

Conference Poem 2008

Thanks for your indulgence
For allowing me once again
To read some observations
That I've captured with my pen

This conference's slightly different
With Disney helping out
They know just what they're doing
What service is about

Did you note the new 'emcee' this year?
She's better than I've ever been (BEAN)
But did you notice that the females
Were the only ones reading the screen!

We began our Monday luncheon
As all the lights were dimmed
Inspired by Mr. Garing
'All ears' seemed to be on him

Once on the stage he set our goals
As he is wont to do
Stay focused on the mission
Be ready to improve

Tuesday morning's opening
Sent chills right up our spine
With honor guard and anthem
And our thanking the Divine

Gen Kearney told us
That in D.C. he's been vexed
Cause his ally in one meeting
Is his enemy in the next!

In theater it's so different
Al Qaeda's not been stopped
Cause Bin Laden's not been burdened
With a dysfunctional laptop

His C2 should be better
Infrastructure isn't great
But his papers don't get blown away
With a STE for a paperweight!

Gen Croom said "I am DISA"
And with me that resonates
By ourselves we know we can be good
But together WE ARE GREAT!

His demo of the voices
That were highly multiplexed
From one transmitted fuzzy
To five even more complex

I know I should have been impressed
With 14 voices it was fine
But my bar isn't set that high
I grew up on a party line

Our coalition panel
Impromptu but a hit
Had Mr. Hale, one Aussie,
One from Philly, and a BRIT!

Our friend from USTRANSCOM helped us
To know to what extent
We're industry reliant
That it's good money spent

The Brits have outsourced telecom
And data centers, too
Their suppliers do it cheaper
And they do it better, too!

Mr. Hale reiterated
That we must stay secure
But balance that with mission
So our nation will endure

EMC's Joe Tucci then regaled us
With his INFO-centric show
Our data's 2/3 bigger
Than it was a year ago

There's pedabytes and exabytes
And soon we'll count in zetta
Although it's mostly greek to me
It helps us count them better

Spinning disks are all passé
And caching's pretty old
Flash is now the next big thing
At least that's what we're told

I wonder just what's next for us
Can we survive a crash?
It might just be inevitable
That we'll be "All Flash, No Cache"

On Wednesday Adm Hight took stage
To describe tomorrow's world
Where mission is the focus
For our Stars and Stripes unfurled

Velocity, access, automation
The new imperatives
Time that we think differently
Is her declarative

Adopt real-time strategies
Adopt with all your might
If you don't believe in partnership
You'll be in the sights of Hight

Schwab says it's not "big" eating "small"
It's the fast that eats the slow
Can we survive in a paradigm
Where the slow just eat the slower?

If this challenge is not enough
ADM Hight gave us another
Know technology well enough
To teach your own grandmother

To our young staff and service people
This isn't that big a fuss
But for many of you in my age group
They'll be teaching it to US!

Oracle's no longer herding cats
It's Katz that's herding them
Their CFO from Harvard Law
Is NOT the new admin

Safra Katz, that CFO
Who joined in '99
By fiscal year 2000
Oracle was fine

80,000 world-wide staff
Creative human beings
Doing things right across the globe
But not doing the right things

Her coalition of the willing
Quite a rag-tag crew
Set the bar much higher
Built processes anew

As business grew and prospered
And technology got slicker
The Germans finally gave way
But the French, they gave up quicker

Ed Amoroso of ATT
Told of patch roulette
Where putting on a single patch
Was nothing but a bet

He mentioned a place we can secure
A place from which we came
A blasphemy in recent years
So I'll whisper it ---- "mainframe"

If Martians visit us someday
And they just might, sooner or later
It will seem that every soul on earth
Is a Windows administrator

So when 'to your leader' the Martians say
We'll just accept our fates
Instead of to the White House
We'll take them to see Bill Gates!

The panel group on Wednesday
All leaders in their own right
Provided us perspectives
And plenty of insight

Mihelcic wants to innovate
Rivera offers services shared
Vogel wants it in the cloud
Burfield says "it's already there"

But if we use Facebook to recruit
Like he said we should
Won't some guy who thought he'd made a date
End up in Basic at Ft Hood?

I like what Wiseman said today
At his ideas we shouldn't scoff
Send him your 3rd party vendors
And let him kill them off

Don't wed to any vendor
Be prepared to act
If you don't get the deal you want
Make sure their bags are packed

You engineers and techies
Are smarter than most others
But just because you know so much
Don't start lying to your mothers

If you're too close to your vendor
And you're not about to budge
You might get linux envy
So please don't hold a grudge

Gen Croom likes squashing toads
Just like we think he oughtta
But should we take Sabre's approach
And start them in cold water?

I feel better after Wiseman's talk
He did allay my fears
Asia will be all tied up
Dealing with a million engineers

And what an honor to have Vinton Cerf
An evangelistic man
What he told us just might save us
But not quite like Billy Graham

Now if objects all get dated
Future software can't read old data
Perhaps each software version
Should be the meta-data

And our browsers are a danger
What they encounter they absorb
So --- Explorer and Mozilla
Are really just THE BORG?

When I heard about our speaker
A celebrity of lore
The inventor of the internet?
I thought that was Al Gore

The Federal Research Internet Coordinating Committee
Its value seems real clear
Why don't we be assertive?
And get the FRICC back in here?

Ms Atkins told of problems
That should bring us to our senses
If we don't use our spectrum right
We die from unintended consequences

Col McMorries staff says 'as you know'
It's not condescension
They're paying you the right respect
Without risking a suspension

Now, let's all thank Becky Nolen
Of AFCEA fame
Without her magic touch
The conference's not the same

And all our contract partners
The key to our success
We just can't do without them
I'm happy to confess

Now I turn to my real intent
To honor a great Director
A leader who understands
That we're a nation's protector

Two years ago in Vegas
His charm began to show
And just like in the movie
He had us at 'hello!'

So commanding was his presence
His vision clearly grand
He quickly held us captive
In the 'DePalma' of his hand

He started out by killing toads
He didn't give up the fight
We never saw him backing up
Well, until last Tuesday night

Now if you swing a cat at Courthouse Road
You'll hit a PHD
And only three short years ago
They learned their ABCs

He cares about his troops, you see
His heart is just the roomiest
He treats his staff with great respect
Even at his Croomiest

Vision is persistence
Knowing where you want to go
Our Director didn't waver
Would not let us go slow

RADM Hight was on target
At the end of her great talk
She reminded us of purpose
That we need to 'walk the walk'

She reminds us of the heroes
From wheelchairs they still beg
"Let me rejoin my unit
I can fight without my leg"

These young men and women
One more generation free
They choose to fight and die each day
For you, and you, and me

You see, I can't really honor Gen Croom
It is he, who honors us
He's given us a whole career
For a cause he knows is just

He's in a league of heroes
Where heroism is the norm
A leader who's an American
In an American uniform