

VLDB 2004 Newsletter

Issue 1

August 31, 2004

Welcome to VLDB 2004

John Mylopoulos, General Chair

The international conference series on Very Large Data Bases (VLDB) was launched in 1975 in Framingham MA, about 20 miles from Boston. The conference was a huge success for its time, attracting almost 100 papers and more than 150 participants.

We have come a long way since then! VLDB conferences attract today hundreds of submissions and participants. Thanks to the efforts of programme committees, authors, and the VLDB Endowment over the years, VLDB conferences constitute today a prestigious scientific forum for the presentation and exchange of research results and practical experiences among members of the international Databases community.

VLDB conference regulars are familiar with Canada. This is the third time the conference is visiting, after Montreal (1980) and Vancouver (1992). In all three occasions, the Canadian Databases community served as backbone for the organizing and the programme committees. At the same time, as with other years, the committees that put together this conference were international, with participation from all regions of the globe. We are grateful to all members of these committees for their time and efforts. Special thanks to Tamer Özsu, the general programme chair of this year's conference; also Kyu-Young Whang, who served as the VLDB Endowment liaison. Their spirit of cooperation throughout was invaluable.

Of course, the technical programme is not the only attraction of this year's conference. The conference hotel is located in the core downtown area of Toronto, within walking distance of museums, parks, shopping areas and tourist attractions such as the CN tower, the Harbourfront or Lake Ontario. Toronto has been called the most multicultural city in the world and while here, you will have the opportunity to visit neighborhoods that have the distinctive ethnic flavour of parts of the Far East and Europe. More than that, Toronto is a well-run, safe city that visitors enjoy visiting and revisiting.

Welcome to VLDB'04 and Toronto. We hope that you enjoy both the technical programme and the city!!

Internet Access

- **Wireless:** There are three wireless stations in the Ballroom foyer area, and one outside the Territories room. Each station has a capacity of 40 connections. The SSID is "Fairmont". Please keep the laptop with you at all times.
- **Desktop computers:** There are four desktop computers with Internet connection available at Salon A.
- **Important notice:** Please be aware that the Internet connection at the hotel reception and guest rooms is provided by the hotel, **not** the conference organizers, and therefore it is not free.

Announcements

- **Change in program:** There is a change in session chairmanship. Divesh Srivastava will chair Research Session 4 today. David Toman will chair Research Session 15 on Thursday.
- **Proceedings:** A copy of the **electronic** version of the proceedings is provided in the registration package. Hard-copy proceedings are available at a cost of 40 CAD. You can also buy additional CDs with the electronic version for 5 CAD.
- There is a Medical Centre at the Mezzanine floor of the hotel. A medical doctor will be visiting the centre on Wednesday. In case of an emergency, dial 74333 (an internal number of the hotel) instead of 911.

Have you uploaded your presentation?

Remember that **all presenters are required to upload their presentation** to the computer provided by the organizers at the session room. If you have not uploaded it yet, please contact the student volunteer at your session room at least ten minutes prior to the start of the session. You will be provided with USB keys to copy the files from your laptop to the computer in the room.

TOURISM

Cirque du Soleil



Cirque du Soleil has thrilled more than 40 million spectators since it began two decades ago, growing out of a small festival in Quebec. Today, Cirque tours the globe offering a dramatic mix of circus arts and street entertainment featuring wild, outrageous costumes, magical lighting and original music; all without a single animal in the ring.

This world-famous attraction is **currently visiting Toronto**. The venue is at Ontario Place, which is easily accessible from the Royal York hotel (take the 509 streetcar inside Union Station). The schedule for this week is:

Tuesday	8:00 p.m.	
Wednesday	8:00 p.m.	
Thursday	4:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Friday	4:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Saturday	4:00 p.m.	8:00 p.m.
Sunday	1:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.

Ticket prices start at 75 CAD. For ticket information and purchases, call 1-800-361-4595 or visit

www.cirquedusoleil.com/CirqueDuSoleil/en/tickets/touring/alegria/toronto.htm

Six Attractions at One Low Price

CityPass provides entrance to 6 famous Toronto attractions for one low price. It includes tickets to the Art Gallery of Ontario, Casa Loma, CN Tower, Ontario Science Centre, Royal Ontario Museum, and Toronto Zoo. The price is 46 CAD (almost half as buying separate tickets). The pass is good for 9 days from the date of first use. It can be purchased at any of the 6 attractions, or online at citypass.com/buy/toronto.html.

For more information about Toronto, have a look at the guide *Toronto for Database Researchers* at page 6 of the conference brochure.

Weather

Sunny with cloudy periods

High 24C 75F

Tonight 14C 57F

What's On

8pm: Opera Concert at Harbourfront Centre. Free. For the tenth year, Altamira and the Canadian Opera Company present Altamira Summer Opera Concerts. For three consecutive nights, COC General Director Richard Bradshaw leads the acclaimed COC orchestra, members of the COC Ensemble Studio and special guest soloists in a selection of arias and overtures, as well as a special musical performance by children who attend the COC's Summer Opera Camps.

The Harborfront Centre is by the lake (235 Queens Quay West), and just 10 minutes walk from the Royal York hotel.

9pm: Outdoor Movies. Free. The Yonge-Dundas Square (in front of Eaton's Centre) will be transformed into an outdoor movie theatre to show two Canadian movies produced by The National Film Board of Canada. The movies are *World Drums* (1987) and *Spirits of Havana* (2002). For more information, visit www.ydsquare.ca/calendar.htm#aug. (Yonge and Dundas, 20 minutes walk from the hotel; subway: Dundas station)

Near the hotel...

- **Distillery Historic District:** North America's best preserved collection of Victorian industrial architecture is located in this historic enclave in downtown Toronto. Formerly the Gooderham & Worts Distillery (founded in 1832), *The Distillery* has been developed as a centre for arts, culture and entertainment. It is filled with galleries, artist studios and workshops, boutiques, retail stores, restaurants, bars and cafés. (located a short walk from the hotel, near the corner of Parliament and Front St. East)
- **Toronto Islands:** The ferry docks to the Toronto Islands are just a few minutes walk from the hotel. The islands provide the most spectacular view of Toronto's skyline. Best of all, there are no cars allowed, which makes the area a favourite for cyclists, walkers and rollerblade enthusiasts. The ferry docks are at the foot of Bay St.