Abstracts

Die TeXnische Komödie
Contents of Some Past Issues


Luzia DIETSCH, Editorial: p. 3

Two short comments by the editor: The last editorial discussing spaces preceding punctuation marks have caused considerable reaction. The common view: Rules have not changed, additional inserted spaces are (at most) trendy. And in the process of phototypesetting the last issue a figure has been reproduced too small (change of resolution). Therefore, the whole article is reprinted (see pp. 29–33).

› Hinter der Bühne: Vereinsinternes
[Backstage: Club matters]: pp. 4–22

Joachim LAMMARSCH, Grußwort
[Welcome message]: pp. 4–6

A short comment on club matters by the president of +DANTE+. In particular, he explains that the current issue has been delayed by a protest
issued against the members’ assembly (the protocol of which is included on pp. 6–22). MicroPress has mailed p.r. material to all members of +DANTE+, obviously making (illegal) use of the list of members of +DANTE+.

[Luzia DIETSCHE], Protokoll der 10. Mitgliederversammlung von +DANTE+, Deutschsprachige Anwendervereinigung \TeX\ e.V. [Protocol of the 10th assembly of members of +DANTE+]; pp. 6–22

This is the official report of the members’ meeting held in Münster (Feb. 17, 1994). As usual, it contains short accounts on the various hardware platforms, \texttt{german.sty} and other special topics (as presented by the appointed coordinators), followed by a report on the situation of +DANTE+ (mainly organizational matters), and its activities (distribution of books and software, servers, including plans for the future, i.e., a +FAQ+ and a CD), on (partially difficult) contacts with publishing houses (Addison-Wesley, Springer, Vieweg) and the contacts with +TUG+. It is reported that DANTE Ltd., a new European organization, has assured that their field of interest does not coincide with +DANTE+ e.V. Finally, the discussion on a protest claiming manipulation of an election (in Chemnitz) is summarized. (This discussion caused the protest against the assembly mentioned by Joachim Lammarsch, p. 5).

- **\TeX\-Theatertage**
  
  Volker THEWALT, +DANTE+'94 in Münster – Ein kurzer Tagungsbericht [+DANTE+'94 in Münster – A short meeting report]; pp. 23–27

  A personal account of +DANTE+'94 (Feb. 16–18, 1994) in Münster.

- **Von fremden Bühnen** [On other stages]; p. 28

  Don HOSEK, Writers on type and typography needed (in English); p. 28

  An advertisement calling for contributions for \textit{Serif}, a new journal on all aspects of typography.

- **Bretter, die die Welt bedeuten**
  
  Andreas SCHERER, Graphiken mit \texttt{GnuPlot} und \texttt{Metafont}–Korrektur [Graphics with \texttt{GnuPlot} and \texttt{Metafont}–Correction]; pp. 29–33

  This article was published in the previous issue (4/1993, pp. 26–30). It is reprinted because the figure was reproduced incorrectly (much too small):

  The author briefly describes how GnuPlot can be used to produce \texttt{Metafont} code for line graphics which then can be included in a \TeX\ file as a font.

  Michael BAAS, \TeX\-Makros für Fortgelaufene [\TeX\ macros for the runaways]; pp. 34–40

  A lively account of the author’s efforts to develop (imperfect, but working) macros which simplify the use of active characters for easy input of accented characters (and similar macros). (See also the letter by David Kastrup (issue 6/3, 49–52) for comments and suggestions.)

- **Arne W. STEUER, Postkarten mit Pas\TeX\ auf dem Amiga** [doing postcards with Pas\TeX\ (on the Amiga)]; pp. 40–41

  The author describes his \texttt{postcard.sty} which can be used to print postcards. (For the inclusion of graphics, Pas\TeX\ is used.)

- **Richard HIRSCH, Dezimalkomma beim \TeX\xsatz in deutsch** [The decimal comma with German \TeX\ typesetting]; pp. 42–45

  The German replacement for the decimal point is the decimal comma. However, if one writes $3,14\$ the spacing is wrong while the correct input $3{,}14\$ is inconvenient to use. The author describes in detail how to define two types of commas (with \texttt{\mathchardef}) and set up an ‘intelligent comma’ in mathematics mode (with \texttt{\mathcode'}="8000 which, however, is misprinted as \texttt{\mathchardef'}="8000) which inserts an ordinary comma if followed by a space, and a decimal comma if not.

