AAAI News

Fall News from the
American Association for Artificial Intelligence

Drew McDermott.

Congratulations to the 2005 AAAI Award Winners!

Tom Mitchell, AAAI past president and Awards Committee chair, and Ron Brachman, AAAI president, presented the AAAI awards in July at AAAI-05 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Award winners received a certificate and a check for $1,000.

Classic Paper Award

The 2005 AAAI Classic Paper Award was given to the authors of the most influential papers from the Fifth National Conference on Artificial Intelligence, held in 1986 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The authors of two papers shared the award this year. Steve Hanks, University of Washington, and Drew McDermott, Yale University, were honored for their paper, "Default Reasoning, Nonmonotonic Logics, and the Frame Problem," and their significant contributions to nonmonotonic reasoning systems and for stimulating discussion on the nature of causal and temporal reasoning in a wide variety of fields. David Haussler, University of California, Santa Cruz, was also honored for his paper, "Quantifying the Inductive Bias in Concept Learning" (extended abstract), and for his significant contributions to computational learning theory, machine learning algorithms, and understanding the relationship between the two.

Steve Hanks is a professor of computing and software systems and an associate director for academics at the Institute of Technology, University of Washington Tacoma. His recent work involves applying technology to problems in e-commerce and direct mar-

keting. He formerly held the position of associate professor of computer science and engineering at the University of Washington Seattle, and between academic jobs held a variety of industry positions at Harlequin Software, Amazon.com, and other companies. He earned a Ph.D. degree from Yale University, and an M.B.A. degree from the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania.

Drew McDermott has done work in several areas of artificial intelligence. One of his perennial interests is in planning algorithms, which calculate structures of actions for autonomous agents of various sorts. He did seminal work in the area of hierarchical planning in the 1970s. In the last decade, his focus has switched to regression-based techniques for classical planning, especially methods that heuristically search through situation space. Another enduring interest of McDermott's is in the area of knowledge representation (KR). He wrote some influential papers on nonmonotonic logic and representation of temporal knowledge. However, in the mid-1980s he became convinced that the KR project, in its more ambitious formulations, was ill-defined. He is now thinking about KR issues again, this time in conjunction with the problem of metadata on the World Wide Web, which will tell automated agents what the content and capability of a web resource is.

Drew McDermott is a Fellow of the American Association for Artificial Intelligence.

David Haussler is an investigator for the Howard Hughes Medical Institute and professor of biomolecular engineering at the University of California, Santa Cruz. He also directs the UCSC Center for Biomolecular Science
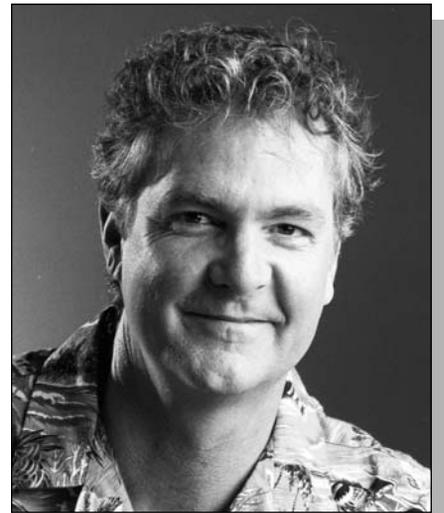

David Haussler.

and Engineering and is scientific codirector of the California Institute for Quantitative Biomedical Research.

Haussler has forged deep and fruitful scientific interactions between computer scientists and molecular biologists. Through original research that led to his involvement in the Human Genome Project, his initial work with that project, and subsequent contributions to the annotation, presentation, and analysis of genomic information, Haussler has contributed to a deeper, more accurate under-

Nils Nilsson Receives Award.
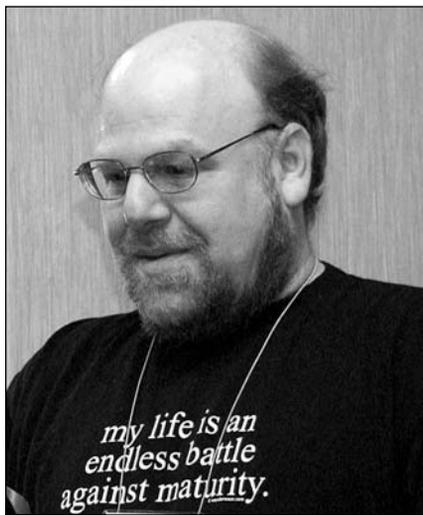
Jim Hendler.

standing of biology, evolution, development, and disease. His work paves the way for intelligently designed therapies and individualized medicine and to a deeper scientific understanding of what it means to belong to the human species. A fellow of both AAAS and AAAI, Haussler received the 2003 ACM/AAAI Allen Newell Award, and in 2001, was named by *R&D Magazine* as "scientist of the year."

