From the Managing Editor's Desk: *Glasnost & Neural Nets*
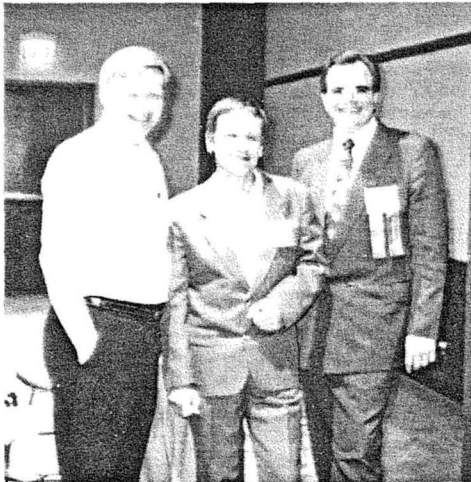
Rosalyn Snyder

It is one thing to read about the momentous events in the USSR in the newspaper. It is quite another to have a distinguished Russian scientist in my kitchen who is too distraught to express a preference for coffee or tea, and who is trying simultaneously to read the account of events in his homeland in the *Winston-Salem Journal*, phone his family in Moscow (only to get a recording that "No Calls Are Permitted"), listen to breaking news on National Public Radio, and explain to the Snyders who all these people *are*.

In July at the IJCNN in Seattle, Wes Snyder (the editor of this publication) agreed to be co-program chair of the *1992 RNNS/IEEE Symposium on Neuroinformatics and Neurocomputing*. When we learned that Dr. Witali Dunin-Barkowski, general chair of the

IEEE NNC Meetings Chair Roy Nutter, Russian Neural Networks Society President Witali Dunin-Warkowski and IEEE NNC President Bob Marks at the Seattle IJCNN.

symposium and the president of the Russian Neural Networks society, was returning to the U.S. in August, we invited him to come to Winston-Salem to present a seminar and work out details of the symposium. We looked forward to an interesting experience, but we had no idea just *how* interesting it would be.

We met the plane on Sunday, August 18. After a pleasant evening we all went to bed, blissfully ignorant of the arrest of Gorbachev and other late-breaking news. The arrival of the morning paper triggered the kitchen chaos scene. After the news Wes and our guest went to tour Bowman Gray Medical School and the Computer Science Department at Wake Forest University. Witali showed interest in everything and tried to maintain his previously buoyant enthusiasm. It must have been hard to concentrate on such things. Changes were taking place that would impact his career, but his life and the lives of him and his family, and he was thousands of miles away and unable to take part.

On Tuesday, while Wes drove our older son to Raleigh to begin his freshman year at the university, Witali and I time-shared my computers. I worked on a newsletter, and he alternately pored over the news accounts in the *New York Times* and prepared slides for his seminar, getting technical help on the MacIntosh from Robert, our ten year old. Robert also initiated our new friend into the mysteries of Nintendo (so much for cultural exchange). By Tuesday night, the news from the USSR suddenly began to appear brighter and Wednesday it was clear the coup had failed. Planning for the Symposium was energetically renewed and on Thursday morning, Witali left, , carrying a newly purchased fax machine, perhaps the symbol of the second Russian Revolution. and returned to his home and institute to take his place in the changes going on in his country.

NNC Standards Committee

The Neural Networks Council has initiated an activity to begin work on guidelines and standards for artificial neural networks. To that end, a Standards Committee has been formed with Walter J. Karplus as chair and Mary Lou Padgett as vice-chair. A Standards Coordinating Committee was appointed and held its first meeting last July in Seattle. This was followed by an open meeting for attendees of IJCNN-91, also in Seattle.

Three provisional Working Groups have been formed:

- **Glossary and Symbols:** Mary Lou Padgett (chair) Auburn University 1165 Owens Road Auburn, AL 36830 (205) 821-2472 email: mpadgett@eng.auburn.edu. *Purpose:* establish equivalencies and assist communication among the widely divergent neural networks community members.
- **Paradigms:** Prof. E. (Litza) Tzanakou (chair) Dept. of Biomedical Engineering P.O., Box 909 Rutgers Univer-sity Piscataway, NJ 08855-0909 (908) 932-2037 email: etzanako@elbereth.rutgers.edu. *Purpose:* establish elementary building blocks for the construction and identification of neural network paradigms.
- **Performance Evaluation Methodology:** Robert Shelton (chair) PT4 NASA/JSC Houston, TX 77058 (713) 483-8110 shelton@gothamcity.jsc.nasa.gov. *Purpose:* establish guidelines for comparative performance evaluation of neural networks.

It is expected to formalize these working groups in February, 1992 and also to form an additional Working Group to deal with Hardware and Software Interfaces.

Anyone interested in participating, regardless of society affiliation, is invited to contact the above individuals, or to get in touch with:
Prof. Walter J. Karplus, Computer Science Department, University of California, Los Angeles, CA 90024, 213) 825-2929 email: karplus@cs.ucla.edu

1992 NNC Officers

The Administrative Committee of the *IEEE Neural Networks Council* elected officers for 1992 at the Seattle IJCNN in July. The 1992 officers, who comprise the Council's Executive Committee, are

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