

---

## Editorial Comments

Barbara Beeton

### T<sub>E</sub>X meetings in 1994

This year's TUG meeting was held in Santa Barbara on the University of California campus, on a peninsula overlooking the Pacific Ocean. I won't go into details, except to invite you to see for yourself in the proceedings (published as *TUGboat* 15 no. 3) the wide variety of topics on the menu. Some faces from the past reappeared—Leslie Lamport and Chuck Bigelow are two whose names should be familiar to all *TUGboat* readers. A most enjoyable meeting.

I also attended EuroT<sub>E</sub>X '94—an even greater adventure. Held in Sobieszewo, Poland (a seaside town near Gdańsk), it was in a totally new region for me, and I'm still thankful that Włodek Bzyl and his wife were so kind to collect me at the airport. (Thank you ever so much, Włodek!)

As always at T<sub>E</sub>X meetings, there were many new faces to attach to names I already knew from e-mail correspondence, and old friends with whom to catch up on gossip. The accommodations and the meeting rooms were in a holiday resort, just a few hundred meters from the Baltic shore.

Włodek Bzyl and Tomek Przechlewski, editors of the GUST bulletin, were the meeting organizers. Hanna Kołodziejska, the President of GUST, also joined in making everyone feel warmly welcome. A full report appears later in this issue, so let me just take this opportunity to thank everyone who made the experience so memorable.

### A new, expanded T<sub>E</sub>X FAQ

With Robin Fairbairns in command, a UKTEXUG working party has produced a new, reorganized, much expanded T<sub>E</sub>X FAQ ("Frequently Asked Questions" list, with answers); the results can be seen in *Baskerville* Vol. 4 No. 6, December 1994.

The original FAQ was compiled as an adjunct to the Usenet newsgroup `comp.text.tex` and maintained by Bobby Bodenheimer of Caltech. (Thanks, Bobby, for all your efforts.) The new edition has been created with his knowledge, and it is intended to feed it back to `c.t.t` via Bobby's regular posting.

The new FAQ is available electronically from CTAN, in `tex-archive/usergrps/uktug/faq`. The source (for L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X2<sub>E</sub>) is there as well as several predigested versions:

- `letterfaq.ps`, for U.S. letter-size paper
- `newfaq.*`, for A4 paper; `.dvi`, `.ps` and `.pdf` versions, using PostScript fonts, are available

- `newfaq-cm.dvi`, for those who have only Computer Modern fonts

Thanks to Robin and his colleagues for a fine job.

### UKTeX Digest ceases to exist

With the distribution of Volume 94, Issue 48, the UKTeX Digest ceased to exist. This digest was a regular visitor to my e-mail in-box, and I learned many useful things from its contents.

Originally created in July 1987 by Peter Abbott to announce developments of the UK T<sub>E</sub>X Archive at Aston University (another of Peter's creations), it was moderated and edited by Peter for its first few years of existence. Since mid-1990, David Osborne has been the editor. Through the seven and a half years of its existence, 336 digests were produced.

With the emergence of CTAN (the Comprehensive T<sub>E</sub>X Archive Network), the need for a UK-oriented digest has disappeared. However, for some time David has also been editing the TeX-hax Digest, the model for UKTeX, and TeXhax will continue, absorbing contributions that would have been addressed to UKTeX.

There is still a need for such an electronic distribution list as a question, answer and announcement forum for the global T<sub>E</sub>X community, especially for people without access to news, or who do not have the time to read the full contents of `comp.text.tex`.

In any event, this is an appropriate occasion to publicly express our appreciation to Peter and David for their efforts through the years, with special thanks to David for the statistics that I have shamelessly copied from his notice in the final issue.

Well done!

### Miscellaneous gossip

Raman's thesis, "An Audio System for Technical Reading (ASTeR)", has won the ACM Dissertation Award for 1994. The official presentation will be in March 1995.

Anyone who attended the 1992 TUG meeting in Portland will remember Raman's presentation, a preliminary report on his research, and his friendly black Labrador retriever, Aster, to whom the work is dedicated. Another look at the article in the proceedings (*TUGboat* 13, No. 3) will be worth your time, and increase your awareness that there is an audience for T<sub>E</sub>X that isn't interested only in how the output looks on paper.

Congratulations and best wishes to both Raman and Aster.

From David M. Jones, creator of the (now sadly outdated)  $\text{\TeX}$  index: “Reviving the  $\text{\TeX}$  index will be my New Year’s resolution, but I’m still shy of making any promises, since my record for keeping those over the last couple of years has been dismal. :-C”

(Actually, David has been occupying his spare time with other useful  $\text{\TeX}$ -related pursuits; he has contributed ideas and code to the display math environments of  $\mathcal{AMSLAT}\text{\TeX}$ , and his name now appears among the acknowledgements for that package. David also attended his first TUG meeting this past summer in Santa Barbara, demonstrating that he really does exist.)

The question keeps arising on `comp.text.tex` and other electronic forums, where is an electronic version of *TUGboat*?

Contrary to what is apparently the general belief, *TUGboat* does not lend itself easily to electronic distribution, requiring, as it does, nonstandard (and sometimes proprietary) fonts, nonstandard versions of macro packages, multiple files for some articles, both plain-based and  $\text{\LaTeX}$  processing, and other varieties of special handling. Moreover, since *TUGboat* is just completing its 15<sup>th</sup> volume, the archives contain a variety of input styles and require several different versions of (I $\Delta$ ) $\text{\TeX}$  for processing, including the no-longer-available  $\text{\TeX}78$ .

However, the TUG Publications Committee is looking into ways to get around these problems, so as to be able to provide at least some of the most important material in electronic form. Stay tuned.

◊ Barbara Beeton  
American Mathematical Society  
P. O. Box 6248  
Providence, RI 02940 USA  
`bnb@math.ams.org`