Distinguished Service Award

The 2004 AAAI Distinguished Service Award recognizes one individual each year for extraordinary service to the AI community. The AAAI Awards Committee is pleased to announce that this year's recipient was Nils J. Nilsson of Stanford University. Nilsson was honored specifically for a lifetime of service to artificial intelligence, including seminal scientific contributions to pattern recognition, heuristic search, planning, robotics and expert systems, pioneering achievements in scientific publishing and skilled exposition in many influential textbooks, and service to the AI and computer science communities in many key leadership roles including president of AAAI.

Nils J. Nilsson is Kumagai Professor of Engineering, Emeritus of Stanford University. He is the author or coauthor of several AI textbooks and many of the seminal papers in the field. His career in AI began at SRI International in 1961 and continued at Stanford University where he was the chair of the Department of Computer Science from 1985 to 1990. Nilsson is a Fellow and a past president of AAAI. He received the IJCAI Award for Research Excellence in 2003.

Robert S. Engelmore Memorial Lecture Award

The Robert S. Engelmore award was established in 2003 to honor Robert S. Engelmore's extraordinary service to AAAI, *AI Magazine,* and the AI applications community, and his contributions to applied AI. The annual keynote lecture is presented at the Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence Conference. Topics encompass Bob's wide interests in AI, and each lecture is linked to a subsequent article published upon approval by *AI Magazine.* The lecturer and, therefore, the author for the magazine article, are chosen jointly by the IAAI program committee and the editor of *AI Magazine.*

AAAI congratulates the 2005 recipient of this award, James A. Hendler of the University of Maryland, who was honored for two decades of technical and government leadership in artificial intelligence, as well as pioneering

research on agent-based systems and the semantic web. His lecture was entitled "Knowledge as Power: A View from the Semantic Web," and explored the similarities and differences between the semantic web and traditional AI knowledge representation systems, and sought to validate the analogy, "the semantic web is to KR as the Web is to hypertext."

James A. Hendler is a professor and director of the Joint Institute for Knowledge Discovery at the University of Maryland. One of the inventors of the semantic web, Hendler was the recipient of a 1995 Fulbright Foundation Fellowship, is a former member of the US Air Force Science Advisory Board, and is a Fellow of the American Association for Artificial Intelligence. He is also the former chief scientist of the Information Systems Office at the US Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), was awarded a US Air Force Exceptional Civilian Service Medal in 2002, and is a member of the World Wide Web Consortium's semantic web coordination group. He is the editor-in-chief of *IEEE Intelligent Systems* and is on the board of reviewing editors for *Science.*

For more information about nominations for AAAI 2006 Awards, please contact Carol Hamilton at hamilton@aaai.org or (650) 328-3123.

AAAI, INTEL, ISEF Special Awards

Now in its seventh year, the AAAI Special Awards program at the annual Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) consists of up to ten awards to recognize outstanding achievement in the area of intelligent computation and robotics. The awards are intended for the best exhibits in the area of computer science with an artificial intelligence component. Finalists in other areas with significant computer science components are also eligible. The student authors of each award-winning project share $500 and each student receives a certificate and other mementos. The winners and their schools also receive a complimentary one-year membership in the AAAI, including a subscription to *AI Magazine.*

Intel Award Winners.

This year, ISEF was held May 8–14, 2005 in Phoenix, Arizona. There were ten winning projects by twelve students (one team). Five projects were entered in the category of computer science and five were in engineering. The 2005 winners are as follows:

- Novel Investigations for N-Gram-Based Automatic Identification of Written Language, (Marek Blahus, Gymnazium Uherske Hradiste, Uherske Hradiste, Czech Republic).

- Handwritten Number Recognition: Ants Versus Templates, (Holly Kristine Zelnio, Chaminade-Julienne Catholic High School, Dayton, Ohio).

- A Practical Implementation of Gradient-Based Convolutional Neural Networks in Handwriting Recognition, (Yuetian Xu, Stuyvesant High School, New York, New York).

- Age of Acquisition in Facial Identification: A Connectionist Approach, (Brenden Manker Lake, Torrey Pines High School, Encinitas, California).

- Artificial Cognition and Memory: Tissue Image Analysis for Tumor Diagnosis, (Kimberly Elise Reinhold, Saint Joseph's High School, Hilo, Hawaii).

- Dynamic Balance Function and Surface Adaptation for General Humanoid Robot Platform, (Yang Ge, Beijing Jingshan School, Beijing, Beijing, China).

- The Googler, (George Francis Hotz, Bergen County Academies, Hackensack, New Jersey).

