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President's Column

Dave Witso

Editorial Comment

Bob Rea

2006 Happy New Year 2006

from CADvisory

Welcome to 2006! We hope you all had a pleasant holiday, and wish you health, happiness and prosperity throughout the New Year. Most economic forecasts certainly look promising for the near future: the continued low interest rates, and the approaching 2010 Olympics¹ are providing construction and jobs for many of our members. For many of us this brings special challenges possibly including scarcity of trained workers, unmanageable deadlines or too much work, high costs. It may also provide opportunities for new jobs, higher remuneration or profit, interesting learning experiences or new ventures.

What can we expect from VAUS this year; how can VAUS help us help ourselves? We are a society founded on this principle. Though diverse in many aspects, our specific employment requirements share many common interests, including aspects of design, computer-aided design and drafting using Autodesk products.

Each year the VAUS Executive assembles a schedule of monthly meeting presentation and topics for discussion. They volunteer their time and energy and incur costs in aid of the society. The members who attend meeting also volunteer their time (and dues). We have an interesting forum for discussion of many related ideas, which of late, has been drastically under-utilized. We have a wealth of experience in our members, how can we use that to our mutual benefit? Perhaps we should discuss this in January.

¹Visit the City of Vancouver's website for some information regarding some of the 2010 Olympic projects:
<http://vancouver.ca/olympics/venues.htm#village>

I'll begin by resuming my incessant plea for contributions from all of you out there. We, as your executive are as busy as you are, so we can't do all the work of running VAUS and producing an informative CADvisory by

ourselves. Please email your contributions, with CADVISORY CONTRIBUTION in the subject line (So I don't mistake it for spam, and fry it), to caddgeek@yahoo.ca. If you have any questions you can call me at work.

We have move our website to a new server with the predicted glitches. We're working on it, but for now, the ***@vaus.org emails are still not functional.

¹ Visit the City of Vancouver's website for some information regarding some of the 2010 Olympic projects:
<http://vancouver.ca/olympics/venues.htm#village>

December Meeting

Tables With Frank Zander

Franks presentation of AutoCAD's Tables capabilities was informative and easy to follow, thanks to Frank's teaching experience. By following the help files within Autocad, printouts of which he provide, Frank stepped through the process of creating and formatting and editing tables within ACAD.

New and Announcements

January Meeting

Learn the truth about dynamic blocks from Dave Witso!

Dynamic Dave Witso president of "Dave: Drawings, Design, Consulting. Ltd, a Vancouver home design company has experience with ACAD and ADT. After many years serving on the executive committee, including as refreshment coordinator, Dave was (~~de~~)promoted to president of VAUS.

See more about Dynamic blocks on the Autodesk Website or read Ellen Finkelstein's article on ACAD2006's new features at www.ellenfinkelstein.com (there's a link to her site from the VAUS.org/links/coolcadd/ webpage).

Bring your questions. Prepare yourself for a group interactive session (we will try to fit it in this month)!

Cool Code! - Hot Coffee! - Warm Juice! - Doughnuts barely less than a day old!
and more people like you!!

What more could you want? Be there!

Door Prizes

Paid-up members qualify for this month's door prizes. If your membership is due, remember to bring payment in full so you qualify! VAUS members in good standing are eligible to win great prizes from Autodesk and other sponsors. Bring a question about AutoCAD and enter it into the computer. Sometimes a winner is selected through a random draw and other times by having submitted the best question. Everybody wins when we all start answering the questions.

Tips and Tricks

Sharing ACAD files and fonts

It is customary for firms in many instances to share cad files. One example is an architect distributing building architectural drawings and sheet border and title block to sub consultants. In many cases these drawings include elaborate True-Type *.TTF (non-ACAD .shx), fonts. Further elaboration is capable through the formatting

capabilities of Mtext. This has often resulted in inconsistent plotting because of increased variables, i.e. missing *.TTF (and *.SHX) files, exploding text to remove forced colours and to a lesser extent, device driver variability.

