



# The SESUG Informant

## Sun on a Beach! SESUG Heads to Hilton Head!

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Special points of interest:

- Connect with SESUG at the SAS Global Forum!
- SESUG heads for Hilton Head in 2007
- Hints, tips, tricks, techniques, and more!

Have you ever been to a SESUG conference? If so, you already know that the size of the SESUG conference is ideal for learning a lot and quickly making friends. You also know that SESUG conferences provide a wonderful opportunity to:

- Present your SAS papers
- Network, and learn with other SAS users
- Attend many high quality presentations
- Visit with SAS developers
- Attend weekend workshops on specialized SAS topics, and
- Have a great time visiting with friendly people in a nice location!

SESUG '07 will be no exception and your participation will help to make the conference better than ever!

On November 4-6, you can enjoy the conference in the beautiful [Hilton Head Marriott Beach & Golf Resort](#). You and your family can also enjoy the many pleasures of Hilton Head Island including walking, bicycling, kayaking, shopping, beach combing, and maybe even a swim in the Atlantic!



**Call for Papers:** Many have already submitted their paper abstracts and weekend workshop proposals for SESUG '07, but there is still time for you to submit your ideas! Use the online

paper submission system at [www.sesug.org](http://www.sesug.org) to submit your abstracts. The deadline for abstracts is April 30th, so don't delay.

Sections: SESUG '07 will have concurrent sessions on Monday from 7:30-5:30 and on Tuesday from 7:30 until noon. The sections include Applications Development, Coders' Corner, Data Mining, Data Presentation, Hands-On Workshops, Intro to SAS, Posters, Serendipity, Statistics and Data Analysis, and Tutorials.

Weekend Workshops: SESUG plans to offer six half-day workshops on Sunday. Each workshop will provide four hours of in-depth learning on one of a variety of topics taught by an experienced instructor. These workshops will cost \$125 each.

Demo Room: SAS Institute personnel will be available for you to meet and talk with in the demo room on Monday and Tuesday. They always bring a wealth of information on new software features and SAS development efforts. SAS likes your feedback, so be sure to visit the demo room.

**Volunteer:** SESUG has a reputation for friendly attendees and organizers. If you volunteer to help with the conference, you will really get to know

many of these people! SESUG has many volunteer opportunities beyond presenting a paper or a poster. SESUG needs session

*(Continued on page 3)*

# What's Happening With SESUG?

\* We've got a LOT of folks at the SAS Global Forum! If you would like to find out a little more about the SAS regional user group in the southeast, here's where we'll be!

- There will be a host of SESUG representatives in the SAS Demo Room; you can find us at the Regional User Group (RUG) exhibit.
- Ed Heaton and Joy Smith host the SESUG Planning Birds-of-a-Feather (BOF) meeting at 7:30 on Wednesday, 4/18.
- Section Chairs: Andy Kuligowski and Peter Eberhardt in Hands-On Workshops; Maribeth Johnson and Jennifer Waller in Statistics and Data Analysis; Joe Kelley in Systems Architecture; and Greg Nelson in the Industry Focus, Energy and Utilities.
- Paper presentations:
  - Pre-Conference Seminar: Peter W. Eberhardt; [Creating Custom Add-ins for SAS Enterprise Guide and the SAS Add-in for Microsoft Office](#)
  - Tutorials:
    - Gregory S. Nelson; [Introduction to SAS®9 Business Intelligence—A Tutorial](#)
    - Andrew T. Kuligowski; [Easy Come, Easy Go—Interactions Between the DATA Step and External Files](#)
    - Peter W. Eberhardt with Ilene K. Brill; [How Do I Look It Up If I Don't Know How to Spell It? An Introduction to SAS® DICTIONARY Tables](#)
  - Hands-On Workshops:
    - Marje Fecht with Rupinder Dhillon; [A "SAS® Programmer's" Guide to SAS® Enterprise Guide®](#)



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Gregory S. Nelson; [Planning for and Designing a Data Warehouse – A Hands-On Workshop](#)

Edward Heaton; [Reading Excel Workbooks](#)

— Systems Architecture: Gregory S. Nelson; [Architecting SAS® in a Modern World: Best Practices for Design, Configuration, and Management of SAS®9](#)

— Coder's Corner: [Edward Heaton; Creating a Local Library](#)

... and those are just the SESUG EC members!