- Factors Affecting Cooperative Robotic Behavior, Year Three, (Donald Stuart Eng, Stanton College Preparatory School, Jacksonville, Florida).

- Iris Recognition for Individual Identification, (Nina Maria Huffman, Langley High School, McLean, Virginia).

- Electricity Load Forecasting Using the Support Vector Machine, Adam Shabti Charles, Yuriy Novodvorskiy, and David Dengyu Wang, Stuyvesant High School, New York, New York).

AAAI congratulates all the winners! In addition, we would like to recognize the judges, who attended the fair in Phoenix and selected the ten winning projects from many remarkable and worthy entries. Many thanks to Reid Simmons (chair), Carnegie Mellon University, for his organizational efforts, and to all the judges, Sven Koenig, University of Southern California, Dave Kortenkamp, Metrica TRACLabs, and Holly Yanco, University of Massachusetts Lowell, for their generous donations of time and energy.

AAAI Executive Council Nominations

Every year four new councilors are elected to serve three-year terms on the AAAI Executive Council. All elected councilors are expected to attend at least two council meetings per year, and actively participate in AAAI activities. Nominees must be current members of AAAI. The nominating committee encourages all regular members in good standing to place an individual's name before them for consideration. The nominating committee, in turn, will nominate eight candidates for councilor in the spring. In addition to members' recommendations, the committee will actively recruit individuals in order to provide a balanced slate of candidates. AAAI members will vote in the late spring of 2006.

To submit a candidate's names for consideration, please send the individual's name, address, telephone number, and e-mail address to Carol Hamilton, Executive Director, AAAI, 445 Burgess Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025; by fax to (650) 321-4457; or by e-mail to hamilton@aaai.org. Nominators should contact candidates prior to submitting their names to verify that they are willing to serve, should they be elected. The deadline for nominations is November 1, 2005.

Celebrate the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Dartmouth Conference!

The Twenty-First National Conference on Artificial Intelligence (AAAI-06) will be held July 16–20, 2006 in Boston, Massachusetts. The Eighteenth Conference on Innovative Applications of Artificial Intelligence (IAAI-06) will be collocated with AAAI. The AAAI-06 and IAAI-06 calls for technical papers, tutorial proposals, workshop proposals, student abstracts, doctoral consortium, intelligent system demonstrations, and robot competi-

tion participants are now available on the AAAI-06 and IAAI-06 web sites (see www.aaai.org/Conferences/conferences.html). If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at aaai06@aaai.org or iaai06@aaai.org.

New Programs at AAAI-06!

In addition to the fiftieth anniversary of the Dartmouth Conference, several new programs are planned for AAAI-06 including the following:

Senior member papers: The senior member presentation track provides an opportunity for established researchers to give a broad talk on a well-developed body of research, an important new research area, or a thoughtful critique of trends in the field.

AAAI nectar papers: As AI matures and becomes increasingly interdisciplinary, many of the AI community's most exciting results appear in the proceedings of AAAI's sister conferences and conferences in related fields. AAAI-06 will include a new special paper track designed to highlight those results in a way that is accessible to the broad AI audience.

Member posters: The goal of this novel program is to provide a forum in which AAAI members can present and discuss their work based on a submitted abstract, rather than a regular AAAI paper.

Artificial intelligence and the Web (special technical track): This track will include technical papers on the use of AI techniques, systems, and concepts involving the Web, especially those using text and language analysis to interpret and understand natural language text found on the Web and those developing and exploiting semantic web languages and systems that explicitly encode knowledge using languages such as RDF and OWL.

Integrated intelligent capabilities (special technical track): Papers submitted to this track should report on theoretical or empirical studies that highlight the role of integration of multiple components in achieving intelligent behavior.

A staggered submission schedule has been developed, with AAAI-06 technical papers due on February 21, 2006. Please refer to the complete call for participation (www.aaai.org/Con-ferences/National/2006/aaai06.html) for paper submission deadlines and other important guidelines.

Student Scholar and Volunteer Program

AAAI is pleased to announce the continuation of its student scholar and volunteer programs. The Student Scholar Program provides partial travel support for students who are full-time undergraduate or graduate students at colleges and universities; are members of AAAI; submit papers to the conference program or letters of recommendation from their faculty advisor; and submit scholarship applications to AAAI by April 14, 2006. 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 information about the Scholarship Program, or to obtain an application, please contact AAAI at scholarships06@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 Boston, Massachusetts. In 2006, 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 volunteer06@aaai.org. The deadline for volunteer applications is April 14, 2006.

We hope to see you in Boston next summer!

Save the Date for AIIDE-06!

