### Repeat of Prior ICDE'2000 Announcement

As many of you perhaps are aware, the deadline for the ICDE'2000 conference, which is the flagship conference of our technical committee, was June 16. I am co-PC chair along with Gerhard Weikum. We had almost 300 submissions, so this promises to be a very selective and high quality conference. Our PC members are now just beginning the reviewing of the submissions, with authors notified of acceptance by October first. ICDE'2000 will be held in San Diego, California from Feb. 28 to March 3. San Diego is a great place (even more so in the winter when the weather is tough in many other places) and the conference will have an excellent program. While we will not know the complete technical program for a while, we do know that there will be two great keynote speakers,

**Jim Gray:** Senior Researcher in Microsoft Research, and 1999 ACM Turing Award winner;

**Dennis Tsichritzis:** Chairman of the Executive Board of GMD German National Research Center for Information Technology.

Both are terrific speakers with great insights and much useful information to convey. I would encourage you to plan to attend.

### This Issue

SQL has been, in Mike Stonebraker's words, "inter-galactic data-speak" for the relational database world. It looks increasingly like XML will play an analogous role in the world of semi-structured data on the web. Unlike the coming of relational databases, however, and the introduction of SQL, the database research community has not played a large part in this XML revolution. The current issue reflects both the non-research origins of XML and, if researchers act promptly, that it is still early in the revolution and research input can be both useful and effective.

What makes the current situation a close parallel to 25 years ago with the relational model is that the business world is again handing researchers the problem to be solved. Indeed, our industry is racing to provide XML infrastructure for e-commerce, information interchange, effective query of diverse sources, and yet more integration of diverse data. In a sense, the emergence of XML is evidence of a hierarchical data "counter-revolution". But, just as in the political world, things are never quite restored to the way they were before. The expertise that has been painstakingly acquired over years of working with the relational model, together with XML's semi-structured aspects, ensure that history will not repeat. Rather, we are once again setting off into unchartered waters.

The current issue is a very nice blend of tutorial, industry perspective, and research opportunity. Donald Kossmann is the editor for this issue, and has done a very nice job of pulling together papers from both research and industry. The issue clearly captures a technical area in the state of flux. That is, of course, both a problem and an opportunity. Let me thank Donald for his very successful efforts, and invite you all to read an interesting and timely Bulletin issue.