
Subject: Re: Coyote Library

Posted by [Pavel A. Romashkin](#) on Fri, 26 Jan 2001 17:47:42 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

"Jason P. Meyers" wrote:

>

> As most of us know, Dave Fanning has a rather extensive IDL website
> which hosts many good example IDL programs.

What an overstatement. Its just *decent*, thats all it is :-)

> I recently discovered that
> some issues may cause problems for the unsuspecting. Let me explain.
> Dave's "Example Programs" page
> (<http://www.dfanning.com/documents/programs.html>) contains three links
> to zip files containing different groupings of programs from the Coyote
> library. These three files are coyoteprograms.zip (website size:430KB
> actual:399KB), coyotefiles.zip (website size:210KB actual:202KB), and
> coyote2ndfiles.zip (website size:230KB actual:229KB). Note: website
> sizes refer to the advertised size on Dave's website and the actuals
> refer to the size reported by Windows NT 4.0.

O-oh, how embarassing! Advertising the whole 40 Kb more than actually
offering! Must be all the spaces in line indents were replaced with tabs
(factor of 8 or 6 decrease?)

> Finally, I would like to thank Dave yet once again for a great set of
> programs. I find my self using them without even knowing it.

I am afraid this is the sort of appreciation David gets *most* of the
time :-)

Anyway, I think the Coyote is hard at work fixing things up.
BTW, David, I can upload 40 Kb of my worthless code to your site so that
your promised archive sizes are more realistic! Let me know :-)

Cheers,
Pavel

P.S. Lets just say (TM) I am having a slow warmup this morning that
started with my car misfiring so badly I had to fix it before going to
work :-)

Subject: Re: Coyote Library

Posted by [davidf](#) on Fri, 26 Jan 2001 17:57:29 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Jason P. Meyers (jpm7934@cis.rit.edu) writes:

> Here are my questions for Dave which I think will be of general
> interest:
>
> 1. Is there a single zip file that contains all of the publicly
> released "Coyote Library" files? Purpose: Ability to place all coyote
> files in a single directory.

Well, here is the problem. Life goes on, but books are kind of static creatures. (This is true even the way I publish books, which is to make small print runs and update frequently.)

What happens to me is that I get a good idea, which is still a novel enough occurrence that I act on it right away, and I make a change to a file. But I have already described how a program works in one of my books. So the question always becomes, "Is this a change I can get away with substituting for a 'book file' without anyone suspecting? Or this a fundamental change to a program that is more along the lines of the way the program *should* have been written if I was thinking straight when I wrote it."

Sometimes its the former, and--less frequently-- it is the latter. In any case, book files tend to diverge from my library files over time. Because I like to delude myself that *someone* must be reading the darn things, I hate to overly muck with book files. This is especially so with First Edition programs, which go w-a-a-y back in time.

So, to answer your question, if it were me I would get the "library" programs, coyoteprogams.zip. These are always the most up-to-date versions of any programs I talk about. For the most part, these programs will work in a fashion that is similar to the programs with the same names that are described in your book. (If the program works radically differently, I have given it a different name. For example, PS_FORM in the 1st Edition and PSCONFIG in the 2nd Edition.) If you can handle a little messiness in your life, you will probably not be overly confused. And if you are, I'm always standing by. :-)

If you do as Jason does, and installs several versions of the programs, make sure the "library" directory is

first on your path. I have a conglomerate sub-directory myself, that I create by installing the book files first, and then overwriting everything with the same name by installing the library files. (Actually, I have directories coming out the wazoo, which is one of the real problems with this kind of publishing, but that is a story you really don't want to hear.)

So far, the good news. Now a bit of the bad. :-)

I don't have enough hours in the day to update the zip files every time I make a change to a program. So, unless a program has a fatal error, the zip files are updated frequently, but not constantly. If you are using a program that doesn't seem to work correctly, you should always check for the latest version by downloading the specific instance of the file from my web page:

<http://www.dfanning.com/programs/whatever.pro>

This version is always concurrent with what I am using myself.

Now, as far as PWD goes, that darn thing much be one of those virus programs. I don't have a clue how that program got into the book files, except that it is so darn useful that I probably copied it about 100 times on my computer so I would never be without it. :-)

And to complicate things even more, when I teach courses I always carry around a file called coyotecoursefiles.zip. This contains *everything*: book files, program files, neato-keno files, whatever I have lying around that I think might be useful in a class. This is sometimes available via anonymous FTP, but not always. I usually post it about a week before I teach a class and remove it about two weeks afterwards. (It is really too much effort to keep this current with everything else.) This is the contents of the subdirectory I have on my own personal IDL path. If it is there, you can get it like this:

[ftp://ftp.dfanning.com/pub/dfanning/output/idl_course/coyote coursefiles.zip](ftp://ftp.dfanning.com/pub/dfanning/output/idl_course/coyote_coursefiles.zip)

> Finally, I would like to thank Dave yet once again for a great set of
> programs. I find my self using them without even knowing it.

Jason has become one of my biggest fans. **Blush.** He must

have gotten a good grade on his final project. :-)

Cheers,

David

--

David Fanning, Ph.D.

Fanning Software Consulting

Phone: 970-221-0438 E-Mail: davidf@dfanning.com

Coyote's Guide to IDL Programming: <http://www.dfanning.com/>

Toll-Free IDL Book Orders: 1-888-461-0155