There are also wonderful papers from good friends of SESUG, like Ron Fehd, Ian Whitlock, Kirk Paul Lafler, Russ Lavery, Ben Cochran, and many more!

- \* Gary Schlegelmilch gave a presentation on [Shuffling, Shifting, Structuring - Using the Program Editor](#) at the Washington DC SAS User's Group (DCSUG) in February
- \* Ed Heaton presented his paper on [Top-Down Programming with SAS Macro](#) at the March DCSUG meeting
- \* Peter Eberhardt will be giving a paper to the Greater Atlanta SAS Users Group (GASUG) in Georgia in July
- \* Marje Fecht will be giving a paper to the in-house SAS UG at Westat in Rockville, MD in September.

Would you like a SESUG speaker at your Local or in-house SAS User Group? Come visit us at <http://www.sesug.org/SESUGOrganization/SpeakerSharingProgram.htm>, and we'll be happy to help!

(Continued from page 1)

coordinators to help during the concurrent sessions with doors, lights, and introductions. SESUG also needs volunteers to help at the registration desk. Don't be afraid to sign up!

Mixers: SESUG has great socials and this year will be no exception! SESUG evening mixers will provide an opportunity for you to unwind after a day of learning or teaching.



Back to the BOF: At the SAS Global Forum, SESUG will sponsor a BOF for SAS Users from the Southeast Region. This BOF will be a social with a purpose! That purpose is to provide the following opportunities:

- Meet other SAS users from the Southeast
- Learn about local user groups in the Southeast
- Learn more about SESUG '07 Conference
- Meet the SESUG '07 Section Chairs and Conference Organizers
- Learn more about the SESUG Speaker Sharing program, which provides speakers to local user group meetings.



Conference Chairs:

[Ed Heaton](#) is the SESUG '07 Academic Chair. Ed works at Westat in Rockville, Maryland, where he teaches SAS programming, helps SAS programmers at Westat and worldwide, and develops in-house SAS applications.

[Joy Smith](#) is the SESUG '07 Operations Chair. Joy works at North Carolina State University helping faculty, staff and students analyze their research data. Joy was a student at NCSU (many years ago) and she has never left.



Co-Chairs Joy Smith and Ed Heaton, brainstorming for SESUG 2007 on beautiful Hilton Head Island!

Joy Smith, [OperationChair2007@sesug.org](mailto:OperationChair2007@sesug.org)

Ed Heaton, [AcademicChair2007@sesug.org](mailto:AcademicChair2007@sesug.org)

**We hope to see you at the SAS Global Forum and at SESUG '07!**

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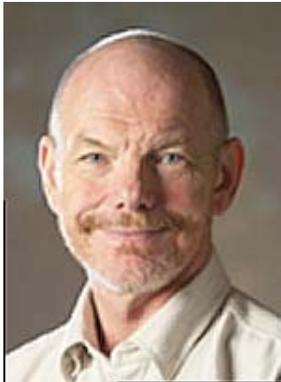
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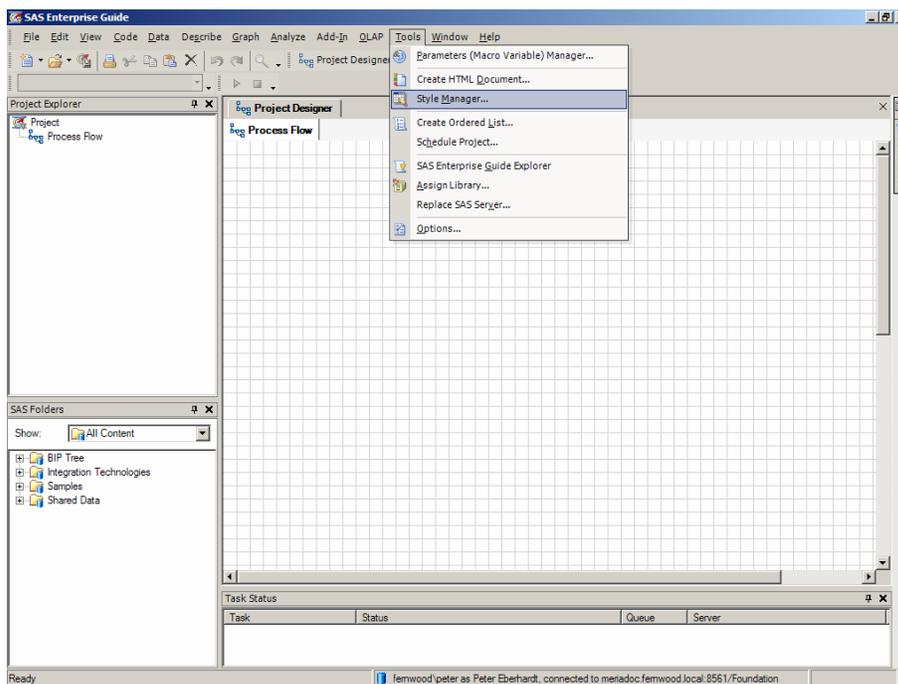


