

# AAAI News

*Winter News from the  
American Association for Artificial Intelligence*

## Celebrate AAAI's Twenty-fifth Anniversary!

Mark your calendars now for AAAI-05, celebrating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the American Association for Artificial Intelligence! The Twentieth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-05) will be held from July 9–13, 2005, at the Westin Convention Center Pittsburgh Hotel in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Seventeenth Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence will be collocated with AAAI-05, and will be held from July 11–13. Other programs to be held during the course of the conference include the AAAI-05 Workshop Program (from July 9–10), the AAAI-05 Tutorial Forum (from July 9–10), the AAAI-05 Student Abstract and Poster Program (July 12), the Tenth AAAI/SIGART Doctoral Consortium (from July 9–10), the AAAI Intelligent Systems Demonstrations (July 12), the AAAI Mobile Robot Competition and Exhibition (from July 11–13), and the AAAI Game Playing Competition (from July 11–13).

The following list contains a few important deadlines to note on your calendar:

- January 21: AAAI-05 Student abstracts due
- January 25: IAAI-05 electronic paper submission due
- January 14 – March 18: AAAI-05 authors register on the AAAI web site
- February 4: AAAI/SIGART Doctoral Consortium applications due
- February 19: IS Demos proposals due
- March 11: IAAI-05 notifications to authors
- March 18: AAAI-05 electronic abstracts due

- March 22: AAI-05 Electronic technical papers due
- April 29: AAAI-05 Notification of acceptance or rejection
- May 10: AAAI-05/IAAI-05 Final, corrected PDF camera-ready copy due at AAAI office

Please check the AAAI-05 web site ([www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html](http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html)) for additional information including conference registration materials. Information is also available by e-mail ([aaai05@aaai.org](mailto:aaai05@aaai.org)).

## AAAI-05 Workshop Program

The AAAI-05 workshops will be held on Saturday and Sunday, July 9–10, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The cochairs of the AAAI-05 Workshop Program are Adele Howe, Colorado State University ([howe@cs.colostate.edu](mailto:howe@cs.colostate.edu)), and Peter Stone, The University of Texas at Austin ([pstone@cs.utexas.edu](mailto:pstone@cs.utexas.edu)). A preliminary list of workshops that have been accepted into the program follows. For an updated list, as well as complete information about schedules and guidelines for participation, please see [www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html](http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html).

- Contexts Meet Ontologies: Theory, Practice and Applications. Jerome Euzenat ([Jerome.Euzenat@inrialpes.fr](mailto:Jerome.Euzenat@inrialpes.fr)), Alain Leger ([alain.leger@rd.francetelecom.com](mailto:alain.leger@rd.francetelecom.com)), and Deborah L. McGuinness ([dml@ksl.stanford.edu](mailto:dml@ksl.stanford.edu))
- Educational Data Mining. Joseph E. Beck ([joseph.beck@cmu.edu](mailto:joseph.beck@cmu.edu))
- Human Comprehensible Machine Learning. Dan Oblinger ([oblio@us.ibm.com](mailto:oblio@us.ibm.com))
- Inference for Textual Question Answering. Sanda M. Harabagin ([sanda@hlt.utdallas.edu](mailto:sanda@hlt.utdallas.edu))

[da@hlt.utdallas.edu](mailto:da@hlt.utdallas.edu)

- Integrating Perception and Action in Multimodal Interfaces. Catherine Pelachaud ([c.pelachaud@iut.univ-paris8.fr](mailto:c.pelachaud@iut.univ-paris8.fr))
- Integrating Planning into Scheduling. Mark Boddy ([mark.boddy@adventiumlabs.org](mailto:mark.boddy@adventiumlabs.org))
- Learning in Computer Vision. Bir Bhanu ([bhanu@cris.ucr.edu](mailto:bhanu@cris.ucr.edu))
- Link Analysis. Dunja Mladenic ([Dunja.Mladenic@ijs.si](mailto:Dunja.Mladenic@ijs.si))
- Modular Construction of Human-Like Intelligence. Kristinn R. Thórisson ([thorisson@ru.is](mailto:thorisson@ru.is))
- Multiagent Learning. Eduardo Alonso ([eduardo@soi.city.ac.uk](mailto:eduardo@soi.city.ac.uk))
- Planning and Scheduling for Web Services, Grid and Autonomic Computing. Biplav Srivastava ([sbiplav@in.ibm.com](mailto:sbiplav@in.ibm.com)), Jim Blythe ([blythe@isi.edu](mailto:blythe@isi.edu))
- Question Answering in Restricted Diego Molla Aliod ([diego@ics.mq.edu.au](mailto:diego@ics.mq.edu.au))
- Spoken Language Understanding. Gokhan Tur ([gtur@research.att.com](mailto:gtur@research.att.com))

