

General Delivery

Opening words

Christina Thiele
President, T_EX Users Group

Well, here we are — end of the year. Publications for 1993 are back on track, as far as schedules go. This has been a difficult year for both Barbara and myself, as we have found more and more work, both volunteer and that-which-pays-our-bills piling up on our desks. You will have seen the ad in *TTN*, looking for a new editor; while I really enjoy working on the newsletter, I just have to pass the job on to a new person. Similarly, Barbara is making changes in how work on *TUGboat* is going to be re-distributed, as she also has to make some concessions to the fact that the day only has 24 hours in it. We acquire tasks, and make offers of assistance, and generally try to provide information when asked, and it just keeps on going — so we are looking to gently move some of our responsibilities onto new shoulders.

As we sit here at the end of the year (perhaps reading this issue, to avoid going out to shovel the snow yet again), it seems appropriate to reflect on my first year as TUG's president. I've seen a significant upsurge in activities in our user group: committee work, especially with respect to conferences; the Technical Council and its TWGs and SIGs. We have a new board in place, with a combination of old hands and new faces, if you'll pardon the mixed anatomy. The office is almost done with tidying up all the expected and unexpected loose ends from the move out to Santa Barbara. As a user group, I think we have improved our accountability and our responsiveness to our members. We've also begun to actively seek out opportunities to introduce a T_EX presence outside our immediate community; I hope to see more of this in the new year.

1 Other happenings

For anyone in the Boston area in January (6th through 9th), there's a meeting of the Linguistic Society of America at the Sheraton Boston Hotel — and T_EX will be there, the form of a poster session on T_EX and linguistics. I hope to see the information which is gathered for the LSA meeting develop into a nice little package for linguists on how they can use T_EX and all its add-ons in their work. Since this is an on-going project, I invite anyone who's interested to get in touch with me, and we'll add you to our group.

We're also hoping to have a TUG and T_EX presence at the June meeting of the Society for Scholarly Publishing, which will be held in San Francisco.

2 Free-Net

Something which I've been meaning to write a bit about in this column is Free-Net. You may have heard this new buzz-word; you may have seen it as part of someone's e-mail address. All that's needed is a modem and a computer. There are no user fees, *no connect fees* — on the other hand, donations are never turned down! For a community such as ours, where so much of our work, our information, and many of our contacts are network-based, not being connected is a big problem; there's a sense of the haves and the have-nots, the privileged and the ordinary man/woman in the street. While the services available vary from site to site, all provide full service Internet e-mail. The opportunity to finally be connected — to reach colleagues, to find the files you want, the information you need — that alone is worth the price of asking. So find out if there's a Free-Net where you live!

3 Renew for 1994!

And remember to send in that TUG renewal form for 1994. You don't want to miss anything that's coming in the new year: new articles and tips in *TUGboat* and *TTN*; the annual meeting in Santa Barbara (if you want to submit a paper, your deadline is **February 1, 1994**; send queries to tug94@tug.org). Barbara's editorial has a list of some new ideas that are brewing for the coming year's issues of *TUGboat*. So stay tuned.

Tell a friend or colleague about the benefits which come with being a member in the T_EX Users Group. If every current member brought in one new member, think of all the projects we could undertake. We aren't lacking for ideas; we're lacking funds, and volunteers. You can show your support by renewing your own membership; by letting people know what you do with T_EX and lending a hand when someone asks for some advice or help. And you can always show your support by submitting items for publication in either *TUGboat* or *TTN*.

Have a safe and happy holiday season. And we'll see you next year!

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