Following the success of the first event this past June, the Second Conference on Artificial Intelligence and Interactive Digital Entertainment will be held in Marina del Rey, California, June 13–16, 2006. AIIDE is the definitive point of interaction between interactive entertainment software developers interested in AI and academic AI researchers.

Sponsored by the American Association for Artificial Intelligence, the AIIDE conference is targeted at both the research and commercial communities, promoting AI research and practice in the context of interactive digital entertainment systems with an emphasis on commercial computer and video games.

AIIDE-06 will include invited speaker sessions, paper presentation sessions, demonstration sessions, exhibits and a full day of tutorials. We invite researchers and developers to share their insights and cutting-edge results, and encourage the presentation of results from core AI research areas applicable to interactive digital entertainment and AI approaches developed and fielded in commercial systems. Please see www.aaai.org/Conferences/AIIDE for more details and the complete call for papers.

Fall Symposium Series Registration

The American Association for Artificial Intelligence's 2005 Fall Symposium Series will be held Friday through Sunday, November 4–6, Hyatt Regency Crystal City, Arlington Virginia, adjacent to Washington, DC. The symposium series will be preceded on Thursday, November 3, by a one-day AI funding seminar, which will be open to all registered attendees of the fall symposium series. The titles of the eight symposia are:

- Agents and the Semantic Web
- Caring Machines: AI in Eldercare
- Coevolutionary and Coadaptive Systems
- Explanation-Aware Computing

- From Reactive to Anticipatory Cognitive Embodied Systems
- Machine Ethics
- Mixed-Initiative Problem-Solving Assistants
- Roles, An Interdisciplinary Perspective

A general plenary session, in which the highlights of each symposium will be presented, will be held on Saturday, November 5, and an informal reception will be held on Friday, November 4. Symposia will be limited to between forty and sixty participants. Each participant will be expected to attend a single symposium. In addition to invited participants, a limited number of other interested parties will be allowed to register in each symposium on a first-come, first-served basis. Working notes will be prepared and distributed to participants in each symposium, but will not otherwise be available unless published as an AAAI technical report or edited collection.

The final deadline for registration is October 7, 2005. For registration information, please contact AAAI at fss05@ aaai.org or visit AAAI's web site (www. aaai.org/Symposia/Fall/2005/fss-05.html). A hotel room block has been reserved at the Hyatt Regency. The cut-off date for reservations is October 12, 2005. Please call (703) 418-1234 or (800) 233-1234 for further information.

Spring Symposium Series Call for Participation

AAAI presents the 2006 AAAI Spring Symposium Series, to be held Monday through Wednesday, March 27–29, 2006, at Stanford University. The titles of the eight symposia are:

- Argumentation for Consumers of Healthcare
- Between a Rock and a Hard Place: Cognitive Science Principles Meet AI-Hard Problems
- Computational Approaches to Analyzing Weblogs
- Distributed Plan and Schedule Management
- Formalizing and Compiling Background Knowledge and Its Applications to Knowledge Representation and Question Answering

- Semantic Web Meets e-Government
- To Boldly Go Where No Human-Robot Team Has Gone Before
- What Went Wrong and Why: Lessons from AI Research and Applications

Symposia will be limited to between forty and sixty participants. Each participant will be expected to attend a single symposium. Working notes will be prepared and distributed to participants in each symposium. A general plenary session, in which the highlights of each symposium will be presented, will be held on Tuesday, March 28, and an informal reception will be held on Monday, March 27. In addition to invited participants, a limited number of other interested parties will be able to register in each symposium on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration information will be available by December 15, 2005. Please contact AAAI at sss06@aaai.org or visit our web site (www.aaai.org/Symposia/Spring/ 2006/sss-06.html).

Submissions for the symposia are due on October 7, 2005. Notification of acceptance will be given by November 4, 2005. Material to be included in the working notes of the symposium must be received by January 27, 2006. The complete call for participation is available at the URL listed above.

AAAI Member News

AAAI notes with deep regret the death on June 5, 2005 of Rob Milne, long-time member of AAAI and *AI Magazine* editorial board member. Milne died while climbing Mount Everest.

Robert William Milne was born in Libby, Montana, in 1956. He received his B.Sc. in electrical engineering and computer science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1978 and a Ph.D. in artificial intelligence at the University of Edinburgh in 1983. He then spent four years with the US military, first as an assistant professor at the USAF Institute of Technology and then as chief scientist of the Army AI Center at the Pentagon.

Milne earned international respect for his innovative work in adapting AI as a practical aid to industry and in bridging the gap between the research laboratory and the factory floor. He

Rob Milne.

was considered a leader in the effort to promote artificial intelligent applications. Even during his ascent on Mount Everest, he was testing a communications system called IMPACs, which allows climbers and adventurers to plan their expeditions more effectively and report progress to those monitoring the expedition. The system was developed at the Artificial Intelligence Applications Institute in the School of Informatics at Edinburgh University.

