



The Bowfin Inquirer

Since 1993



September 2024

Block Party

At noon on Saturday, September 7th, about 20 of us on the block got together to enjoy each other's company and feast on Round Table pizzas, a variety of salads, samosas, dim sum dishes, and desserts. This year we even had a friendly chess match or two! Thank you all for making this year's event another success!



Additional photomontage on page 4

Aaron's Answers Column



A modern computer programming class website



Scratch, a modern programming and website

Questions: (1) When I was in high school (1965-1967) hardly anyone had access to a computer, to learn computer programming. A few students were writing programs and submitting them to a university's computer center, waiting days for their results. I'm sure that's all changed since, so I'm wondering how widespread among the students in your high school is knowledge of computers and programming them? Are there many high school classes available to learn computer programming?

(2) Recently, a 10 year old on our block introduced me to a programming language called **Scratch** and showed me how children at very young ages can learn to write game programs in it. What can you tell me about **Scratch** - and do you know fellow students who are making use of it?

-Jerry

Aaron's Answer (A'sA): As an aspiring programmer, both of those questions interest me very much! Currently at my high school, we have many different programming classes. We have *Computer Programming 1 & 2* (it's one class), *Advanced Computer Programming*, and *Algorithms and Data Structures*. Additionally, we have two *Game Development* classes and two *Web Development* classes. This year we also got some more like *Linux Fundamentals*. In total, we have many different classes and paths for students with interests in computers to

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Solution to Last Month's Quiz

Creature Features

- 1 – I
- 2 – C
- 3 – G
- 4 – B
- 5 – D
- 6 – H
- 7 – A
- 8 – E
- 9 – F
- 10 – J

This Month's Quiz

Mixed Metaphors

A kid-friendly quiz

Can you be construction workers and fill in the _____s with the appropriate word to make each into a commonly used expression?

- 1. Bull
- 2. Butterflies
- 3. Clouds
- 4. Einstein
- 5. Fish
- 6. Hearts
- 7. Key
- 8. Lobster
- 9. Potato
- 10. Sheep

- A. After hours in the sun, he was a _____
- B. Don't be a _____; think for yourself!
- C. Hard work is the _____ to success
- D. His head is always in the _____
- E. He's a _____ out of water at school
- F. He was a _____ in a china shop

- G. I've got _____ in my stomach
- H. Quit being such a couch _____ and go outside!
- I. The science fair winner is a real _____
- J. They're two _____ beating as one

Fall Maintenance Home Recommendations

Contributed by Lori Langmack, Realtor

As October approaches, prepare your outdoor spaces for the changing seasons. Here are some maintenance tasks to consider:

October

- 1. **Prune Tree Limbs:** Ensure tree limbs are trimmed 6 feet away from roof areas. This helps prevent potential damage during storms and reduces the risk of rodents.
- 2. **Prune Plants and Remove Dead Branches:** Take time to prune your plants and remove dead branches. This will enhance the appearance of your garden and promote healthy growth.
- 3. **Seed the Lawn:** October is an ideal time to seed your lawn. Doing so now will encourage strong grass growth by spring, providing a lush and vibrant lawn.

November

- 1. **Clean Out Rain Gutters and Downspouts:** As the rainy season begins, it is crucial to clean out your rain gutters and downspouts. This prevents blockages that could lead to water damage or flooding.
- 2. **Clean Outdoor Yard Drains:** Ensure outdoor yard drains are clear of debris. Removing blockages will help facilitate proper drainage during heavy rains, protecting your property from water accumulation.

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Maintenance continued from page 2

By attending to these tasks in October and November, you can maintain the health and beauty of your outdoor spaces while preparing for the winter months ahead.

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Aaron's Answers continued

pursue, most classes are offered during multiple periods as well, so there are many provided opportunities.

In fact, I am part of the reason we are offering Algorithms and Data Structures this year, we didn't offer it last year but because I was driven (and with the collaboration of my teacher and a couple other students), we convinced our school board to start offering that class. There are many others like myself in my high school, and in other schools nearby, probably around the country and world as well. While the average student doesn't take those classes and doesn't know a lot, there are many people who are interested in computers and are taking those classes. Technology is certainly more widespread and available nowadays than it was in 1967.

As for Scratch, that may have played a part in this national change. Scratch isn't a real programming language per se; it's a website and "language" made by MIT in order to teach people basic principles of programming. It's built off of "block" programming, where you drag and drop blocks that do stuff. As far as I know, the blocks function very similarly to programming languages; I believe Scratch even converts those blocks into a language that is then run. It propagates basic programming principles and habits in a fun way that has, no doubt, contributed to the upsurge in computer knowledge throughout the world. By instilling children with the desire to make something with computers, many a programmer has "cut

his/her teeth" on Scratch. Unfortunately, I'm a bit older than the typical age group that uses Scratch, so I don't know many people who use it, however I know that people do. Both of those changes together have made this generation one of the leading innovators in computer technology, artificial intelligence, and other subjects that can lead humanity to greater heights.

Target Date for Next Month's Contributions:

October 15, 2024

Please reach us with your articles, news, photos, CHILDREN'S ARTWORK or ideas at

344 Bowfin, (650 572-9153) or email us at our email EDITOR@BOWFININQUIRER.COM *or by adding a NOTE on our Facebook Page or our website: BOWFININQUIRER.COM*

Coming soon to Hillbarn Theatre October 17-November 3



"Blocky" Raccoon



This new Bowfin neighbor with a striped tail welcomed me back to our block when I parked Thursday just a bit after sundown.

BOWFIN BLOCK PARTY ATTENDEES



‘One Ring’ Phone Scam

(from the FCC website, www.fcc.gov)

For illegal robocallers, the goal isn't always getting you to answer. Sometimes, it's getting you to call back. Every so often, your phone may ring once and then stop. If that happens to you, and you do not recognize the number, **do not return the call**. You may be the target of a "one-ring" phone scam.

One-ring calls may appear to be from phone numbers somewhere in the United States, including three initial digits that resemble U.S. area codes. But savvy scammers often use international numbers from regions that also begin with three-digit codes – for

example, "232" goes to Sierra Leone and "809" goes to the Dominican Republic. Scammers may also use [spoofing](#) techniques to further mask the number in your caller ID display. If you call back, you risk being connected to a phone number outside the U.S. As a result, you may wind up being charged a fee for connecting, along with significant per-minute fees for as long as they can keep you on the phone. These charges may show up on your bill as premium services, international calling, or toll-calling.

Variations of this scam rely on phony voice-mail messages urging you to call a number with an unfamiliar area code to "schedule a delivery" or to notify you about a "sick" relative.

How to avoid this scam

- Don't answer or return any calls from numbers you don't recognize.
- Before calling unfamiliar numbers, check to see if the area code is international.
- If you do not make international calls, ask your phone company to block outgoing international calls on your line.
- Always be cautious, even if a number appears authentic.

Filing a complaint

If you are billed for a call you made as a result of this scam, first try to resolve the matter with your telephone company. If you are unable to resolve it directly, you can file a complaint with the FCC at no cost. You have multiple options for filing a complaint with the FCC. I list two here (see web for other methods):

• **File a complaint online** at consumercomplaints.fcc.gov

By phone: 1-888-CALL-FCC (1-888-225-5322); TTY: 1-888-TELL-FCC (1-888-835-5322); ASL: 1-844-432-2275