

Highlights From . . .

# Florida and Connecticut

Educational  
Computer

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## A General Overview

### **1981 Florida Instructional Computing Conference Exceeds Expectations and Welcomes 1000 Educators and Administrators**

The 1981 Florida Instructional Computing Conference, held in St. Petersburg on February 4-5 drew double its expected attendance of 500, surprising its Department of Education (DOE) sponsors and causing exhibitors to scurry for overnight delivery of more materials.

"By mid-January we had over 500 people pre-registered, so we counted on 700 coming," said Fred Daniel, a spokesman for the Florida DOE. "We weren't prepared when more than 800 showed up the first day and there were new registrants the second day." A total of just under 1,000 educators, mostly from Florida, attended the sessions and crowded into the exhibit area at the Bayfront Concourse.

"When we first opened the doors to the exhibit area, hundreds of people swarmed in," said Sharon Lobello, exhibit chairperson. "They were just short of eating the booths! By the end of the day, the exhibitors were signalling me to close the doors." Lobello

said that on the second day even more people were there. "The exhibitors couldn't believe it. None of us could," she exclaimed.

Vendors were also enthusiastic about the response they received. Mel Pace of Cook Consultants, one of the 50 exhibitors, said a man walked up to him and "handed me a purchase order. In all the years I've been doing this, that's never happened."

More than 20 concurrent sessions introduced educators and administrators to topics that ranged from computer literacy seminars to administrative usages of microcomputers. Continuous showings of video tapes on instructional computing kept audiences occupied throughout the conference. Other areas covered included "How to Get a Micro Program Started," a discussion of the capabilities and potential instructional uses of micros, minis and mainframes, various aspects of instructional computing, and a software exchange.

"Although we couldn't start the exchange

until after 9 pm," said David Brittain, software exchange moderator, "it didn't matter. People were still there after 11 pm!"

"There was something there for just about everyone," said Le Anne Brown, DOE instructional computing consultant. "People kept asking me when the next conference would be held."

The Florida Instructional Computing Conference did "have something for everyone," and we recommend attending this conference next year. □

## **Editor's Note:**

This newsletter is an introduction to **Educational Computer Magazine**, a bi-monthly publication focussing on microcomputers in the classroom from elementary to college level. Until its arrival in May, a monthly interim newsletter will be distributed to all early subscribers.

This issue includes a brief overview of the **Florida Instructional Computing Conference** in St. Petersburg February 4-5, **Queue's Educational Software Symposium** held January 17-18 in Bridgeport, CT, a calendar of events, a book review and information on video-taped courses.

The April newsletter will include more information on the Florida Conference, Michael's Micros, Dateline and a glimpse at the May magazine issue.

We welcome all comments from the readership, including news items, announcements and questions. □

*Every classroom and every teacher will have an educational computer.*

*Every classroom and every teacher should have **EDUCATIONAL COMPUTER** magazine.*



Many educators gained hands-on experience with Radio Shack's microcomputers at the exhibit area of the Florida Instructional Computing Conference.

# Educators, Software Producers, Special Ed Teachers Attend Queue's First Educational Software Symposium

Reported by Frances Rosenbaum

Despite the 14°F weather, 110 people attended Queue's first Educational Software Symposium held January 17-18 at the Holiday Inn in Bridgeport, CT under the direction of Monica and Jonathan Kantrowitz. Ninety-five percent of the attendees were high school and college teachers. The remainder of those attending were software producers and elementary and special education teachers.

On both days the exhibit area was open prior to the start of the panel discussions. The exhibit room featured various microcomputers, among them the Apple II, the PET and the TRS-80, as well as software. Many of the visitors engaged in hands-on demonstrations of the microcomputers.

Each day there was a choice of two panel workshops in the morning and then again in the afternoon. At the "Approaches to Educational Software" discussion, which was moderated by Jonathan Kantrowitz, John Victor of Program Design Inc., Patrick Mayer of Teach Yourself by Computer, William Denmon of Med Systems Software and Martin Horowitz of Compu-Con Ltd. explained the different types of software designs such as Tutorial vs. Drill and Multiple Choice vs. Fill-in-the-Blanks. The conferees sought opinions on branching, game incentive, use of sound graphics and scoring. Many of the educators present were about to make their first hardware and software purchases. They were particularly interested in publications that review hardware and software.

