

National

Computer literacy needed in future

United Press International
NEW YORK — Americans may find themselves branded as functionally illiterate some time in the future, even though they can read and write, if they can't operate a computer.

Within a few years it will be necessary to be able to program and operate a small electronic computer in order to get and hold a job, a number of scientists and technicians warn.

Arthur Luehrmann, computer-research director of the University of California's Lawrence Hall of Science, says computer illiteracy could become a national headache by the end of this decade.

"We will need 40 million persons able to use computers by 1990 and I don't know who is going to teach them," he warned.

The world of the computer has changed so radically that the electronic marvel now is affordable for all institutions, businesses and individuals, but the thinking about it in our educational system has not changed, said Dr. Andrew Molnar of the National Science Foundation in Washington.

Too many educators still think of the computer as a scarce resource whose use must be rationed, he said.

"The day will come when we will need to have a computer sciences

department in every grade school," said Edward W. Warnshuis, publisher of the magazine, Technical Horizons in Education at Santa Ana, Calif.

Warnshuis said Dr. Sylvia Chapp proved in a program in Philadelphia schools that computer literacy can be achieved in grade school.

But school administrators still are loathe to spend money on computer training and in any event Dr. Warnshuis wasn't hopeful about solving the problem in schools because he said most persons capable of teaching computer skills already are employed in the business world.

This means, Warnshuis said, that "for the foreseeable future, business is going to have to solve its computer literacy problem itself."

Luehrmann agreed with that and added that with the prospect of 10 million computers of all sizes being in use as early as 1985, the task of training people to program, operate and service them looks staggering.

Since business will do a large part of the training job, it needs computers that are in effect self-teaching, says Chairman George Ryan of CADO Systems Corp. of Torrance, Calif. CADO is one of several companies that are making such computers for small business institutions

and individuals.

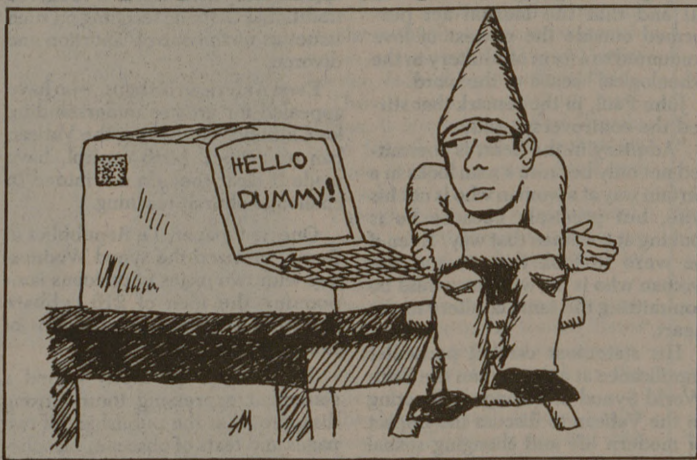
Working with Phoenix Performance Systems of St. Paul, CADO developed a system of interactive self-teaching programs for its little computers in such functions as word processing, which means operating automatic typewriting and data storage and retrieval banks, and general, payroll and inventory accounting.

These programs were tested on many persons, including two groups of high school students not previously exposed to the computer. Ryan said the results were astounding. The kids mastered each course in an average of four hours.

Although it will take a huge national effort, computer illiteracy can be averted and will have to be if young people hope to compete in the job market.

A word processing technician already earns half as much again as a clerk-typist and there are not nearly enough trained persons available to fill these jobs.

"The person who can use a small computer can command a far better salary than persons burdened by computer illiteracy," Luehrmann said, "because their productivity is so much greater than other workers with similar background and education."



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Drug increases stamina

United Press International
LONDON — Dr. Stephen Fulder claims there is a drug that athletes and millions of others in Soviet Russia swear by as a year-round restorative and which undoubtedly was taken by competitors to increase their performance in the Moscow Olympics.

effects of other medication. Soviet cosmonauts also take it in space."

Fulder says Eleutherococcus was discovered as a result of a screening program of Far Eastern plants and sufficient extract is now made to give 12 million citizens a month-long course every year.

"It is true," he said, "that some look askance at Soviet medical research." But he believes the effect of the extract cannot be a mass illusion on the part of millions of people and therefore it is something the West ought to give serious scientific examination.

Yet despite its extensive use in the Soviet Union for the past 20 years, the West knows very little about it and has a hard time accepting it can be as effective as alleged.

"For this reason," Fulder said, "it has not been included in the list of drugs which are banned for international sports events, nor it is in any Western pharmacopoeia."

According to an article in "New Scientist," digested from Fulder's new book, "The Root of Being," the drug is an extract of a thorny creeping plant known as Eleutherococcus senticosus which belongs to the same family as the ginseng root. It was evaluated by scientists at the Institute of Biologically Active Substances at Vladivostok and accepted as an official medicine in 1962.

Fulder, a gerontologist, said the use of the drug in sport stems from the discovery that it apparently could increase stamina and performance with less side effects than any known stimulant.

In one test, Fulder said, a large group of athletes was sent on a 10-mile run, some after taking Eleutherococcus, others being given placebos. The tonic takers generally were faster.

Another large-scale test showed it could increase the amount of training an athlete could tolerate without harm, though there were occasional and transient instances of a rise in blood pressure.

Fulder quoted Prof. A.V. Korobkov of the Lesgraft Institute of Physical Culture and Sports in Moscow as saying the preparation is not akin to doping because it is primarily aimed at accelerating the restorative processes after intensive activity.

"It is not only athletes that relish Eleutherococcus," Fulder said. "The drug is put to some extraordinary uses for which Western doctors would assume drugs to be neither relevant nor effective."

"It is taken by Soviet deep sea divers, mine and mountain rescuers, climbers, explorers, soldiers and factory workers to resist stress while working hard under inhospitable conditions. Lorry drivers and pilots take it to keep alert and counteract the potentially dangerous side

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