- **Was Sie schon immer über \TeX\ wissen wollte...** [What you always wanted to know about \TeX\ ...?]; pp. 46–47:

  Luzia DIETSCHE, Seitenzahlen [Page numbers]; pp. 46–47

  Three short hints for \LaTeX\ users: centered page numbers, the total number of pages, and page numbers together with the total number of pages, by redefinition of \texttt{\thepage}. (Cf. the comments in the next issue 2/94, 50–52.)

- **\TeX\-Beiprogramm** [\TeX\ co-features]; pp. 48–51:

  Jörg LEHRKE, LinuX – ein freies *nix für PCs [LinuX – a free *nix for PCs]; pp. 48–51

  A pointer to and a short description of LinuX 1.0, a full implementation of Unix for PCs, initiated by Linus Torvalds in 1991—well suited for \TeX, but not only for \TeX.
Oliver Hansen, Mut zur Typographie [Dare typography]; pp. 52–53

A review of Mut zur Typographie by J. Gulbins and C. Kahrmann (Springer 1993), a book explaining the basics of typography and layout. The bottom line: ‘Whoever wants to do serious +DTP+, or to do a thesis with a word processor, should take a thorough glimpse (at least) into this book.’

Andreas Schrell, Der Stammtisch in Wuppertal [The local meetings in Wuppertal]; pp. 8–10

An account on the the local meetings in Wuppertal (Aug. 92–Dec. 93) by their initiator and organizer. A yearbook of the proceedings is available.

Hermann Zapf, Has type design any future? (in English); pp. 11–13

This is a widely circulated protest (revised version by Hermann Zapf and Charles Bigelow) against piracy of typefaces.

Bernd Raichele, \TeX{} 3 von Version 3.0 bis 3.1415 [\TeX{} 3 from version 3.0 to 3.1415]; pp. 14–26

A description of the changes and the major bug fixes implemented in \TeX{} and \texttt{plain} versions 3.0–3.1415, and how these versions can be identified by macros.

Walter Schmidt, Umsteigen auf \LaTeX{} [Changing to \LaTeX{}]: pp. 26–31

A short description of \LaTeX{} (distributed since June 1994), its installation, and its compatibility with \LaTeX{} 2.09.

Walter Schmidt, \LaTeX{} für Techniker [\LaTeX{} for technicians]; pp. 32–36

Standard \LaTeX{} lacks some features needed for texts in physics and engineering. The author describes how they (italic greek letters, some symbols, boldface variables) can be implemented with \LaTeX{}2ε.

Michael Schank, \TeX{} und OS/2 2.x [\TeX{} and OS/2 2.x]; pp. 39–42

A short description of em\TeX{} (\texttt{tex386b11}) and GNU emacs with Auc\TeX{} for OS/2 (in the implementation by Eberhard Mattes), updating and supplementing an earlier article (issue 5/4).
Markus Porto, \TeX{}-Service des +HRZ+ der Universität Gießen [\TeX{} support by the computer centre of the University of Gießen]; pp. 43–46

At the address \url{www.uni-giessen.de} the University of Gießen offers an +HTML+-based help and information system on \TeX{} (mainly in German). It includes an interactive \LaTeX{} cookbook containing code samples and facilities for testing them (or variants of them) online.

- \textit{Rezensionen} [Reviews]; pp. 47–49:
  [Dr.] Rainer Schöpf, Zwei neue Bücher [Two new books]; pp. 52–53
  Short reviews of \LaTeX{} zum Loslegen [Get Going with \LaTeX{}] by Joachim Lammarsch and Luzia Dietsche, and \TeX{}, \LaTeX{} und Graphik by Friedhelm Sowa (both published by Springer 1994).

- \textit{Leserbrief(e)} [Letter(s)]; pp. 50–52:
  Frank Mittelbach, Seitenzahlen [Page numbers]; pp. 50–52
  The author points out some side effects of the macros proposed by Luzia Dietsche in the previous issue (1/94, 46–47).

- \textit{Spielplan} [Repertory]; pp. 53–55:
  The international and national calendar, and the invitation to the autumn meeting of +DANTE+ in Katlenburg-Lindau (Oct. 13–14, 1994).

- \textit{Adressen} [Addresses]; pp. 56–59:
  Various addresses related to DANTE, the addresses of everyone who has contributed to this issue, and the addresses of the coordinators in charge of the various hardware platforms and other special topics.


Luzia Dietsche, Editorial; p. 3

Two remarks by the editor: Contributions submitted to the Komödie tend to form clusters of related material. Also she would like to install a ‘bulletin board’ for short questions, news, etc.—if she receives such material.