*Peter is a long time SAS consultant, a certified SAS professional, and a SAS Alliance Partner. Although he enjoys working with SAS and teaching his EG classes, he does take time to speak and generally hob-nob with friends and strangers alike at SESUG, NESUG, SUGI and soon the SAS Global Forum. He is the Co-Chair of the upcoming SESUG 2008. And when he is not working, Peter partakes in the great outdoors, either paddling his home-made cedar canoe, or snowshoeing and camping with his home-made ash snowshoes.*

# The Enterprise Guide Guy!

Welcome to the latest edition of "*The Enterprise Guide Guy*". This column will cover one or two aspects of SAS Enterprise Guide 4.1 (EG) in each issue. If you have any questions about SAS Enterprise Guide, have any suggestions for topics you would like to see covered, or have any tips and tricks of your own you would like to share feel free to contact me at [egg@fernwood.ca](mailto:egg@fernwood.ca). In this edition we are going to explore the world to style according to SAS Enterprise Guide.

If you are like me, the plain old listing outputs from v6 were all the style I needed; after all, I was more interested in content than presentation. But a pretty presentation does not make up for wrong content. With SAS v8 and ODS, even I could quickly and easily add a couple of line of code and Presto!, prettier output. And, as long as any of the built in styles meet your needs, no problem. Of course, it is a different matter when the built in styles do not meet the need (well, not for me, I just use what is there!!). Yes, it is supposed to be easy to get under the hood and make all the style changes, but not too many people I know are willing to try. Thankfully SAS Enterprise Guide makes it easy with its Style Manager. To access the Style Manager, go to the Tools menu and select Style Manager (Figure 1).



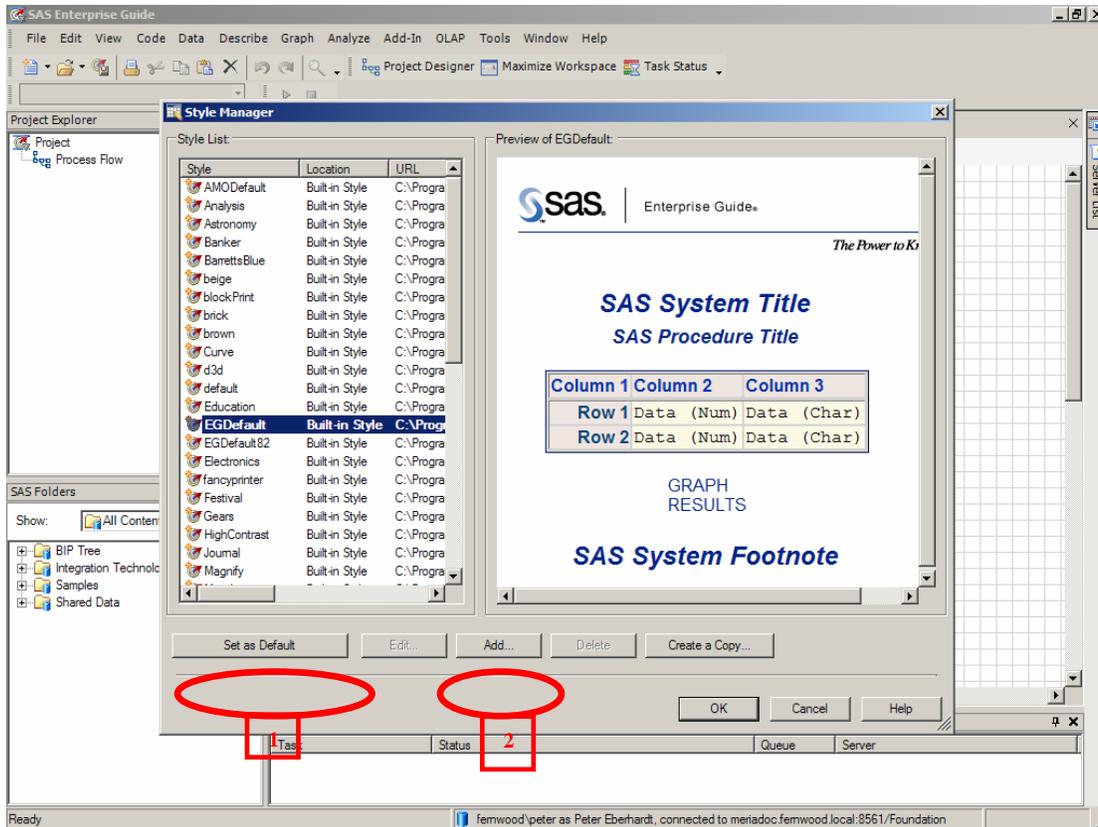
**FIGURE 1 – OPENING THE STYLE MANAGER**