## AAAI-05 Student Scholar and Volunteer Program

We are pleased to announce the continuation of its Student Scholar and Volunteer Programs. The Student Scholar Program provides partial travel support for students who are (1) full-time undergraduate or graduate students at colleges and universities, (2) members of AAAI, (3) submit papers to the conference program or letters of recommendation from their faculty advisor, and (4) submit scholarship applications to AAAI by April 15, 2005. In addition, repeat scholarship applicants must have fulfilled the volunteer and reporting requirements for previous awards. In the event that scholarship applications exceed available funds, preference will be given to students who have an accepted technical paper, and then to students who are actively participating in the conference in some way. However, all eligible students are encouraged to apply.

After the conference, an expense report will be required to account for the funds awarded. For further infor-

mation about the Scholarship Program, or to obtain an application, please contact AAAI at [scholarships05@aaai.org](mailto:scholarships05@aaai.org), or 445 Burgess Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Telephone: 650-328-3123.

The Student Volunteer Program is an essential part of the conference and student participation is a valuable contribution. Volunteers will support AAAI organizers in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2005, a limited number of complimentary technical program registrations will be available for students who volunteer during the conference. Preference will be given to student scholars for the volunteer positions. Local students or students not requiring travel assistance can apply for the Volunteer Program if openings are available. AAAI membership is required for eligibility. For further information regarding the Student Volunteer Program, please contact AAAI at [volunteer05@aaai.org](mailto:volunteer05@aaai.org). The deadline for volunteer applications is April 15, 2005.

## AAAI/ SIGART Doctoral Consortium

AAAI and ACM/SIGART invite students to apply for the Tenth AAAI/SIGART Doctoral Consortium. The Doctoral Consortium provides an opportunity for a select group of Ph.D. students to discuss and explore their research interests and career objectives with a panel of established researchers in AI.

The consortium has a number of objectives; first, to provide a setting for mutual feedback on participants' current research and guidance on future research directions; second, to develop a supportive community of scholars and a spirit of collaborative research; third, to support a new generation of researchers with information and advice on academic, research, industrial, and nontraditional career paths; and finally, to contribute to the conference goals through interaction with other researchers and participation in conference events.

The Doctoral Consortium will be held as a workshop from July 9–10, 2005, immediately before the start of

the main conference. Application packages are due at the AAAI office by February 4, 2005. The 2005 Doctoral Consortium Chair is Kiri Wagstaff ([wkiri@aig.jpl.nasa.gov](mailto:wkiri@aig.jpl.nasa.gov)).

## AAAI First Annual General Game Playing Competition

We are pleased to announce the First Annual Game Playing Competition, to be held in conjunction with AAAI-05 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from July 9–13. This competition will test the abilities of general game playing systems by comparing their performance on a variety of games. The competition will consist of two phases—a qualification round and a runoff competition. A \$10,000 prize will be awarded to the winning entrant. The competition is open to all computer systems except those generated by affiliates of Stanford University. Sorry, no human players allowed! For a complete call for participation, please see AAAI's website ([www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html](http://www.aaai.org/Conferences/National/2005/aaai05.html)). In addition, the competition website at [games.stanford.edu](http://games.stanford.edu) contains further details, including the description of the underlying framework, the game description language, and the programmatic interfaces necessary to play the games.

