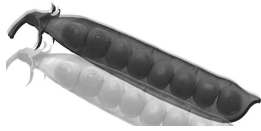


# Post-Obvious Double Dispatch

OOPSLA's Official Newsletter

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October 18th, 2005



Welcome to OOPSLA 2005, the premier gathering of professionals from industry and academia, including practitioners, researchers, students,

and educators—all sharing their experiences with object technology and its off-shoots. OOPSLA has been an incubator of many state-of-the-art technologies and practices. Some of them are patterns, refactoring, aspect-oriented programming, dynamic compilation and optimization, unified modeling language, and agile methods.

New for this year are essays and lightning talks. And be sure to look for the special 20th year events with our creativity consultant. And of course there are plenty of social opportunities for mingling and professional networking.

That's just a sampling of what makes OOPSLA the conference of choice for software technologists, from recognized academics to undergraduate students, from industrial researchers to developers and managers, from the creators of technology to its users.

We hope you enjoy the 2005 OOPSLA conference!

## Ruminations of a Program Chair



Richard Gabriel

Ok, so I'm the program chair of OOPSLA this year. Probably you think this means I made up the program-

nope, nothing like it. A program chair is like the sweeper in curling:

"Effectiveness is the crucial physical component of sweeping, but it is even more important to be

able to judge when to sweep. After all, if you're effectively sweeping a rock right through the house, you're not a very valuable member of the team. Those who know when to sweep are keepers. Judge the weight of the rock as early as possible, in some cases before it is released. Study all shots-your team's and your opponent's-so you'll get a better 'feel' for the ice."

Mostly all I did was help Ralph figure out what sorts of events to put on-the paper tracks, the symposia-which speakers to invite for keynotes and stuff like that, and what special things to try. Then we find people who are jazzed to do stuff for the conference and start sweeping-making sure they don't go right through the house.

Ralph and I started planning this whole thing 18 months ago. I put up a Wiki the Summer before last, invited three or four dozen people-and not just object folks-to contribute ideas for OOPSLA, and used them to get a sense of what the community wanted / needed.

Being program chair is a lot of work. By tradition the program chair has to be on the program committee the year before and the year after she / he is chair, and also has to be on the ECOOP pc. This year that ECOOP part meant going to a program committee meeting in Switzerland in February (except it was muddy).

I then attended ECOOP in Scotland in July (could have been

muddy, but it wasn't (too much)).

For OOPSLA itself I drove down here three times-last December for a visit with Ralph, in early May for the big organizing committee meeting, and then to get here now. Ralph and I also did a site visit two weeks ago. That's when we learned the posters couldn't be where we wanted them.

How much work? There were 5000 emails I had to respond to. I had to at least look at all the papers submitted-research papers, Onward! stuff, and the essays-and I had to wrangle the program committee through the review process including our fun face-to-face meeting, which was at the hang onto your ear muffs-the LA airport. One exciting part was there were 5 people who had to join in by phone. One in Austria, one in Germany, one in Nashville, one in California, and one in Australia. The hotel's phone system didn't really work, so after the last minute we used Skype!

The website was mostly done by hand-the format's all set up but people like me get to cut and paste most of contents from one database to another. Then there's reviewing the page proofs for the Proceedings and Companion. Since September first it's been a double full time job.

But-it's fun being on the inside as the planning and execution unfolds. Seeing how many decisions you can make by not making them. Seeing how it all comes out.

-Richard Gabriel

## Welcome from the Conference Chair

OOPSLA is my favorite conference. I've been going to it for twenty years, and I sometimes say that if it didn't exist, I would have to invent it. Of course, I



Ralph Johnson

probably wouldn't have been able to invent it, because the strength of OOPSLA comes from its diversity. It is not dominated by any one group. Some academics think it is too commercial, and some people from industry think it is too academic. Some people from Sun think IBM has too strong a role, some people from IBM think that Sun is too prominent, and people from Microsoft probably think there is too much Java. This is a sign that there is a healthy competition, and that competition of ideas regularly creates new ways of doing things and new ways thinking about things. I love the fact that I can meet people who build large systems in programming languages that I have never used and so find out principles that transcend one particular environment.

Even though I love OOPSLA, it is far from perfect, and over the years I've had a variety of ideas about how to make it better. You will see some of the new ideas at this OOPSLA. I

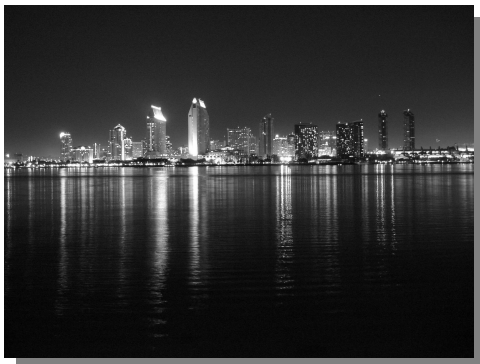
think it will be a great program. (You can tell me afterwards if you disagree). We had a few ideas that we couldn't figure out how to implement, and perhaps they will surface in the future. But I'd like to talk about an idea that has been slowly growing on me. This is an idea to solve a problem that has been around for a long time, and that we didn't handle as well as I would have liked. The problem is marketing.

