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Quadruplegic clicks tongue to activate writing device

United Press International
WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind.— Christopher Lee writes by clicking his tongue.

The clicks activate a six-inch electronic device to turn on his tape recorder. The box was developed for him by Purdue engineers with a grant from the Indiana Rehabilitation Services.

Lee, a freshman and creative writing major at Purdue University, is a quadruplegic as a result of cerebral palsy.

The voice-operated computer system was designed by Prof. Vernon Newhouse to allow the physically handicapped to operate any type of electronic system or machinery with a click of the tongue.

Newhouse, who started the clinical engineering program at Purdue five years ago, says if the device works well, he will make the circuit and building instructions available free to anyone who has use for them.

"The device has about as much electronic equipment in it as a black-and-white TV," the professor said. It is essentially a sophisticated computer system that can recognize up to five different instructions.

Until he got the box, Lee had written short stories, plays and poetry by dictating to his mother, Mrs. Muriel Lee, a speech teacher at Indiana University-Purdue University at Indianapolis.

"We've been trying to find an answer to dictating term papers and other writing," said Mrs. Lee. "We couldn't find anything that could control consistently."

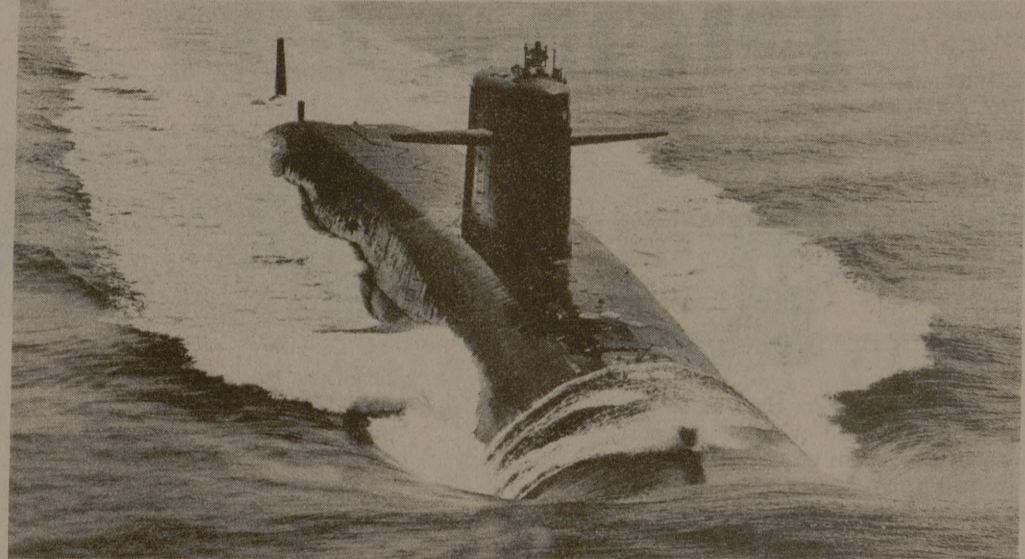
She recalled one particularly disappointing trip they made to New Jersey to test what was promoted as a "speech synthesizer." Mrs. Lee said it didn't work as advertised.

Newhouse said the parts for the device cost about \$200. Lee's recorder cost an additional \$300.

Newhouse's assistants in building the box were students.

To Lee, the device is further proof of the broad application of engineering to rehabilitation in the future. With more time, he himself already has developed a correctional device for children called a head-posture trainer.

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TIP TOP
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TAMU TEXAS AVE. SEARS COLLEGE STATION TIP TOP

Link connecting MS, house pets reported weak

United Press International
SCHAUMBURG, Ill.—Pet owners who practice good sanitation to keep their animals healthy have cause for alarm as a result of reports suggesting a possible link between multiple sclerosis and close contact with small house pets, says an American Veterinary Medical Association.

An article in the British medical journal, "Lancet," and a letter by a New Jersey physician published in the "Journal of the American Medical Association" recently suggest such an association.

The association says the authors of the "Lancet" report, made it clear that studies such as theirs "show associations and not cause and effect." They warned that results "require cautious interpretations."

Similar associations have been found between MS and a variety of other variables such as allergies, early rising, outdoor activities and eating cake.

The veterinary association said that owners should have no trouble keeping pets and other members of the household free from parasites and disease if they practice good sanitary habits. They should also be sure their animals have regular health checkups, routine vaccinations and other preventive medical care when needed.

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