Whatever Happened to John Berenberg

Then	Capsule Summary	Now
	Born in: Brooklyn, New York Grew Up in: New York City High School: Bronx HS of Science, NYC Undergraduate Degree: BS Math, Cornell University, 1966 Entered Purdue: Fall, 1966 Purdue Degrees: - MS CS May 1968; - ABD CS April 1970 Lived/Worked in: Houston, TX, Cincinnati, OH (current residence)	

Purdue Highlights	Career Highlights
As a freshman at Cornell John had a job in the university library reshelving books for $1.05/hr, but then the director of the Computing Center offered to pay him $1.50 to jump ship. When it was time for graduate study, John knew that CS was his destiny, and he chose Purdue.

As a Grad Research Assistant John worked in the Purdue Computer Center, on their IBM 7094, IBM 360, and CDC 6500, implementing disk drivers, display drivers, plotting routines, time sharing support, accounting support, and system utilities. JAB gave his initials to TEXTJAB for the 6500, which was just his reverse engineering ripoff of the TEXT90 program for the 7094 (SHARE users group 1965). He taught Fortran for non-CS students and did his stint consulting in the computer center, where the most common question was "why doesn't my program work?"

When the CS department moved from ENAD to the Math Sciences Building, John moved his large, heavy wooden desk and chair across campus in a midnight raid, tossing the dinky new MS furniture out in the hall. And then John acquired .a key to the MS elevators with which he could reverse direction, because during "rush" times the elevators would time out and refuse to go down to the computer | John joined IBM at their Houston Scientific Center where he did research in compiler building systems. He picked up APL\360, and he was the IBM Data Processing Division's representative at the Alpha Test of the mainframe time-sharing system CP-67/CMS. State of the art 70's-era technology allowed John to have a modem-equipped Selectric typewriter at home, with an acoustic coupler for his second telephone line and a ratchet feeder for the fan-fold computer paper. In his spare time John taught two computer science classes at the University of Houston.

In January 1973 John followed his boss and left IBM, joining a machine tool manufacturer, Cincinnati Milacron. His division was bought and sold several times (1996 Vickers, 1999 Eaton, 2000 Siemens) but he stayed with it for the next 37 years, by which time it was part of international conglomerate Siemens.

John's name is on two US Patents involving machine tool software, the rights for which he signed away for $1 apiece, plus lunch and a plaque. For about 10 years he was the company's delegate to the IE-31 committee of the Electronic Industries Association (EIA), whose commercially competing member companies strove to standardize the computer syntax used to direct numerically controlled machine tools ("CNC").

John was a lead architect of several generations of Acramatic branded CNC software, and effectively owned the hardware-independence layer and the scheduler of the proprietary real-time operating system.

When John's division became part of Siemens, John became part of a tightly knit but globally distributed development group for Sinumerik branded CNC software. For about 8 years, working from Cincinnati for a project leader in Stuttgart, he merged his code to a site in Germany for the nightly builds. Sinumerik software is aggressively object oriented, and is written in C++ that gets recompiled for an |

center.

John and his Pearl Street housemates hosted one elaborate Thanksgiving Dinner for anybody who hadn't left campus. They moved all the furniture to the garage and rented tables and chairs, and prepared three turkeys and a host of trimmings all from scratch. Department head Sam Conte attended.

On April 1, 1970, having fulfilleld all requirements for his PhD except for a dissertation, John started negotiations to leave Purdue and go to IBM. By April 15 he was an IBMer.

assortment of target platforms using several different compiler platforms. John has read the entire Stroustrup book and he understood enough of it to become a go-to resource for his colleagues.

John's whole Cincinnati office was closed by the parent company during the economic downturn. If it had stayed open, John would probably have stayed on for several more years. But John was 66 and so he took the occasion, and a nice separation settlement, to retire, effective October 2010.