## AAAI Fellows Nominations Solicited

The 2005 Fellows Selection Committee is accepting nominations for AAAI Fellow. The AAAI Fellows program recognizes people who have made significant, sustained contributions to the field of artificial intelligence over at least a ten-year period. All regular AAAI members in good standing are encouraged to nominate a candidate. Two references must accompany nominations. The nominator (or one of the references) must be an AAAI Fellow who is also a current member of AAAI. For further information about the Fellows Program or to receive nomination and reference forms, please contact AAAI at 650-

328-3123; by fax at 650-321-4457; or by email at [fellows05@aaai.org](mailto:fellows05@aaai.org). Nomination materials are also available on the AAAI web site at [www.aaai.org/Awards/fellows.html](http://www.aaai.org/Awards/fellows.html). The deadline for nominations is February 15, 2005.

## 2005 Special Award Nominations

AAAI is pleased to announce the continuation of its two special awards in 2005, and is currently seeking nominations for the 2005 AAAI Classic Paper Award, and the AAAI Distinguished Service Award. The 2005 AAAI Classic Paper Award will be given to the author of the most influential paper(s) from the Fifth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence, held in 1986 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The 2005 AAAI Distinguished Service Award will recognize one individual for extraordinary service to the AI community.

The awards will be presented to the winners during AAAI-05 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and will include a certificate and \$1,000. Complete nomination information, including nomination forms, is available at [www.aaai.org/Awards/awards.html](http://www.aaai.org/Awards/awards.html). The deadline for nominations is March 15, 2005. For additional inquiries, please contact Carol Hamilton at [hamilton@aaai.org](mailto:hamilton@aaai.org).

## 2005 Spring Symposium Series

The 2005 Spring Symposium Series will be held from March 21–23 at Stanford University and will feature the following eight symposia:

- AI Technologies for Homeland Security
- Challenges to Decision Support in a Changing World
- Developmental Robotics
- Dialogical Robots: Verbal Interaction with Embodied Agents and Situated Devices
- Knowledge Collection from Volunteer Contributors (KCVC05)
- Metacognition in Computation
- Persistent Assistants: Living and Working with AI

■ Reasoning with Mental and External Diagrams: Computational Modeling and Spatial Assistance  
Registration information is available on AAAI's website ([www.aaai.org/Symposia/Spring/2004/sss-04.html](http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/Spring/2004/sss-04.html)). The deadline for registration for invited participants is February 13; the general registration deadline is February 27.

## 2005 Fall Symposium Series

We are pleased to announce the continuation of the Fall Symposium Series! The 2005 symposia will be held in Washington, D.C. in early November 2005. The program will feature approximately eight symposia, and will again be preceded by the popular, one-day AI funding seminar. For more information about the accepted symposia, please see AAAI's website: [www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/2005/fss-05.html](http://www.aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/2005/fss-05.html). Submissions will be due in early May 2005.

## Executive Council Meeting Minutes

July 26, 2004  
San Jose Marriott Hotel  
San Jose, California

*Attending:* Ron Brachman, Tony Cohn, Oren Etzioni, Tim Finin, Yolanda Gil, Carla Gomes, Jim Hendler, Haym Hirsh, David Leake, Michael Littman, Alan Mackworth, Maja Mataric, Tom Mitchell, Peter Norvig, Illah Nourbakhsh, Ted Senator, Manuela Veloso, Dave Waltz, Mike Hamilton, and Carol Hamilton

*Absent:* Steve Chien, Andrew Moore, Yoav Shoham

AAAI President Ron Brachman called the meeting to order at 9:08 AM. Introductions were made.

Before launching the standing committee reports, Brachman reviewed several important areas of concern, first noting that he would like to strengthen the structure of the Executive Council, and stressing the importance of everyone's participation as AAAI faces serious issues and decisions in the coming months and years. Brachman hopes to improve

## AAAI E-mail Addresses

AAAI will again modify its email addresses in 2005 in an effort to reduce the amount of spam that we receive. We will be adding 05 to all email addresses, as follows:

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| ■ <a href="mailto:aaai05">aaai05</a>           | ■ <a href="mailto:aimagazine05">aimagazine05</a>     |
| ■ <a href="mailto:aipotops05">aipotops05</a>   | ■ <a href="mailto:fss05">fss05</a>                   |
| ■ <a href="mailto:info05">info05</a>           | ■ <a href="mailto:membership05">membership05</a>     |
| ■ <a href="mailto:orders05">orders05</a>       | ■ <a href="mailto:press05">press05</a>               |
| ■ <a href="mailto:iaai05">iaai05</a>           | ■ <a href="mailto:sss05">sss05</a>                   |
| ■ <a href="mailto:workshops05">workshops05</a> | ■ <a href="mailto:scholarships05">scholarships05</a> |
| ■ <a href="mailto:volunteer05">volunteer05</a> | ■ <a href="mailto:awards05">awards05</a>             |
| ■ <a href="mailto:fellows05">fellows05</a>     |  |

