

# Schools Expect More Funds To Aid Computer Curriculum

BY TERRY POPE

Brunswick County schools will receive more and more funds each year from the state to improve and upgrade its computer curriculum, said Tom Hill, county schools' computer coordinator.

For the 1985-86 fiscal year, the N.C. General Assembly is expected to appropriate \$13.5 million for computer instruction in grades 4-12, or about twice the amount appropriated for last year's school computer programs, Hill said. Brunswick County will also receive a share of the funds to help boost its computer programs into the elementary grades.

With the extra funds, the county plans to purchase computer hardware to reach the ratio of one computer per 50 students in grades 4-6, Hill told the Brunswick County Board of Education last Thursday. For the 1986-87 fiscal year, close to \$10 million will be appropriated from the state to aid computer instruction in grades K-12, Hill said.

The state awarded Brunswick County approximately \$39,000 last year for its computer programs, or close to \$10 per student, Hill said. With the funds, 17 Apple IIe computers and accessories were purchased by the county including a membership into the Minnesota

Educational Computer Consortium, or MECC.

Under MECC, close to 900 computer programs can be purchased at a minimum expense under state contract for the schools that may use the same computer software, but do not follow the same organized curriculum. There is no written computer curriculum for high school programming classes, Hill said.

"It's all being done off the cuff," Hill said. "Students transferring from one high school to the other would be at a disadvantage because there is no similarity."

Hill also suggested that a committee of three persons be formed to meet once a month to handle computer and software purchases since the schools will be expanding its stock at a faster pace. A program called "Computronics" would also be introduced as an inservice training session to middle school principals and teachers.

Presently, there are 93 computers in operation at the 11 county schools, including a number of Radio Shack Model IV computers for the vocational education business classes and IBM pcs (personal computers) for the computer assisted instruction classes.

"I get asked all the time, 'Why do we have three or four kinds of computers around here?'" Hill said. "I always say it's because we have three or four different kinds of jobs to train our students for."

Students in the vocational business classes use Radio Shack Model IV computers primarily for word processing. Under the MECC system, only six programs are available for the Radio Shack models while close

to 900 programs are available for the Apple IIe computers, which are used for computer literacy and programming classes.

Data entry, word processing and computer instruction basic is being

taught at all three high schools. The "Computronics" classroom program will still "leave it up to the individual teacher how to use the material," Hill said.

Under the present program, some students are having to be chided from the school building at 2:40 p.m. to catch their buses they are so fascinated by the computers, Hill said. "It certainly is a tremendous motivating tool," he added.

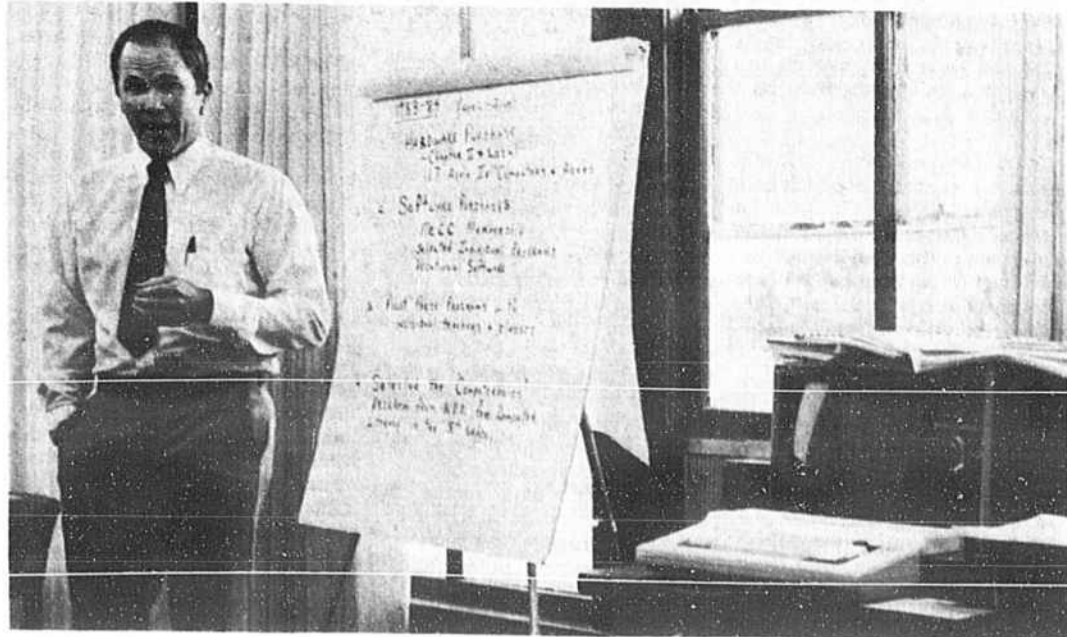
"I'm disappointed that it's not in the elementary grades more," board Chairman James Forstner said.