One luncheon speaker, Robin Madder of Cavri, gave a brief talk on interactive video. She stated that there are more video tapes than disks on the market because of the high cost of disk production. Interactive video systems are now being employed by large corporations such as oil refineries, by the Navy in their work with nuclear power, and by those engaged in educating the deaf. Madder described how correct answers are reinforced because the tape indicates if a reply is incorrect and returns to the beginning of the problem. She stressed that this form of instruction benefits all levels of learners. With interactive video, a knowledge of programming is not a prerequisite. Canada has made good use of this medium by broadcasting instructional programs in areas where decentralized education is necessary because of distance.

Those attending the "Computers in the Mathematics and Computer Education Curriculum" seminar were interested in knowing the best way to promote computer literacy. The panelists advocated the creation of a "computer room" in each institution, where students and teachers may borrow computers over the weekends. It was suggested that instructors obtain a series of 26 booklets written about mathematics and computer

usage published by the University of Illinois, Urbana, IL. The Association of Educational Data Systems in Washington, D.C. was also mentioned as a source for material.

The seminar entitled "The Educational Software Marketplace" included a discussion of distribution channels, end-users and patterns of supply and demand. Educational software came into existence in 1978. Despite a sizeable increase in available software since then, it is still a cottage industry. It takes from six months to a year to produce a good program. Programming education software is an exceedingly slow process because quality is of the utmost importance. Generally programming eight to ten lines per day is considered good. It often takes 200 hours to create a program and an additional 60 hours to debug it.

Educational software is beginning to receive recognition by major educational publishing companies who wish to provide software for microcomputers (i.e., Milton Bradley, McGraw-Hill, Scholastic Magazine). A number of educator-computer-user groups have arisen in response to the need for software. This often leads to the stealing of programs by group members. To date, software is non-copyrightable. Thus there is a need for a method to prevent the pirating of educational software.

A number of teachers in the audience said they felt leary of purchasing programs sight unseen. The panelists recommended that prospective purchasers read software reviews. The panelists stated that 95% of the educational software sold to schools for remedial work may be used interchangeably at all levels--grade school, high school and college. One reason software vendors dislike selling to schools is that they often have to wait one to three months for payment. It was mentioned that Radio Shack offers free introductory courses to computers for teachers in groups of ten.

One important factor to consider in buying a microcomputer is the amount of software available for it. Apple is the most popular classroom computer. There is a lot of software for both the PET and the TRS-80 as well. One problem faced by educators is that their schools allow funds for hardware but little or none for software. Another problem is that school administrators often dislike arranging time for teachers to learn programming. In conclusion, the seminar attendees believed that the federal government will provide the money for computer literacy and that in the next 3 to 5 years there will be a computer room in every school and someday a computer for every child.

"Computers in the Elementary Classroom" and "Computer-Assisted Instruction in English and Reading" each attracted an audi-

ence of about 50 people. An experiment was described where pre-school youngsters who did not know how to read, learned how to use computers. Computers are also excellent tools for the instruction of gifted children. One way students could employ microcomputers is in text editing. When preparing a paper, the student could type it, and then make his corrections so that the first draft is also the final draft. The computer is able to adapt to usage by a very bright child, an average child and a slow child, and still challenge each of them. This frees the teacher, enabling him to perform other tasks. A few educators confessed that they thought that their jobs might be eliminated. The panelists offered reassurance and said that in some cases where jobs may be phased out, new ones will be established.

At "The Future of Educational Software" seminar, there was an interactive panel discussion on new developments and industry trends. It was predicted that the trend will be to take adventure games and add them to educational software. The panelists also felt that there will be greater use of graphics and voice-operated microcomputers.

The future may also offer pocket computers with light-emitting diodes. Currently, software lags behind hardware. There may be a central software bank as soon as 1985. Voice chips will be used in cars, typewriters, toasters and washing machines. As hardware becomes smaller, the cost of manufacturing it will decrease. At present most computers are sold to junior high schools and colleges, with less than 10% going to elementary schools. This will change radically in the next few years. Computers will be employed at all academic levels. □

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## A Request For Quality Articles

We are looking for quality articles by people interested in using microcomputers in education. Some topic ideas include your experiences with developing CAI courses, computer literacy, usages of educational software, and the how to get started. Our audience varies in computer experience and therefore all terms must be defined.

