

**H**ere we are again. Another TUG season has come and gone! And what a season 2007-2008 was, on stage and backstage!

Actually, there were two stages this year: TUG and IBM itself. IBM has been active in the last twelve months and we just could not ignore the activities on their part. Many things happened at IBM. Just to name a few: There was the announcement of a new release of WDS along with new packaging. Then there was the V6R1 release (which is now referred to as "6.1"). And, on April 2nd, 2008, we witnessed the official announcement of the merger of the System i and System p hardware platform (which had been expected for some time).

On the TUG stage, we had another great selection of presentations and speakers all season long.

It started on October 3, when with close collaboration with IBM, **Dr. Frank Soltis** paid us a visit and gave us his view on the future of the System i and the computer world in general. Then, in November we hosted **Alison Butterill** and **Trevor Perry** who told us about the PHP world and gave us ways to survive in the IT world (and be a survivor in general).



Jay Burford

Léo Lefebvre at the TUG Tourney

In January we went to the IBM Toronto Lab in Markham, to learn about the new release of WDS, its new packaging, and general pricing. This visit also gave us a great opportunity to meet some members of the Rational team from Toronto and Raleigh, NC.

And how could we best learn about a new System i operating system release? By getting a presentation directly from IBM, of course. In March, **Barry Pow** took that responsibility, and **Barbara Morris** gave us more details on the RPG side.

After another successful TEC in April, the meeting season ended on a very high note with **Scott Klement** giving us two of his personal presentations on ways to use RPG to interact with the IFS and then with Excel spreadsheets.

The TUG backstage has also been very busy this past year. With the announcement of **Wende Boddy's** retirement last Summer (effective this past April), we took that opportunity to review our internal procedures and management tools. The combination of the process changes we were planning for the TUG office were to have a major impact on the work Wende's replacement would have to do. To be very, very short, we first hired a professional accounting firm to look after our day-to-day financials, freeing the TUG treasurer of many clerical tasks and bringing some continuity in maintaining and reporting TUG financials. Then we attacked the database itself. A new system has been designed and developed which came to life just after TEC 2008, thanks to our Editor **Vaughn Dragland**.

Parallel to all of these big changes we "called for proposals" to find a replacement for Wende. What a challenge that was, especially because of the talented candidates we had! It was extremely difficult to choose the person, and in the end **Lindsay Sutherland** was offered the position. She already had some



Vaughn Dragland

experience with the TUG office as she had replaced Wende on a few occasions in the past and she went through a two-month training period just before TEC 2008. Lindsay officially took her role on May 1, 2008 and quickly got a very close view of looking after a regular TUG meeting (the May 28th with Scott Klement) and the TUG Annual Charity Golf Tournament. She has had quite a ride so far, but it came out very good.

In the backstage, we still have a few things to look after—actually we always have something to look after in the backstage (like preparing the next TEC). The TUG website is another area to work on. We have considered many options in the past and we should be able to come up with a new look soon, so stay tuned.

As I was saying, another season has passed and we are now getting ready for the next one. Every season brings its own challenges and the upcoming one will be no different. With the merger of the IBM i and p hardware systems, new opportunities are arising. What we are going to do with them is still under evaluation. We'll need some help, especially from IBM and the industry to figure out what would be the best way to bring to our members the best education available. We will keep you informed. If you have any suggestions let me know.

In the meantime, enjoy the summer. If you are taking vacation, have a great one, and we'll see you in September.

