FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Computer Society has made major strides forward during this 25th Anniversary year. The standing committees, technical committees, and chapters have been very active and have expanded their activities into new areas. Without reviewing the entire year, I would like to report to you two changes in the Computer Society that I consider important: membership elections and software-related activities.

Membership elections

Included in this issue of Computer are bylaw changes which were passed last summer. These changes provide for a vice-president of publications, a vice-president of conferences, a vice-president for technical activities, a vice-president of chapters, and a number of vice-presidents over technical interests groups. The current election procedure requires that all vice-presidents be selected from Governing Board members. Selecting a large number of officers from a small number of Governing Board members, in my opinion, leads to a closed group selection procedure. In view of this I am very pleased with the Governing Board recommendation that the election procedure be changed to allow officers to be selected from Computer Society membership at large.

In addition, the Computer Society Governing Board has recommended that a constitution and bylaws change be prepared which would provide for all voting members of the board to be elected by membership mail ballot. Besides the proposed 20 regular board members, the president and the first and second vice-presidents would be elected by membership mail ballot. All of the officers would be appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Governing Board. The new president would allow nominations by a nominating committee and by membership petition. Terms would be for two years and would run concurrently with the term of the president. The regular board members' terms will be two years, with 10 out of 20 board members being elected each year. The only restrictions on qualifications for officers and Governing Board members would be that candidates must be members of the Computer Society.

The proposed election procedure changes will, hopefully, become effective before the next Computer Society elections take place.

Software-related activities

Software activities have an established tradition in the Computer Society. Besides our long-standing technical committees and conference cosponsorship on such subjects as simulation, microprogramming, design automation, and fault-tolerant computing—all of which incorporate a significant software component—we have more recently taken the initiative in the areas of software reliability and software engineering. The Transactions on Software Engineering and the International Conference on Software Engineering, both initiated in 1975, are now firmly established and generally recognized as fulfilling a genuine and important need for the computer professional.

The subject of software has received a good deal of attention during our last two Governing Board meetings, in which considerable sentiment was expressed in favor of initiating a third COMPCON-like conference—this one to be oriented primarily toward software. In response to this interest, I appointed an ad hoc committee with Steve Yau as chairman to look into the feasibility of establishing such a conference. The committee has completed its investigation and has submitted the following recommendations:

1. an annual conference emphasizing software and applications should be organized;
2. the conference should be held in Chicago during November; and
3. the conference should follow the COMPCON Guidelines, with the exception that the steering committee of the conference may decide to publish either a digest or proceedings of the conference.

Although software and applications would be emphasized, it was understood that the conference would not exclude computer systems. A proposal for the new software-oriented conference is to be prepared and presented to the Governing Board for approval. I strongly endorse this idea. A COMPCON-type software-oriented conference could be an important service to Computer Society members working in software-related areas.

Thanks

Our success this year has been due to the efforts of volunteers and Computer Society staff alike. I would like to give special thanks to Harry Hayman and True Seaborn for their support and untiring dedication to the Computer Society. We have an excellent organization, and I hope that the next 25 years will be as exciting as the first 25 years have been.

Dick B. Simmons
President
IEEE Computer Society