- \textit{Hinter der Bühne : Vereinsinternes} [Backstage : Club matters]; pp. 4–17:
  Joachim Lammarsch, Grußwort [Welcome message]; pp. 4–5
  A short comment on club matters by the president of +DANTE+. In particular, he complains about raised bank fees for payments to +DANTE+.

4\All\TeX, the plug&play +CD+ of +NTG+, can be obtained from Dante.

[Luzia Dietsche], Protokoll der 11. Mitgliederversammlung von +DANTE+, Deutschsprachige Anwendervereinigung \TeX{} e.V. [Protocol of the 11th assembly of members of +DANTE+]; pp. 6–17

This is the official report on the members’ meeting held in Katlenburg-Lindau (October 13, 1994). It starts with short accounts on the various hardware platforms, \texttt{german.sty} and other special topics (as presented by the appointed coordinators, supplementing a more detailed written report, see pp. 31–45), followed by a report on the situation of +DANTE+ (mainly organizational matters), and its activities. There are some difficulties in +DANTE+’s relation with +TUG+ (payment of membership dues). Joachim Lammarsch has resigned from the Board of Directors. Finally, the status of NTS and \e-\TeX{} is described, and a letter of thanks from Philip Taylor (from the NTS group) is presented.

- \textit{Von fremden Bühnen} [On other stages]; pp. 18–20:
  [The \LaTeX{} Programming Team], \LaTeX{} News, Issue 2, December 1994 (in English); pp. 18–20
  This is the \textit{Newsletter} accompanying the second release (Dec. 94) of \LaTeX{}2\e. There are two new packages included: \texttt{inputenc} (which allows choosing an 8-bit input encoding), and +AMS+-\LaTeX{}.

- \textit{Bretter, die die Welt bedeuten} [The stage is the world]; pp. 21–30:
  Christian Kayssner, Handbücher [Manuals]; pp. 21–24
  The author describes his program \texttt{double} that rearranges the pages of a \texttt{dvi}-file for easy 2-up printing of booklets.

Arne W. Steuer, Style-Files – leicht gemacht [Style files – made easy]; pp. 25–30

Taking labels for organizers as an example, the author shows in detail how (even) a \LaTeX{} beginner can develop simple style files.

- \textit{\TeX{}-Beiprogramm} [\TeX{} co-features]; pp. 31–45:
  Bericht des technischen Beirats [Report of the technical council]; pp. 31–45
  A collection of short reports (by the appointed coordinators) on the various hardware platforms and other special topics, supplementing those of the
protocol (p. 5). One of them (by Joachim Schrod) concerns the working groups on driver standards and directory structure.

○ Leserbrief(e) [Letter(s)]; pp. 46–55:
Andreas Ringhandt, Von A4 zu A5? [From A4 to A5?]; pp. 46–47
This letter asks for advice on how to handle a document (a thesis) that will be printed both in A4 and A5. No answer is given.

The writer argues that a +CD-ROM+ copy of +CTAN+ would be the best way to distribute TeX for users without net access. For information on the contents of +CTAN+ he offers a disk containing the +CTAN+ file FILES.byname in text and dBase format.

David Kastrup, TeX-Makros für Fortgelaufene in Die TeXnische Komödie 1/1994 [TeX macros for the runaways in Die TeXnische Komödie 1/1994]; pp. 49–52
The author comments on the macros described in the article cited in the title (by Michael Baas, issue 6/1, 34–40) from an expert’s point of view and suggests some improvements.

Heinz Kusznier, Aus der Verwaltungsküche in Die TeXnische Komödie 2/1994 [From the administrative kitchen in Die TeXnische Komödie 1/1994]; p. 53
In reaction to the article cited in the title (by Jürgen Günther, issue 6/2,5–7), the writer thanks the +DANTE+ team for their good services.

Martin Schröder, Gedanken zu Gedankenstrichen [Thoughts on dashes]; pp. 53–55
The writer points out that dashes are used differently in German and in English typography. A dash (= Gedankenstrich) in German text should be an en-dash between spaces. He criticizes that these differences often are neglected (e.g. in the article by Hermann Zapf as printed in issue 6/2, 11–13) and mainly blames Kopka as the source of this habit.

○ Spielplan [Repertory]; pp. 56–58:
The international and national calendar, and invitation to a conference, +DANTE+’95 in Gießen (Feb. 28–March 3, 1995).

