

# Computer Literacy Becoming A Way Of Life

Editor's note: The following is the first of a series of articles on computers in the Potsdam Central School District.

**BY JARED THAYER**  
Computer literacy, the process of getting to know computers, how to use them and what they can do. That is what the Potsdam Central School District is aiming for, with a program that involves students at all grade levels.

The Commodore Vic 20 computer is currently in use in 20 classrooms at Lawrence Avenue School. According to Principal Gary Snell, the Commodore or a similar computer will eventually be in every classroom in the elementary school. It receives its programming instructions from a cassette player, and the number of functions it can perform are limited

and it is relatively simple. The cost for the Vic 20 is approximately \$300 with cassette.

The Potsdam High School also has computers, including seven Apples and four made by Radio Shack. These computers can perform many more functions than the Vic and are equipped with a disc drive, enabling them to do far more than the Vic 20 and do it faster. A kit including computer, disc drive and other components costs about \$2,000.

Both the Vic 20 and the Apple computers themselves, the removable disc the memory is stored on in the Apple and the printers that can be attached to the computer and the actual computer screen are referred to as hardware.

Programs are the instruction set the computer uses. Programs are referred

to as software. Without a program a computer isn't much more than a keyboard and a screen with nothing on it. A certain program can allow one to play Pac Man or recreate a physics experiment. Understanding computer terminology is a step toward gaining computer literacy.

Computer literacy is what the Potsdam School District computer program is all about. Bill Mundell, math teacher at the high school who also teaches computer courses, stated that he is not turning out computer programmers or even trying to. "What we are trying to do," he said, "is expose the students to computers so they can get an idea how they work and become familiar with what they can do."

Six or seven years ago a computer program was started at the Potsdam High School, using Clarksons College computers. Since that time small computers have become more available, at a more affordable price.

The district's computer program has continued to evolve as faculty members have come and gone and new equipment has become available. Students learn how to use computers in stages and at the same time the computers are used as teaching aids in traditional subjects. The program starts in elementary, continues through middle school and is completed in high school. All students receive exposure to computers and those students who have an interest in the subject are given the opportunity to master basic programming and some problem solving.

State grant money has been used to purchase computers at the elementary school. At the elementary level, the computers are used primarily to

drill the students by using math or spelling games. Snell pointed out the fact that computers provide instant feedback to the student. In the "Guess My Number" game played by second graders for instance, if a student gives a wrong answer he is told that it is wrong and told to try again. This continues for three wrong guesses then the correct answer would be revealed. On a traditional homework assignment the student would not learn that he had made an incorrect answer for at least a day after the error, pointed out Snell.

Typing skills and spelling skills are also developed in the student by learning to use a computer, Snell continued. Games such as Pac Man are used as a positive incentive for learning to run the computer. Connie Harper, a second grade teacher stated she plans to start rewarding the students' use of the math games by allowing them to play Pac Man when their work was done.

Parents have been involved in the program to the extent of actually writing programs for games. While a math or spelling program might be set up like a game it is serious work, school officials said. Even in elementary school the student must learn which commands must be given to the computer to set up the game. The students learn quickly that they must tell the computer exactly what is required or the computer will not respond.

According to Snell, some parents are becoming interested in computers because of their child's involvement with them. In some cases this has led to the purchase of a home computer, perhaps not just to aid the child in school work but to satisfy or merely whet the parents' curiosity.

## PCS District Notes

Canta Sera and the Potsdam High School Girls Ensemble will provide music for the Village of Potsdam memory tree lighting ceremony at 7 p.m. Dec. 9. The memory tree is located in the parking lot behind the Civic Center.

Following the outdoor ceremony both musical groups under the direction of Joseph M. Liotta will present a program in the Potsdam Museum. The public is invited and refreshments will be served.

**Outstanding Students**  
The Outward Area Technology Center has released lists of students who have been outstanding while attending there.

The following students from Potsdam Central School have had perfect attendance for the first ten weeks of this school year at Seaway Tech: Ken Fuller, Alan Huckler, Audie Jerome, Michael LaPoint, Joel Miller, Van Peets, Joe Pusateri, Lisa J. Smith, Kelly Sochia, Tony Weaver and William White.