Selecting the Style Manager from the Tools menu will open the Style Manager window (Figure 2)  
**Viewing Existing Styles**

When the Style Manager opens, the currently active style (EGDefault in Figure 2) is highlighted in the left pane, and the components of the style are displayed in the right pane. You can scroll through the various built in styles by moving up and down the left hand pane; as you scroll through, the right hand pane will change to preview the style. If one of the existing styles tickles your fancy, simply highlight it and click on the "**Set as Default**" button (1).



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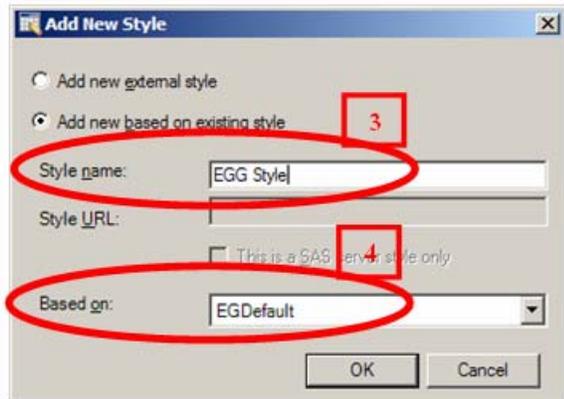


**FIGURE 2 – THE STYLE MANAGER WINDOW**

If none of the existing styles is quite what you had in mind, fear not for it is easy to create your own style. The easiest way is to find a style that is similar to what you are trying to accomplish and create your style based upon that one. Once you have a selected the closest style, click on the "Add" Button (2).

**Adding A New Style**

Clicking the **Add** button brings up the Add New Style dialogue (Figure 3). Fill in the new style name (3) and select the style upon which you want to base your new style from the drop down list (4), and click **OK** to continue.



**FIGURE 3 – THE ADD NEW STYLE DIALOGUE**

Clicking **OK** adds the new style and sets it as the default, but at this point the new style is nothing more than the existing style with your style name, Figure 4. So, lets see what we can do with it.

