THE EDITORIAL VIEW

Spring Processor Forum…and Help Wanted

By Tom R. Halfhill {5/30/06-02}

....

If you attended our recent **Spring Processor Forum** in San Jose, thank you! I hope you're one of the attendees who won our drawing for an Apple iPod after submitting your feedback form. (You *did* submit a feedback form, right?) If you *didn't* attend SPF, we hope

you'll tell us why and consider attending our Fall Microprocessor Forum in October. Here are a few SPF highlights you missed:

AMD Senior Fellow Chuck Moore revealed some of the first technical details about AMD's next-generation x86 microarchitecture. His opening keynote attracted widespread media coverage and showed that AMD is running hard to maintain its momentum against Intel. Two days later, Dell Computer sent shock waves through the industry by announcing that some high-end Dell servers will use AMD Opteron processors—the first time Dell has swerved from Intel's path.

P.A. Semi's **Dan Dobberpuhl**, one of the industry's most respected CPU architects, delivered the second-day keynote on power-efficient design. Dobberpuhl filled our big PowerPoint screens with equations as he explained how his design team dramatically slashed the power consumption of P.A. Semi's new PWRficient family of PowerPC-based processors. (See *MPR 10/25/05-01*, "P.A. Semi: New Blood for Power.")

ARM introduced the Cortex-R4, the first member of the Cortex-R family. (See *MPR 5/16/06-01*, "ARM Reveals Cortex-R4.") Texas Instruments disclosed its first implementation of the superscalar ARM Cortex-A8, and Handshake Solutions explained the asynchronous-logic technology behind the revolutionary ARM996HS. (See *MPR 2/21/06-01*, "Can ARM Beat the Clock?")

As usual at our forums, there was some weird science to ponder. This year, IntellaSys CTO Charles Moore—who invented the Forth programming language in 1971—introduced a new 24-core, 18-bit asynchronous video processor. It has a Forth-like instruction set consisting of only 30 instructions.

In the same session, Connex Technology's chief scientist, Professor Gheorghe Stefan, journeyed from his university in Bucharest, Romania, to deliver the first technical presentation of his 1,024-core Connex Array video processor. (See *MPR 1/9/06-01*, "Massively Parallel Digital Video.") The unusual characteristics of video processing are inspiring some highly unorthodox CPU architectures, and we expect to see more in the future.

Kevin Krewell Departs MPR

We regret that Kevin Krewell has left his editor-in-chief position at *Microprocessor Report*. Kevin has joined Nvidia as director of strategic marketing. That's great for Nvidia, but we will sorely miss Kevin at *MPR*.

With his dual degrees in engineering and business administration and his broad experience at AMD and other companies, Kevin was well suited for his role as a technology analyst and editor in chief. Indeed, this company thinks so highly of Kevin that we hired him back twice after his previous departures. This time, alas, he appears to be gone for good. Best of luck, Kevin!

Until we replace him, I am serving as editor of *MPR*. It's a big job, and I want to find a new boss as soon as possible. We need a knowledgeable and experienced team leader who can direct our technology analysis, supervise the editorial content of our forums, and interact with the business side of our operation. Candidates must be very familiar with current microprocessor design and related system-design requirements. Experience as a processor designer is a plus.

Of course, our editor in chief must also be a skilled writer, editor, and verbal communicator.

It's not easy for us to find candidates with the requisite technical, business, and communication skills. If you want to apply for this position or nominate someone else, please go to *www.instat.com/employ.asp#1*. ◇

Tom R. Halfhill