Greetings

Michael D. O'Dell Editor-in-Chief

Interactive programs can be a blessing when one is in an interactive mood, but trying to use such programs without the immediate aid of a human can be a vexing experience. Don Libes has created a program called expect which provides a framework for harnessing overly-interactive programs in an embedded setting. His paper, "expect: Scripts for Controlling Interactive Processes," describes the design and implementation considerations of such a tool as well as providing some clever examples of its use.

In our second paper, Eric H. Herrin II and Raphael Finkel describe their experiences building "An ASCII Database for Fast Queries of Relatively Stable Data." Their system captures much of the structural flavor of record-oriented databases while maintaining the searching flexibiity of full text information retrieval systems. The easy availability of such a system is sure to lead to some interesting applications.

It is a particular pleasure to note that both software systems described above are readily available with few if any strings attached. This is very important for the feedback loop of science wherein others attempt to analyze and duplicate your results.

Our final paper is a Controversy piece by Jim Waldo presenting "The Case for Muiltiple Inheritance in C++." You will recall that in our previous issue, volume 4, number 1, Tom Cargill mounted the podium to argue against multiple inheritance in C++. Waldo's reply is our first submitted rebuttal to a previously published Controversy piece, and your editor fervently hopes this marks the beginning of a flood of participation in general.

Next in *Computing Systems* (4.3) we will publish a special issue devoted to multiprocessors and distributed systems. It will contain five papers and an introduction by guest editor Eugene Spafford of Purdue. And like the previous such special issue, volume 3 number 1, it will be on the hefty side.

That does it for now. I hope your tomato plants are prolific. (This is the spring issue, after all.)