

## *Greetings and Felicitations*

Michael D. O'Dell Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to issue three of *Computing Systems*. I hope your world has been less chaotic than mine has been of late. As you can tell from my affiliation in the masthead I have moved by half a continent and started a new job. As the old Chinese curse puts it, “May you live in interesting times.” Indeed.

This issue contains an eclectic assortment of topics. “GRAB – Inverted Indexes with Low Storage Overhead” by M. Lesk discusses a system for text storage and retrieval (an area near and dear to my heart). Lesk discusses a text inversion scheme suitable for quick retrievals from large text collections. Maybe this will inspire someone to do a full-text version of the UNIX *man(1)* command!

M. Bishop’s paper, “An Application of a Fast Data Encryption Standard Implementation,” is a study of how to make a complicated algorithm go fast. While he has specific uses in mind for a fast implementation, the technique of using the underlying theory to provide insight into how to make an implementation go fast is widely applicable.

UNIX folklore holds that “copy-on-write” implementations of the *fork()* system call will be more efficient than those which simply copy. The paper “Effects of copy-on-write Memory Management on the Response Time of UNIX *fork* Operations” by J. Smith and G. Maguire, Jr., provides some actual measurements of the effects of a real implementation of the copy-on-write mechanism.

For this issue, the “Controversy” soapbox is on loan to one Mr. R. Pike who makes a compelling case that “Window Systems Should Be Transparent.” Some readers will already be familiar with Mr. Pike and some of his other strongly-held opinions; they

will not be disappointed. His writings are often controversial, usually entertaining, and always incisive and thought-provoking. You will not be disappointed, either.

And now I must make a correction. In the editorial of issue two I ascribed the comment: “Every meeting is an experiment in running a meeting” to a sage member of the USENIX Board. Peter Collinson, a member of our Editorial Board and a long-time member of the EUUG (European Unix systems Users Group) Board subsequently informed me that he lays claim to that turn of the phrase. He is indeed sage, but is not a member of the USENIX Board. So, credit assigned where credit due.

That about does it for this issue. Keep those cards, letters, and especially those manuscripts coming in, folks. That’s where the journal comes from! Just remember: if you know something useful and don’t write about it, you do everyone a disservice. In particular, I strongly suspect that there are a great many internal technical reports and memoranda generated at both industrial and research establishments which could form the basis for a *Computing Systems* paper. I strongly encourage you to think about this, rummage about, and write.

Thanks for coming, and I’ll see you back here next quarter.