The following Potsdam Central Students have achieved an average of 85 or above for the first ten weeks in attendance at Seaway Tech: Kim Adams, Randy LaValley, Gregory Murray, Tina Robar, Andy Snyder and Roy Waite.

**First Place Winner**  
Christie Stanfel earned a first place trophy with her dramatic interpretation of "Anastasia" at the recent St. Lawrence University High School Speech Tournament. Her first place performance followed a third place finish at the Potsdam College High School Speech Tournament. These rankings qualify Christie to compete in

the New York State Championships to be held in Albany in April.

**Pac-Man**  
Pac-man eating little dots and the ghosts. Oh, no, in the wrong spot. Better turn into another lane. If you don't it will be the end of the game. Pac-man goes down, up, down. Pac-man goes all around. Eat the cherry. That last berry. I hope I got the high score. Not getting the high score is a bore. A few more dots and the high score will be defeated. I did it. The ghosts have retreated!

by Jason Shearer

**Olden Days**  
On Nov. 19, 27 students participated in an "Olden Days Classroom" at the Lawrence Avenue School. One student was selected from each of the K-5 classrooms and spent from 12:30 to 3 p.m. in a very unique setting. Students sat on benches, drank water from a dipper, ate bag lunches, sat on dunce stools (wearing a dunce cap), and stood when responding to questions. Mrs. Margaret McBurnie, teacher, and Gary Snell, headmaster, conducted class for the afternoon and the lesson included a mathematics lesson where students used lap boards and chalk (no paper). The afternoon concluded with a walk through the school, so that everyone could see the costumes worn by the students, and with a game of "drop the handkerchief" played on the playground.

## Corporation Files

continued from page one

It has also seen the company move toward greater reliance on gasoline sales, which have steadily topped, by expanding out of Northern New York into Central and Western New York.

Today, the company no longer has any family members other than Frank A. Augsburg Jr. as part of its management. Augsburg's three sons are not with the company.

Lefebvre says the company has 120 days to submit its reorganization plan.

But the debtors can ask the court to appoint a trustee, ask for changes to the plan, or ask the court to force the company into Chapter 7 bankruptcy proceedings.

Augsburg Corporation officials say the filing gives them "breathing room" to improve their cash flow situation.

Lefebvre says many of the companies that file under Chapter 11 manage to go back to normal operation.

"I wouldn't say it's terrible," he says. "Many of them do come out reorganized."

"There are many reasons a company can file," he says. "But there is definitely some trouble they are trying to head off. We're seeing an increasing number of companies taking advantage of the protections offered by the law. Nationwide there is a substantial increase."

**Layoffs Not Foreseen**  
Corporation spokesman Glenn Allen

said the restructuring plan will not involve management, but primarily the company's financing plans.

"We don't foresee any further layoffs," he says. "This is not a management restructuring, its financial."

He said company officials are not certain how long it will take to put together the financial blue print which will be submitted to the court.

"It's difficult to set a timetable," Allen said. "We don't know how long it will take."

For now, the decision allows the company to improve its cash flow position, particularly as it enters the heating season, when the company's heating oil sales are the greatest.

But the court action has no effect on Augsburg himself. When asked whether Augsburg has personally signed for any of the company's debts, Allen declined comment, saying he was not in a position to know.

"I'm not in a position to give a definite answer," Allen said.

But the court action will have no impact on Waterfun Village and Madison Barracks, two of the company's real estate operations. Those operations have both been in financial trouble, with the officials of those divisions negotiating with local officials for tax breaks on those operations.

The Augsburg Corporation employs 365 people of which 120 are in St. Lawrence County. Sixty-five of those in the county are in the Ogdensburg operation which includes the accounting offices on Riverside Avenue, sales and distribution.

## Robert Plumb Artworks Begin Series Of Maxfield's Exhibits

Restaurant owner Larry Hazen will add a special feature to Maxfield's, the new eatery in Potsdam located in the old Cox building on Market Street.

