

# The CMA Circuit

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HALL OF FAME COMMEMORATIVE ISSUE

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## Curator's Column

By David Weil

### BACK TO THE PAST...

I have been speaking before a variety of groups about the history of computing and occasionally offering my personal speculations about where we are headed. It seems to me that there are a great number of sources for this sort of opinion, but few are ever right on the button. One exception is the weekly PBS web column I, Cringley. Written by the 12<sup>th</sup> Apple employee and host of the PBS series "Triumph of the Nerds," Robert X. Cringley is one of the few who not only get it on the button most of the time, but are smart enough to know when they don't. His weekly columns are available at [www.pbs.org/cringley](http://www.pbs.org/cringley).

### SPEAKING OF APPLES...

After moving out of the offsite storage facility last month, the Museum staff uncovered some long lost treasures. One was the Apple Lisa model 1 pictured here:



## 2004 HALL of FAME

Online voting began earlier this year, hosted by [HomeLAN.com](http://HomeLAN.com). The results reveal the top five popular choices for induction into the Computer Hall of Fame. The top five vote-getters were:



Linus Torvalds

Vinton Cerf



Ken Thompson

Marc Andreesson



Bjarne Stroustrup

These five popular vote selections will join the Nomination Committee's selections for induction into the Hall of Fame are:



Howard Aiken



Paul G. Allen



Philo T. Farnsworth



John Mauchly



John Presper Eckert

continued below...

# *The Hall of Fame Inductees of 2004*

**Linus Torvalds** After programming games on his first computer, a Commodore VIC 20, Torvalds turned his interests to creating an alternative to the standard operating systems available commercially. Using an open-source model (allowing a loose-knit group of other interested programmers to contribute source code and changes to the software) and attaching his favorite animal, the penguin, as the products icon, he created LINUX.

**Vinton Cerf** As the co-developer of Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol (TCP/IP), Cerf was one of the innovators that took the concept of computer networking and packet-switching and turned them into a useful and effective pathway to the Internet as we know it today. His vision of an open-to-all Internet was partly motivated by a desire to create accessible systems even for those without certain abilities, such as people with hearing-loss, which he and wife both had to overcome.

**Kenneth Thompson** Unix was developed at Bell Labs in the 1970s to meet the growing demand for decentralized computing systems and the emerging network computers. The end of the mainframe era or “big iron” systems was near and Thompson along with Dennis Ritchie solved the problem of how to operate these new “mini-computers” with an efficient and elegant operating system.

**Marc Andreessen** Browsing the Internet in the early 1990s meant that a user had to perform a rather cumbersome series of steps. Andreessen decided to create an interface so that retrieval of information could be accomplished more easily. NCSA MOSAIC was the result and he offered it for free on the Internet to the joy of many early users. This was all before Andreessen graduated college. After graduating, he joined James Clark, the founder of Silicon Graphics in California and they co-founded Netscape Communications.

**Bjarne Stroustrup** One of the most prolific programming language in use today is C++. Stroustrup designed and implemented the program to make creating software easier and more effective. Many games, operating systems, office productivity suites and database programs contain all or part of Stroustrup’s programming language and techniques.

**Howard Aiken** In the days before the transistor and integrated circuit, choices for computer designers were limited to vacuum tubes or electro-mechanical devices. One of the first large-scale electromechanical computers was the Mark I, also know as the Automatic Sequence Control Calculator. Built at Harvard University with funds and engineering expertise from IBM, Aiken designed the machine to be useful during WWII to produce navigational and mathematical tables for the Navy.

**Paul G. Allen** As co-founder of Microsoft, Allen was instrumental in creating one of the largest technology companies on the face of the earth. He was a high school friend of Bill Gates, and together their company brought computing to the masses. After leaving Microsoft due to illness, Allen has been the force behind many new ventures and continues to push for innovation in technology.

**Philo T. Farnsworth** Television was conceived by several visionaries and even science fiction writers before it ever existed. It took an inventor like Farnsworth to make it a reality. His self-taught knowledge and creativity figured out how to put the electron to work to provide recognizable images electronically. Although he never received his rightful monetary or scientific recognition, it was his invention that changed the world, for better or worse.

**John Mauchly and John Presper Eckert** Their creation of the Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC) ushered in the age of electronic computing. With its 18,000 vacuum tubes, ENIAC was operational for ten years, 1945-1955. In 1949, they designed the BINAC computer for Northrup Aircraft and followed in 1951 with UNIVAC, the first commercially available computer in the US.

# LEARNING CENTER CELEBRATES ITS FIFTH YEAR!

The Coleman College Center started life as the Learning Center in 1999. Since its opening, more than 500 seniors, children and visitors have been introduced to the Digital Age thanks to its staff, volunteers and free services and programs. After a start-up grant from Microsoft and continued support from the Coleman Foundation, the Center has been the bridge that spans a digital divide between those who are cyber-savvy and those who aren't. The Mission Valley YMCA has brought its PRYDE program kids to the Museum three times a week during the school year to assist those students who don't have computers at home.

[Angelica Murillo](#), a graduate of [Coleman College](#), has been the Education Coordinator in charge of the Center since 2000. She has helped students from ages 5 to 90 and is always happy to provide one-on-one instruction for anyone who wants to join those using the computer to improve their productivity or expand their horizons.

Although the computers in the Center are now out-of-date (Pentium IIIs running at 450 mHz), they still provide the lifeline that users of the Center depend on to read E-mail, search the Internet and learn programs such as EXCEL and WORD. The Center has also provided a home for special programs such as those offered at last years SIGGRAPH Convention in San Diego as well as private instructional programs for other nonprofit staffs.

Congratulations to everyone who has made the Coleman College Center a great community resource and success!



## WE NEED YOUR SUPPORT!!!

### Support the Computer Museum of America - become a member

Receive free admission to the Museum, invitations to special events, free use of the Coleman College Center computers and free classes. Please complete the following information, then clip and return with your payment. Make checks payable to the Computer Museum of America. Or, to pay with a credit card by phone, call: (619) 464-8220.

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