Connections

The Newsletter of the IEEE Neural Networks Council

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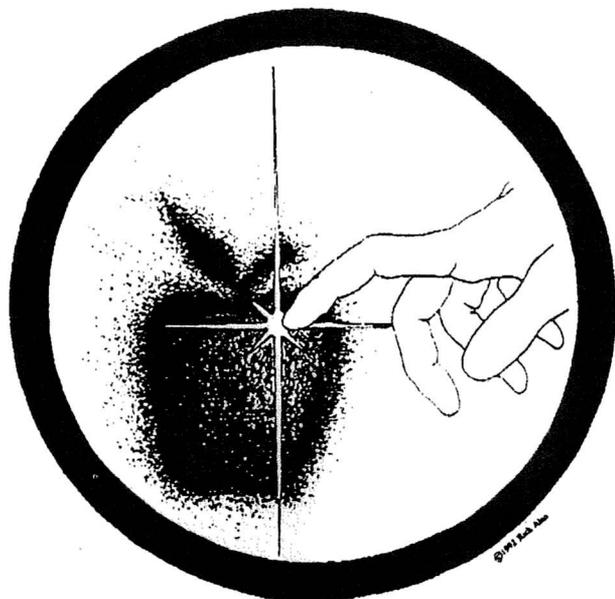
Also in this issue:

Artificial Life: What is it?
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CoNNections Newsletter

President's Message

Russell C. Eberhart
Research Triangle Institute

I just returned from the IJCNN '92 Beijing. The conference was a great success. My special thanks go to Prof. Sha Zong for being responsible for the overall conference arrangements. The banquet, with its sumptuous 14-course dinner and traditional Chinese music and theatrical performances, was especially memorable.

Thanks also go to Conference Co-Chairmen Profs. Wu You Shou and Shun-Ichi Amari, and the Program Co-Chairmen Prof. Zhong Yi Xin and Dr. Harold Szu. The technical papers and posters were of high quality. It is noteworthy that much discussion occurred in the question-and-answer periods after the paper presentations. I have never seen as much "give and take" at an IJCNN— and all despite potential language barriers.

Special thanks also go to Mary Lou Padgett, who chaired a session on standards. Finally, thanks are due to the man "behind the scenes", Mr. Zhou Mengqi, Secretary of the IEEE Beijing Section, who helped with numerous arrangements, and made my time in Beijing easier and more pleasant.

At the banquet, International Cooperation Awards were presented by the Chinese Neural Network Society to Prof. Sha Zong, Prof. Shun-Ichi Amari, Dr. Harold Szu, and to me. As I stated at the banquet, Prof. Sha certainly deserves the award more than I. It was Prof. Sha who contacted Dr. Irv Engelson at IEEE Headquarters in late 1990 and suggested that the NNC send a representative to China to participate in the First Annual Chinese National Neural Networks Conference. I also believe that I share the award with many people in the NNC who "kept the faith" and worked hard to make the conference a reality, such as Prof. Robert Marks, who has consistently helped with international activities, and Prof. Robert Newcomb, whose team quickly and professionally reviewed all papers from outside P. R. China submitted to the IEEE.

During the Beijing IJCNN, there was discussion of the formation of an Asian Neural Networks Association. One of the purposes of the association, as I understand it, would be to coordinate conferences and other activities in the Pacific Rim area. I heartily endorse such an organization. The IEEE, through its sections and NNC Regional Interest Groups in Asia, stands ready to support the association's activities. I have some concerns, however, that are reflected by the words "in Asia" and "support" in the previous sentence. I strongly believe that, to be effective, an Asian association must be organized and run by Asians. It is important that non-Asians not try to control (or even "guide") the formation or activities of the association. At the Council level, we are committed to being responsive to our constituents, which include IEEE Sections and NNC Regional Interest Groups.

We are now looking forward to our next conferences: the International Conference on Neural Networks, and FUZZ-IEEE '93, to be held concurrently in San Francisco in late March, 1993. Dr. Enrique Ruspini, the General Chairman, is heading an organization that will, I'm sure, carry on the tradition of excellence.