by Irene L. Travis

The Semantic Web envisions a world in which computers can understand and act on the semantic meaning of information. A key element of this vision is data linkage, the infrastructure that can enable machines to find information related to the same entity such as a person, organization or concept across multiple information resources. Data linkage entails an enormous and necessarily distributed effort, which, in turn, requires not only new ideas but also a host of new standards to support it. Knowledge organization systems (KOS) such as classification systems, thesauri, terminology lists and ontologies are a key component of the semantic backbone. Therefore, standards relating to the encoding of KOS (for example, the Simple Knowledge Organization System [SKOS] and the Web Ontology Language [OWL]) and the uniform description of KOS, for which standards are under development, are critical. Indeed, such standards are already enabling innovative projects.

Our guest editor, Jane Greenberg, has assembled a broad range of articles on these challenges under the umbrella "Knowledge Organization Innovation: Design and Frameworks." The eight articles range from the description of deployed systems, such as KOS registries and cross-database data linkage in an archaeological application, to discussions of the development of the new enabling frameworks to theoretical speculation about the new possibilities for knowledge organization, exploitation and discovery that lie ahead. It is an extensive, substantive and exciting special section, and we are very grateful to the guest editor and our many authors for their excellent contributions.

Our usual IA Column and President's Page also appear in this issue. Thom Haller, associate editor for IA, in a follow up to a previous column on the Plain Writing Act (www.asis.org/Bulletin/Dec-10/DecJan11_Haller.html) discusses how a new mandate stemming from the act has suddenly changed the users and expected services for the website plainlanguage.gov, and how that change, in turn, has impacted the adequacy of its architecture.

ASIS&T's relatively new activity as a sponsor of "webinars" is the subject of the President's Page. Linda Smith, 2011 ASIS&T president, long a participant and advocate for distance learning, provides her perspective on this vehicle for continuing education.

On matters relating to the *Bulletin* itself, we are continuing to experiment with the means to make *Bulletin* contents more visible to search engines and accessible to potential readers. As I noted in my last Desktop, we added indexing and brief abstracts to *Bulletin* articles on our website beginning with the February/March 2011 issue. To avoid burdening our volunteer authors and editors with the additional job of writing abstracts, we called upon Access Innovations, the company that currently indexes the *Bulletin* in the *ASIS&T Digital Library*, to perform this task. After our first publication with the abstracts, we realized that it was unclear to readers that the abstracts were not written by the authors themselves. So as we continue to seek the best ways to gain greater visibility for *Bulletin* articles and authors, we are still using the descriptions generated by Access Innovations, but for now, each will be labeled *Editor's Summary*, rather than *Abstract*. ∎

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