Other problematic objects are: embedded or inked graphics. Title block fonts and graphics are commonly sources of problems with special fonts and formatting and project or company logo's.

Theoretically, procedures can be implemented to ensure consistency of output through support file (font, linetype, penstyle/colour style etc.) and set-up standardization however this is a time-consuming intra-company challenge, and a virtually unworkable inter-company one. Furthermore, Murphy's Law dictates that the associated problems will become evident usually after the plotted drawings have been distributed. The antidote to Murphey's Law is often the KISS law:

1. If you plan on sharing ACAD files with other drafters or organisations who don't use the identical cad systems, use only common *.shx fonts and don't embed other files unless absolutely necessary.
2. If title block appearance is important, convert graphics and special fonts to elementary ACAD entities, solids or hatches. Usually these ACAD entities are plotted faster too!
3. If greyscales or pen widths are required, put these on layers with descriptive names such as "Gray50Percent010inch."
4. If title sheet border widths are important, draw them using a pline with width.
5. Do this before sharing the drawings the first time and retain these standards for the duration of the project.

These tips may require a slight increase in initial drawing set-up, but will likely later save time for all involved, and produce increased inter-company, and perhaps intra-company consistency.

Just for (defun) of it

by Caddgeek

Lisp

There are all kind of lisp routines available on the internet. Some Are just easier to write yourself and keep in a file for the times you need them.

Advertise in CADVIsory

Rates

Size	Per Year (10 Issues)	Single Issue
10" high x 7.5"wide	\$600.00	\$120.00
5" high x 7.5"wide	\$400.00	\$80.00
5" high x 3.5"wide	\$200.00	\$40.00
2" high x 3.5"wide	\$100.00	\$20.00

Note: Business card ads (2"high x 3.5"wide) are free for VAUS members

To arrange advertising email: webmaster@vaus.org

Contributions and Submissions

Fodder for Mass Consumption

Contributions in the form of articles to this newsletter can be made by email to any member of the executive and will be greatly appreciated not only by the members who must toil to produce this e-rag, but also, especially, by

those VAUS members who read it. It's your publication. Please help keep it alive and vibrant. At least one of you out there must be more interesting than we are

Away from the *bored* (outside of VAUS (Get a Life))

Caddgeek

Books

***A Short History of Nearly Everything* by Bill Bryson**

I seem to be working my way through a series of Mr Bryson's books during the last few months. Bryson is a non-fiction writer whose work manages to be completely entertaining while being fascinatingly informative, often providing examples illustrating truth to be stranger the fiction.

While his previous books concentrated on various single topics ranging from words to hiking adventures, some subjects being more expansive (Australia, Africa) than others (Great Britain), this book tackles, in a word, everything. Bill brings his talent for compiling extensive research driven by journalistic curiosity with a dry wit and a penchant for the absurd, to the task of assembling a historical account of science. All science. As much as would fit in one book. The product is an entertaining read, full anecdotes concerning the quirks of important contributors to scientific progress, to many of whom history has been neglectful or even, unkind. In this way the book is not only a fascinating collection of facts, explanations and histories, but also a collection of tales of personal triumphs, failures, sorrows and laughs.

An Excerpt from the website:

Their names were Arno Penzias and Robert Wilson. In 1965, they were trying to make use of a large communications antenna owned by Bell Laboratories at Holmdel, New Jersey, but they were troubled by a persistent background noise--a steady, steamy hiss that made any experimental work impossible. The noise was unrelenting and unfocused. It came from every point in the sky, day and night, through every season. For a year the young astronomers did everything they could think of to track down and eliminate the noise. They tested every electrical system. They rebuilt instruments, checked circuits, wiggled wires, dusted plugs. They climbed into the dish and placed duct tape over every seam and rivet. They climbed back into the dish with brooms and scrubbing brushes and carefully swept it clean of what they referred to in a later paper as "white dielectric material," or what is known more commonly as bird shit. Nothing they tried worked.

Visit the website: <http://www.randomhouse.com/features/billbryson>