Milne had many interests, especially his love of mountains and his 25-year challenge, set in graduate school, to climb the world's highest peaks. He was within 1,200 feet of the top of Everest, and of joining an elite group of mountaineers who have climbed the highest summits on seven continents, when he died from a heart attack.

In 2003, Rob Milne was given Fellowship of the Royal Society of Edinburgh (Scotland's National Academy) to recognize his work in applied artificial intelligence and for his efforts in giving leadership to European AI society activities.

Executive Council Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2005, Palo Alto, California

Attending: Ron Brachman, Steve Chien, Tim Finin, Lise Getoor, Yolanda Gil, Carla Gomes, Jim Hendler, Hyam Hirsh, Michael Littman, Alan

Mackworth, Tom Mitchell, Andrew Moore, Karen Myers, Illah Nourbakhsh, and Ted Senator.

Not Present: Tony Cohn, Oren Etzioni, David Leake, Maja Mataric, Yoav Shoham.

AAAI President Ron Brachman brought the meeting to order at 9:00 AM with a review of the Executive Council committee structure, and the mechanism for bringing a topic for discussion before the Executive Council. Each committee was encouraged to meet prior to each meeting to discuss pending issues, and bring their recommendation to the Council for consideration.

Brachman reported that the officers and the executive director have been involved in an extensive review process during the past six months. One of the conclusions of that review is that Brachman is anxious to identify ways to increase increase membership and attendance at the national conference.

Standing Committee Reports

Finance: Ted Senator, Secretary-Treasurer, announced that Yoav Shoham has joined the Finance Committee. The AAAI financial statement as of December 31, 2004 showed a fund balance of 7,624,286 — virtually unchanged from December 2003. However, AAAI has continued to rely on its operating reserve to fund its operations and grant program. A plan adopted in 2002 to reduce the deficit by $300,000 per year is still being pursued, albeit on a somewhat slower path. The budget for 2005 projects a deficit reduction of $600,000 from the original $1.2 million in 2002. The eventual goal is to reduce the annual withdrawal from the operating reserve to approximately 5 percent of the fund. The Executive Committee will be reviewing the budget to see if there are ways to further reduce the deficit during the current fiscal year, or alternately, to propose a modification to the current policy that would allow for an increased annual rate of reduction in the operating reserve. The Council encouraged the Committee to look for innovative ways to increase revenue through sponsorship, conference participation, and membership as an al-

ternative to further budget cuts. Senator reported that the investment portfolio, with a value of $7,587,286 on December 31, split between three managers, is invested according to the target percentages in the AAAI financial policy of approximately 66 percent equity and 35 percent fixed assets. However, the Finance Committee is seeking more information about possibly reduced fees for a lower level of service.

Awards / Fellows / Nominating: Past President Tom Mitchell reported that the Fellows Selection Committee was reaching consensus on the list of new fellows for 2005. He also solicited nominations for the Distinguished Service Award and the Classic Paper Award. He reported that the Nominating Committee only receives a handful of nominations each year for candidates to serve on the Executive Council and encouraged Executive Council members to nominate people in the 2006 cycle. Carol Hamilton will send a reminder to all Council members about how to subscribe to the AAAI membership mailing list so that they can receive announcements about elections and other AAAI programs.

Conference: Conference committee chair Jim Hendler reported that technical paper submissions for AAAI-05 almost doubled from the previous year, partly due to the very late submission deadline after the IJCAI notification date. The Council noted that this was a rare opportunity to make AAAI as inclusive as possible.

Hendler reported that several new features have been added to the conference, including a special track featuring highlights and summaries from AI sister conferences, a conference-wide poster session, a game-playing competition, and an invited speaker track that will not conflict with the technical talk presentations. During the review process, a new author-feedback period was added as well. Other programs will include IAAI-05, the tutorial forum (16 tutorials), 13 workshops, the intelligent systems demonstrations, student abstracts, the AAAI/SIGART doctoral consortium, and the robot competition and exhibition. This will be the first year that the con-

ference will be held entirely in a hotel venue. Carla Gomes, the AAAI-05 sponsor chair, has been working with Carol Hamilton to increase sponsorships this year.

Hendler also reported that the new Artificial Intelligence and Interactive Digital Entertainment Conference will be held in early June in Marina del Rey, California. The technical program and invited speaker track had been set, and the committee was in the process of expanding sponsorships. Current sponsors included Electronic Arts, Microsoft, NAVUS, Mad Doc Software, Soar Technology, and USC Institute for Creative Technologies.

