BCCN03
1. Advice for an Apprentice...

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Let's suppose your son or daughter formally asked for a meeting with you one night, and after you ascertained that the family car was still in one piece, you agreed to sit down with them. They close the door to the study, and gravely proclaim, "I want to become a master FoxPro programmer like you, Dad (or Mom, as the case may be)."

In the olden days (about six months ago, I believe), young people would apprentice with a craftsman, learning a trade. One of the rites that this combination would go through was the creation or passing down of tools to the new tradesman.

If your offspring wanted to apprentice with you as a developer, what tools would you pass along to help them become part of the guild?

Here's a (partial) list, in no particular order, of tools and utilities I would insist that my apprentice master. Paul Heiser's dSalvage, of course, because the day it arrives, you'll never need to repair another database or memo file (right?). MicroMega's FoxFire, because I don't like creating reports, and, funny enough, my users do. Joe Gotthelf's JKEY, for incremental search capability in my browses. Pat Adam's PROERROR error trapping utility so that I don't have to write my own (inferior) version. A "stripped down" version of Fox that will fit on a single disk and enable you perform most Command Window activities - this can be created using the distribution kit.

As far as non-Fox-specific programs, John Whitney's Visual Compare, to compare two text files - wonderfully useful. PKZIP, of course. Filefind and text search utilities (I use old, compact versions of Norton's). And while we're talking about Norton, some version of an "Unerase" utility - for that one customer that is still running DOS 3.3... Perhaps a text editor, and clean boot disk of DOS. Last, just for fun, CUSTCURS (over on WINFUN Forum) provides about 30 different cursors that replace the blah arrow that comes with Windows.

The commercial products can all be found via advertisements in the trade magazines, and the shareware products are all on the FoxForum.

I'd be interested in hearing what belongs in your toolkit, and why.