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Call For Articles

Can you write a few paragraphs on an interesting topic related to what you do for a living? ICCA of Minnesota is looking for articles for this newsletter, for our web page, and for submission to larger-circulation journals.

Please help!

Send articles or story ideas to editors@icca-mn.org, or call us at 612-245-ICCA.

President's Letter

By Wade Herschberger

I'm sure all of you have run across a few articles lately on what is happening with patents. More and more ridiculous patents are getting issued that I think will ultimately cause a lot of harm to the software industry, particularly small companies that don't have droves of lawyers on their payroll, and the public as a whole.

The patent office appears to be abdicate their responsibility to check for prior art and to reject the obvious. It seems their standard operating procedure is to grant the patent and let the lawyers fight it out in court.

that were previously in the public domain. Even if some companies claim that they will never enforce certain pat-

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Next Meeting

Thursday

October 21, 2004

Axel's Char House in the
[Roseville Radisson Hotel](#)

Speaker: Rocky Lhotka
Magenic

Topic: .NET Development in
a Team Setting

Mentoring 5:30PM Dinner 6:30PM

Members \$25 Non-Members \$35

Member bring a guest \$30 for 2

RSVP 651.257.2570

Bring a colleague!

October Speaker - Rocky Lhotka

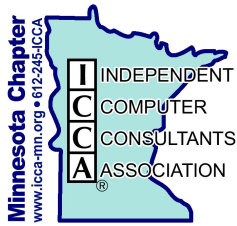
Topic: .NET Development in a Team Setting

Team-based development is more than just application design and coding. You'll need to deal with issues such as team communication, issue tracking, configuration management, unit testing, run-time logging, exception handling, security integration and many other issues. At our October 21 meeting at Axel's Char House in the [Roseville Radisson Hotel](#) (networking and mentoring begin at 5:30 p.m.; dinner at 6:30) we'll learn how we can use various Microsoft Application Blocks, open source software, and other tools and processes to help address many of these key issues.

Rockford Lhotka is the author of numerous books, including the Expert One-on-One Visual Basic .NET & C# Business Objects books. He is a Microsoft Software Legend, Regional Director, MVP and INETA speaker.



Rocky speaks at many conferences and user groups around the world and is a columnist for MSDN Online. He is the Principal Technology Evangelist for Magenic Technologies, one of the nation's premiere Microsoft Gold Certified Partners dedicated to solving today's most challenging business problems using 100% Microsoft tools and technology.



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ents, they often will not release it to the public domain. This means they could change their mind at some time later.

What can we do? There is at least one organization, PUBPAT (<http://www.pubpat.org>, that is fighting for public interest. I've not done a lot of research on this par-

ticular organization, but they have popped up in a couple of articles I read. They are looking for technical experts (I think many of us would qualify) to help, not surprisingly on a pro bono basis. I'd encourage you to check them out and donate some time to help. If you know of other similar organizations, I'd be interested in hearing about them.

Eclipse eclipses other IDEs

By Wade Herschberger

Recently I started using Eclipse (<http://www.eclipse.org>) for development. For those that haven't heard of it, Eclipse is a platform that was designed to be a kind of universal tool platform - an open extensible IDE for anything and nothing in particular. It's an open-source project that has spawned numerous other projects. I, for example, am using the Perl plug-in called EPIC.

The key aspect of Eclipse goes back to the statement 'an open extensible IDE for anything and nothing in particular'. Everything is about building extensions, called plug-ins in the Eclipse world, to the core platform. In fact, very little of Eclipse isn't a plug-in. The architecture is a thin layer on top of the OS with plug-ins for just about everything else. I've used it on Solaris, Linux and Windows and I find the transition between platforms very easy. This is a little surprising because a fundamental design deci-

sion for Eclipsed was to use native OS widgets/controls wherever possible to enhance performance and maintain a native look-and-feel.

It's one thing to have similar capabilities that works across multiple platforms, it's another thing to build a world-class IDE and Eclipse has done that, particularly with the latest 3.0 release. The fundamental components, workspaces, perspectives and editors have tons of great features (too numerous to mention) that I love as a developer. Overall it's better than any other IDE I've used, though there are features of other IDEs that aren't in Eclipsed (yet!)

But again, the key concept isn't everything that Eclipse does out-of-the-box, but rather that it is designed to be extended by either 3rd-party plug-in developers or the Eclipse users themselves. If I want a particular feature, I can fairly easily extend Eclipse to have it.

I'd encourage you to take a look.

THE OUTSIDER

BY KARL HELLA

We acting newsletter folks need some help. There were no submissions this month [except 2 last minute pieces from Wade] so all you get is the program announcement from the web site and this rambling. You too can be a published author.

Do you need a project?

I am working with some folks looking at a data transfer project for the court system. We need a

person or two, especially if you can move IMS data into other formats.

You will participate in the proposal writing (unpaid) as well as project work if we win.

Call me immediately

Karl Hella

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*When You Hire One of Us, You
Get Our Collective Knowledge and
Experience*