With the new emphasis on committee structure and discussion, Hendler proposed that a general chair be appointed for each conference, who would oversee the general programs and plans for the conference. This would relieve both the program chairs and the conference committee chair of this responsibility, which has become overwhelming with the increasing number of subprograms. The Council unanimously approved Ken Forbus for this post in 2006, as well as the 2006 program chairs, Yolanda Gil and Raymond Mooney. A suggestion was also made that both the IAAI and AIIDE general chairs should serve on the AAAI Conference Committee, and that the chairs of future conferences should be formally approved by the Executive Council.

Hendler circulated a new proposal for a Poker Competition at AAAI-05. The Council determined that some clarification was needed and that there was not sufficient time before AAAI-05 to implement the needed changes. Therefore, the proposal was not accepted, but the group was encouraged to submit another proposal for 2006. They were also strongly encouraged to submit a proposal for an intelligent systems demonstration in 2005.

Grants: Carol Hamilton reported that as part of the overall budget reduction effort, grant activity had been severely reduced or eliminated to events not wholly sponsored by AAAI. In addition, the Executive Committee will continue to examine ways to reduce subsidies to AAAI events or programs through cost savings, sponsor-

ships, or modified programs. The Grants committee will examine the current conference and workshop grant guidelines to develop creative ways to sponsor and cooperate with programs in the future.

Membership: Haym Hirsh reported that memberships continued to increase at a steady level during the previous eight months. The popularity of the platinum category registration is largely responsible. In addition, membership is recovering from 2001 and 2003 when no membership discount was offered for IJCAI conferences. The membership committee will be examining past trends and surveys during the coming months and will be seeking innovative ways to attract and retain new members. They will also plan to conduct a survey of new members and members who did not renew to determine the primary reasons for joining, as well as the reasons for leaving the association. They may conduct focus groups at a conference or symposium to see what the correlation is between membership and conference attendance. Carol Hamilton will inquire about the AAAI membership use of the online *AI Journal* access benefit.

Publications: Mike Hamilton presented the report on behalf of Publications Chair David Leake. The upcoming issues for the magazine are well underway, with a special issue on IAAI in the fall and a special AAAI twenty-fifth anniversary/AI fiftieth anniversary issue for the winter, featuring articles by several AAAI past presidents among others. Several changes have taken places in the magazine production process, including freelance copyediting, the use of electronic proofing tools, and electronic author proofs, all resulting in reduced cost and increased efficiency. Hamilton announced that Tony Cohn is the new editor-in-chief of the AAAI Press. Two new books, *Advances in Data Mining* and *New Directions in Question Answering,* were published in the fall of 2004. A new book, *Android Epistemology Revisited,* will be published in the fall of 2005. Four new book proposals are under review.

Hamilton reported that volumes 18-22 of *JAIR* are now available from AAAI in hard copy, and that subscriptions are trickling in. Costs have been

less than half of what was originally anticipated for the first two years. Therefore, the Press would like to continue the project for an additional year, with the hope that it will be revenue neutral in the future, possibly by 2006. The Council approved the extension of this experiment for another year.

Hamilton also reported that Google has proposed indexing all AAAI publications in Google Scholar. In their model, Google crawlers would be granted access to the full text of the AAAI Digital Library. Google Scholar searches would return a link to a page generated by AAAI (no content would be cached). A request by the Publications Committee to proceed to negotiate this more formally with Google and to put this in place as soon as possible (unless unexpected issues arise) was approved by the Executive Council. The committee will explore models for facilitating member access and for making additional information available through the pages generated by AAAI (for example, to encourage memberships). The committee will also examine the costs of implementation.

The Publications Committee has been exploring ways to make the AAAI digital library accessible to libraries in response to inquiries from several institutional members. They proposed a model with fees based on a sliding scale according to library size. Based on a comparative study of other computer society rates, and taking into account the difference in size of their digital libraries, the committee proposed the following rates: small labs and workgroups: $750.00 (less than 1,000 users); medium sized libraries $1,000.00 (1,001–5,000 users); and large libraries $1,250.00 (more than 5,000) users. A special introductory rate may be offered to encourage participation. The Council approved this proposal with the following stipulation: no access be granted to the *AI Magazine* for the first year after publication.

At the summer 2004 Executive Council meeting, the Publications Committee was charged with examining the potential impact of allowing free access to the AAAI digital library. The committee concluded that in light of the likely adverse effects on income

and membership from allowing free access, access to the digital library should remain a member benefit. Additional information corroborating the committee recommendation will be presented by David Leake at the summer meeting.

