International Conference on Data Engineering (ICDE'05)

For one last time, I want to draw your attention to the "call for participation" for ICDE'05 that is on the inside back cover of this issue. ICDE (also called simply the Data Engineering Conference) is sponsored by the IEEE Technical Committee on Data Engineering (TCDE). The 2005 Data Engineering Conference is in Tokyo in April, timed to coincide with the cherry blossoms. I encourage you to find out more about the conference at its web site (http://icde2005.is.tsukuba.ac.jp/), and urge you to attend. You will find it very rewarding, with a great technical program and a wonderful opportunity to see Tokyo and Japan.

The Current Issue

Networks and databases have co-existed for a very long time. We old timers remember CICS (the archetypical TP monitor) and SNA (network architecture), which, together with IMS (the database) formed the heart of IBM's enterprise computing software in the early 1970's. The current world has a much larger diversity of product offerings, from many vendors including startup companies. It is a world of networked computers, grid computing, P2P, sensors, data streams, world-wide web, web services, yada, yada, yada!

This is also a world in which researchers are actively participating. This issue of the Bulletin grew to a rather larger size than is the common case simply because there is so much going on in so many parts of our "database" community. There is interest from database vendors, communications providers, enterprise computing vendors, and a host of web centric companies as well. A cross section of this activity is captured in the current issue.

This issue was very ably assembled by Minos Garofalakis. Minos was very successful in soliciting papers from some of the prime groups doing research in this area. And he shepherded the articles into an issue that truly does represent a snapshot of some of the very latest work in the area. This is a fine example of the role that the Bulletin desires to play, presenting work in progress from leading researchers and practitioners in areas of current interest to our community. I thank Minos for his fine job. I'm confident you will find the issue both engaging and useful.