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Above: *Silicon Valley Bank's Stuart Edwards, ASC Special Events Co-Coordinator at the 1998 Texas Software News Right: Les Belady*

## Software: The Pervasive Technology—The Theme of TSS 9.9.99



Les Belady, ASC Executive Director

Software is not an industry segment: it is the lifeblood of virtually every human activity. It is through software that we can use the power of computers in engineering, manufacturing, transportation, communication, government, education, indeed our daily lives. At the third Texas Software Symposium (TSS), leading speakers will present cases where quality software is the essential technology in familiar industry segments.

Since the power of information technology can be exploited only by software, to write quality software quickly and efficiently is the decisive factor of an individual, company or nation's competitiveness. Our keynote speaker John Yochelson, President of

the U.S. Council on Competitiveness, will highlight the current state of America's high tech clusters and their merits.

One of the largest applications of software is in the budding E-business, the transition to carrying all transactions via intra- and inter-company electronic networks. At TSS industry executives will present their involvement in this great transition, including the role of portable wireless devices.

Software also goes underground: familiar products, from toasters to cellular phones to automobiles, become smarter by embedded real-time computers. Here engineers must consider the entire system: software

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## Gold in Them Thar Hills

Emily Sopenky

Thar's gold in them thar hills. Silicon hills, that is. And that's right where the Austin Software Council's new logo begins—at the top. With technology dominated by software (the pervasive technology), that is what dominates our new logo as it does our business.

For any who have struggled with remaking your company's image, you know the well-worn paths that the Austin Software Council followed to arrive at a new look. Some couldn't wait for it to happen. Some, who recognized the significant impact the Council already had on Austin and the high technology community, questioned the rationale for changing the existing image. Some were indifferent.

Many versions were generated by our branding firm, The Ad Ranch. Six preliminaries were presented to the board of directors, who charged Chair Betty Otter-Nickerson with directing the project. Staff and volunteers (most notably Pam O'Neal, Director of Marketing Communications at Ventix) were pelted with various versions. We went the same route for the key message, "The business of technology."

Both the newsletter and the website have received a makeover. After many years of providing the Software Council with incredible newsletter prepress support, Sheehan Communications stepped down from this volunteer job. With this issue, Best Electronic Prepress Services debuts as our newsletter partner, including their redesign by Mona "True" Bernhardt. We look forward to working with them.

Besides a new look, our website content was redesigned by Karen Krepes of Net Ingenuity, working closely with Dan Price and the deans of ASC "U." Dan, with help from KDi Inc., is developing secure chat rooms for some of the peer groups. Also in development is a For Members Only extranet.

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## Gold in Them Thar Hills

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To recap where the Software Council is today:

- ▶ In May 1998, we left the folds of the University of Texas to become an independent nonprofit organization.
- ▶ Exposure at the first 360.alpha was significant. The Council was the only organization repeatedly identified as the “solution,” the connector, the organization that ties others together.
- ▶ In March 1999 not only did we get a new chair who has a wealth of experience with a rapidly growing, prestigious software company, but we also got a new executive director, known both nationally and internationally in the software industry. The former chair, Becky Taylor, the new chair, Betty Otter-Nickerson, the former executive director, Cerise Blair, and the new executive director, Les Belady all acknowledged that the Austin Software Council was evolving to a new level.
- ▶ We started a major membership drive about the same time. The sponsorship levels were restructured and expanded. A major capital foundation campaign was begun, attracting new members, new sponsors, and new partners.
- ▶ Our seminar group is teeming with ideas. There is now at least one seminar per month. The number of peer groups is growing exponentially. We introduced a virtual benefits program for member companies, including discount payroll services and insurance services. The Council’s job fairs, established jointly by the CEO Peer Group and the University of Texas, attract over 2000 students. Besides the grant from the U.S. Department of Labor to identify and train the severely disabled for customer support and systems administration jobs, the Council is taking an active position in local workforce development. New management software allows us to do things differently and be more efficient.
- ▶ This year we strategically scheduled our annual event, the Texas Software Symposium, for a software milestone—September 9, 1999 or 9.9.99, a seminal day

for a seminal event and a perfect time to bring out a new look. When I first came on board as publicity chair, I had no inkling that so much would be going on. But then with 20/20 hindsight, I guess it was inevitable. The local economy is running hot on technology and attracting new and creative players. Our previous image with the calm soft green logo provided an identity for the Austin Software Council while still part of UT. That logo was recognizable and served its purpose admirably. But as the Austin Software Council is experiencing new growth and looking at new horizons, it just makes sense to put on a new face that reflects the dynamics of the organization, of this town and of the software industry.

Hope you agree.

The Wired Bunch Peer Group is comprised of software developers, engineers and consultants of hot startups and well established high tech companies. The group’s goal is to get the technical community *wired* to the latest technologies and to beat the competition. Expert speakers will get you *wired* to topics such as quality assurance, software development, enterprise management, e-commerce and interactive TV solutions. The group meets quarterly, providing frosty beverages and food along with a groovy grand prize and other cool stuff. To get *wired* or get more information on the next event, contact the peer group chair, Nicole Urbis of PSW Technologies, at [nurbis@psw.com](mailto:nurbis@psw.com).

## Membership Drive Aims for an Eagle

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“My teammates didn’t do a lot for the aquifer, but we contended and had fun.” Things got interesting on the 14th hole when Foley uncharacteristically pured a two-iron off the tee to put his team in the lead. “Did the web-cam get that?” he asked. Otter-Nickerson quickly regained the lead on the next hole and only got better, playing the final three holes at even par. “Trash talkin’ Betty” ate Lost Creek for lunch that afternoon and walked away with a 25% stake in Tivoli. “This should really help BMC’s growth rate,” she told the press at the awards ceremony.

Overall, the day was a tremendous success and a fun way for the Membership Committee, the Council, and our members to celebrate the new ASC memberships this year. We’re all really excited about what’s happening at the Council and are extremely grateful for everyone’s support. We encourage everyone to contact an ASC volunteer or representative for information on how your involvement with the association will help improve your business—maybe even your golf game.

Special thanks to the staff at Lost Creek for outstanding service.

*Brent Davis is Chair of the Membership Committee and a financial representative with New England Financial. He can be reached at [bdavis@austin.nefn.com](mailto:bdavis@austin.nefn.com) or 637-6247.*