AAAI can also be reached by completing the contact form, accessible from [www.aaai.org](http://www.aaai.org).

the decision-making process by increasing Council participation on the committees. Committees will be responsible for studying issues and reporting to the larger Council with their recommendations. Brachman asked each Council member to volunteer for two or three committees. He will then review their choices, and make the final assignments.

Second, Brachman noted the difficulty AAAI faced when scheduling the 2005 national conference. The huge number of summer conferences, as well as their migration to traditional AAAI dates, has presented the biggest challenge. This issue is likely to become more severe in future years, and will certainly reoccur in IJ-CAI years. AAAI plans to announce its dates for future conferences several years in advance to try to decrease any potential conflicts.

Brachman reported that AAAI faces budget concerns in the next few years. The Association is in a cost-cutting phase that is aimed to decrease the reliance on the operating reserve in the next 3–5 years. After the budget for 2005 is formulated, the officers and finance committee will review it and make any necessary recommendations. In conjunction with addressing expenses, Brachman asked the membership committee to investigate ways to increase membership.

The budget issues reflect a frag-

mentation of the field, and Brachman encouraged Council members to seek solutions that will form alliances with other societies and groups. In order for strategic planning to occur, full participation by all Council members is needed. He requested that Council members attend meetings, participate on committees, and play a functioning role in the decision-making for the organization.

Ted Senator, AAAI Secretary-Treasurer, reviewed the obligations of the officers and councilors of AAAI with regard to their service on the Council and the fiduciary responsibility that accompanies that service. He also stressed the importance of participating in AAAI events, such as the national conference. The information that is sent to new councilors will be reviewed to be sure it includes this information. In addition, more information will be circulated prior to the meeting about the current status of the association, and other current issues. The issue of telephone participation was considered, but the Council decided to restrict this to a specific subject by a specific person, and only if absolutely necessary. Senator also noted that each standing committee should have two council members on it, so volunteers are needed to round out the committees. The Conference Committee will be expanded with several ongoing members, replacing its current structure of one ongoing

chair and rotating members of the organizing committee for the national conference.

## Standing Committee Reports

**Conference:** Conference Committee Chair Jim Hendler reported that the national conference attendance was about 5% lower than that in 2002 in Edmonton. All programs remained the same, except for the omission of the Robot Building Lab. In addition, the Botball National Tournament and associated National Conference on Educational Robotics were collocated with AAAI-04 in San Jose. A tutorial fee was reintroduced (\$100/4 tutorials), which did result in a drop in attendance for these sessions. However, the IS Demos program saw a dramatic increase in participation with a total of 22 demos. The technical program returned to traditional parallel sessions, and the AAAI-04 Outstanding Paper Award was given to Lin Liao, Dieter Fox, and Henry Kautz, University of Washington, for their paper, "Learning and Inferring Transportation Routines." Honorable mention was also given to Trausti Kristjansson, Microsoft Research, Aron Culotta, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Paul Viola, Microsoft Research, and Andrew McCallum, University of Massachusetts Amherst for "Interactive Information Extraction with Constrained Conditional Random Fields" and Joohyung Lee, The University of Texas at Austin and Fangzhen Lin, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, for "Loop Formulas for Circumscription."

Hendler noted some of the issues the Conference Committee will address include attendance at the national conference, the scheduling of multiple conferences during the busy summer period, the international identity of most conferences, and the perception by researchers in some fields that AAAI will not accept their papers. Tim Finin encouraged the conference committee to foster new and emerging fields, such as games. Another suggestion was to be sure to have senior program committee members from under-represented fields, and to ask them to publicize the conference to their communities. It was

also noted that the national conference provides a unique opportunity for junior researchers to meet senior researchers, and more avenues for this type of exchange should be made available, such as mentoring tutorials.

