Reporting bugs for Don Knuth (as soon as possible)

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Abstract
Please report TeX system bugs intended for Don Knuth as soon as possible.

1 The next TeX tuneup
At the end of the last TeX tuneup report [3], Don Knuth mentioned that the next tuneup will be released in 2021. He asks for the collected submissions towards the end of the previous year [1], that is, 2020, which is this year! I am the one collecting bugs this time, having been passed the TeX entomologist’s microscope from the inestimable Barbara Beeton. I do not have an exact cut-off date, but it would be reasonable for you to assume that anything submitted after November 1 will not be warmly welcomed.

To reduce the number of reports at the deadline, I ask that they be submitted as soon as possible. Handling them takes time, since colleagues and I review each and every one before putting it in Don’s pile. There are two ways to submit reports:
1. Send email to the public mailing list, tex-k@tug.org (https://lists.tug.org/tex-k). This is preferred, since then many people, not just me, can review the report (and often reply faster).
2. Send email to me, karl@freefriends.org, if you want your report (name, email, contents) to be private. It is fine to do this if you prefer; much better than not reporting the bug at all.

2 Research before sending
Please do a general web search on your report before you send it in, choosing the relevant search terms, etc., to the best of your ability.

If the web doesn’t have anything, please check Don’s detailed errata listings, available at https://ctan.org/pkg/knuth-errata or, in TeX Live, in texmf-dist/source/generic/knuth/errata. Just try searching (e.g., grep) for keywords; it may not be easy to make your way through the errata files, but do the best you can.

In all cases, what’s of interest is true bugs in the code, typos or other outright errors in the text, etc. Requests for enhancements, new features, etc., are not going to be reviewed by Don. However, if a report is in the gray area between bug and feature, please go ahead and send it, and we will review it.

Some enhancements, including but not limited to increasing array sizes and other configuration issues, can be (and have been) made in TeX Live and other implementations. It’s fine to also send such requests to tex-k@tug.org or my address.

3 Software for which to send reports
Of course the most important programs for which I’m collecting bug reports are TeX and MetaFont themselves: The contents of Volumes A–E of Computers & Typesetting. (Volume A is equivalent to The TeXbook in softcover; Volume C is equivalent to The METAFONTbook in softcover. Volume B contains the source code for TeX and the prose that explains each part; Volume D contains the analogous code and prose for METAFONT. Volume E contains complete METAFONT code for the original Computer Modern fonts.)

The other WEB programs still maintained by Don are also fair game. The complete list:
dvitype gftodvi gftopk gftype mf mft plotf pooltype tangle tex tftopl vftovp vptovf weave

The main exception is BibTeX: reports for that should be sent to the public list biblio@tug.org (https://lists.tug.org/biblio); Oren Patashnik, the BibTeX author, will see them there. Or you can send them to me. (No particular deadlines or tuneup release dates for BibTeX.) Reports for other Stanford WEB programs can also be sent to tex-k or me.

4 CWEB(bin)
Don also still maintains the original CWEB programs written by him and Silvio Levy, and will accept bug reports for them, at the usual low priority; TAOCP must take precedence.

With Don’s agreement, in 2019 we changed the CWEB distributed in TeX Live to come from the cwebbin package, developed by Andreas Scherer at https://github.com/ascherer/cwebbin. It is compatible with the original CWEB, and supports more C and C++ language variants, has enhanced internationalization, etc. Reports for cwebbin should go to tex-k@tug.org or the github project above.

Thanks, and let the bug reports flow.

References

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https://tug.org/texmfbug

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