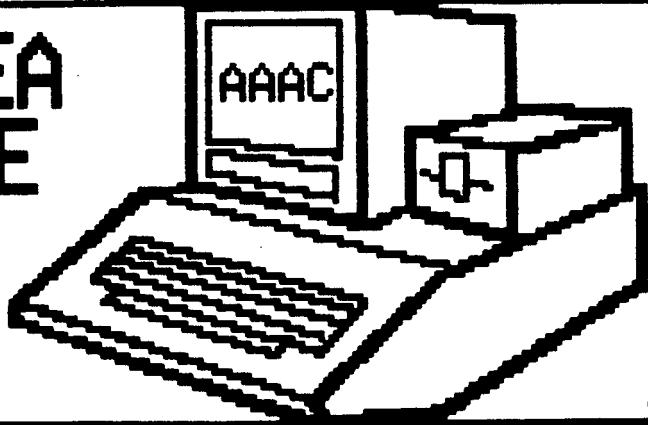# AURORA AREA APPLE CORE NEWS

VOL. I NO.4

LISTening Post
by
Gary Senesac

How in the world did Christmas get here so fast? Labor Day weekend was just last week wasn't it? Sure seemed funny eating Thanksgiving turkey so early in the year!

This month we'll spend some time talking a bit (pun intended) about computers and education as well as some ideas for applications that you or your kids can do with the Apple.

I hope everyone who attended last months meeting and picked up a free Viewtron Starter Kit disk has already used it! Remember, if you intend to subscribe to Viewtron be sure to fill out the registration card that came with the starter kit. If you return the card to me so that it can be sent in to Viewtron before December 31st, the AAAC will be eligible for a drawing in January. Prizes include a Commodore Amiga, an Apple //c or $1,000 cash.

In response to my appeal at last months meeting for some assistance in putting out announcements of AAAC meetings to the local media, Barbara Voigts has offered to see that the monthly press releases are typed and mailed out. I appreciate Barbara taking on this assignment. I never seem to have enough time just before meeting week to tidy up all the last minute details and still get the News to press on time.

Incidently, as yet no one has stepped forward with an offer to write an article for the News. We now have some 67 paid up members in the AAAC, and I'm sure some of you must read an interesting article, use a newly acquired program, or made a neat discovery about the Apple. If so, please share this with the group. The News is not MY newsletter, but

YOURS. The more participation we can get, the more interesting and informative it will be for everyone.

Speaking of paid up memberships, please check your mailing label on this month's AAAC News. If it is in black ink, you are paid up til 9/86. If your label is in green ink, it means you are receiving a complementary copy of the News. If the label is in red ink, it means this is the last copy of the News you will receive until you join the AAAC.

If you would like more information about paying your AAAC dues, please contact our Treasurer, Art Shaff. Art's phone number is listed on the back page of this newsletter.

Our December meeting will be held in the Waubonsee Community College Student Center on Thursday, December, 12th. This month our program will feature Mr. Mark Glenn of Penguin Software, Geneva, IL.

Mark will talk about the climate for software publishing and will also demonstrate a couple of Penguin's most popular products. The Graphics Magician and The Complete Graphics System.

COMPUTERS & EDUCATION

Recently a lot of articles have been showing up talking about schools, kids, and computers. John Scully, Apple president, has indicated that he is in favor of taking the company back to its roots in the grade schools of America.

Another small piece, from Associated Press, cited how industry's call for more high technology-oriented public school programs has trickled down to the kindergarten level in Lowell, MA. Lowell's 27 schools have introduced a major computer literacy program from kindergarten through high school.

A full page Time Magazine article in October focused on Philadelphia's Drexel University, which requires incoming freshmen to purchase a Macintosh computer and a bundle of software. Several members of the faculty now refuse to accept term papers and research projects unless they have been typed on a word processor!

The bottom line appears to be that computers and teaching people how to use them is once again a hot topic of discussion.

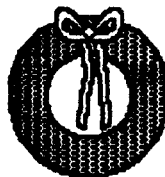When the first computers hit the classrooms, most efforts at using them centered on tutoring math, spelling, language, etc., or in teaching the BASIC programming language. The theory seemed to be that using some kind of a tutoring program would free the teacher for more individual attention of other student needs, while learning to program a computer would teach logic skills.