Coordinated by the Friends of Brainerd Art Gallery at Potsdam College, a monthly exhibition of artwork at Maxfield's featuring North Country artists will begin Wednesday with the work of award-winning watercolor artist Robert Plumb. Several of Plumb's landscapes will be on view through Jan. 2.

Plumb, a native of Potsdam, attended the State University College at Buffalo, where he received both the bachelor of science and master of science degrees. He has exhibited works at the SUNY colleges at Buffalo and Potsdam, Jefferson Community College, St. Lawrence University, the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute,

Eastern States Art Exhibit, Adirondack National Exhibition of American Watercolors, Chautauqua Exhibition of American Art, American Watercolor Society, Watercolor, U.S.A., and Rocky Mountains National.

Plumb's works are in numerous public and private collections, including the Adirondack Museum at Blue Mountain Lake.

One of the primary goals of the "Friends of Brainerd Art Gallery," of which Hazen is a board member, is to promote the visual arts in the North Country. "Isle of You" was one of many area businesses which supported last summer's "First Annual North Country Regional Art Exhibition" at Potsdam College. Plumb was one of the artists selected for the juried show.

## M-W Announces Honor Roll

MADRID — The Madrid-Waddington Central School honor roll has been announced, as follows:

- Grade 8 Honors — Meredith Burns, Missy Campbell, Christine Lumley, Patricia Mathis, Sandy McIntosh, Dawn Mowry, Kelly Putney, Julie Ruddy, Betty Sharlow, Scott Sharpe.
- Also Suzanne Bailey, Mark Nichols, Gisele Groulx, James Sabre, Becky Vallance, Mike Chambers, Troy Donie, Darin Greene, Harold Mitchell, Jay Newcombe.
- High Honors — Beverly Alford, Dikayi Dunkley, Gabriel Elin, Tyler Jeppesen.
- Grade 9 Honors — Scott Barney, Barbara Cady, Pat H. Corneau, Kell Conway, John Dineen, Laura Robare, Ted LaVine, Dan Oakes, Carrie Whyte.
- High Honors — John Coons, Melissa LePage, Amy Goyette, Tammy Murray, Vicki Murray, Matt Wagner, Kristi Longshore.
- Grade 10 Honors — Trudy Caswell, Elizabeth Kester, Andrew Golden, Scott Murphy, Trudy Murray, Paige Porteous.
- High Honors — Cheryl Carr, Susan Hamelin, Lisa Moulton, Timothy Taber.
- Grade 11 Honors — Julie McConnell, Shelly Mossou, Victoria Ashley, Lisa Davis, Lori Savan, Joni Throback, Troy Throback, Rex Tutthill, Stephanie Wright, Cheryl Kinney, Kelly Huribut, Mary Lehman.
- High Honors — Laurie Adams, Marilyn Allison.

- Kathy Burke, Megan Burns, Lisa Cardozo, Kelly Dineen, Nancy Ruddy, Jody Moulton, Kenny Godeske.
- Grade 12 Honors — Steve Ashley, Margaret Dutton, Robert Finley, Mike McQueeney, Scott O'Neil, Sandy Perry, Pat Pierce, Brett Pryce, Theresa Raleigh, Bonnie Slop.
- High Honors — Lisa Autschlager, Mark Baxter, Tim Butterfield, Patti Chokowski, Darlene Clark, Sean Clegg, Mike Collins, Brenda Dunn, Paul Grayson, Lisa Hargrave, Leslie Hoyt, Lorie LaPierre, Anne Loomis, Rebecca Lumley.
- Also, Tom MacMahon, Michelle McAvoy Cheryl McBeth, Kathy O'Neil, Brian Penrod, Laurel Porteous, Susan Rocker, Wendy Rupert, Marco Vassallo.

**NEWSBRIEF**  
SHOKAN, N.Y. — New York State Power Authority Chairman John S. Dyson dedicated the Power Authority's first small-scale hydroelectric project at ceremonies here last Wednesday and said further development of the state's hydropower resources offers a long-range alternative to dependence on OPEC oil.



