

# – TUG MoM Review –

## The March 2005 Meeting of Members

By Stephen Collins

The March meeting was an adventure – try finding a new venue in the dark AND in the middle of a snowstorm! Still it was worth the effort once again.

The 5 o'clock meeting was entitled “Developing Web Applications using JavaServer Faces and Enterprise Generation Language” – a typical IBM mouth full...Our presenter was **Kushal Munir** from the IBM Toronto Lab, who gave us a one-hour overview of this new package developed by IBM. IBM have bundled this (free) package within the WebSphere Development Studio Client for iSeries. The package is a 4<sup>th</sup> Generation Language and is split between JavaServer Faces (JSF) and Enterprise Generation Language (EGL).



Matinee MoM speaker Kushal Munir

### JavaServer Faces & Struts

To standardize web development, Apache developed a framework called Struts. This has become a very popular Open Source web application framework. Struts provides the following key benefits:

- Simplifies web development
- Promotes development of well structured Web Applications (MVC)
- Helps build internationalized web applications

JavaServer Faces (JSF) has only been standardised within the last year, and is itself an add-on to the Struts framework. It provides:

- Emerging Standards based Web Application Framework

Photos by Léo Lefebvre



Stephen Collins

- Event driven architecture
- UI components are decoupled from its rendering (allows desktops and handheld devices to be used – pushed down from the server).

JSF and Struts do overlap in the User interface and form processing area and, although JSF will not replace Struts immediately (both are supported in WebSphere Studio.) Eventually JSF will become the primary technology used in Web application development.

### Enterprise Generation Language (EGL)

EGL allows rapid development using a platform-neutral high level 4<sup>th</sup> GL specification language. This type of procedural language removes the need to worry about database I/O; as the package, once directed, handles all the Get/Put/Update to the databases (or data queues) for you by the use of wizards. This could also be expressed as CRUD! (Create/Read/Update/Delete.)

With the nuts and bolts of coding concealed, both Programmers and System Analysts can use the product without having to learn a lot of Java. The syntax used is similar to RPG in style. The package currently generates both CICS and iSeries Cobol and WAS (Java) – sorry no RPG as yet but a 3<sup>rd</sup> party company is looking into this.



For a more detailed explanation of JSF & EGL check the TUG Conference CD for the full session handout.

EGL is developed in Websphere with target platforms of:

- MVS CICS or Batch
- Windows
- Linux
- iSeries
- z/OS USS (Java)

and can be used to write:

- Batch Server programs
- Interactive 5250 applications
- Web applications

These can be either Program Driven or Event Driven Models. Since EGL is written within Websphere Studio all the normal tools apply such as:

- Perspectives
- Projects
- Wizards
- Source Editor
- Debugger
- Help

### Intermission

This was our first time at the Meridian so we didn't know what to expect in the way of food. We were not disappointed however. Everyone was pleased with the excellent buffet. Then after the usual TUG business, announcements and door prize giveaways, we carried on with our second speaker.

### IBM's Investment in RPG

The 7 o'clock speaker, **George Farr**, took us on a tour of RPG – its past (before V5), present (V5 R1-3), and future... The future? Does RPG have a future? George says YES – definitely! He said that many people get the wrong impression from the Websphere Development Roadmap – that IBM is trying to push everyone into Java – but this is not the case. Many programmers will make the journey to Java, but many more will stay with RPG (which is a different track on the same roadmap) and IBM is committed to supporting those who do.

RPG was born in 1965 on the main-frame and became RPGII in 1971 when it was adopted by IBM's first mini-computer, the System/3. RPGII moved to the System/34 in 1977 and later to the System/36. Then in 1980 RPGIII was created for the System/38, and 1988 AS/400 was launched with RPG/400. RPGIV and VARPG came along in 1994.

The modern RPGIV language really hit its stride in V5R1 on the iSeries platform, and saw significant enhancements in V5R2 and V5R3. Some examples of what's new in V5R3 are:

- RPG preprocessing for SQL Preprocessor
- 63 Digit support (Packed and Zoned)
- Second parameter on %TRIMx - char to trim
- Allow dynamic resizing of arrays, %SUBARR
- Option to pass trimmed string as parameter.
- Conversion of date/time/tstamp to numeric using %DEC.
- Relax rules for result data structure
- New environment variable for Java method calls

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## The 5th Wave By Rich Tennant



"We found where the security breach in the WLAN was originating. It was coming in through another rogue robot-vac. This is the third one this month. Must have gotten away from it's owner, like all the rest."



*Evening MoM speaker George Farr*

Although they were not allowed to be documented (for proprietary reasons) there are many exciting future enhancements for RPG in the pipeline! George treated us to some hints verbally, which were truly amazing. It was obvious from his presentation that RPG is alive and kicking, and will be for a long time to come... If you would like to keep up-to-date with current developments in the RPG language, you may subscribe to the WDSC-L Dist list. To subscribe, unsubscribe or change list options, visit: <http://lists.midrange.com/mailman/listinfo/wdsci-l> 

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Photos by Léo Lefebvre

*Wende Boddy at the TUG Meeting of Members, March 23, 2005, Meridian Banquet Hall, Toronto*