Busywork: programmers’ programs and routines

By John Lonhardt

All Applesoft programmers have to invent routines to center lines, accept input, check dates and perform a host of housekeeping activities for the various programs they write. If you are organized, you do it once, save the program fragment or routine and use it again and again in subsequent projects. If you are like me, you forget what you did, change your mind about how to do it or you reinvent the wheel for each programming project.

Busywork provides a coherent set of Applesoft routines for building many useful programs.

FEATURES: The Busywork package contains 34 routines, a standardized greeting program, main-menu program and system-parameter program. There is also a comprehensive demonstration that illustrates the various routines. You can use all these in a variety of ways. You can load the whole Busywork package, modify the variables to fit your needs and build the application program inside the structure of Busywork. If some of the routines are unnecessary, simply delete them.

Some of the features of this package include input routines, dollar formatting, program headings, identification of master and data disk, menu routines, escape return to main menu, center print, screen hold, printer heading, valid selection and date input, system setup, printer line initialization, main menu and error handling.

PERFORMANCE: As the demonstration program shows, these routines do what they say they do. None of them uses esoteric programming tricks that could make them unsuitable for general utility programming. In any case, because they use lots of string manipulation, they can contribute to rapid garbage collection in programs that have lots of string operations of their own.

None of these routines is hard to understand. All are listed in the documentation. Every one does what the instructions say it should do. So if you need these routines and don’t want to write your own, they are a good deal.

Most programmers who know enough about Applesoft to use the routines effectively, however, are likely to have their own tool kit of routines or to find these routines not exactly what they want. Actually, there may be more use for this tool kit as an aid to teaching people how to solve common programming tasks in Applesoft, rather than as a cookbook for pro-

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