only the 5 digit ZIP code in `\envaddress` so as to make the envelope look less like junk mail:

```
New York, New York\quad10036
```

It's possible to print several envelopes at once by repeatedly calling `\begin{envelope}` and `\end{envelope}`.

There are absolutely no conventions about feeding envelopes into various printers and telling the device driver to print landscape. With Eberhard Mattes' excellent `dvihplj` driver[2] and my unusual printer I seem to achieve reasonable results with the options `/tr3 /l-1in /t3.5in` (rotate 90 degrees clockwise, and change offsets). It's desirable to have the FIM facing the inside, since most printers can't print on the outside edge. One needs to discover the correct options and envelope feeding procedure for one's driver/printer combination by trial and error.

Managing address files and the future

The layout of database tables for mass mailing lists and for one's personal correspondence is similar: each row should contain a unique identifier for joining with other data tables, an optional salutation, and the complete address (preferably, with ZIP+4 code and carrier route, and room for ZIP+6). But the operations are somewhat different for the two applications. For a mass mailing list, it's desirable to detect similar entries (i.e., slight variations of the same addressee) to avoid duplicate entries, and to be able to select a random sample of a specified size (so-called nth sample, used for tests); while for a personal address file it would be convenient to have a tool similar in spirit to BIBTEX, where the user would reference only a name tag, or a name and a department tag, in the TEX file, and one or more clever programs would pull the missing address information from the address table and complete the letter and the envelope, just like BIBTEX retrieves references from tags in a LATEX file. Oren Patashnik suggested that BIBTEX itself may be capable of doing this.

I may eventually write such a program. Alas, few people now write TEXware and distribute it freely with source code. If I do write such a program, it will be distributed in the same spirit as TEX itself.

These macros have not been certified by the Post Office, and are not warrantied to do anything at all. You may use them at your own risk. The certification process costs $375, and I'm not making any money by giving them away for free. The macros are copyrighted, though, and I intend to defend them strenuously against unauthorized commercial use.

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[2] I use emTEX, the excellent implementation of TEX for MS-DOS, also by Eberhard Mattes, that's available for free; SBTEX is another such implementation, by Wayne Sullivan. Anecdotal evidence suggests that, regrettably, many *The TEXbook* readers are unaware that it's not necessary to spend hundreds of dollars to obtain TEX, and that free implementations are usually just as good as the commercial ones.

LATEX

The LATEX Column

Jackie Damrau

There has been much discussion as to what this column tries to cover. I would like to provide a few comments of what I view this column's purpose to be. I certainly welcome any comments from others on what they would like to see in this column as well.

I see my role as Associate Editor of this column to put forth questions, answers, and macros that other users — especially those of the novice class — would find most useful. However, what may work at one particular site may not always work the same at another. Bear in mind that most users can obtain an idea of how to create macros from what has been accomplished by others in creating their own macros. These are what I try to print in the LATEX column. These may not be the most sophisticated nor the most clever solutions to problems or situations. When I put forth a question that has been sent to me, I do not always provide an answer. I feel that anyone who would like to submit an answer to be published in the next issue deserves a chance to do so. It also helps to solicit answers from users who are not necessarily available electronically and reach out to those who are advancing through the ranks from novice to LaTeXpert.

One goal I try to achieve when printing a solution in this column is not to imply this is the only solution. There are always many ways to solve a problem; however, the trick is to find the solution which is understandable and useful to the user and not necessarily to the half-dozen experts to whom the user has NOT turned. Users do not always wish to have the most detailed/clever/astute/elegant solution. The *role* of the TeX or LaTeX consultant in this case *is* to be the person who provides a solution which is adequate to the problem and which is most useful and educational to the user.

Another goal I try to strive for is to reach out to novice users and invite them to submit their questions. We all began somewhere — some with advanced knowledge in computer programming; some just beginning to learn programming; and some with no programming background at all. There is a vast pool of knowledge in the TeX community that needs to be shared and we should never treat a beginner's question — no matter how many times asked — like "That has been answered before, why ask again?".

We should strive to invite the novice user into our community in a friendly fashion. If someone repeats a question, we should provide them with some helpful suggestions and a possible place where relevant answers can be found (e.g., TeXhax, *TUGboat*). In doing this, we all add enrichment to the TeX community in our teaching, to our own knowledge, and we have gained one more contact in our everlasting networking scheme.

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A comment on the LaTeX column

Nico Poppelier

1 Double spacing

In the LaTeX column of *TUGboat* 1, no. 1(4) (1990), Jackie Damrau presented two macros for changing from single line-spacing to double line-spacing. Everyone who has ever tried this knows that the simpler macros do not do what the author, Josephine Colmenares, claims them to do. The correct answer was already given by Jackie in her column in *TUGboat* 1, no. 1(1) (1990), namely

```
\newcommand{\single}{%
  \renewcommand{\baselinestretch}{1}
  \large \normalsize}
\newcommand{\double}{%
  \renewcommand{\baselinestretch}{1.5}
  \large \normalsize}
```

I will try to explain why only this works under *all* circumstances.

In the comment in `lfonts.tex` (version of 10 April 1989) we can read[1]

```
% A SIZE COMMAND is something like
% \normalsize that defines a type size.
% It is defined by the document style.
% However, \normalsize is handled
% somewhat differently because it is
% called so often--e.g., on every
% page by the output routine.  The
% document style defines \@normalsize
% instead of \normalsize.
```

The command `\normalsize` checks whether the current size is `\normalsize`.

- If it is, it switches to the `\rm` font
- If it isn't, if switches the new size by means of a call to the kernel macro `\@setsize`

Somewhere else in `lfonts.tex` we find

```
% Each size command \SIZE
% executes the command
%  \@setsize\SIZE{BASELINESKIP}
%           \FONTSIZE\@FONTSIZE
% which does the following.
  ...
% 3. Sets \baselineskip to
%    \baselinestretch * BASELINESKIP
  ...
```

In other words, to switch between single and double spacing you have to do the following:

1. you start by re-defining `\baselinestretch`

[1] The comment is reformatted to fit into the narrow columns.