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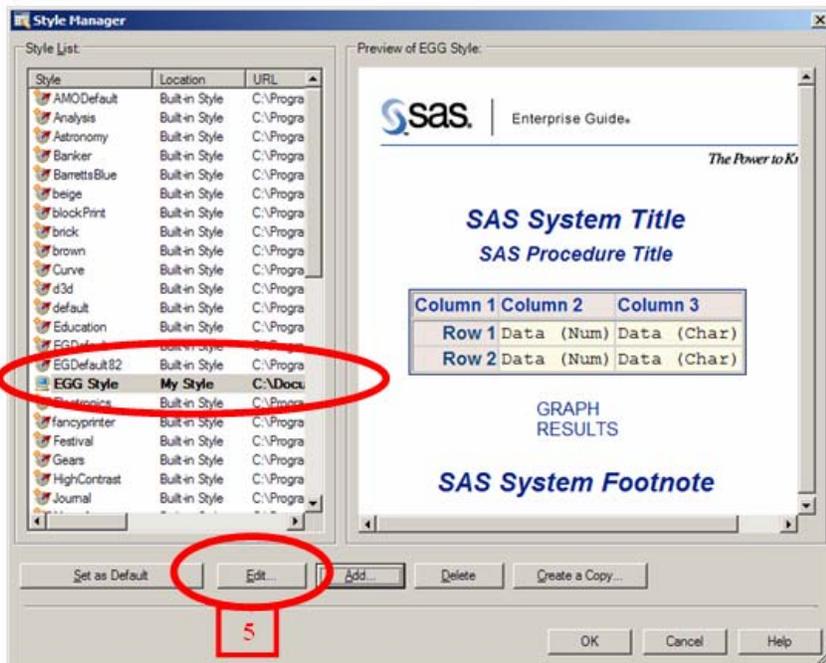


FIGURE 4 – YOUR NEW STYLE IS ADDED

**Really Adding a New Style**

Ok, we added a new style, but it is nothing more than a copy of an existing style. Now it is time to really add some style. With your new style highlighted, click the *Edit* button (5). As usual with most of SAS Enterprise Guide, this brings up another interactive EGG dialogue, this time the Style Editor window (Figure 5)

The left hand pane of the Style Editor has the components of the style (e.g. Body), and the left hand pane has all of the attributes of the component. The left hand pane allows you to select the component one of two ways. First, you can select from

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**A Look Back at Atlanta - and SESUG 2006!**

The 14th annual conference of the SouthEast SAS Users Group – SESUG 2006 – was held in Atlanta, GA October 8-10, 2006. Nearly 400 SAS users from the southeastern United States and points beyond assembled for an action-packed conference featuring over 125 presentations. Attendee feedback reinforced the excellent educational and networking opportunities available at SESUG conferences. As one conference attendee told us - "Great conference! I enjoyed the presentations and the ability to talk with the SAS experts."

**Student Scholarship Program**

For the first time, SESUG offered scholarships to

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Bridging People, Technology & Knowledge



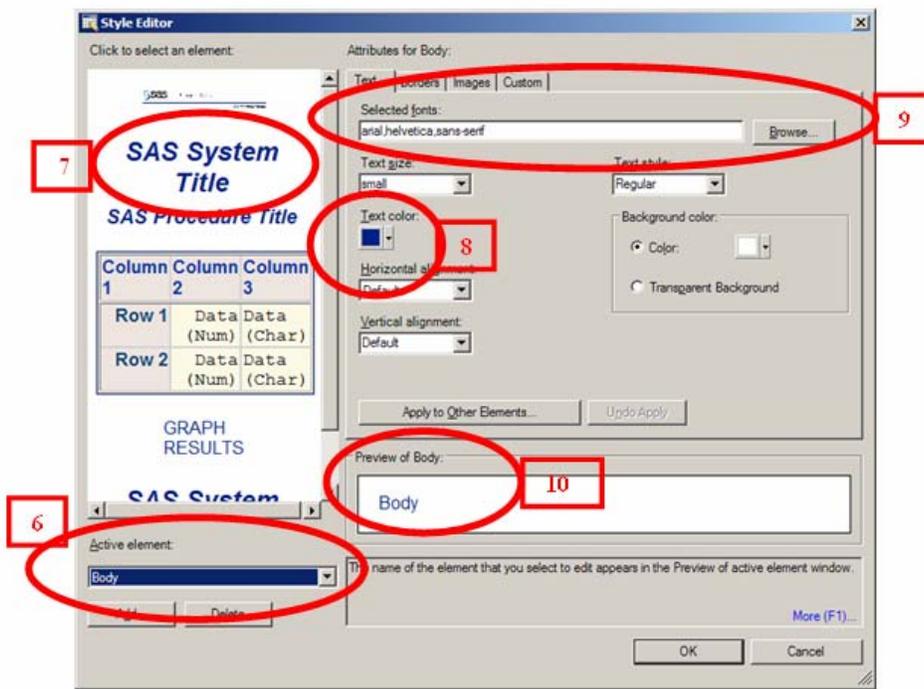

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the drop-down list of components (6), or second, you can click on any part of the display in the upper part of the left hand pane (7). In either case, the attributes of the selected component are displayed in the right hand pane.



