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 From: Jerrold L. Wagener <jwagener@trc.amoco.com>
 To: x3j3@ncsa.uiuc.edu
 Cc: SC22WG5@dkuug.dk
 Subject: I'm back from the mountain

To X3J3 -

As mentioned at the Terre Haute meeting, this capsule summary is late (and therefore perhaps moot) because of my expedition to Mt Logan (Yukon, Canada) immediately following the meeting. Even though it is not timely, this summary is submitted for the sake of completeness (after a brief account of the mountain).

Mt Logan, at 5940 meters (19,800'), is the highest peak in Canada and the second highest (after Denali - Mt McKinley, Alaska) in North America. Its latitude (near the arctic circle), combined with its height, makes it, as with Denali, one of the world's challenging climbs. It is a bigger mountain above its base than Denali (though not quite as high), and has more ice flowing off its flanks, in the form of glaciers, than any mountain in the world outside of Antarctica. As it turns out, Logan is a somewhat more difficult mountain to climb than Denali.

Nevertheless, we had a fantastically successful expedition, putting all nine of our expedition members on the summit. There were six expeditions to try Logan this year, and no other expedition managed to summit all their members, and in fact only two other expeditions managed to put anyone on the summit. In most cases it was various forms of high altitude sickness that prevented people from summiting, though bad weather was also a factor. We were fortunate in that we kept all our expedition members healthy, except for an occasional headache or bout of diarrhea, and were in striking position when a beautiful summit day appeared (June 19).

We were on the mountain a total of 22 days, experienced temperatures down to almost 40 degrees below zero (Celsius or Fahrenheit - take your pick - it doesn't make any difference at that point), and were above 17,500' for ten days. Crevasses were more of an obstacle on Logan than we experienced on Denali, and we had one crevasse fall with its attendant rescue operation. We all lost weight (I lost 15 pounds), despite our 6000 calorie/day diet, and so are working on getting our strength back. I'm also nursing a couple of frostbitten fingers, but it's beginning to look like there won't be any permanent damage or loss.

So much for the mountain. The principal objectives for the Terre Haute X3J3 meeting were:

- process all outstanding requests relating to F90 maintenance
- respond to the X3H5 request for a F90 binding
- establish a US position on the WG5 L12 document

With regard to the first of these objectives, there are now upwards of 50 distinct items in the S20, about a dozen for which processing has not been completed. Some of the unfinished ones were "late-comers" at the meeting, but a few turned out to be somewhat knotty problems and time ran out before their processing was completed. Presumably these will be completed at the August meeting in Seattle. (The workload for Terre Haute accumulated over the six-month period since the previous meeting; with only two months until the subsequent meeting perhaps that workload will be less.)

With regard to the X3H5 request, a recommendation was developed and is has been communicated to X3. The recommendation is to accept the X3H5 proposal, which is to allow X3H5 to develop Fortran syntax for a syntax-style binding of the X3H5 functionality to Fortran 90. This essentially delegates to X3H5

the development of a standard extension to Fortran 90. X3J3 will serve as "coordinating liaison" in this work, which means that X3J3 must officially review the binding and make corresponding recommendations to X3. An X3J3 subgroup will be formed to coordinate closely with X3H5 on this project.

This is precedent-setting action, departing from the current model (for example such as depicted in X3J3/92-0030), and has significant implications for the "collateral standards" issue in the L12 document. Indeed, the main reason for the US "no" vote on the L12 document is to insure that the final L12 wording is consistent with this more lenient policy of "coordinated farming out" of some syntax development as well as the development of standard modules. This particular issue may well be one of the more critical ones, if not the crux, of the upcoming WG5 meeting in Victoria.

On other fronts, at Terre Haute X3J3 tended to favor an "I-style" revision in the 1995-96 timeframe, rather than official corrigenda/interpretations documents, which would replace the two (identical) ISO/ANSI standards with a single ISO standard; the sentiment in Terre Haute was that this interim revision would be limited to cci - corrections, clarifications, and interpretations - and would not include and extensions or other changes of substance. In terms of electronic efficiency, an ad hoc subgroup was formed to explore the most effective ways of using electronic mail and repositories to minimize the paper burden and provide wider and more timely access to committee materials.

As I have not yet seen the minutes of the Terre Haute meeting, the above report is largely from my (now dim) recollections of the meeting plus a few notes that I managed to resurrect. I'll let you know if any of the above turns out to be incorrect (or, probably sooner, others will set the record straight). My sincere thanks to those that pitched in to make sure things were taken care of after the meeting, while I was on the mountain, especially to Maureen for completing the minutes, preparing the August agenda, conveying our X3H5-related recommendation to X3, and generally making sure that the critical things got done. I look forward to seeing you all in a few weeks.

Jerry



On the 19,850' summit of Mt Logan, Yukon, Canada, 19 June 1992.

Mt Logan is the world's most massive mountain above its base and has more glacier volume than any other mountain outside of Antarctica. Its 19,800' west summit is in the middle background. Standing guard over the cloud-shrouded lower glacier on the left is 17,240' King Peak. The ascent route angled right from King Peak, climbing up behind the west summit and then over its shoulder.

Jerry Wagener