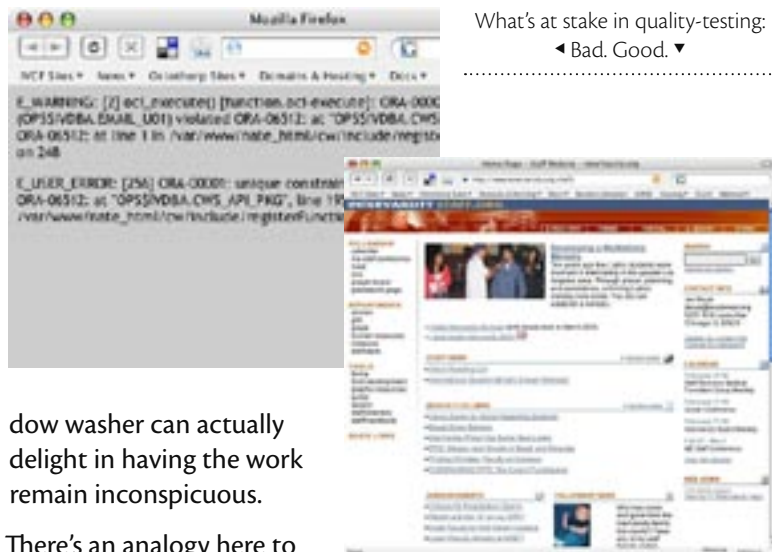


Washing Windows

It's often a bit challenging to write up stories here in *Off-Line* about my work with Information Services (IS). An unusually attentive reader may notice that there are always at least one or two items about that half of my job, but I can't claim they always come easily (and they may not stick in your memory as easily, either). Why is that? Certainly not because what we do in IS isn't important!

I once washed windows with a wise man who pointed out that, when washing windows, you've done a good job only if no one can see your work. Clean glass is practically invisible, and a good win-



dow washer can actually delight in having the work remain inconspicuous.

There's an analogy here to my work with the Web Team. For instance, one of my responsibilities is doing much of our quality-testing for new InterVarsity websites. As you can see from the screenshots, there's a big difference between a broken page and a working one, just as there is between dirty and clean windows. I often joke that I specialize in breaking things my colleagues have been building, but it's all for a noble goal: making web technology which — in the end — works so smoothly that students, faculty, and InterVarsity staff might never notice it.

Tidbits

- ◆ Plans for Open for Business — a conference about “business as mission,” to be held at the Urbana Mission Convention this December — are going well. We have a top-drawer Steering Committee that meets by phone now to help shape the event, but we'll **meet face-to-face** for the first time in April. (They're also helping us raise funding, a considerable need.) We hope that we can draw out everyone's strengths to build the best program possible.
- ◆ I can't ever say enough in **appreciation** of those of you who read this newsletter, make financial donations, or pray for my ministry. Your partnership and support are “daily bread” to this mission, and it's a privilege for me to be embedded in so powerful a community.

Next Up

- ◆ This weekend, I'm off to Southern California for a **conference for university faculty**, entitled “For Such a Time as This.” My Graduate & Faculty Ministries (GFM) colleague Lynn Gill has been praying and planning for this event for a year, and it's been a privilege for me to assist her as she developed the logistics and program. Now I'm pleased to be able to attend, help out on-site, introduce a speaker, meet with students, and even serve as official photographer.
- ◆ What do you get when you put 100 GFM staff in one conference center for four days? Seriously, that's no joke — it's a whole lot of work. Our task force has been laying plans for months to prep our annual March **GFM staff meetings** in Mundelein, Illinois. We've set up everything from keynote speakers and worship leaders to comp-line prayer and a “fun night” involving toothpicks and gum drops.

Site Seeing

What makes you say “gee whiz”? Here are some recent raves of mine:

- ◆ Del.icio.us is billed as a “social bookmarking site.” Say what? Fact is, it's so flexible it's good for lots of things. I've adapted it, in part, as a log to rate movies we watch: see del.icio.us/jonboyd/film-log.
- ◆ Google Earth blurs the line between website and application — and between map and movie. This “browser for the planet” might just blow your mind. Download it from earth.google.com.
- ◆ New at **JonBoyd.org**: new book reviews of *Baby Catcher* and *God in the Flesh*, a recommended article about secularization, and more.

Boyd's Eye View

Needless to say, the big story around here is the countdown till **Baby Girl** arrives. We could hardly be more excited. She's due on Easter Sunday (April 16), so we've got just 51 days to go — and believe me, I'm counting. Ann and Baby are both in great shape, and we're so thankful. With the Lord's blessing, the next issue of *Off-Line* will feature a baby picture! By the way, yes: we do have a name picked out already, but it's an absolute secret. The jury is still out on her middle name, though (including my vote for no middle name at all). Any suggestions?

Also coming up in April: Opening Day baseball at the **White Sox!**

Believe it or not, something else we're excited about these days is a homemade accounting system we've started. (Does that make us geeks? Or rather, *bigger* geeks?)

It's built on the old concept of an **envelope budget**, but instead of literal envelopes, each month we're putting a budgeted amount into categories in a database. As we spend money in any category, we can always see how much is left — whether it's for boring old utilities or something fun like eating out or our personal allowances. Now, when I say to Ann, “A penny for your thoughts,” I have to be sure I can afford it!

Prayer Requests

Please pray with me:

- ◆ For a healthy delivery of Baby Girl (due on Easter, April 16)
- ◆ For good gatherings: GFM staff meetings and the OFB Steering Committee summit
- ◆ In gratitude for such generous financial and prayer partners

Facts

Jonathan Boyd

Associate Director
Graduate & Faculty Ministries
Web Producer
Information Services
InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

5231 N Saint Louis Ave
Chicago IL 60625-4705
(773) 588-0231

jboyd@octothorp.us ≈
jboyd@intervarsity dot org

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To make a tax-deductible contribution to support my ministry, make checks payable to InterVarsity and mail to PO Box 7895, Madison WI 53707. Please include a note saying “For Jon Boyd.” You can also give securely online; for info, visit JonBoyd.org and click on “Donate.”