**FIGURE 5 – THE STYLE EDITOR**

Want a different color for the text? Use the Text Color selector (8).  
Want a different font? Use the Font selector (9).

And as you make any changes to the attributes, the changes are reflected in the Preview box (10).

And finally, click **OK** to save your changes.

### Wrap Up

This has been a brief overview of changing styles within SAS Enterprise Guide. As you can see, the process is simple, and because you see the effects right away creating new styles can be easily accomplished. Next time you have SAS Enterprise Guide open, create a new style. Go wild and see what you can do with it. And when you are done, if you do not like it, simply delete it.

If you have any questions about styles, or any other topic in SAS Enterprise Guide feel free to contact me at [egg@fernwood.ca](mailto:egg@fernwood.ca)

(Continued from page 6)

students using SAS in their coursework or research. A total of 14 students were awarded the opportunity to attend the conference, including waived registration fees and extra events.

The feedback received from this first-year program was overwhelmingly positive and SESUG will build on the success by offering a similar program in 2007. Student applications for scholarships to the 2007 conference were accepted during the month of March and SESUG looks forward to hosting another group of future



SAS professionals. SESUG appreciates the support of SAS in sponsoring this program.

### Thank You!

The conference Co-Chairs would like to thank the many volunteers that worked hard to organize an excellent conference. And, we thank the attendees for sharing your knowledge and experiences in Atlanta.

- Deb Skinner and Marje Fecht



Andrew T. Kuligowski has been a SAS user for over 20 years, with experience in the petrochemical and media research industries as well as in the public and non-profit sectors. He's chaired two SAS conferences in the past 10 years, and estimates that he has been an Invited speaker at over 40 SAS user group conferences and meetings. Despite being an Emeritus (semi-retired) member of the SESUG EC, his tireless efforts aiding Site Selection, the annual conferences, and the work of the EC continues to be a vital part of the organization.

### Andy's Book Reviews:

## Learning SAS by Example – A Programmer's Guide

As a youth, I can remember standing around in the cold Buffalo winter behind the old Memorial Auditorium. My brother and I braved the wind, the low temperature, and the snow for a chance to meet and to request autographs from some of the members of the local professional hockey team. Rick Martin, Gilbert Perrault, Tim Horton, and more... each of them showing patience with a couple of shy kids.

I was reminded of those days last year while I was talking with a professional colleague at one of the SUGI mixers. While trading stories of the events in our lives over the past year, we were suddenly interrupted by voice shouting "Ron Cody! You're Ron Cody!" Two recent college graduates happened to look over and recognize my colleague – not hard to do, since his picture can be found on the back of the several books that he's written over the years. These folks approached us, and said (perhaps *stammered* would be a more descriptive word) some very nice things about the books he'd written. They asked if he'd be so kind as to pose for a picture with them (with this reviewer thrust into the role of photographer), and then they moved on.

Ron Cody has earned a reputation as an excellent lecturer, instructor, and author. As mentioned, he has written several books over the past years that are available via SAS Press. His most recent work, *Learning SAS by Example – A Programmer's Guide*, does not merely adhere to his historic level of excellence; it raises it to a new level.

Dr. Cody's earlier works each focused on a relatively narrow aspect of the SAS System, such as Functions or Data Cleaning. His target in this book is more ambitious; Ron seeks to teach us a little bit about almost everything a new SAS user might want to know! In *Learning SAS by Example*, Ron has succeeded in condensing the major components of Base SAS into one easy-to-read book. Through the use of simple examples, he illustrates the use of the DATA step and many of its components, basic PROCs, and even Macros and ODS.

