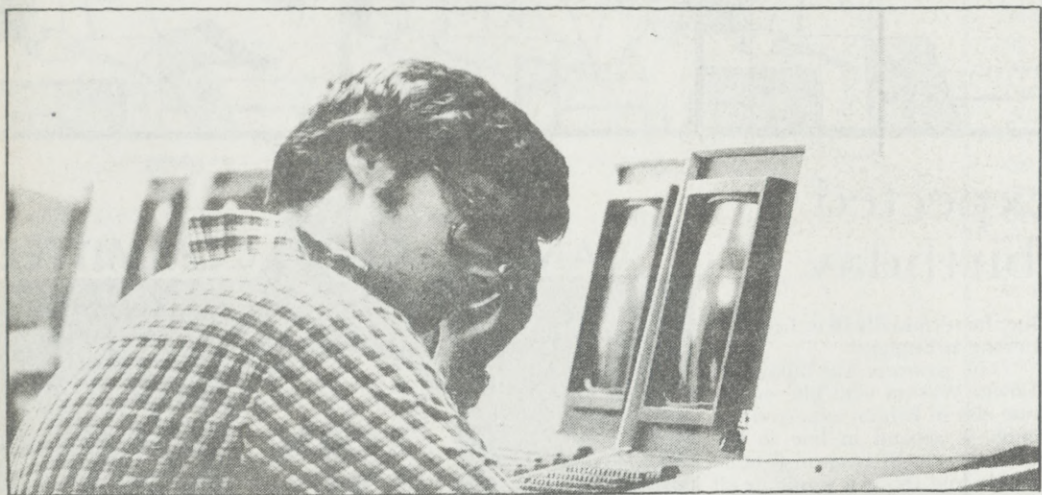


Night people

Computer terminals screen out darkness



staff photo by Eileen Manton

Senior computer science major Chris Young works on a program at the Remote Computing Center. Late nights are common at the RCC.

Editor's note: This is the third in a five-part series about the upside down lives of those who work at night.

by Sandra Kay Gary

Battalion Staff
While some students are sitting at home in front of a television "studying," others are burning the midnight oil in front of computer terminals.

One group of students who spends evenings staring at computer screens are those who frequent a room in the basement of the library. Most of these students, who spend hours punching out computer programs in the Remote Computing Center, are taking business and computer science courses.

Students working on computer programs are intense since they are charged a fee for computer time, paper and cards, said Karen Frazier who works

from 4 p.m. till midnight at the main desk of the RCC.

After happy hour, a program through which students can use the computers with no charge from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m., Frazier said, people get laid back and everything gets a lot quieter.

"You get so used to being here," she said, "by the time happy hour ends, you're drained."

But errors in programs and pressure for grades prompt students to spend long hours in front of computer screens.

Frazier estimates the computer terminals are half full from 10 p.m. till midnight. "After midnight there is never any more than 25 people in the center, until the end of the semester, of course," Frazier said.

Al Campodonico, a junior geography major who works in the RCC Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10 p.m. until 4 a.m., likes working those hours so that he can get all of his studying done.

"I only sleep five to six hours at nights anyhow," Campodonico said.

A one to two hour nap in the afternoon also helps, he said.

Helene Harding, a senior chemical engineering major, said she prefers to work on her computer programs in the early morning hours at the RCC.

"I come this late at night because there are few people here," Harding said. "I don't have to wait in line for my outputs and I can also turn the music up on my tape player without bothering people around me," she said.

Another group of students who spend Sunday through Thursday nights staring at computer screens instead of TV screens are those responsible for producing the 23,000 Battalions which are published each regular school day during the fall and spring semesters and three days each week during the summer sessions.

A 30-member, paid student staff, along with help from students in journalism reporting and editing classes put out The Battalion, and much of the work is done late at night. Most of the work done preparing stories that will appear in the paper is done on computer terminals.

Since news is generated continuously, the production cycle of the paper never ends. However, the cycle basically begins about 3 p.m. the day before publication and continues until copies

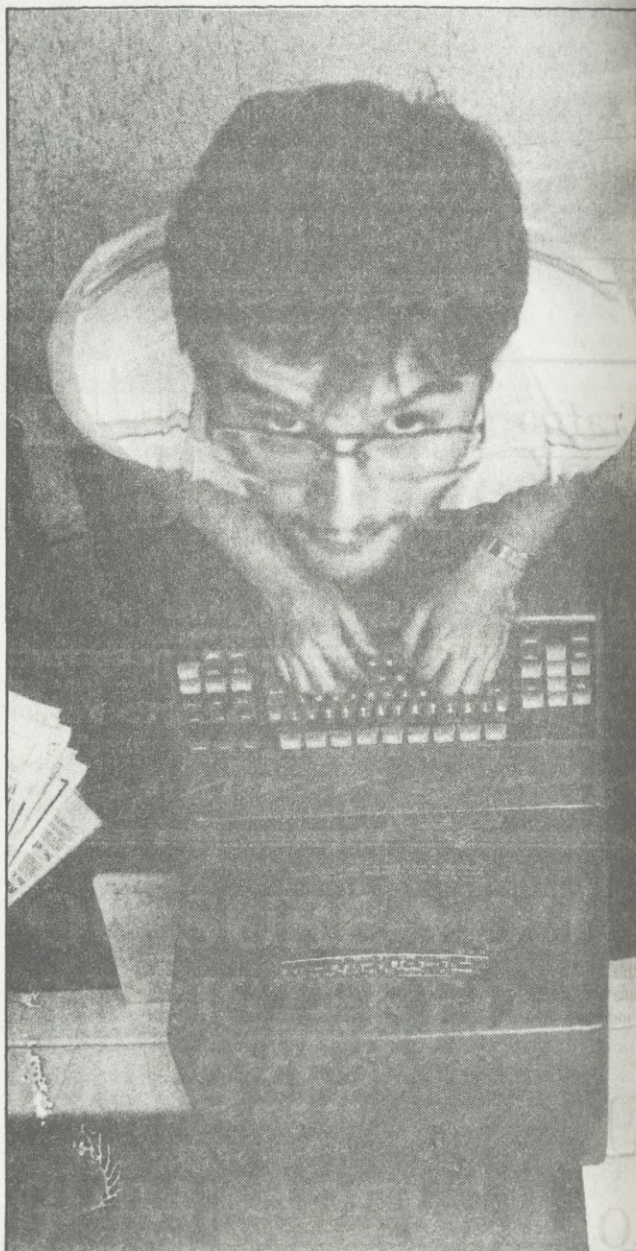


photo by Greg Gammot

Senior journalism major Todd Woodard works at a computer terminal in The Battalion office. Late nights in front of computer screens can send students up the walls.

of The Battalion are delivered to different locations around campus about noon.

"You learn to adjust your schedule so you can work late night," said Phyllis Henderson, night news editor at The Battalion. Most of the staff tries to schedule their classes in the afternoon, so they can sleep in

the morning. "You have to get used to never seeing your roommates or friends who have normal schedules, but you learn to live with it," she said.

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Questions? Call 845-3051

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