General Delivery

Message from the Outgoing President

Pierre MacKay

The August 1985 meeting of the TeX Users Group gave evidence of how fast TeX has matured since its coming out party in 1983. Rather to our surprise there was the announcement that a genuine bug had been found a month or so before and that a new, corrected version of TeX was to be made available as a result. That brings us up to version 1.5 and, since the bug was in a rather obscure corner of the code, it will have affected few users. (It involved the expansion of a \toks string in an \edef or \xdef.) Otherwise, the problems of programming and installation which were once so much a part of every TUG meeting were largely reduced to assurances of success. Even in the case of **METAFONT** it is no detraction from our deep appreciation of the work currently being done to provide working change files if we note that most of the success with the WEB system, and its constant refinement through experience with TeX, will carry over to **METAFONT**. We can expect the official release of **METAFONT** version 1.0 some time in October, and the ports to various systems should come soon after. We look forward most especially to the creation of interactive interfaces to **METAFONT** which are being developed by our pioneers.

By the time of the TUG meeting, **METAFONT** had already reached version 0.96 at Stanford, and some external ports were up to version 0.91 or above. The full set of new Computer Modern fonts (these will restore use of the designation CM) was nearing completion. Since Don has a sabbatical planned, he aims to have **METAFONT**, the CM fonts, and the **METAFONT**book finished when he leaves Stanford. We shall not be left entirely without guidance during his absence, however. For a while at least, David Fuchs will continue to ensure the health of TeX, **METAFONT**, and their close relatives as he has throughout the entire history of TeX.

The most noticeable change in the focus of interest this year was the evidence of widespread commercial interest in TeX. It was not that there were more vendor exhibits than before, but rather that all the exhibits seemed to cohere into the promise of an ever richer environment for the TeX user. It is still a bit hard to get used to the idea that a program once criticized for its complexity,

inaccessibility and sheer size is now being made available on the larger class of personal computer systems, but here it is. Owners of the IBM AT, or the larger versions of the IBM PC have the choice of two different implementations of TeX and an implementation for the Macintosh was also shown. There are more output devices every year, and the quality tends to improve. Access to genuine typesetting is also becoming easier, though there is a great deal to be achieved still in that line. It is clear, however that the TeX community has established itself as a significant market both here and overseas. Each new computer, display system, laser-printer system or typesetter that includes TeX among its capabilities adds to the general range of capabilities for all of us, and we welcome all such developments enthusiastically.

These new developments, however, will bring a clearer responsibility to TUG and its members. As commercial developments proliferate, it will be up to TUG to maintain the standards and quality of the software. One of the most important functions of this organization will be to ensure that anything which is called TeX (or **METAFONT**) genuinely is TeX (or **METAFONT**). The mechanism for validation exists, and has been used to establish the credentials of the products mentioned above. I do not at present know of any problems of substandard TeX except for those left over from TeX78, but it would be surprising indeed if none ever developed.

Perhaps even more important than the maintenance of TeX standards will be our insistence on the general character of TeX and **METAFONT** as public domain software. The TeX system in its largest sense is one of the most significant additions to the library of public domain software that has ever been offered. Every site coordinator is aware of the astonishment that often results from the simple reminder that TeX is and has always been in the public domain. The ports of TeX to small personal systems are examples of the sort of commercial development that TUG must support and encourage, but we must never forget that TeX was given to us free. We are the beneficiaries of seven years of intense development effort, the results of which have been distributed throughout the computing world without restrictions. We can best show our appreciation by continuing to enhance the TeX environment with supporting contributions of free public domain software.

I should like to close this message with a mention of the special support that has been given to TUG by Kellerman and Smith, who will be

offering the Macintosh version of TEX. They have already made other contributions to support TUG, and have now arranged to set aside a royalty on each sale for the further support of TUG. In addition, they have offered to fund the first of the Donald Knuth scholarships for support of attendance at a TEX training course in the coming year. I echo here the deep appreciation that was expressed by the the TUG membership at the business meeting this August.