The problem was, most tutor programs were boring students to death after the novelty wore off and few students could see any practical need for them to learn how to program a computer. Consequently, a lot of Apples soon found themselves sitting quietly in the corner because no one could figure out what to do with the darned thing!

Now, the latest trend seems to be in finding a practical day to day use for the computer that will make it more acceptable to its users. I think they might have something this time!

Few students will ever have need to master a programming language for real world use, certainly not BASIC anyway! A more valid approach would seem to be one that stresses the enormous utility of the computer in performing a variety of tasks. Word processing and data collection are probably the two most often used applications of a personal computer.

OK, where do we begin to get students started doing something useful with these computers?

Unfortunately, back to one of the tutor programs! Before obtaining mastery of the computer, the student is going to have to learn a bit about typing at the keyboard. Hunt and peck can only get you so far! While learning a bit of touch typing can be boring at first, it can remove much future frustration at not being able to input things to the computer fast enough.

Once some basic familiarity with the keyboard is learned, specific uses or applications must be found. It shouldn't be too hard to employ a word processor for doing school reports, articles, class newsreports, etc. If you have an easy to learn data manager, such as Appleworks,

it could be employed in several useful projects. How about a data base of the student's record collection? Artists, song titles, price paid, etc. could all be kept for fast reference.

Do you have a record of the serial numbers of all your valuable household items? Your student could set up a data base of make, model, serial no., date purchased, amount paid, etc. You might be surprised to see just how much you have tied up in your computer, VCR, stereo equipment and cameras!

Do you have VisiCalc, AppleWorks or some other type of spreadsheet? How about tracking household utility expenses and forecasting future costs? Or set up a model to follow car history; MPG, gas, insurance, repairs, etc. How about next summers vacation? Create a model to plan out the itinerary expenses day by day. Meals, motels, sightseeing, average daily mileage to cover, total miles, etc.
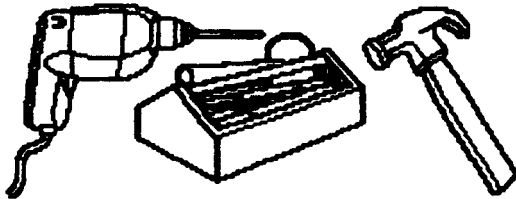
Such projects teach students that computers are tools that can be used to accomplish a wide range of tasks. To a non-educator, it seems logical to assume that the more "real world" applications that can be found for using personal computers as day to day tools, the easier it will be to have students accept them and use them through out their lives.

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND HAPPY NEW YEAR!

ODDS & ENDS

A while back we asked if anyone knew how to get an 80 column listing of a program dump on an Imagewriter. At last month's meeting a solution was offered that seems to make no sense. What the heck, try it anyway!

Type PR#1:POKE33,33:LIST and hit RETURN. After the printing stops, type PR#0 and RETURN. If anyone finds this works let us know! Then we'll try to figure out why!

This month we will have three, count 'em folks, three new public domain disks. Defender, a nice star wars game with a nifty intro graphic by our own Jay Vicory, Eamon II adventure game, and, in keeping with the season, a disk of Christmas songs. All disks are $2 each. So get bundled up, come on out and pick up some new stuff for Xmas.

While your at the meeting, be sure to pick up your new AAAC membership card. These will be available at the Treasurer's desk.

Finally, Ralph Johnson offers this reminder for those of you that type in BASIC programs of your own or from a magazine. The ESCape key sequence can be used to edit programs lines to correct typos or add more statements to a line.

First display the line by typing LIST and the line number. Then hit ESC, left arrow, up arrow to the line number, and hit the space bar. Now use the right arrow to cursor over to the typo and retype. Continue to use the right arrow to cursor to the end of the line before hitting RETURN. If you are in 40 column mode, enter POKE33,33 to prevent copying a bunch of spaces into the middle of your line.

To duplicate existing lines, which avoids having to retype the same statements all over again, LIST the original line entered and use the ESC sequence to move the cursor to the line number. Type in the new line number and right arrow the cursor to the end of the line. Your new copy of this line will be inserted in the proper place in the progam and the original line remains unchanged.

Next month we'll discuss inserting text in the middle of a line and review GALE - a program line editor!

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