It was noted that the advance scheduling of the conference dates has been reduced in recent years. Carol Hamilton agreed that this should be adjusted to a 3–4 year advance time. Announcing the dates will allow other conferences the opportunity to possibly collocate with AAAI or at least to schedule their conferences around the national conference dates. Hamilton noted that the AAAI web site and magazine contain a Calendar of Events. She would like all conferences in the field to routinely post their dates on this calendar so that organizers can detect potential conflicts. Hopefully, the list of area conferences will facilitate this process (see Area Conference Research below).

**Publications:** David Leake, Publications Chair, reported that the fall and winter issues of the *AI Magazine* were currently in production—one a special issue and one a regular issue. The spring issue will mark the beginning of the 26th year of publication for the magazine, and will be a special issue on semantic integration. The magazine has now implemented a system of using several freelance copyeditors, which will hopefully reduce this cost in future years. Overall manufacturing costs remain at pre-1988 levels, despite rises in postage and printing costs. The Robert S. Englemore Memorial Award, which is cosponsored by the *AI Magazine*, will be presented to Edward A. Feigenbaum. Leake also noted that the current Editorial Board has done a great job, but that its efforts could be supplemented by members of the Executive Council. The magazine continues to seek high-quality submissions in all areas. He agreed to draft an appeal letter that Ron Brachman will circulate to the Council. The Publications Committee was also asked to review the current access policy for the AAAI digital library before the next meeting of the Executive Council.

Leake announced that Anthony Cohn of the University of Leeds will take over as Editor-in-Chief of the AAAI Press. Tony replaces Ken Ford of the Institute for Human and Machine Cognition, who served in this capacity for twelve years. The Council formally thanked Ford for his outstanding service. He will remain in an advisory capacity as Editor Emeritus during the coming years. In other AAAI Press news, Leake noted that a contract with JAIR has been signed, which makes AAAI Press the distributor of the hard copy of JAIR. As part of this agreement, AAAI will also be able to include all of the JAIR issues in its digital library. AAAI Press will publish two new books this fall: *Data Mining: Next Generation Challenges and Future Directions* by Hillol Kargupta, and *New Directions in Question Answering* by Mark Maybury.

**Finance:** Ted Senator reviewed the current financial statement, noting that the association still relies heavily on its operating reserve to fund grants and some operations. With the recent decline in the investment picture, this trend will result in a continuing reduction in the fund. He reminded that the Council that this dependence needs to be significantly reduced, and that the officers and Finance Committee will be making suggestions about how to accomplish this after the 2005 budget has been compiled. He also noted that the Finance Committee will probably be expanded to include at least one new member.

**Grants:** Manuela Veloso, Grants Committee Chair, reviewed the grant expenditures for 2004. Because of the new policy of only supporting new events, the committee only granted \$11,000 in support to area conferences. However, cooperation status was awarded to seven other conferences. Another \$5,000 was awarded for Women and Minority grants. Veloso noted that the committee would like more information about the budget process. She also suggested that the committee review the guidelines for support and cooperation.

Other programs not directly under the Grants Committee purview, but

that do receive funds or subsidies from AAAI, include a number of awards (see Awards report below), the Intelligent Systems Demo program, the Mobile Robot Competition and Exhibition, and the Doctoral Consortium, and the student scholarships for the national conference and symposium series. In 2004, Carol Hamilton arranged for sponsorships for the national conference from various companies, totaling \$28,000. Yolanda Gil suggested that a sponsorship chair be added as an ongoing member of the Conference Committee to help with this fund-raising process. Carla Gomes agreed to serve in this capacity for 2005. It was also suggested that we give AAAI members an opportunity to make charitable contributions to AAAI to help support these programs. A box will be added to the membership form in 2005 for this purpose.

**Symposium:** The 2004 Symposium Series will be held in Washington, DC. There will be eight symposia, and attendance is expected to be good. The more central location, as well as the addition of the AI Funding Workshop just prior to the event, seems to have made this event more convenient and attractive. The Call for Proposals for the 2005 Fall Symposium Series will be issued in the fall of 2004. The 2004 Spring Symposium was another success with about 325 attendees at eight symposia. There are eight symposia planned for 2005 as well, and submissions are also due in the fall. The spring event will continue to be held at Stanford University. The Council thanked Marie desJardins for her service as Symposium Committee Associate Chair, and asked for a volunteer to replace her in this role.