"As I work with lower grades, I see a reception to computers there," Hill said. "Not only with the students, but with the teachers, too."

Next year, the county will begin participating in the state's Student Information Management System (SIMS) program that will use computers to keep permanent records, grades, test results and attendance records on file in Raleigh.

Two county schools, North Brunswick High and Shallotte Middle School, will tie into the system for the 1985-86 school year. Beginning in 1987, there are plans to gradually tie all 11 county schools into the program, Hill said.

Funds were made available by the state to implement the program at only two county schools this year, Hill said.



COUNTY COMPUTER coordinator Tom Hill addressed the Brunswick County Board of Education last Thursday about the expansion of computers into all

classrooms. Computer programs prepared by the students were also demonstrated.

## Ward Earns DeKalb Award

West Brunswick High School senior Randy Ward, son of Mrs. Doris Ward of Ash, has received the 1984 DeKalb Agricultural Accomplishment Award.

At the annual West Brunswick FFA Chapter Parent-Member Banquet May 16, he received a pin and certificate presented by Chapter Advisor Michael Russ. Several other honors also were awarded and new officers presented at the banquet, held at Jane's Seafood Restaurant.

Ward's name will be engraved on a plaque displayed in the FFA meeting room at West.

Sponsored by DeKalb AgResearch Inc. and DeKalb-Pfizer Genetics, the award goes to the senior agriculture student attaining the highest degree of proficiency in scholarship, leadership and a supervised agricultural program.

Ward has been president, reporter and treasurer of the West Brunswick High FFA Chapter and Federation president and vice-president. His

agricultural program is in soybeans and tobacco.

Following graduation he plans to major in agriculture at Southeastern Community College at Chadbourne.

As retiring chapter president, Ward was also presented the 1985 federation banner to hang in the agriculture classroom.

Freshman Johnathan Clemmons received the Star Green Hand award and senior Kevin Smith received the Star Chapter Farmer award.

Team awards were presented by alumni member Steve Norris and Russ in creed, tools, forestry, parliamentary procedure, public speaking, land judging, dairy, livestock and hunter safety.

Officers for the 1985-86 school year will be Jon Proctor, president; Tommy Cribb, vice-president; Jeff Russ, secretary; Johnathan Clemmons, reporter; Ronald Brady, treasurer; Dean Smith, historian; Gina Caison, parliamentarian; and Sean Ward, chaplain.

