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-THE WOFFORD CONNECTION -

Wofford College Computer Center Spartanburg, South Carolina

Meeting

The SREB-NSF group met in Daytona Beach, Fla. on 28 Dec. - 2 Jan. The five-day meeting consisted of fifteen working sessions for both the curriculum development groups and the facility principal investigators. This was the final meeting of the curriculum development projects which included the areas of physics, chemistry, numerical methods, economics, and natural science. Dr. Moore represented Wofford in the chemistry group and Dr. Olds attended as principal investigator.

The curriculum groups have developed new programs and new ideas for undergraduate use. It seemed to be the consensus of the meeting, however, that the particular software packages produced were more valuable to others as a source of ideas than as a directly importable package.

New Programs

The following programs were written by Dr. Norm Love of Maryville College. Tape copies are filed in the Computer Center.

ORBIT* This program calculates the trajectory of a rocket shot from earth in an attempt to reach the moon. The user supplies initial position and velocity of the rocket.

VECTR* A conversational program for use in obtaining vector sums.

STOCKS* A BTICAC version of the 3-M bookshelf game "Stocks and Bonds." BONDS* contains rules and information.

Dr. Bernie Weigman and Dr. Jim Kozics of Loyola College in Baltimore have developed a large number of programs for use in teaching a general physics course. In addition, they produced several subroutines which may be of wider interest. Among these are:

GRAPHS (X,Y,N) and GRAPH (X,Y,N) which are two plotting routines in Fortran. They are capable of plotting more than one function on a graph, of plotting multivalued functions, and of automatic scaling.

PAGE(N) A Fortran routine which breaks the output of a program under execution into 8½ x 11 inch pages.

PLOTFO(X,Y,N) Plots one graph of N points with automatic scaling.

Time Saver

Dr. Love of Maryville College points out a neat trick for rapidly removing programs from the disk files. Instead of the OLD, UNSAVE sequence, use REN, UNS. The system responds more rapidly since it does not have to seek and load a program.

Minicomputers

1970 may be the year of the minicomputer. A rapidly increasing variety of general purpose computers priced in the 8K$-20K$ range can make considerable impact on the planning of computer users. Units in this price range, available now, are equipped with FORTRAN, conversational BASIC, and comparable languages. One or more teletypes may be used for I/O in an expandable system. Such a system can handle many of the problems presently worked at a time-sharing terminal and seems to be particularly attractive as a supplement to such a system for the educational environment. As usage grows, additional equipment will be needed. The minicomputer has a favorable price/performance ratio and appears to be a valid alternative to a second time-sharing terminal.

News from Columbia University

Bill Rudisill, our Columbia correspondent, has sent an issue of the Columbia (University) Graduate Business News with an article about a pre-term computer orientation program. This seven-day program last fall was planned to insure that new M.B.A. students could use the Columbia computer facilities before classes began. Bill also sent the mimeographed booklet prepared for the course. This booklet is an interesting source of helpful hints for new time-sharing users and of initial program assignments for students interested in business and statistics. The material emphasizes the importance which the business faculty at Columbia places on computer usage.