Symposium: Karen Myers reported that attendance at the Fall Symposium in Washington, DC doubled from the last fall event held in 2002, with eight symposia held instead of five. The AI Funding seminar that immediately preceded the symposium series was very successful and there are plans to repeat this program in 2005. FSS-05 will be held at the same venue in Arlington, Virginia just outside Washington, DC. The Spring Symposium preregistration numbers indicated a slight decline in attendance for 2005, but overall the symposium series program appears to be healthy with a good selection of proposals and submissions for each event.

Old Business

Computing Research Association: CRA Liaison Tim Finin reported that the annual Computing Leadership Summit was expanded beyond CRA's affiliate members to include representatives from 23 different organizations and industry labs who are concerned about computing research issues. The purpose was to address several problems critical to computing research: (1) the declining federal investment in computing research, (2) the small number of US-born undergraduates who attend graduate school in computing and related fields, and (3) the small number of US high school students who choose computing and related fields as a college major. In response to these three problems, the goal of the summit was to work together to create and disseminate clear and consistent messages that make the case for: (1) increased federal funding of computing research; (2) going to graduate school in computing; and (3) undergraduate majors/minors in computing. Ron Brachman reviewed several of the discussion topics, including the ongoing issue of decreased funding for basic research and broadening participation in computing research among minorities and women. Finin reported that the CRA

has plans to pursue both the funding and pipeline issues more aggressively, and is forming task forces for this purpose. They have asked for volunteers from AAAI to serve on these committees. More information will be circulated after the meeting.

As part of an effort to address the pipeline issue, John White of ACM was soliciting signatures from participating organizations for a letter to the NCAA, requesting that computer science be added to the list of requirements for eligibility. (The letter was circulated after the Council meeting and the Council voted in favor of AAAI signing the letter after certain modifications were made.)

Area Conference Research: Yolanda Gil circulated a summary of her 35-page report regarding her research on ten artificial intelligence area conferences. The report is based in her discussions with the organizers of the following conferences: AAMAS, ACL, ICRA, AIED, ISWC, ICML, ICAPS, IUI, and KR. Her report concludes that there is significant potential for the AAAI conference to reach a broader audience, to increase its technical paper submission rate, and to increase its corporate/institutional sponsorship. In addition, there are several ways for AAAI to strengthen its cooperative role with these and other conferences, including coordination of dates, continuation of the new sister conference presentations, special issues of *AI Magazine* on area conferences, proceedings publication, conference and financial services, and conference sponsorship and cooperation. The AAAI conference and workshop support programs could be improved and expanded as well as pursued more proactively. This program should also be advertised more widely so that area communities are aware of this contribution by AAAI. AAAI should explore a bigger role in international conferences. The full report will be circulated to the Council after the meeting. Yolanda will work with the Grants Committee to explore ways to strengthen the affiliation between AAAI and area conferences. The Conference Committee will organize a luncheon for the sister conference representatives at AAAI in Pittsburgh. Carol Hamilton will check with IJCAI to see

if an international AI society meeting is planned at IJCAI-05.

AI Fiftieth Anniversary: Jim Hendler reported that there are plans now for four interlinked events surrounding AAAI-06 in Boston, including the following: a one and a half day AAAI Fellows symposium just prior to the conference; a kick-off event at AAAI-06 consisting of a possible panel or film, special workshops/programs/roundtables featuring specific topics throughout the conference; and a final presentation at a plenary session at the end of the conference. A formal document will be published as a result. Another nonaffiliated event is planned at Dartmouth.

Several special projects commemorating AI's fiftieth anniversary have been suggested, including displaying the 1986 signature quilt, creating an AI timeline poster, producing a film, video or play about AI, or publishing a book. Sponsorship is a key issue. Identifying sponsorship opportunities and sponsors needs to be coordinated. The events at AAAI will be part of a broader plan for the International Year of AI, with AAAI-06 and IJCAI-07 as the anchor events. International participation will be solicited. IEEE will publish tie-ins in its magazine. A chair for the North American events is being sought, and will hopefully be one of AAAI's past presidents. Budget issues will need to be resolved soon. AAAI-06 events will be publicized on the conference Web site.

New Business

AI Topics: Tom Mitchell reported that the Executive Committee had completed a review of the AI Topics Web site, sponsored by AAAI. The site is used regularly by elementary, middleschool, and high school students, as well as by people with a general interest in artificial intelligence. In addition, it has become an important resource for high school teachers and some press contacts. The committee recommends that the site be continued, and this was approved by the Council, pending a satisfactory proposal from the website administrator. Mitchell also suggested that a committee be formed to evaluate the general structure of the current website, and to

see how it is satisfying the needs of its constituents. Steve Chien, Karen Myers, Carla Gomes, Michael Littman, and Tom Mitchell agreed to serve on this committee.

