
Editorial Comments

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TUG election

Please remember that this is an election year for TUG. Both the presidency and a number of seats on the Board are open for candidates. Nomination papers are due to the TUG office by March 15, 1999, balloting will take place during the spring, and newly elected officials will assume their offices at the annual meeting in Vancouver.

The form for nominations appeared in *TUGboat* 19(3), on page 234. The form is also available from the TUG Web site, at <http://www.tug.org/>, in the form of a PDF file, or a copy can be obtained on request from the TUG office (office@tug.org).

Your participation in this election will help to determine the course that TUG will take headed into the new century. Don't leave it to chance—become active and help make it happen.

TEX '98

During the past summer, Don Knuth undertook his periodic review of the accumulated bug reports for TEX, METAFONT, and the *Computers & Typesetting* book series. The new versions of all the source files are in place on CTAN, in <ftp://ftp.ctan.org/tex-archive/systems/knuth/>, mirrored from labrea.stanford.edu.

Here is a brief summary of changes.

- The most important *TEXbook* corrections appear in the files `errata.nine` and `errata.tex`; some insignificant changes (e.g., page numbers in index entries out of order) are corrected in `texbook.tex` but not mentioned in the errata files, so anyone who thinks s/he has found an error should check it in `texbook.tex` before reporting it.
- `plain.tex` has had a few changes and now has a format version 3.1415926, two steps ahead of the version of TEX itself. The definitions of `\AA`, `\d`, `\b`, `\c`, `rightarrowfill` and `leftarrowfill` were corrected or improved to work correctly or more robustly in a wider range of situations. A new control sequence, `\Orb`, was introduced to typeset the big circle used in `\copyright`.
- A few corrections were made to comments in *TEX: The Program*, but the version remains 3.14159.
- In *The METAFONTbook*, numerous nitpicky corrections are recorded in the errata file, but the only really important change is the cor-

rection to the syntax of path expressions on page 129 (repeated on page 213).

- METAFONT moves to version 2.7182, correcting a bug involving unprintable strings of length 1.
- Changes to Computer Modern typefaces are documented completely in the file `cm85.bug` as well as in `errata.tex` (changes to Volume E). Most corrections simply make the programs more robust in the presence of weirder combinations of parameters. Contrary to previous claims that the shapes would never change again, a few have changed in nontrivial ways, to improve their appearance in the new editions of *The Art of Computer Programming*: lowercase beta and omega, uppercase sans serif C and G, and the position of the dots on the i's in sans serif fi and ffi ligatures has descended to the normal position for i dots.
- DVltype is now version 1.6; it reports some errors better.
- VPtoVF is now version 1.5, fixing a bug with respect to rules of dimension zero.
- Typos in `GFtoPK.web` and `PKtype.web` were corrected, with no change to version numbers.
- In `logo.mf`, the S has been redesigned; it now sort of assumes that a T will follow, as in METAPOST.

Don's advice is to TEX and print out the file `errata.tex` for reference. His transmittal letter concluded, "In summary, I'm pleased that people still care enough about TEX/METAFONT to understand the details and to help me get them right. But oh how I wish I hadn't made so many mistakes!"

Don will next address TEX-related bugs in 2002. Until then, I will continue to collect reports, acting as his entomologist.

The end of an era — Phyllis Winkler retires

When Don Knuth created TEX, he intended it to be a tool for himself and his secretary, Phyllis Winkler, to prepare his books and papers for publication.

On October 1, 1998, Phyllis retired from Stanford, after 32 years of service, for 28 of which she was Don's secretary. As he says on his Web page of news for 1998¹,

She typed more than 200 of my papers, most of which required several rounds of revisions. She buffered all of my email and telephone messages. She administered the editorial

¹ <http://www-cs-faculty.stanford.edu/~knuth/news98.html>; a photo shows Phyllis with Don, who is, for I think the first time I've seen it, wearing a necktie.

work of more than a dozen technical journals, and helped out with numerous research projects. She made online indexes of all the correspondence in our files. She did all of the initial keyboarding for the new editions of *The Art of Computer Programming*, Volumes 1 and 3 — amounting to more than 1500 printed pages of what printers used to call “penalty copy” because it is so hard to do. And so on and so on, what a team we made! And she was simultaneously also serving as secretary for several other faculty members.

I remember Phyllis most fondly. I met her in 1979 when I was first sent to Stanford with a small group from AMS to learn \TeX ; she took very good care of us. Whenever a TUG meeting was held at Stanford, I always enjoyed checking in with her to find out what was happening. I learned some interesting personal things about her, for example that her son-in-law raised and trained large cats for several well known magicians; a delightful poster on her wall showed him with his hands full of tiny tiger kittens, their mother looking on with curiosity but without concern. Phyllis told me that once when she was visiting her daughter, her son-in-law suggested she might go out in the back yard to get some exercise running around with their resident panther. I *think* they were just kidding . . .

Phyllis also took care of communicating messages between Don and me whenever he would work on the current batch of \TeX bug reports. She could always be depended on to get necessary messages through to him, but insulate him, firmly but politely, from things that weren't urgent.

On September 30, members of the Stanford Computer Science Department held a retirement party for Phyllis. Among the other greetings, a resolution from the TUG Board expressed our appreciation for all her contributions over the past 20 years.

Along with many other friends, I wish Phyllis a long, productive, enjoyable retirement.

Sans Serif

Don Hosek, editor and publisher of *Serif: The Magazine of Type & Typography*, has created an electronic adjunct — “Sans Serif: The On-line Companion to Serif”. These Web pages (found at <http://www.quixote.com/serif/sans/>) contain some material related to items in the print product, along with a full calendar of type- and print-related events. Check it out — it contains more local and specialized events than we are able to include in the *TUGboat* calendar.

Sauter font distribution has a new maintainer

The Sauter font distribution, a comprehensive set of parameters for automated generation of Computer Modern and other METAFONT fonts, has been maintained for quite a long time by Jörg Knappen, who took over this task from the originator, John Sauter.

Owing to a change in his employment status, Jörg found it necessary to look for, and has found, a replacement. The new maintainer of the Sauter font distribution is Jeroen Nijhof; he can be reached at J.H.B.Nijhof@aston.ac.uk.

Goodies on CTAN

With the recent posting of yet another translation of *The (not always) short introduction to \LaTeX* (familarly known as *lshort*, the number of languages in which this little manual is now available has reached seven: English, Finnish, French, German, Mongolian, Russian, Spanish.

On CTAN, *lshort* can be found in [/tex-archive/info/lshort/<language>](http://tex-archive/info/lshort/<language>).

This is a fine beginner's manual for $\LaTeX 2\epsilon$, and while it doesn't replace Lamport or the other formally published manuals, it is readily available, and the price is right!

Other new or updated packages, tools, documentation, you name it, . . . , appear on CTAN in a continuing stream. How is one to know what is there, and to determine whether it is useful in one's own work? With this issue of *TUGboat*, we have initiated a new column, “The Treasure Chest”, in which one or more packages will be presented in each regular issue. Enough examples will be shown to provide a flavor of the package, so that a reader can decide to investigate further, if it's of interest. The first package to be presented is *soul.sty*. Take a look, let us know what you think, and if you have any suggestions for other packages you would like to see highlighted, send them to Christina Thiele (cthiele@ccs.carleton.ca). Better still, if you'd like to volunteer to help produce the column, Christina will be delighted!

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