



**Happy Holidays to all of our wonderful clients, suppliers, & friends!**

**2010** **Recession? What recession? . . .** *No sooner had the opening bell sounded on the New Year than our phones started ringing. After a slow 2009, this year was crazy busy – but we still found time to squeeze in some fun. Wes & Elizabeth celebrated their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and learned to sail in the Florida Keys. Wes is still trying to convince the staff to address him as "Skipper." Frank and Ellen rafted through the Grand Canyon, and Frank took advantage of his captive raft-mates to line up three new design projects for Kontek. Linda learned that the job description for CAD Technician apparently includes roof repair and heating and air conditioning maintenance. Gigi adopted another homeless cat, but didn't appreciate Jonathan's offer to launch Miss Kitty into low Earth orbit – so he settled for a digital camera and blasted it to 76,000 feet. Brenda is requesting a "do-over" on her mid-life crisis, since her little red Miata convertible lasted barely two months before it was squashed by an 18-wheeler on I-85. Here's a Christmas hint: Hummer H3. DJ turned 40, but was late to his surprise birthday party at the Green Room because he was still tweaking the new sound system at the Casbah. New goal: total AV domination of the downtown Durham music scene. Scott departed Kontek on Friday afternoon for a new job with SAS, and by Monday morning was Kontek's newest client. Joel's fellow designers accused him of leaving Kontek two years ago so he could negotiate for a new iPhone 4 upon his return. Julian and Carrie finally took a romantic vacation alone without the kids – to Disney World. Hint to Julian: think sunny beaches and little drinks with umbrellas – not huge talking rodents. Billy sent his youngest daughter Emily off to college, and celebrated his newly empty nest by signing up for his first "minimally invasive screening procedure." Erik and Pete discovered that in the Service Department, 8:00 really does come around twice a day. JAN TURNED 50 AND GOT A SURPRISE BIRTHDAY PARTY FEATURING THE BAND OF OZ – ALMOST ENOUGH FUN TO COMPENSATE FOR ALSO GETTING AN MRI AND A COLONOSCOPY (OOPS – "MINIMALLY INVASIVE SCREENING PROCEDURE"). Sammy and Dannette turned their back yard into a tropical wonderland for their wonderful wedding, complete with authentic Indian food and African drumming. Ben spent a week installing a system in Montreat, NC, and came home with an unexpected surprise: his new fiancée, Julie. Monica maintained her perfect attendance record at NCCU tailgate parties while never actually setting foot in the football stadium. Brian still can't decide whether Montreat or Baltimore is a more fun town. Hint: ask Ben. Cameron moved to Southern Village to get closer to his beloved Tar Heels. His original plan of living in an RV in the Kenan Stadium parking lot was vetoed by campus police. Tim managed to take 6 weeks of vacation, but spent all of it doing construction work on his house, his brother's house, his mother's house. . . Hint to Tim: check dictionary definition of "vacation." Kim and Hope welcomed new baby Gibbs Durack, proud wearer of Kontek-branded jammies. Dan went pub crawling – in Ireland. Downtown Durham pubs reported a net 37% loss of revenue for the week.*

What a year! Our business came back with a roar, with projects both close to home and very far away. Downtown Durham was a hotspot for Kontek this year, with lots of activity from American Tobacco to Golden Belt and all points in between. With projects running the gamut from the Casbah to Piedmont Investments, we had fun watching (and contributing to) the renaissance of the downtown area. As early adopters ourselves (we moved downtown in 1997) it's especially nice to see the momentum continue to build.

We earned frequent flier points doing major medical projects in Houston and Baltimore, and around the state of North Carolina visiting Montreat, Charlotte, Greenville, and Buies Creek. Our intrepid installation team barely had time to do the laundry before heading out again.

As always, our core Triangle-area university clients at Duke, UNC, NC State and Campbell brought us interesting and challenging projects. Standouts were the UNC Friday Center's stunning 1080P projection system for Grumman Auditorium, NC State College of Management's large lecture hall with automatic camera tracking, Campbell's School of Pharmacy classroom upgrades with lecture capture, Duke's Mill Village student life complex at Central Campus, and major HD digital capture systems at the Duke Clinical Research Training Program and Clinical Research Institute.

We could barely keep up with all the activity at North Carolina Central University. In May we installed a teaching studio and video infrastructure to link remote students to their Law School professors for real time (synchronous) law classes. Later in the fall we got the good news of a federal grant award which will fund a statewide network of telepresence sites to extend legal clinic services to under-served communities across North Carolina. Stay tuned for more news about "Virtual Justice."

The Walter Jones Board Room at NCCU gave the university's board of trustees a sophisticated new meeting space with fully digital video routing, four 65" plasma displays, and a unique two-toned cherry table. Watch for photos on the Kontek web site soon! And the School of Education auditorium project featured a super-large (23') super-bright (10,000 lumens) projection system, with a beautiful maple lectern and Smart Board annotation system.

Our experience serving research universities helped us win the confidence of two major new clients, SAS and RTI International. Both have extensive campuses with lots of AV-equipped meeting and presentation spaces, and both depend on video technology to support their global business operations. At year's end we had completed RTI's Hill Building videoconference room, with more projects in the works.

In the category of most out-of-the-box installation, the winner has to be the Multipurpose Room at Epic Games, a Cary-based video game developer ("Gears of War"). As if the enormous (16' x 9') rear projection screen with 5.1 surround sound weren't enough, the climbing wall and giant playground slide put it over the top. This is the kind of project we live for.

We said farewell this year to Scott Sublett and Mike Juday, and welcomed Joel Johnson back to the fold after a two-year hiatus. On a sad note we lost our old friend and former colleague Eric Peters, but Jennie, Gus and Charlie Peters remain lifetime members of the extended Kontek family.

The past two years have been a roller coaster ride. It's nice to be busy again, but being slow was unexpectedly rewarding - we kept our team together, took care of one another, and had a little more time to spend with friends and family. We're equally grateful for busy times and slow ones too. We wish you and your families a wonderful holiday season and a New Year filled with peace and joy.

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This year's holiday card picture by Frank features a Whirligig made by 92 year old artist Vollis Simpson from Wilson, NC

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Frank Konhaus, Wes Newman, Dan Sanville, Gigi Krapels, Brenda Pratt, Billy Morris, Ben Wallace, Sammy Truong, Tim Rabalais, Jan Stutts, Jonathan Danforth, Cameron Powell, Julian Milano, DJ James, Linda Guzynski, Erik Benson, Kim Durack, Peter Rehm, Brian Peters, Monica Ellis, Joel Johnson

In Memoriam: Eric J. Peters, 1970-2010