

THE VANCOUVER SUN

Custodian of Canada's .ca domain wins Canarie award: UBC computer specialist started work on project in the mid-80s

Vancouver Sun
Tuesday, April 24, 2001
Page: D1 / FRONT
Section: Business
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Source: Vancouver Sun

John **Demco**, the University of British Columbia computer specialist who pioneered Canada's .ca domain name on the Internet, was awarded the Canarie's information highway community service award Monday.

Demco was among five award winners, including John Manley, federal minister of foreign affairs, winner of the public leadership award, to be honoured by Canarie, a non-profit organization.

Canarie, which is supported by the federal government, as well as members and project partners, has as a mission to accelerate Canada's Internet development and use.

Demco, who volunteered on his own time to be the custodian of the .ca domain, started his work on it in the mid-80s, long before most people had even heard of the Internet. As the global network grew, so did **Demco's** volunteer work, which he did in addition to his job as computing facilities manager at UBC's computer science department.

However, **Demco** is modest about his volunteer work on the Internet.

"Everywhere in all walks of life there are people who tirelessly give their time and effort to all kinds of good causes, so I don't think I'm really special in that regard," said **Demco**, who estimated the time he spent on .ca registration was the equivalent of a full-time job.

Late last year .ca registration was commercialized and the work spread among companies, including Webnames.ca, a company **Demco** helped start and one that he remains involved in as a partner.

The sixth annual IWAY (for information highways) awards, held at Vancouver's Pan Pacific hotel, recognized individuals and organizations for their contribution to Canada's information society.

Awards finalists included Vancouver's Anja Haman, president of the Wired Woman Society and Tino Varelas, Oon-Sim Ang, Barry Tsuji and Tze-Wo Leung, co-founders of Vancouver's West Bay Semiconductor Inc.

Illustration:

• Color Photo: Mark Van Manen, Vancouver Sun / John **Demco** worked on the .ca domain name project in addition to being a computing facilities manager at UBC.

Idnumber: 200104240053
Edition: Final
Story Type: Business
Length: 287 words
Keywords: AWARDS; VOLUNTEERS; INTERNET
Name: JOHN **DEMCO**
Illustration Type: Colour Photo