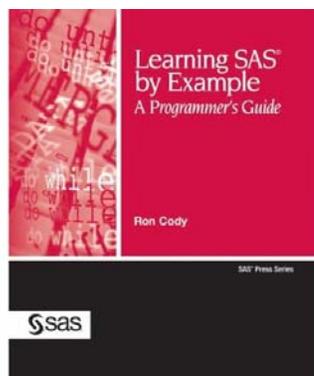
The topics in this book were addressed in a logical, consistent order – one which closely

parallels the way one might attempt to learn a language independently. There were only a couple of instances where a coding example alluded to a future topic; instead, almost all examples were based on material already covered in the text to that point. One of my personal dislikes is encountering a phrase like "Topic X is out of scope for this text"; apparently Ron Cody also dislikes it, as you will not encounter it in this book. On the other hand, Ron does make clear that all topics are being addressed at a rudimentary level. He compensates for this by providing recommended reading lists to obtain a greater understanding of each individual topic.

Ron further assists in comprehending and retaining the material in each chapter by providing some sample exercises at the end of each chapter. In fact, the only issue that I had while reviewing this book was that my pre-release copy did not have the promised answers to the odd number questions! I would assume that this section was completed in time for the actual publication of the book.

My programming colleagues often ask me for a guide they can use to learn SAS programming. Most of them already have a copy of Delwiche's and Slaughter's famed *The Little SAS Book*, so I used to suggest *SAS Applications Programming: A Gentle Introduction* by Frank C. DiIorio and *Working with the SAS System* by Erik Tilanus (now unfortunately out of print). With due respect to those fine works and excellent authors, *Learning SAS by Example – A Programmer's Guide* is now at the top of my list of texts to assist programmers in teaching themselves SAS.

*Learning SAS by Example – A Programmer's Guide* by Ron Cody, published in 2007, is 664 pages long and retails for \$69.95. It is available through SAS Press.





Ed Heaton has been programming in SAS since 1988 - professionally since 1993. He has presented papers at SUGI (now SAS Global Forum) and in-house, local, and regional SAS Users Groups since 2000. Ed is the academic Co-Chair of the 2007 Southeast SAS Users Group conference.

As a senior systems analyst at Westat, Ed teaches SAS in formal classes, aids other SAS programmers through the SAS Help Desk, writes papers for the Westat intranet, and develops corporate applications.

# Testing for Missing Values

Ed Heaton and Michelle Zhuang, Westat, Rockville MD

SAS® 9.1 provides a call routine – `Call missing()` – that sets collections of variables to missing without user concern about their data types. However, we often need a way to test collections of variables to see if they are all missing.

## Testing for Missing

Sometimes we want to determine if all values from a list of variables are missing. If they are all numeric, we can sum them with the `sum()` function and then test if the returned value is missing.

```
If missing( sum( of n1-n5 ) ) then do ;
```

If they are all character, we can concatenate them and test if the returned value is missing.

```
If missing( catS( of c1-c5 ) ) then do ;
```

However, we would really like a test that is independent of each variable's data type.

The new concatenation functions – `{cat(), catT(), catS(), catX()}` – convert numeric values to character strings and then remove leading and trailing blanks from those strings – automatically – with no notes in the log. We can use this. But, we must first tell SAS to display a missing numeric value as a blank. Then we can concatenate the values together and determine whether the concatenated string is a missing value.

```
Options missing=' ' ;
Data _null_ ;
  Set ;
  If missing( catS( of n1-n5 c1-c5 ) )
    then put "They're all missing." ;
    Else put "Some are not missing." ;
Run ;
```

A few notes are in order.

Without the `missing=' '` option, a numeric missing value will be converted to `.'` and that is not a character missing value.

We used the `catS()` function because it strips leading and trailing blanks off the values before it concatenates them. This might save memory.

This process will not work if you have special numeric missing values such as `.A`, `.Z`, and `._`.

The `of` keyword does not work in `Proc sql`, the `Where` statement, or the `missing=()` dataset option.

## Conclusion

The combination of the `missing=' '` system option and the `missing( catS( of ... ) )` construct can make the task of testing a range of variables simpler to code and more robust. The code will also be easier to maintain. Of course, this requires SAS 9 or later.

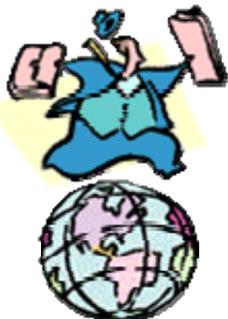
## Contact Information

Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged. Contact the authors at:

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*Kirk Paul Lafler is with Software Intelligence Corporation. He is a published author on SAS, a frequent contributor to the SESUG Informant, and has presented and taught workshops at local, regional, and SUGI conferences.*

Kirk's Korner: Quick and Simple Tips

## Validating SQL Query Syntax with the VALIDATE Statement

Wouldn't it be handy to check your SQL queries for syntax errors before the execution of any code or data being processed? Here's a tip that will show you how to make your job of troubleshooting and debugging your SQL queries easier.

