

# Intruder Alert – Y2K-- IT Professionals' Finest Hour

By Burt Tschache

Bring up the subject of Y2K and you will likely get the widest variance in a response set known to humanity. The main reason for that is that unless you are a true computer wonk or wonkette, you probably did not understand the significance of all the differing information published about it, pro and con.

There was \$300 billion spent worldwide in solving a problem few understood and, unfortunately, some of the non-compus-mentus group wrote reams about it in the press, creating a huge aura of fear about the entire process. They took what could happen as what would happen and blew it entirely out of proportion. So what else is new?

How does this tie into the History of the Internet? The Internet pretty much saved the day, allowing IT Professionals to communicate, form user groups and produce white papers on the

subject for others to peruse. The 90's were when computer technology really began large-scale integration into the infrastructure of the industrialized world. Computers controlled everything from basic services to the manufacturing sector.

The problem of the rollover from 1999 to 2000 was in both hardware and software. Computers have evolved rapidly, but in the earlier days, space was a prime consideration in everything done on a computer. The highest consideration was for the data, while computer guidelines spelled out specifically what could be done and how you should do it.

One of the ways to conserve space is in the header records that included the date in a format of mm/dd/yy. Some very forward-thinking IT Pro's wondered what would happen when 99 became 00 and the models of that changeover caused many a wonk or wonkette to lose sleep at a time when we

needed all the sleep that we could get.

The task was to change every bit of code that had a two-bit year field to a four-bit year field. Now, that does not sound terribly daunting until you take into account the number of computers and computer programs worldwide. Compounding the issue was not knowing which program and which computer had the two-bit date field, so essentially everything had to be tested.

That was where The Internet proved its worth and then some. The world of the IT Professional was under the microscope with the whole world watching. How would IT react to the biggest challenge ever faced? We all came together as a virtual team and got the job done! We were sold on the necessity, but many of us had a genuine ordeal selling the process to many corporate bigwigs that had no understanding of, nor wanted to understand, computers. That was for the IT folks.

With a hard deadline that everybody understood, we began working on saving our own company's bacon and then posting helpful results and even programs to assist others with their bacon-saving processes. At times, it seemed as if the entire IT community was one team. It is amazing what the possibility of an impending disaster of epic proportions can do. It mobilized IT worldwide to make sure nothing happened.

As the year began changing over around the world, we watched expectantly, knowing we had done all we could. There were many celebrations, as the predicted disasters did not occur. There were a few minor glitches, but nothing major. The press referred to it as a real non-event. Every IT Professional smiled, as we knew otherwise.

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## An Opinion: *continued from page 3*

structive activities be one possible explanation for our high teen pregnancy rate? Better save that question for another column.

Mountain bike enthusiasts have a history of building trails for themselves, because there aren't resources or agencies interested in doing the hard work for them. For years, mountain bike riders have formed clubs, built their own trails and enjoyed the results of their own hard work. With nowhere to ride, they have created their own places. In other words, if you don't think there is anything to do, then *make* something to do for yourself. Youth in our community could take a page from this

book. Instead of tearing things down, maybe try to build something up. What they need is some guidance and good role models.

Through community volunteerism, this town has lifted itself, made things better, improved our image, and built its own pride. The group Vernonia Pride is a perfect example-- citizens who work to improve our community and who organize the "Make Vernonia Shine Day" each year. They lead by example.

By the way, "Make Vernonia Shine Day" is April 17th-- a chance for all of us to lead by example.


## US Bank Now Open Earlier

The Vernonia branch of US Bank is now open earlier, according to branch Manager, Nicole Larke. "To better serve our customers we have changed our hours. US Bank will now open earlier at 9:30 AM Monday through Friday. We appreciate our customers and thank you for your business," said Larke.

## Larke Promoted to Vernonia US Bank Manager

US Bank would like to announce the promotion of Nicole Larke to the Branch Manager Position at the Vernonia branch. Nicole has been with US Bank since September of 2008 as a Universal Banker. Prior to her coming to US Bank, Nicole was an Account Executive in the mortgage finance industry and has been involved in banking and finance since starting her career in 1990 with First Interstate Bank. Nicole has been very involved in the community since moving to Vernonia in 1999 with her husband and family from Bay City, Oregon. Nicole is currently involved in the Vernonia Kiwanis Club, is a 5-year committee member of the Vernonia Cub Scouts, and is a graduate of the Ford Family Foundation, which is currently working on the Vernonia Community Garden Project. Community is very important to Nicole, and she brings this attitude to her career every day. It is through her caring for her community members, and knowledge of finance that she strives to provide everyone with a great experience at US Bank. We are pleased to have her as part of our management team.





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