Editorial Comments

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Old *TUGboat* issues go electronic

Thanks to the efforts of Brooks Moses, Robin Laakso and Karl Berry, the oldest issues of *TUGboat* are now posted on the TUG web site in scanned PDF form. Volumes 1–11 (1980-1990) are almost complete, except for issues 10:3, 10:4 (1989) and 11:4 (1990). A few issues from 1991–1994 are posted as well.

Regular posting of articles when published began with volume 16 (1995), so all issues after that should be present. However, owing to the wording of the copyright statement, for volumes 19–24 (1998–2003), only articles for which explicit permission has been received can be posted. Also, there will be a delay, beginning with this issue, of a year after printing, during which time only TUG members will have on-line access.

The missing issues will be scanned and posted as time permits.

If you find any problems with the posted material, or have not given permission to post an article from the "restricted" period, please notify the office (office@tug.org).

CTAN announcement archives

The archive of ctan-ann mail can be seen and the contents searched at http://www.mail-archive.com/ctan-ann@dante.de/. This collection begins with January 2005; earlier notices have been summarized in previous *TUGboat* issues in "The Treasure Chest".

Another LaTeX manual — for word processor users

Users of word processors often seem to have particular difficulty making the switch to (LA)TEX, no matter how much they appreciate the better appearance of the output. A manual directed toward such potential users is available from CTAN. Written by Guido Gonzato, this manual presents the basics of preparing input with an editor, concentrating on *structure* rather than appearance, use of packages (including installation on one's system), and many other topics. The manual is presented as a PDF file, with hyperlinks to many packages and tools mentioned in the text.

The manual can be found at http://www.ctan.org/tex-archive/info/latex4wp/.

Create your own alphabet

From the website http://alphabet.tmema.org/:

> "The Alphabet Synthesis Machine" is an interactive online artwork which allows one to create and evolve the possible writing systems of one's own imaginary civilizations. The abstract alphabets produced by the Machine can be downloaded as PC-format TrueType fonts, and are entered into a comprehensive archive of user creations. The products of the Machine probe the liminal territories between familiarity and chaos, language and gesture.

The tools found here were created for the project "art:21", "art in the twenty-first century" (a project of PBS), by Golan Levin, with Jonathan Feinberg and Cassidy Curtis. In addition to the downloadable software, the site contains example alphabets produced by visitors, an archive of user creations, and a bibliography of works on the history of writing, writing systems, and the (Latin) alphabet.

Type design exhibition "Letras Latinas"

The binennial type design exhibition "Latin letters" can be viewed on line at http://www.tipografica.com/letraslatinas/. This event takes place simultaneously at several venues in Central and South America. The on-line exhibition includes fonts for both text and display. Although the text of the site is in Spanish, no translation is needed to appreciate and enjoy the samples shown. The exhibition was organized in Buenos Aires, Argentina, by *Tipográfica* magazine. Font designers can register to submit their work for the next show via a form on the web site.

The cost of a bad proofreader

In April, the French government was forced to destroy 162,000 copies of the EU constitution because the phrase "incoherent text" appeared on a page by mistake. (This occurred before the French referendum in May.) Proofreaders failed to notice this phrase in a footnote on a page which contained Article 1/33 of the constitution; it was apparently invisible on the screen when the document was read on line. A corrected version of the full 232-page text was printed at the cost of 74,000 euros. Whoever was responsible for inserting the text was not known.

The full report can be read at http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4421963.stm.

No matter how hard one tries, it seems that some typos always get through.

Looking at the same text in different ways: CSS on the web

Re-use or reformatting of the same text is a common theme in print. Here is a demonstration of what can be done using CSS to do the same for web pages: http://www.csszengarden.com/.

Some comments on mathematical typesetting

This quote, by Gottfried Leibniz, was contributed by Don Knuth, who found it in the library at the Institut Mittag-Leffler, near Stockholm.

From *Leibnizens mathematische Schriften*, edited by C. I. Gerhardt, Erste Abtheilung, Band III (1855), in a letter from Leibniz to Johann Bernoulli, 15 May 1696:

> In notandis calculis ad usum typorum decrevi pro lineis vinculorum imposterum uti commatibus directis atque inversis in vim parenthesium: ita non interrumpetur typorum series nec spatium amittetur, et tamen omnia (ni fallor) accurate habebuntur. Velim tamen prius Tuam audire sententiam. Exampli causa, Tuum $\dfrac{a+\dfrac{b}{c}}{e-\dfrac{f}{g}}$, quod quinque typorum lineas minimum postulat, sic poterit scribi: $,a+,b : c,, : ,e-,f : g,,$: possent tamen inversa commata omitti, scribique $a+,b : c,, : e-,f : g,,$ quod et facere soleo et communiter sufficere potest. Sed tamen designatio quasi parenthetica per commata includentia est absolutior tutiorque interdum; præsertim si pro commatibus adhibeantur veræ parentheses, ne commata inversa confundantur cum littera c, exempli gratia in eoden casu ista stabit $(a+(b:c)):(e-(f:g))$.

Another relevant note comes from *Acta Eruditorum* (Leipzig: 1708), 271; here is a translation from the Latin original, given by Florian Cajori on page 219 of his *History of Mathematical Notations*:

> We hereby issue the reminder that in the future we shall use in these *Acta* the Leibnizian signs, where, when algebraic matters concern us, we do not choose the typographically troublesome and unnecessarily repugnant, and that we avoid ambiguity. Hence we shall prefer the parenthesis to the characters consisting of lines drawn above, and in multiplication by all means simply omit the comma; for example, in place of $\sqrt{aa+bb}$ we write $\surd(aa+bb)$ and for $\overline{aa+bb}\times c$ we take $aa+bb,c$. Division we mark with two dots, unless indeed some peculiar circumstance directs adherence to the usual practice. Accordingly, we have $a:b=\dfrac{a}{b}$. And it is not necessary to denote proportion by any special sign. For, if a is to b as c is to d, we have $a:b=c:d$. As regards powers, $\overline{aa+bb}^m$, we designate them by $(aa+bb)^m$; whence also $\sqrt[m]{aa+bb}$ becomes $=(aa+bb)^{1:m}$ and $\sqrt[m]{\overline{aa+bb}^n}=(aa+bb)^{n:m}$. We do not doubt that all geometers who read the *Acta* will recognize the excellence of the Leibnizian symbols and will agree with us in this matter.

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