To submit articles for publication, send your typewritten, double-spaced manuscripts to EDITOR, **Educational Computer Magazine**, P.O. Box 535, Cupertino, California 95015. We pay from \$20 to \$50 per printed page upon publication depending upon the amount of editing involved and the value of the material content. Manuscripts will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope. □

# MICHAEL'S MICROS

## Book Review

### **MINDSTORMS: Children, Computers and Powerful Ideas**

by Seymour Papert, BASIC Books, Inc., New York, 1980, 230 pp, \$12.95

This book is a must reading for anyone involved with, or who plans to be involved with, computers in education. Papert has an easy and pleasant manner in expressing his ideas, thoughts and experiences that makes his book not only informative but also a joy to read. It must be noted that his mathematics background heavily influences his examples and perceptions in this book, but not to the point of becoming unreadable for those who do not share his background.

This book treads quite heavily on some of our standard educational practices and although you may disagree with Papert on some points (some of which you may feel are quite controversial), you certainly should be made aware of them. His experience with using computers in the classroom is quite extensive and this book allows us to gain some valuable insights. I would recommend this book as "must reading." The only improvement I would hope for is that BASIC Books comes out with a paperback version soon. □

*Editor's Note: Have you read an especially good or bad book lately? Extol its virtues or condemn its shortcomings by becoming a book reviewer. Send book reviews to: Education Computer Magazine, Book Reviews, P.O. Box 535, Cupertino, CA 95015.*

## Product Announcement

For those of you who have heard about the wonders of Visicalc but who have a CP/M-based system, you may want to look at a new package called Microplan. Microplan runs

on any CP/M-based system and allows you to do budget preparation, variance, reporting, cashflow planning, investment and economic data analysis and more. For more information contact Chang Laboratories, 10180 Barbara Lane, Cupertino, CA 95014. □

## Video Tape Courses

The following information is not meant to be an evaluation of the quality of the material involved. It is mainly to give teachers an idea of another source of microcomputer learning aids available to them — video tape courses. We strongly endorse the concept of using video tapes to improve computer literacy.

**Little Computers . . . See How They Run** provides grades 8-12 with a general understanding of the computer and demonstrates the microcomputer specifically. The series introduces the student to the microcomputer's primary elements and how they function together. The series consists of four tapes and eight lessons.

Lesson 1 (16 minutes) introduces computers and describes how they function.

Lesson 2 (19 minutes) describes how the computer understands data.

Lesson 3 (16 minutes) describes how the computer reads an instruction, executes the desired action and selects the next instruction.

Lesson 4 (23 minutes) concentrates on peripheral storage and the storage and retrieval of information.

Lesson 5 (22 minutes) covers the manner in which data is stored (format) and transferred (communicated).

Lesson 6 (15 minutes) describes the step-by-step development of a program.

Lesson 7 (16 minutes) discusses the manner in which computers communicate to each other.

Lesson 8 (20 minutes) covers some of the human-oriented functions (music, speech, graphics) that the computer can perform.

For more information contact: Electronic Data Systems, 14580 Midway Road, Dallas, TX 75234.

**Fast Forward** is a seven-tape 13-lesson series for grades 10-12 that covers many aspects of the rapidly changing areas of computer applications and communications. This series' goal is to demystify and humanize the technology of today. All lessons are 28 minutes long.

Lesson 1 covers information processing, storage and transmission of microcomputers.

Lesson 2 describes the movement of information via computer, telephone and television in today's information marketplace.

Lesson 3 discusses microcomputers as instructing, business, communication and entertaining tools.

Lesson 4 discusses the effects of the television media in 20 countries.

Lesson 5 looks at computers in the robots of today and their virtually human movements and acts.

Lesson 6 underscores the benefits of the new technology for handicapped people.

Lesson 7 follows information as it passes through cables, optical fibers and telephone interconnections.

Lesson 8 discusses computer image processing and its influences on us.

Lesson 9 shows computers simulating situations too dangerous or expensive to allow actual occurrence.

Lesson 10 looks at electronic medicine—electronic pain killers, cardiac pacemakers and electronic healing.

Lesson 11 goes over the development of electronic memory from the early relays and tubes to today's integrated circuits and the coming new technologies using Josephson junctions.

Lesson 12 examines electronic music from electric guitars to computer-controlled synthesizers.

Lesson 13 covers the future of television as the message and information media of the future.

