YEARS AND YEARS AGO

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This issue of *;login:* is "volume 30, number 3." But, of course, it isn't.

The purple ditto'ed sheets created by Mel Ferentz in July 1975 were headed "UNIX NEWS." It was years later, following a threatening letter from a lawyer at Western Electric, that the name of the newsletter was changed.

My copy of "UNIX NEWS," Number 1, is dated July 25, 1975, and contains the notation "Circulation 37."

Dennis Ritchie and Ken Thompson delivered the first UNIX paper in October 1973. Lou Katz and Reidar Bornholdt convened the first "UNIX Users" meeting on May 15, 1974. The UNIX paper appeared in the July 1974 *CACM*, and Mel sent notices to 37 institutions of the arrival of V6.

And a meeting, organized by Lou, Reidar, and Mel and hosted at CUNY by Ira Fuchs, was held on June 18. Mel described it in that first newsletter:

"The meeting on June 18 at City University of New York was attended by over 40 people from 20 institutions. Each institution described briefly its function and idiosyncrasies. . . . There was unanimous sentiment for keeping the user's group and its newsletter as informal as possible."

Over the decades both the "user's group" (now USENIX) and the newsletter (now *;login:*) have shed a good deal of that informality. But there's a lot of the cohesive spirit still there 30 years on.