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## Who We Are

The Vancouver SAS Users Group (VanSUG) is an informal group of SAS users in the Vancouver area who meet and share their knowledge. There are no fees – we simply meet every spring and fall to have presentations, networking, and fun! Check us out at [vansug.ca](http://vansug.ca).

## Newsletter Inputs

This newsletter is for and by the local Vancouver SAS community. If you'd like to contribute to a future newsletter, please email us at [vansug@gmail.com](mailto:vansug@gmail.com)!

## Executive Team

### President:

Colleen McGahan  
(BC Cancer Agency)

### Vice President:

Nate Derby (Stakana Analytics)

### Other Members:

Scott Albrechtsen (BC Hydro)  
Fareeza Khurshed  
(BC Cancer Agency)

Libo Lu (KBM Group)  
Sharon Relova  
(BC Cancer Agency)

Cathy Rupp (BC Hydro)

Brian Sun (Rick Hansen Institute)

Julia Zhu  
(Cardiac Services BC)

## Executive Update

Colleen McGahan: [vansug@gmail.com](mailto:vansug@gmail.com)

Well, it has been another great year for SAS users in and around Vancouver. We had our first formal Business Analytics Session with over 40 attendees and have received very encouraging feedback. I have heard we are already the largest Business Analytics group across Canada! So I hope you will all continue to encourage other users to attend, to help grow and share in this community.

As presented to you in the spring, we saw the launch of SAS Canada Community ([www.sascanada.ning.com](http://www.sascanada.ning.com)) with its aim for Canadians to make connections outside of the user group meetings and to help and share their SAS knowledge. The VanSUG Executive has set up a user profile and also a VanSUG “group.” So, step on in, join us! Networking has always been one of the top priorities of users who attend our VanSUG meetings so our hope is that this community facilitates our ability to network outside of our meetings.

Lastly, I would like to say congratulations to Brian Sun, a VanSUG member and also one of our newer members on the Executive. Brian presented at the WUSS (Western Users of SAS Software) meeting in San Francisco this October and was a Young Professional Award Winner. Well done, Brian!

## TIPS & TRICKS: Syntax Checker

Ryan Knowles: [ryan.knowles@bchydro.com](mailto:ryan.knowles@bchydro.com)

Ever run a program overnight or during lunch, only to discover you misspelled a variable/table name, or variable formats don't line up when combining tables? I have never encountered this myself, but perhaps you know of someone who has.

Try the following option at the beginning of your program for a quick syntax check.

```
OPTIONS OBS=0 NOREPLACE;
```

Note that some code will still execute. For example,

```
PROC DATASETS LIB=work NOLIST KILL MEMTYPE=data;  
QUIT;  
RUN;
```

will still delete all SAS datasets in your work library. To reset, type the code below:

```
OPTIONS OBS=max REPLACE;
```

*SAS Global Forum* is the annual international SAS conference which is in Orlando on April 22-25, as explained at [sasglobalforum.org](http://sasglobalforum.org). Full-time undergraduate or graduate students can apply for a scholarship for free registration! A paper submission is suggested but not required. For more information, email Julie Petlick at [julie.petlick@sas.com](mailto:julie.petlick@sas.com).

## New Executive Team Members

*Scott Albrechtsen* is a lead research analyst at BC Hydro. He holds a master's degree in Applied Economics from the University of Arizona (2007). He is a SAS Certified Advanced Programmer who has been doing extensive predictive modeling and data mining at BC Hydro for the past 4 years.

*Brian Sun* is a senior statistician at the Rick Hansen Institute. He holds master's degrees in Statistics and in Business Administration, focusing on marketing research. He started to use SAS in 2005 and was the founding chair of Peking University SAS Club where he coached over 180 people with SAS. Brian is a SAS Certified Predictive Modeler using SAS Enterprise Miner, and a SAS Certified Advanced Programmer. His professional work and interest mainly focused on predictive modeling in telecom customer relationship management, simulation in health care operation, and business revenue forecasting.

### TIPS & TRICKS: Importing Many Long-Length Variables

Cathy Rupp: [cathy.rupp@bchydro.com](mailto:cathy.rupp@bchydro.com)

Recently I was asked to import a CSV file with 200 variables. I first used PROC IMPORT to bring it into SAS, but I noticed that SAS calculated the variable lengths based on the first few observations. This gave me lengths that were shorter than needed. To solve this problem, I used the DATA step to set the length for variables that required a longer length. Since there were 200 variables, I used numbered range lists to avoid typing all the variable names.

```
DATA work.text_data;
  INFILE 'D:\Projects\datausdump.csv' DELIMITER = ','
  MISSOVER DSD LRECL=32767 FIRSTOBS=2;
  INPUT VAR1
         VAR2 :$20.
         VAR3
         (VAR4 - VAR23) (: $50.)
         VAR24 :$100.
         (VAR25 - VAR200) (: $50.);
RUN;
```

### TIPS & TRICKS: Time-Series Transformations with PROC EXPAND

Mei Chong: [mei.chong@bccdc.ca](mailto:mei.chong@bccdc.ca)

Did you know that PROC EXPAND can perform various time-series transformations of your time series data? This is much easier than doing it with a DATA step. Here are some examples:

```
PROC EXPAND DATA=test OUT=out METHOD=none;
  *METHOD=none specifies that no interpolation be performed;
  ID date;
  CONVERT x;
  CONVERT x = x_lag2 / TRANSFORMOUT =(lag 2); * no transformation;
  CONVERT x = x_lead1 / TRANSFORMOUT =(lead 1); * lag 2;
  CONVERT x = x_movave / TRANSFORMOUT =(movave 2); * lead 1;
  CONVERT x = x_cusum / TRANSFORMOUT =(cusum); * backward moving average of 2 values;
  CONVERT x = x_log / TRANSFORMOUT =(log); * cumulative sum;
  * natural logarithm;
RUN;
```

Our next meeting will be on **May 30, 2012**. Check out the VanSUG website at [vansug.ca](http://vansug.ca) later for more information!

Archives presentations and newsletters, as well as a link to scheduled SAS training courses held in Vancouver, can all be found on the VanSUG website at [vansug.ca](http://vansug.ca)!

The **Puget Sound SAS Users Group** (PugSUG) will have a meeting next spring in Seattle. Details can be found at [pugsug.org](http://pugsug.org).

The first **Insurance and Finance SAS Users Group** (IFSUG) conference will be held March 3-4 in Cary, NC. Information is at [www.ifsug.org](http://www.ifsug.org).

**SAS Global Forum 2012** will be held on April 22-25 in Orlando, FL. More information is at [sasglobalforum.com](http://sasglobalforum.com). The call for papers is still open until November 14.

The **2012 Pharmaceutical Industry SAS Users Group** (PharmaSUG) conference will be held on May 13-16 in San Francisco, CA. Information is at [www.pharmasug.org](http://www.pharmasug.org).

The first **Western Canadian SAS Users Summit** (WestSUS) will be in Minneapolis, MN on September 16-18, 2012. It's part of the Midwest SAS Users Group (MWSUG) conference. For more information, see [westsus.ca](http://westsus.ca).