**Membership:** Ron Brachman announced that Haym Hirsh is taking over for Reid Simmons as the Chair of the Membership Committee. The Council thanked Simmons for his service on this committee, and also thanked Haym for his willingness to serve. Haym noted that membership levels have shown the first signs of growth in several years, with an increase of about 200 members during the preceding four months. Most of

this can be attributed to the introduction of the platinum registration option on the symposium and conference registration forms, as well as the fact that AAAI is not combining with IJCAI this year. Haym also encouraged Council members to join the Membership Committee.

*Awards:* Tom Mitchell, Past President of AAAI, reported that there are six new Fellows this year, including Subbarao Kambhampati (Arizona State University), Craig A. Knoblock (University of Southern California), Daphne Koller (Stanford University), Gérard G. Medioni (University of Southern California), Stuart M. Shieber (Harvard University), and Moshe Y. Vardi (Rice University). In addition, two Special Awards were given for the 1984 Classic Paper to Hector Levesque (A Logic of Implicit and Explicit Belief) and 2004 Distinguished Service to Bruce Buchanan. Two honorable mentions were awarded in the Classic Paper category to Michael Georgeff (A Theory of Action for MultiAgent Planning) and the team of Hector Levesque and Ron Brachman (The Tractability of Subsumption in Frame-Based Description Languages). Finally, AAAI distributed ten \$500 awards to 12 students (one team of 3) at the Intel Science and Engineering Fair, May 9–15, 2004. The Council thanked Reid Simmons for his continuing work in organizing this event, as well as the 2004 AAAI judges: Dave Kortenkamp, Metrica TRACLabs (head judge); Jeremy Frank, NASA Ames Research Center; Adele Howe, Colorado State University; and Sven Koenig, University of Southern California.

Carla Gomes suggested that the Council consider creating more awards, such as an award at the spring symposium series or an AAAI Dissertation Award, which would assist department chairs in identifying exceptional work. Mitchell reminded the Executive Council members to help get nominations for current awards. Mitchell also noted that the Nominating Committee will be accepting nominations for the Executive Council, including President-Elect, this fall. Nominating Committee members include the Past

President and the four retiring councilors. Details about the process will be sent to all members of the committee in the fall.

## Old Business

**Computing Research Association Report:** CRA Liaison Tim Finin reported that several of the CRA Undergraduate Research Awards would be presented during AAAI-04 in San Jose. Several of these were awarded for work in artificial intelligence. A recent study by CRA indicates that a career in computer science still has a good 10-year outlook, even with downsizing and offshoring. Pipeline issues are still of concern, however, with enrollments in computer science down by 50% at the undergraduate level. The Council suggested that it might be possible to work with the CRA to secure government funding for such programs as Botball. However, Finin reminded the Council that the House has recommended cuts in NSF, NIST, and other budgets. Finin also reported that the CRA is also actively promoting careers in computer science for women and minorities. CRA Systems now has a new center, the National Center for Women in Information Technology, in Boulder, Colorado.

**Botball:** Carol Hamilton reported that Botball and the associated National Conference for Educational Robotics is being held in the San Jose Convention Center, collocated with AAAI-04. The hope is that this will be an annual event, but funding may be a problem in the future. The cost to collocate has been high for KIPR, the sponsor of these programs, and they may be looking for alternate venues in 2005. The Council supports collocation in 2005 and had several suggestions for KIPR to partner with other societies such as IEEE and ACM for funding. Manuela Veloso noted that RoboCup Junior abolished teams from one country or institution, and initiated a mixed-team approach. However, the Botball structure is based on a series of regional competitions, culminating in the annual national tournament.

## New Business

**AAAI-04 Innovations:** The AAAI-05 Program Cochairs presented a list of possible innovations for the 2005 national conference, including a conference-wide poster session with posters/demos/multimedia presentations from all authors; a one-day parallel session with presentations by program chairs from other conferences, such as ICAPS, UAI, and ICML, to name a few; and implementation of a mechanism for authors to have a "one-shot" (two questions), "length-limited" reply (one day) to comments of reviewers. It is hoped that these innovations will address some of the concerns that have been voiced in recent years, such as fragmentation in the field; the challenge of information exchange in a parallel-sessions format; the desire to hear about research presented at other AI conferences; and the hope of drawing researchers from all areas of AI to the national conference. Visiting area conference chairs will be asked to present examples of where there could be links between AAAI and other conferences, such as machine learning and robotics.

