International Conference on Data Engineering

ICDE (the International Conference on Data Engineering) is the flagship database conference of the IEEE. The 2009 ICDE will be held in Shanghai, China at the end of March. I would encourage readers to check the ”Call for Participation” on the back inside cover of this issue of the Bulletin for more details. ICDE has become not only one of the best database conferences, but one of the largest as well. I attend this conference every year and always find my time well spent. Not only is the research program first-rate, but there is an industrial program, demos, and workshops as well.

The organization exercising oversight for ICDE within the IEEE Computer Society is the ICDE Steering Committee. This organization has on-going responsibility for selecting the conference committees for each of the individual conferences, and for establishing the policies and procedures under which these annual conference committees operate. The outstanding success of ICDE during this decade has been enabled by the planning and management of this committee. Erich Neuhold was Steering Committee Chair until 2007. Since then, Calton Pu has been the Chair. More information about the Steering Committee can be found at `http://tab.computer.org/tcde/icde_stc.html`. Much is owed to Thomas Risse, who established the web site, and has done so much over the years, both for the Steering Committee and for the Technical Committee on Data Engineering, which sponsors both ICDE and this Bulletin.

The Current Issue

Not so long ago, transaction processing was considered to be a core part of the database field. Roughly speaking, transaction processing involves not only the database, but also applications written that exploit databases and transactions to provide functions that are specific to some particular problem area, e.g. business data processing. More recently, the database field, as measured by conference participation, has been moving away from transaction processing, perhaps considering it to be a solved problem. However, with the emergence of the web, and specifically web services, there are new solutions and new problems to be solved. The subject of the current issue of the Bulletin is ”Semantic Web Services: Composition and Analysis”. I hope that it will stimulate some further involvement by the database community in the area of applications exploiting databases, now in the new context of the web, cloud computing, and widely deployed applications.

The editor of the current issue is Jianwen Su. Jianwen has actively participated in the area of web services research and has focused this issue on this area. The resulting issue contains papers on a wide selection of topics dealing with web services: design, composition, reliability, analysis, reasoning about them, and more. What I like about the issue, and part of what the Bulletin is all about, is that the issue brings these papers together in one place, creating a very useful reference for further work as well as providing a great way to become familiar with this area. I want to thank Jianwen for his very successful effort in bringing this very interesting issue together.