As a normal processing sequence the SQL procedure automatically turns on syntax checking each time a query is submitted. But to enable syntax checking without the automatic execution of a query, a VALIDATE statement may be specified prior to a SELECT statement to control what is checked. Since the VALIDATE statement is designed to be specified in conjunction with a SELECT statement, users are better able to control what code is checked for troubleshooting and debugging purposes. The appropriate message is displayed on the SAS log to indicate whether coding problems exist. As illustrated in the example below, a VALIDATE statement is specified at the beginning of a SELECT statement to enable syntax checking. The SAS log displays the validity of the query syntax as is the case in the example below.

### SQL Code

```
PROC SQL;
  VALIDATE
  SELECT *
  FROM MOVIES
  WHERE RATING = 'G';
QUIT;
```

### SAS Log Results

```
PROC SQL;
VALIDATE
SELECT *
FROM MOVIES
WHERE RATING = 'G';
```

**NOTE: PROC SQL statement has valid syntax.**

```
QUIT;
```

The next VALIDATE statement example illustrates what happens when the syntax checker discovers an error in an SQL query. The resulting error message is the direct result of the missing FROM clause. Since the FROM clause is the only required parameter in a SELECT statement, the step was automatically stopped with a significant error. Also notice that the incorrect spelling of the WHERE clause was ignored because of the missing FROM clause.

### SQL Code

```
PROC SQL;
  VALIDATE
  SELECT *
  MOVIES
  WERE RATING = 'G';
QUIT;
```

### SAS Log Results

```
PROC SQL;
```



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VALIDATE

SELECT \*

MOVIES

-----

22

76

**ERROR 22-322: Syntax error, expecting one of the following: ',', FROM, INTO.**

**ERROR 76-322: Syntax error, statement will be ignored.**

WERE RATING = 'G';

QUIT;

**NOTE: The SAS System stopped processing this step because of errors.**

### Contact Information

If you would like more information or have any questions about this tip, please contact: Kirk Paul Lafler, Software Intelligence Corporation at [KirkLafler@cs.com](mailto:KirkLafler@cs.com). Kirk has been working with the SAS System since 1979 and is a SAS Certified Professional® and SAS Alliance Partner® (1996 - 2002). His company provides custom SAS programming, application design and development, specialized consulting services, and

hands-on SAS training to clients around the world. Kirk is the author of four books including [PROC SQL: Beyond the Basics Using SAS](#) by SAS Institute, [Power SAS and Power AOL](#) by Apress, and more than one hundred peer-reviewed articles and papers for professional journals and SAS User Group proceedings. His popular SAS Tips column, Kirk's Korner, appears regularly in the BASAS, HASUG, SANDS, SAS, SESUG, and WUSS Newsletters and websites. Kirk can be reached at:

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## Editor's Afterwords

"The difficulty lies not so much in developing new ideas, as in escaping from old ones."  
- John Maynard Keynes

I ran across this quote today, while searching for something else entirely—what an appropriate thought, as I make my plans to attend the first SAS Global Forum.



You see, going to any class these days, whether it be public speaking, gardening, SAS programming, analysis, or trying for the seventh time to try and find some way to keep the dog from jumping into the neighbor's yard—not only do you need to learn something, but you need to unlearn a bit. Stop doing things an old way which doesn't work, in order to learn a new way that will.

And what better place to do that—than a SAS conference? There is this incredible resource available to you; the Demo Room, where a virtual legion of SAS people exist purely to answer your questions; papers on a variety of subjects, to teach both young dogs and old how to do new tricks; and most importantly, the opportunity to network, to freely exchange ideas, thoughts, and solutions.

You have a chance to change, and grow, today—and every day. First, you decide to learn something new, giving yourself the opportunity to absorb whatever comes to you. Then, permit yourself to let something else go: the way that didn't work, in order to replace it with a new, fresh way that does!

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