**GUESS MY NUMBER**—Todd Beamis and Jason Pryce are shown here competing against each other and a computer in the math game "Guess My Number." They are both students in Connie Harper's grade two class at Lawrence Avenue Elementary School. (Jared Thayer photo)

## Estate Planning For Elderly

**BY JARED THAYER**  
"Being of sound mind I spent it all." That's what attorney Jerry Leek of North Country Legal Services said his father-in-law told people interested in estate planning.

Leek made the comment at a day-long workshop on legal services for the elderly, held last week at Potsdam College.

"If you haven't got anything you don't need to worry about paying taxes or probate and lawyer fees when your estate is settled," Leek added.

Leek, who is managing attorney for North Country Legal Services and Marilyn Ray, office coordinator, spoke on such subjects as how to avoid costs in settling estates, Medicaid and the transfer of assets problem, and consumer protection.

Leek discussed how middle and lower income elderly can avoid paying excessive costs when settling estates. He suggested that people shop around when hiring a lawyer to settle an estate. It is possible to get a written estimate of the cost of probating a will which, according to Leek is preferable to being told the hourly rate that will be charged.

Leek recommended having a will to ensure the desired distribution of property after death and the necessity of appointing an executor. He stressed that a will is especially important

when minor children or a large estate are involved.

Leek stated that jointly owned property is not probated, so an elderly couple should arrange for joint ownership. If relations within a family are congenial he suggested that an elderly couple could consider giving their home away to their children before death.

Marilyn Ray spoke on Medicaid and the transfer of assets problem. Other topics discussed included the possibility of probating an estate of less than \$10,000 without a lawyer if the total estate is less than \$10,000.

Leek used specific individual situations, based on frequent questions from the audience to clarify what alternatives are available in estate planning.

"Death," he said, "is one thing all of us can count on and since you can't take it with you it makes sense to make plans for dying."

The workshop was sponsored jointly by Potsdam College's Center for Public Service, its Office of Graduate and Lifelong Learning and the St. Lawrence County Office for the Aging.

## FARMING: "Milk Tax" Should Be Repealed

ALBANY — New York's largest farm organization has said Congress should repeal legislation that allows the Secretary of Agriculture to assess dairy farmers 50 cents for every 100 pounds of milk produced as a penalty for overproduction. Richard McGuire, president of the 22,000 member family New York Farm Bureau, called the assessment counterproductive, and said it will cause increased production as dairymen expand output to maintain a steady cash flow. McGuire asserted that the assessment plan authorized by Congress with the passage of the Omnibus Reconciliation Act in August will ultimately result in increased dairy price support program expenditures.

Under the dairy support program the Commodity Credit Corporation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture purchases surplus dairy products at support levels to provide a floor for the price received by the farmer. The price support level has not been increased since October 1980. The 50 cent assessment plan began Dec. 1 and will cost New York dairymen an average of \$4,000 to \$5,000 annually, but many larger dairy operations will pay over \$10,000 under the plan. Total cost to New York milk producers will be \$55 million annually.



**MECHANICAL TOYS** — The collection of wind-up toys shown above is always popular with young visitors to the Potsdam Museum. At Sunday's open house, Radmila Zuman, at left, opens the display case where the toys are kept as Andrew Marshall, Mindy Zipay and others look on. At right Mrs. Zuman shows the children one of the toys. (Betsy Baker photo)

**Convenient Food Mart**

**Make Us Your BEVERAGE HEADQUARTERS**

Prices good December 8 thru December 12

**CONVENIENT —PIZZA—**

Telephone 265-4760

PIZZA (Cut)	6	8	12	24
Grated Cheese	\$2.83	\$3.20	\$5.03	\$6.48
Mozarella Cheese	\$3.63	\$4.54	\$5.61	\$8.59
Any two items	\$4.00	\$5.08	\$5.79	\$10.03
Any three items	\$4.84	\$5.95	\$7.25	\$11.72

**Each Additional Item**

50¢ | 60¢ | 70¢ | \$1.40

+ TAX

**Slices— 50¢ + Tax**

Located in the Rear of

**Convenient Food Mart**

43 MAPLE ST., POTSDAM, N. Y.

OGDENSBURG      POTSDAM