○ Adressen [Addresses]; pp. 60–63:
Various addresses related to DANTE, the addresses of everyone who has contributed to this issue, and the addresses of the coordinators in charge of the various hardware platforms and other special topics.


Luzia Dietsche, Editorial; p. 3
This rather thin issue contains the first article of a new series by Bernd Raichle (Oral games with TeX).

○ Bretter, die die Welt bedeuten [The stage is the world]; pp. 4–27:
Gerd Neugebauer, BibTool – Manipulation von BibTeX-Dateien [BibTool – manipulation of BibTeX files]; pp. 4–11
‘Once upon a time I had the urgent desire to use BibTeX files from various sources in combination.’ This desire had consequences: BibClean, a program written in C and distributed as source only, is a highly configurable tool which can combine (and unify) BibTeX databases, generate keys, sort them, and extract data using information from .aux-files, as well as perform some other manipulations—it is a ‘Swiss army knife for handling BibTeX’, as the author expresses it. Bernd Raichle has added a pointer to bibclean by Nelson Beebe, a prettyprinting and syntax checking program for BibTeX files.

Walter Schmidt, Computer Modern Bright; pp. 11–16
Computer Modern Sans Serif is well suited to emphasize single words or short pieces of text, but less so as the main text font. To fill this gap, the author has developed Computer Modern Bright. This font is obtained from the Computer Modern fonts by a new combination of the parameters and slight corrections to a few letters concerning the dots on the letters i and j and the accents for the German umlauts. The fonts can already be used, but are not yet finished.

Bernd Raichle, Orale Spielereien mit TeX – Teil I [Oral games with TeX – part I]; pp. 16–23
This new series will discuss various aspects of TeX’s month, i.e., its macro processor. The first installment is devoted to the first problem in Appendix D (‘dirty tricks’) of The TeXbook: Define a macro that takes an integer n as input and
expands to a string of $n$ asterisks. First the two solutions described by Knuth and three solutions from *TUGboat* are discussed. Finally a new (December 1993 on `comp.text.tex`) solution based on \romannumeral by David Kastrup is presented.

Matthias Eckermann, Parallelles Setzen l"angerer Texte [Parallel typesetting of lengthy texts]; pp. 23–27

The author describes his (still fragmentary) \LaTeX{} style `parallel.sty' which allows parallel text (e.g., a text and its translation) with automatic page breaks.

- Was Sie schon immer "uber \TeX{} wissen ... [What you always wanted to know about \TeX{} ...]; pp. 28–30:

Luzia Dietsche, Absatzformen [Paragraph shapes]; pp. 28–30

\LaTeX{} code centering the last line of a caption or a paragraph, based on setting
\verbatim
\leftskip=0pt plus 1fil,
\rightskip=0pt plus -1fil, and
\parfillskip=0pt plus 2fil.

- \TeX{}-Beiprogramm [\TeX{} co-features]; pp. 31–36:

Horst Peiffer, WinWord versus \LaTeX{}; pp. 31–34

The author (who classifies himself as a ‘\TeX{}-oholic’) argues that WinWord convinces beginners by first impressions, and that — though it is not at all easy to use for complex applications — difficulties must pile up considerably before a Word user thinks of switching to \TeX{}.

Michael Schank, \TeX{}IT! for OS/2; pp. 34–35

\TeX{}IT! is the author’s OS/2 shell for em\TeX{} (available as beta version).

Luzia Dietsche, Rechtschreibreform [Orthography reform]; pp. 35–36

A parody on efforts to ‘simplify’ German spelling. (The article is taken from an unknown internet source.)

- Rezensionen [Reviews]; pp. 37–39:

Harald Schoppmann, \TeX{}X f"ur Heimwerker... [Do it yourself \TeX{}X ...]; pp. 37–39

A review of *Making \TeX{} Work* by Norman Walsh (O’Reilly, 1994). The bottom line: This is not a book for ordinary users but for system managers (who have to maintain \TeX{} on several platforms) or a PC user looking for special purpose software or special fonts.

- Spielplan [Repertory]; pp. 40–43:

The international and national calendar, and the invitation to a conference, the 16th Annual Meeting of \TeX{} Users Group ‘Real World \TeX{}’ in St. Petersburg Beach, Florida (July 24–28, 1995).

- Adressen [Addresses]; pp. 44–47:

Various addresses related to DANTE, the addresses of everyone who has contributed to this issue, and the addresses of the coordinators in charge of the various hardware platforms and other special topics.

(Compiled by Peter Schmitt)