

General Delivery

From the President

Mimi Jett

Greetings, TUG members!

It is said that anything that becomes routine is, by definition, taken for granted. We see evidence of this throughout our lives; none of us are able to claim that we said an appropriate number of “thank yous” for all of the help and sacrifices people have made on our behalf. Sometimes we are not even aware of the work behind the scenes, to make our life easier or better. As an organization and a community, we owe a debt of thanks to the people who give up time with their families, work, or friends to create the tools and resources we have come to take for granted. For example, the CTAN CDs you are receiving with this issue are the product of literally man-years donated by a number of highly skilled volunteers, including Karl Berry, Robin Fairbairns, Jim Hefferon, Rainer Schöpf, and Reinhard Zierke.

Last quarter you received the \TeX Live CD, which is a shining representation of the devotion to quality Sebastian Rahtz and his colleagues put into their work. The website and server administration done for years, again by Karl Berry, and now managed by Kaja Christiansen, are extremely important, yet almost invisible because it “just works”. Year after year we see upgrades and new tools to make life a little easier. The publication of this journal is another project that reaches deep into the discretionary time of Barbara Beeton, Mimi Burbank, Christina Thiele, with help for many years from Sebastian, Robin and many others. Please join me in thanking these people, out loud, for their contributions. And please, let us not take any of this for granted.

Speaking of contributions, I want to thank those authors who are considering a new article for *TUGboat*. We are happy to see so much interest in \TeX as the move to MathML becomes a stampede. MathML is probably the most important thing to happen to mathematics communication since \TeX . With the open standards becoming real, and practically every mathematics software developer writing to MathML, we finally see the interoperability between applications and languages that seemed like

a dream not long ago. The overlap between the \TeX and MathML communities is quite large, as you would expect. We look forward to many future articles about MathML, XML, XSL, and \TeX as the standards evolve.

Another way you might consider joining our cause is to run for a seat on the Board of Directors. Next year is an election year, with five director positions and the presidency up for grabs. Over our 20-year history we have had dozens of directors who contributed to the organization we have today. Several of them keep coming back for yet another term, myself included. I will be the first to admit that working on TUG is *fun*! It is exciting to meet people from all over the world, to work on solving problems and creating something of value together. The sense of accomplishment is nice, but the relationships with this eclectic group of people are what make it fantastic. Please consider joining us on the board, or running for president. We would love to have you.

The election in 2001 will be held electronically, for those members that have access to the Web. To ensure that we reach all our members, we will also send a paper ballot. Please feel free to use either method to cast your vote, but not both. We expect to announce the opening of nominations by December, with voting to begin in February. By April we should have results to announce.

Next year’s annual meeting will be held at the University of Delaware, August 11–17, 2001. The call for papers has been issued; please check tug.org for current information. The annual meeting for 2002 has two choices of venue: Cork, Ireland, or Kerala, India. We have never had an annual meeting in Asia, although we have a significant number of members on the continent. Due to the diverse opinions about the choice of venue, we are going to survey the members for your opinions. Please watch for a notice from Sue DeMeritt, and let us know what you think.

Thank you for your support of \TeX and TUG. And don’t forget to thank those who make your life a little better.

◇ Mimi Jett
 IBM
 T. J. Watson Research Center
 P.O. Box 218
 Yorktown Heights, NY 10598
jett@us.ibm.com