Volunteer Program: Carol Hamilton requested some guidance from the Council on the status of the volunteer program at AAAI-06. With the move from a convention center to a hotel setting, it is likely that less volunteers will be needed. The Council recommended that volunteer participation be maximized to the extent possible by reducing shift lengths, and perhaps creating innovative ways for students to volunteer. Tim Finin suggested creating a student-run blog, that will document each day's activities at the conference from a student perspective. Tim will follow up on this proposal.

National Conference Report: The AAAI Conference Committee was asked by the Executive Council to generate a set of recommendations to increase attendance to the AAAI conference and indirectly AAAI membership. Their recommendations were as follows: First, create a new position of General Chair to plan new events and special projects. The General Chair is expected to be a well-known AI researcher, and will concentrate on the strategic elements of the conference, or help with securing a high-level keynote speaker or sponsorship efforts. Ken Forbus has been selected as general chair for 2006, and his appointment was ratified by the Executive Council. A formal description of his duties will be drafted by the Conference Committee.

Second, increase interaction between senior and junior AI researchers by requiring plenary session speakers to participate in a roundtable discussion, with 20–50 preregistered participants. Preference will be given to students and new faculty members.

Third, increase conference attendance and membership through Member Posters at the conference. Any member of AAAI could submit a poster and therefore have a practical reason to attend the conference. A high acceptance rate would be expected. The posters would be available digitally. All participants would be required to register for the conference.

Fourth, attract senior members back

to the conference by soliciting senior member papers, which might call for a short write-up of an idea and point to a body of work that supports it.

Fifth, integrate important results from other conferences through the AAAI Nectar (new scientific and technical advances in research) program. This track of papers would cite at least one publication in a major conference from 2005 or 2004. The track would give visibility in the broader AI community of exciting results of general interest that can currently be found only in the proceedings of particular research areas. These short papers would be presented in a special poster session, and a few selected ones as short presentations.

Sixth, establish special tracks in the AAAI-06 Call for Papers. These tracks would have their own review process and as a result separate acceptance rates. Hopefully, they would attract areas that have been successful as workshops and symposia to the main conference.

Seventh, continue the representation of related AI conferences through special tracks, panels, and events to bring some of the best work from these communities to AAAI, making the national conference an integrative event.

Eighth, produce digital proceedings for distribution at the conference to allow for larger numbers of papers and some flexibility in final submission dates.

Ninth, work to increase conference sponsorship, possibly through rebuilding the conference trade show. All the committee's recommendations were endorsed by the Council. Jim Hendler and Tom Mitchell will form an ad hoc committee to review items 4, 6, and 7 to determine the best way to implement them. The committee assured the Council that the addition of these features would not dilute the impact of the accepted papers, but would instead broaden the scope of the conference to better represent the mature discipline that AI has become. The hope is to make the conference an integrative center for the field, and to achieve a revenue-neutral model.

Alan Mackworth Receives the Presidential Ribbon from Outgoing AAAI President Ronald Brachman. (Photo courtesy Ted Senator.)

Strategic Planning

Tom Mitchell reviewed some of the discussion from the last meeting. In general, AAAI activities fall into the following categories: (1) scientific exchange through conferences, publications, and access to *AI Journal*, (2) education through tutorials and AI Topics, (3) mentoring students through the doctoral consortium, the student abstract program, and student scholarships, and (4) outreach/communications through press relations, participation in the CRA, *AI Magazine,* AI Topics, Botball, and Intel awards. Mitchell noted, however, that there is always room for improvement, and asked the Council to brainstorm some ideas about directions for the future, and ways to inject vitality into the field. Some ideas included (1) Expanding our press relations program. Make sure that the press list is getting copies of the AI Alert, and create a database of names that represent an extensive AI expertise knowledge base. Work with a writer to publish an article on the current state of AI, creating a list of the top 10 AI problems; (2) Improve corporate relations by creating a bridge between companies and students. Enlist more corporate participation in the conference through sponsorships and exhibits, perhaps creating a new role of exhibits chair on the conference committee; (3) Invite program managers to the conference, and provide an opportunity for scientists to demonstrate their research; (4) Help researchers throughout their careers with expanded educational programs; (5) Get more involved in policy decisions; and (6) Increase visibility of the field through a high-profile award.

The Council agreed that the best way to carry out these plans is to work on creating the infrastructure to accomplish them. As part of this process, the Executive Committee will discuss the best way to improve outreach and there will be a progress report by the Strategic Planning Committee at the next meeting. The mission statement of the Council will also be reviewed at the next meeting. All committees should review their current charges and make suggested revisions if necessary. One additional meeting (possibly a teleconference) of the Executive Council may be planned for the fall.

Ron Brachman thanked everyone for coming and expressed his appreciation for all of the committee work thus far. The meeting adjourned at 4:45 PM.