It is not enough to have a good product, people have to know about it. I don't think the right people know about OOPSLA. OOPSLA is not for everybody; it is for people who want to be leaders in object-oriented technology, which today means all kinds of software. It is for the programmer who wants to be the technical thought-leader of a software development group, as well as the researcher or the teacher. It is for people who want to argue about technologies, who want to hear from a variety of points of view, and who want to see both successes and failures so they can achieve the first and avoid the second. It is not for people who only care about meeting the next milestone, or how to better use their current tools.

Outsiders tend to think that OOPSLA is just about research. Research

is a big part of OOPSLA, but it is only a part. As a researcher, the thing I like best about OOPSLA is the strong emphasis on practice. You will see this in the invited speakers, in the demos, the practitioner's reports, the workshops, and the tutorials. Over half the people who come to OOPSLA label themselves "software developers". I have learned a lot from them, and they are one of the main reasons I keep coming to OOPSLA. But they also tell me that it is getting harder to convince their coworkers to come to OOPSLA and their manager to let them go.

I would like to form a group to do "guerrilla marketing" for OOPSLA. The organizing committee does a lot of marketing through regular channels, such as (paper) mailing lists and running ads in magazines. There is a fair amount of electronic advertising, as well. My idea is to use the internet, but to do it in a personalized and targeted way. The goal is to attract software developers who are in our target audience. Next year, making the "product" better is Peri Tarr's job, so I would like to focus on innovative marketing, and am looking for people to help. If you would like to, send me an e-mail at [johnson@cs.uiuc.edu](mailto:johnson@cs.uiuc.edu).



San Diego Skyline



San Diego Harbor

## Poetic Opening

In fiction and poetry, writers employ the hook to draw readers into the narrative. This device is also quite effective when running conferences. That's why the OOPSLA conference is opening with a fantastic speaker by the esteemed poet Robert Hass.



Robert Hass

A MacArthur Fellow and two-time winner of the National Book

Critics Circle Award, Robert Hass was named Poet Laureate in 1995. Serving until 1997, Hass spent two years battling illiteracy by promoting the environment in what he calls "nature writing."

Robert Hass's deep commitment to environmental issues led him to found River of Words (ROW), an organization that promotes environmental and arts education in affiliation with the Library of Congress Center for the Book. Hass is chair-

man of ROW's board of directors, and judges their annual international environmental poetry and art contest for youth. He is also a board member of International Rivers Network. Robert Hass was chosen as Educator of the Year by the North American Association on Environmental Education. Robert Hass was the guest editor of the 2001 edition of Best American Poetry.

## New to this Year's OOPSLA

### Wiki Symposium

The 2005 International Symposium on Wikis brings together wiki researchers, implementers, and users for the first time. The goal of the symposium is to find a voice for the community. The symposium has a rigorously reviewed research paper track as well as plenty of space for practitioner reports, demonstrations, and discussions. We are honored to announce that Ward Cunningham, the inventor and host of the original WikiWikiWeb, will present the opening keynote talk at WikiSym

2005. He will be followed by Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia, speaking on Wikipedia in the free culture revolution. Anyone who is involved in using, researching, or developing wikis is invited to WikiSym 2005!

### Lightning Talks

A Lightning Talk is a 5-minute presentation on any topic of interest to the OOPSLA community. Lightning Talks will be presented back to back with strict enforcement of the 5-minute time limit and a few acetate foils (or their electronic equivalent).

### OOPSLA Newsletter (PODD)

Post-Obvious Double Dispatch (PODD) evolved from the patterns community's conferences (PLoP's) as a way to better communicate daily



Joseph Yoder

news. This publication's focus is to highlight points of interest as well as upcoming events during the conference.

We hope you'll use this resource to better the conference experience for yourself and others.

-Joseph Yoder

## OOPSLA Posters and FlashBoFs

### Posters

The OOPSLA Posters provide an excellent forum for authors to present their work in an informal and interactive setting. Posters are ideal to showcase speculative, late-breaking results or to introduce interesting, innovative work. They allow authors and interested participants to connect to each other and to engage in discussions about the work presented. Posters provide authors with a unique opportunity to draw attention to their work during the conference.

#### Posters on Display Tuesday

Tuesday, 10:00, 7 hours, Terrace Pavilion

#### Posters on Display Wednesday

Wednesday, 10:00, 7 hours, Terrace Pavilion

#### Posters on Display Thursday

Thursday, 10:00, 4 hours, Terrace Pavilion

### FlashBoFs

Do you want to do something and need brothers in arms? Propose a BoF. BoF (Birds of a Feather) session (for those that do not know) are highly unorganized sessions of people with a common goal. This can be exploring, defining a standard or programming some code, to name just a few.

FlashBoF is the marriage between a BoF session and an 'open space'. So what is an Open Space? An Open Space meeting is like a formalized coffee break: people getting together to discuss a particular subject.

Editor: Joseph Yoder (joe@refactory.com)

Email the Editor with any article requests, BoF times or results, and comments.

PODD Archives at <http://www.refactory.com/PODD>