For more information contact: TV Ontario, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

**Adventure of the Mind** introduces the viewer to low-cost microcomputers, their development, applications and future in our society. The series consists of two tapes of six lessons (approximately 14 minutes each) designed for grades 10-12 and college.

Lesson 1 looks at the many ways computers can serve our personal interests.

Lesson 2 identifies and discusses the five hardware components (input, output, arithmetic/logic, memory and control) and two software types (system and application) found in all computer systems.

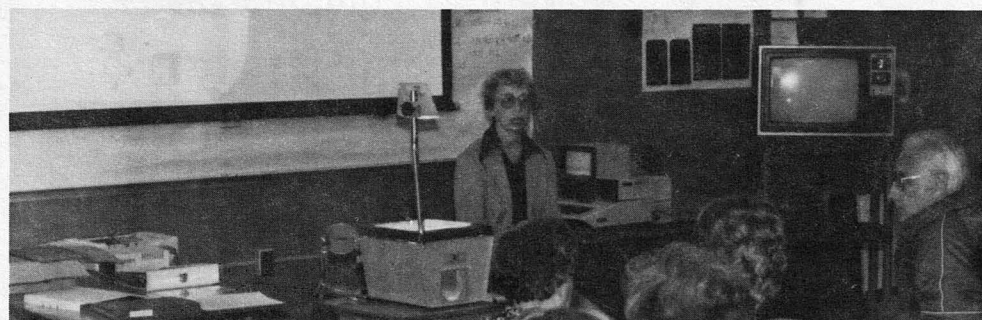
Lesson 3 introduces the programming language, BASIC.

Lesson 4 demonstrates the three major classes of computer applications (data/information processing, control, design).

Lesson 5 discusses the potential benefits and problems to the individual and society in the computer age.

Lesson 6 looks at the impact of microcomputers on the individual to meet their special needs.

For more information contact: Children's Television International, Falls Church, VA. □



**Computer-Using Educators (C.U.E.)** President Bobby Goodson conducts about three in-service programs per week for the Cupertino Union School District in California on the many uses of microcomputers in education. At a recent in-service gathering, Goodson mentioned that no district funds were spent to purchase the 40 microcomputers in her district. Instead the money was raised through Title IVB, General Motors and parent groups. She categorized her in-service audience into four groups of teachers. There are those who are 1.) interested and want to know something about this new world around them; 2.) curious as to how microcomputers can be used in schools (the largest group); 3.) excited and want to teach it; and 4.) creative and investigating ways to use it and implement it. She also noted that often times microcomputers start in mathematics classes. This makes people feel that they belong there. In the Cupertino School District most microcomputers have started in classes other than mathematics. □

# Educational Computer

magazine

M. Dundee Maples, Publisher  
Joan R. Hiraki, Editor

# DATELINE

**Authoring Courseware for Microcomputers** will be held March 16-17 in East Lansing, MI. The workshop is sponsored by the Association for Educational Data Systems and will emphasize microcomputer programs and related documentation. For more information contact AEDS Workshops, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. □

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**The Sixth West Coast Computer Faire** will be held April 3-5 at San Francisco's Civic Auditorium and Brooks Hall. For more information contact Computer Faire, 333 Swett Road, Woodside, CA 94062—415-851-7075. □

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**Association for Educational Communications and Technology Convention** will offer over 300 sessions on April 6-10 at the Philadelphia Civic Center in Philadelphia, PA. For more information contact AECT Convention Office, 1126 16th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036. □

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**The Second Annual C.U.E. Instructional Workshop** will feature introductory hands-on lessons in BASIC, advanced programming and discussions on computer uses on April 25 at San Francisco State University, San Francisco, CA. □

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**The National Computer Conference** will be held on May 4-7 in McCormick Place, Chicago, Illinois. Educational Computer Magazine is happy to announce that this year there will be an educational track as part of the Personal Computing Festival. Our publisher, M. Dundee Maples, will participate on a panel addressing the informational needs of educators. □

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Computer-Using Educators (C.U.E.) will hold their **First Annual Southern California Conference on Microcomputers in Education** on May 15-16 in Bloomington, California. To register to attend, contact Forest Miller, Pre-registration Chairman, 602 S. Tippecanoe, San Bernardino, CA 92415—714-383-1728. □

Announcing the magazine specifically for the educational user of microcomputers.

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