

RIP Janis Booth

Tamar E. Granor

Janis Booth, who many in the Visual FoxPro community will remember as Jim Booth, died on September 11, 2017. Her contributions to the VFP community live on.



Janis first emerged as a community leader in the early 1990's, first on CompuServe, and then as a speaker, writer and trainer. She was published in FoxPro Advisor, FoxTalk and FoxRockX, and spoke at dozens of FoxPro conferences, including many Microsoft DevCons. For several years, Janis was a trainer for Application Developers Training, traveling all over North America to teach VFP classes. She also created video training for the same company.

Janis co-authored *Visual FoxPro Unleashed* and *Effective Techniques for Application Development with Visual FoxPro 6.0*, one of the books in the original Hentzenwerke "Essentials" series. She was the author of the 2nd edition of *Effective Techniques*, which updated it for VFP 9.

Janis received the Visual FoxPro Community Lifetime Achievement award in 2013. She was among the original recipients of Microsoft's Most Valuable Profession award (in 1993) and received it annually through 2003.

I first met Janis on CompuServe, where I built a mental image that turned out to be about as wrong as it could be. When we met face-to-face at DevCon '92, it turned out that Janis looked like nothing so much as Central Casting's image of a leprechaun.

Her outgoing, yet "out there," personality featured regular hearty laughter. Janis had strong opinions and no hesitation in sharing them, especially over a beer or a good scotch.

An expert on object-orientation, Janis worked on some of the better-known VFP projects, including a stint at eMedicine (which later merged with MedScape).

Long-time VFP developer Dragan Nedeljkovich tells this story:

"In 1998, my company was manning the servers of a local ISP, so we were the nearest to the big pipeline of whopping 64kbps. Whatever we didn't use was spread among up to 30 modem lines at theoretical 54KBaud. First thing we did, trying desperately to get our hands on anything to learn VFP from, [was read] Jim's articles on multi-tier architecture at his website.

"Only four years later I find myself as a member of a team where Jim is the boss. And one day he calls me on the phone (which was rare, the whole team lived on instant messaging) just to tell me that he needed to steal a piece of code for something, and he remembered that I worked on a similar piece a week ago. So he looked at it and liked how the code was organized, methods had clear names and scopes, he found everything right away without having to read too much. Called just to congratulate me.

"To me, that was just like winning a prize from some board of masters of my own guild. To hear praise from the author of the books from which I learned, I count that as an accomplishment. Too bad we never met in person."

When I last saw Janis in person at Southwest Fox 2006, she'd faced some health challenges, but was doing well. A few years later, she told the community about her transition and change of name; she became an activist in the LGBTQ community, as well.

Janis leaves three adult sons and a sister, as well as extended family and friends. For the VFP community, she leaves great memories and a legacy of giving.