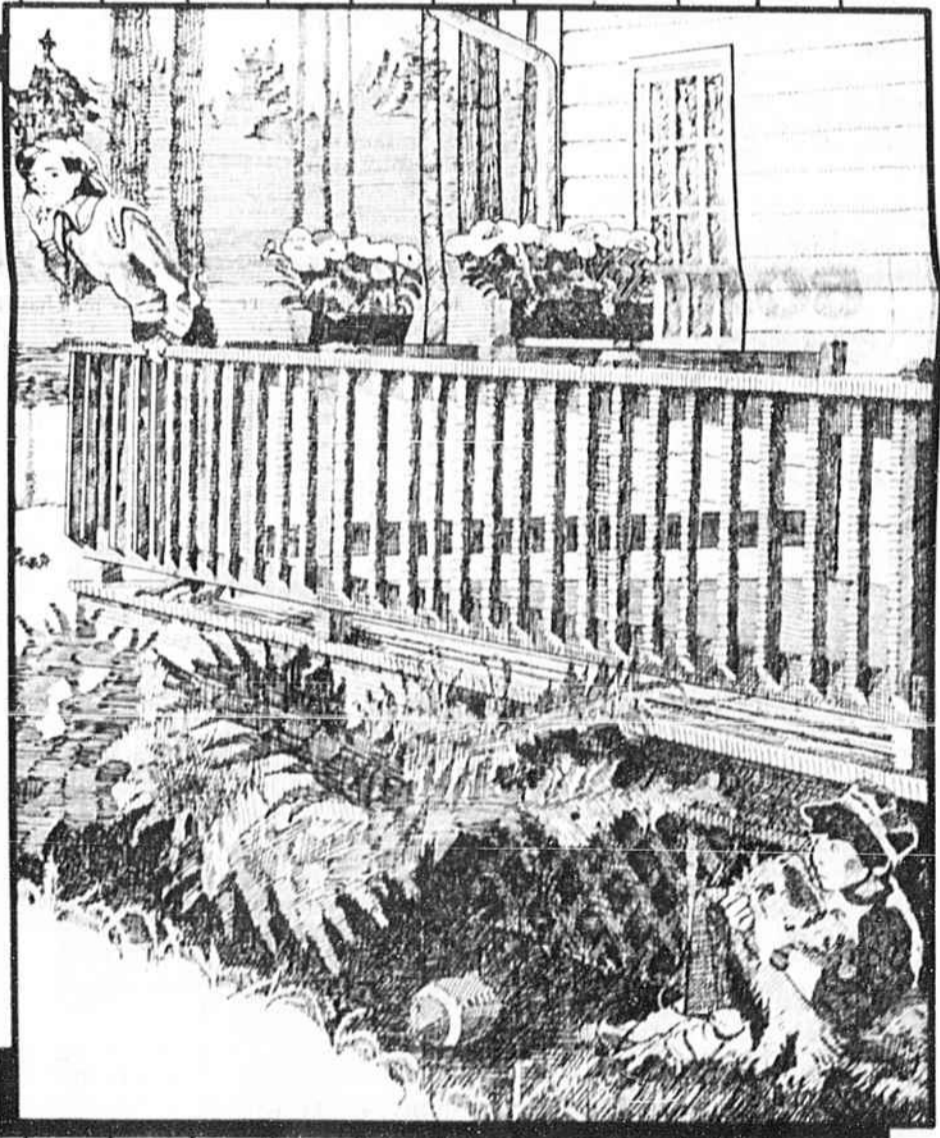
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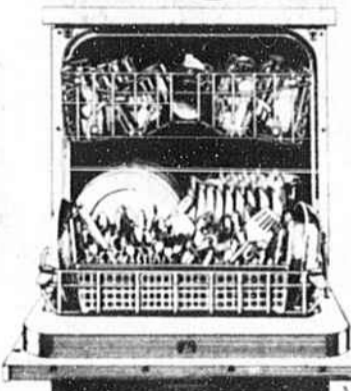
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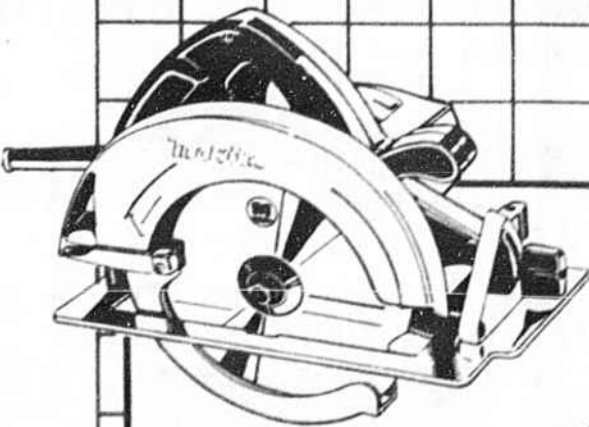
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