

FOXROCKX

Thanks for the Memories (and all the code)!

Doug Hennig

As they discuss in this issue's article, Andy Kramek and Marcia Akins have written their last Kitbox column. Doug offers a tribute to Andy and Marcia to celebrate their years of contribution to the FoxPro community.

The Kitbox has always been one of my favorite parts of FoxRockX (and FoxTalk before it), and I know I'm not alone in that sentiment. Although the ideas and code were always the top-notch quality we've come to expect from Andy and Marcia, it was the writing style that made it such a fun column to read. For anyone who met them in person, reading their articles felt like you were sitting right beside them, listening in on a conversation about the latest coding or design challenge one of them was facing. They always seemed to be timely too: whenever I struggled with a problem, whether it be designing a database for names and addresses or integrating Visio in a VFP application, along would come their latest article with a fresh perspective on the topic.

I've known Andy and Marcia for more than ten years. I first "met" Marcia online in the old CompuServe forums and was thrilled to finally meet her in person at a Great Lakes Great Database Workshop conference (sometimes called "WhilFest" after organizer and former FoxTalk editor, Whil Hentzen). Although I'd read a VFP book he co-authored several years earlier, I met Andy in person for the first time at the VFP DevCon in San Diego in 1997. I found both to be very easy to talk to, full of laughter, and a lot of fun to hang out with over a drink or two or at dinner.

Since then, I've spent countless hours in their gracious company at the various conferences we've attended together over the years: Southwest Fox, German DevCon, Great Lakes, Advisor DevCon, Microsoft MVP Summit, and others. I was even honored to be among those they invited to a dinner party in celebration of their upcoming wedding.

One of the things I've always appreciated about both Andy and Marcia are their strong opinions in their areas of expertise, which are many. Neither is afraid to state their case when it comes to one design decision over another. In fact, after I presented a session at Great Lakes one year, Andy pointed out that the code I'd

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shown was missing an OTHERWISE clause in a CASE statement. Since then, I've specifically added OTHERWISE clauses, even when not actually required, with a comment that it's there so I don't get heck from Andy <g>.

Another attribute they share is that they are always approachable. Although many conferences have a special room where speakers can hang out, check their email, and so forth, I've never known Andy or Marcia to spend time in them. If you ever want to find them at a conference, look in the hallways outside conference rooms or in the hotel bar. They are always surrounded by old friends and newly-made friends. If you have a question about anything, VFP-related or not, don't hesitate to ask either of them. Andy and Marcia will make you feel like you've known them forever in no time.

Their contributions to the VFP community are immeasurable. They are often the first ones to respond to a request for help in the online forums they frequent, including Foxite (<http://www.foxite.com>) and the Universal Thread (<http://www.universalthread.com>). Both have been Microsoft MVPs (Most Valuable Professional) for years because of their willingness to share their knowledge with others. I personally use tools they wrote and shared with us every day. My favorites are Marcia's replacement for the VFP Edit Property/Method dialog (available as a VFP project at [\[codeplex.com/vfpx\]\(http://codeplex.com/vfpx\)\), a utility that adds the variable the cursor is on to the nearest LOCAL statement with a single keypress, and an IntelliSense script that, when you type the first two letters of a variable name \(such as "lc" for a local character variable\) and press Space, displays a list of all variables starting with those letters so you can easily select it to insert it into your code. These utilities save me an enormous amount of time every single day and I'm incredibly grateful that not only did they take the time to write these tools, they made them freely available to our community.](http://www.</p></div><div data-bbox=)

The bad news is that Andy and Marcia have decided they've written their last article and presented their last conference session. The good news is that they're still with us! I expect to see them in 2009 at some conference somewhere, to read Andy's latest blog posting (<http://weblogs.foxite.com/andykramek>), and to follow their helpful answers in online forums.

So, let me raise my virtual glass and offer a toast to Andy and Marcia. Thanks for the ideas, the code, the friendship, and the contributions you've given us over the years. Your articles and conference sessions will be missed, but I'm thankful you're still part of our community.