From the President

Bart Childs

I am proud to accept the challenge of this office and humbly hope that I can contribute to an organization that is dedicated to high ideals. We (the TEX community) are grateful to Don Knuth for his gift of TEX and METAFONT and his placing them in the public domain. Many of us are aware of systems developed under government sponsorship where `revision 0.0001` gets placed in the public domain and `revision 0.0001+` magically appears from some new corporation. As we evolve from what Michael Spivak called "a happy band of anarchists" to our future, I hope that we can keep some of the openess that has been characteristic of our community. I feel a duty to thank Don, David Fuchs, and the whole TEX Project again.

The '85 TUG meeting at Stanford was a great success in spite of the election of someone from TEXas as the new president. Don had obviously laid in wait for the chance for the 'pun'. Still, the class with which he made it was enjoyed by all. I wish to make a few observations on the meeting.

I was surprised by the fact that there was a slight decrease in attendance at the meeting. Many of us have discussed some of the possible causes: the economy, previous meetings have all been at Stanford, ... etc. I will not dwell on that, but, will go on to the things that I think are important for our future.

We will undoubtedly have many pressures from the commercial world that we will affect. I welcome the input of the commercial communities and hope that we can use them as a resource to further our mutual goals. Several people mentioned what they considered "competitive" statements and attitudes by some of the *commercial* representatives. I

acknowledge that this is a fair interpretation. I think the comments were made in a professional manner. We must be sure that we don't become a forum whose apparent primary function is a *sales activity*. We shall strive to remain a forum for function, vendor independence, and other high goals while paying appropriate attention to the pragmatism of reality.

Several items reported at the meeting are particularly noteworthy:

1. TEX 1.5 was announced. One error, which could be coded around, was corrected.
2. METAFONT 0.91 was announced (and now 0.96 is out). *Is there any other system which has as many users and as few errors reported as TEX and METAFONT?*
3. TEX is on almost all major systems and is now appearing on many micros (most notably the PC and the Mac).
4. TEX has been mechanically converted to the "C" language at two or three different institutions.
5. TEX is actively used in several different languages.
6. Leslie Lamport delivered the DVI files for the LATEX manual while we were meeting. An A-W representative said that the book should be out before you are reading this.
7. TUG will sponsor **Donald E. Knuth** scholarships for end users (for example, secretaries). Kellerman and Smith have guaranteed us the first one.

As your elected leader, I will be active in at least the following areas:

1. Society representation. The AMS has extended me an invitation to present a one hour talk on TEX at the joint meeting with MAA in New Orleans in January 1986. (A hard one to accept!)
2. TEX distribution. Our lab will continue to be the Data General distribution point. There were several conversations about the best format of distributions. I will pursue some efforts to reach accord on the format of a minimum standard and accompanying documentation. Barry Smith and others have discussed this topic and I personally feel these decisions will further the understanding of TEX and its relations.
3. Open communications. I will strive to always prepare this column. We frequently need several views of certain items. Members can take it upon themselves to propose these items and get several members to respond. New

members may wish to communicate the item
to the editor or myself for setup of the 'panel'.

Happy TeXing.

Statement of Principles

One of the important decisions taken at the August
meeting was that it was time for the TeX Users
Group to incorporate. Only by incorporation can
we properly confirm our status as a non-profit orga-
nization and ensure legal stability and appropriate
tax status. As part of the discussion concerning in-
corporation and tax status, the steering committee
considered the necessity of making a general state-
ment which would set down our perception of the
purpose of the organizion and our relationship to it.
We offer this text of our statement to the general
membership of TUG as an informal statement of
principles.

1. The primary aim of the TeX Users Group
   (TUG) is to promote the development and use
   of public-domain software relating to the TeX
   system.
2. In addition, TUG encourages commercial devel-
   opment relating to TeX and **METAFONT** wher-
   ever such development contributes to TUG's
   primary aim.
3. Financial support for TUG's activities derives
   from membership dues, attendance fees from
   meetings, fees for courses of instruction, private
   and corporate grants and donations, and other
   sources as approved by the Steering Committee
   of TUG.
4. To avoid any real or apparent conflict of inter-
   est, all members of the TUG Steering Commit-
   tee undertake that they shall make no use of
   their position on that committee for personal
   advancement and shall make no private use of
   information acquired by the Steering Commit-
   tee unless and until such information has been
   published to the general membership of TUG.
5. No member of the TUG Finance Committee
   shall concurrently serve as a direct employee of
   TUG.

<div align="center">Pierre MacKay</div>