Other changes will include a reduction of ten minutes in the time allotted to paper presentations; solicitation of challenge papers; an increase in the number of awards given; and the elimination of the senior program committee meeting. Veloso and Kambhampati hope to distribute passports to all attendees that can be stamped every time an individual attends a poster or paper presentation. An award will be given for the best attendance. Other innovative awards will be given. New AAAI members will receive a special ribbon, and perhaps another memento. The Council discussed the possibility of having poster papers or late-breaking papers, but no final decision was made on this.

**2005 IS Demos Status:** The Council recommended that 2005 IS Demo participants be required to register for the technical program, and that the demos be incorporated into the evening poster session.

**AAAI-06 Site Selection:** Carol Hamil-

ton reported that she is now concentrating on Boston for 2006 because of possible coordination with 50th anniversary events at AAAI-06 and Dartmouth. Dates will be finalized in the fall. As an alternate, the Council suggested New York City.

**Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Dartmouth Conference/International Year of AI:** Jim Hendler reported that several informal ideas have been circulated to commemorate the 1956 Dartmouth conference. A proposal is being presented to the National Science Foundation, and it is hoped that US efforts can be coordinated with other events around the world to celebrate an international year of AI, which would conclude at IJCAI-07. A motion to form an ad hoc anniversary committee, with Hendler as its cochair, was approved. Possible goals for the committee included securing sponsorships, gathering better documentation of the founding of the field, publishing papers and organizing online oral presentations about the history and future of the field, and heightening the profile of AI in the media and Washington. The committee was charged reporting at the next Council meeting on the benefits of these efforts for AAAI. The committee will be disbanded at the conclusion of IJCAI-07.

**Area Conference Research:** Yolanda Gil volunteered to research area conferences, and to compile a list of key events for the coming year. She hopes to design a program that will promote affiliation and cooperation with these conferences. Gil will present a report at the next council meeting. She also agreed to serve as an ongoing member of the Conference Committee.

**Game Conference:** Carol Hamilton circulated a proposal for the first Artificial Intelligence for Interactive Digital Entertainment (AIIDE) conference. The organizers would like AAAI to sponsor, own, and operate the conference. The goal of the AIIDE conference is to bridge the gap between the commercial developers of games and the academic researchers that explore game-related AI. The Council approved the adoption of the AIIDE conference under the AAAI

banner, pending the resolution of budget and other organizational issues.

**Game Competition:** Ron Brachman circulated a proposal from Michael Genesereth for a Game Competition at AAAI-05 in Pittsburgh. The competition will be designed to test the abilities of general game playing systems by comparing their performance on a variety of games. Genesereth has volunteered to donate \$10,000 to the team that wins the final competition. In general, the Council was supportive of competitions, such as this, that present challenges for artificial intelligence, but encouraged organizers to set a minimum threshold to qualify for the full prize. They agreed to sponsor the competition at AAAI-05.

**AAAI Election Lottery:** Ted Senator, in an effort to maximize member participation in the election of Council members, suggested that AAAI run an election lottery in 2005. Members who submit a ballot will be eligible to win a free one-year renewal on their membership. This proposal was approved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:30 PM.

## Member News

AAAI Fellow Daphne Koller, an associate professor of computer science at Stanford University, was named a 2004 Fellow by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Koller is being recognized for her development of new computational methods for representing knowledge and reasoning at the intersection of traditional logic, probability, uncertainty, and subjective judgment. Her work bridges a longstanding divide in the field of AI between efforts to develop an explicit representation of knowledge and efforts to categorize data based on statistical properties.

AAAI, ACM, and IEEE Fellow Peter Chen, the 2002 ACM/AAAI Allen Newell Award winner, is the overseas winner of the 2004 Pan Wen-Yuan Outstanding Research Award in Taiwan, generally recognized as Taiwan's top research award in high-tech. Chen is recognized for his Entity-Relationship (ER) model, as well as many other contributions.