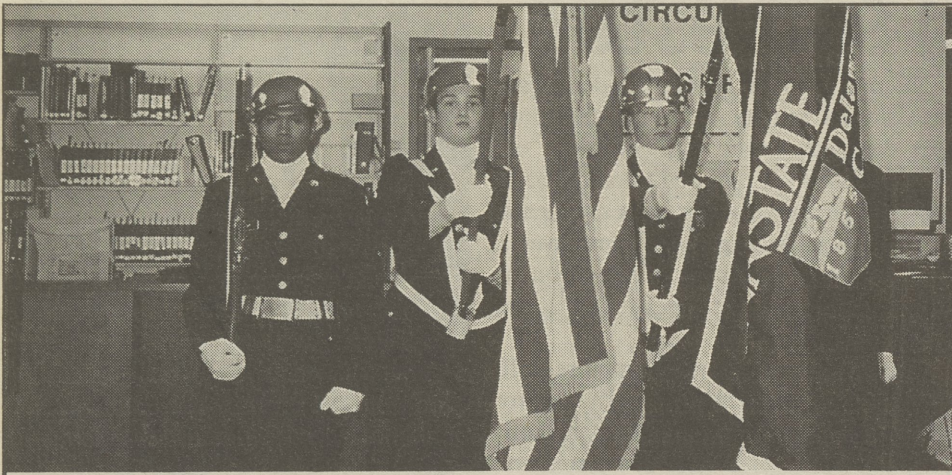


MILLENNIUM



Protecting Vairo from Y2K disaster? Delco's ROTC Honor Guard salute Colonel Pergrin.
Photo by Cherjon Bailey

World Disaster?

Y2K Threatens Security

By Cherjon Bailey

Lion's Eye Staff Writer

Five! Four! Three! Two! One! and the lights go out while everyone is yelling "Happy New Year" around the globe, country by country power outages are occurring. TV's are out. Radio frequencies are scrambled. Computer nerds are rushing to their PC's to find out what is going on.

Everyone around the world realizes that doomsayers were right all along. What is happening? Nobody is exactly sure. Could it be Y2K or just that everyone is using too much electricity to bring in the New Year. Maybe or maybe not. Y2k, you've heard of it I'm sure. The year 2000 date won't read right, it'll revert to 1900 & mess up all the systems. The Y2K theory whether true or not, will affect me you and everyone around the world. First of all, Y2K affects our telecommunications systems, utilities, and transportation, healthcare and banking systems. Most people are saying this Y2K thing is over blown. It's just something to get us hyped up for the millennium.

However, as we step into the new millennium there are a few factors to consider, such as our security systems and its vulnerability to nuclear failure, altering of data and terrorist attacks. After all, the U.S. is the world power and someone is always looking to take over and become the new world leader. That is why our government has spent billions on its security systems to protect us from potential harm.

For instance, on September 13, 1999 the U.S. along with Russia signed and a plan of agreement that says they will share missile-launching information up until January 1st, 2000, just in case there should be a nuclear accident or shutdown. Both the U.S. and Russia have 2,500 nuclear-tipped missiles pointing at

each other and have for many years. Russia previously was said to be sleep walking to Y2K and now have awoken with their new Y2k center for strategic stability.

Also, the U.S. government's information systems could be subject to malicious altering of data. India has been accused of altering U.S. data, just after they had finished doing Y2K work for our government systems. Whether this is true or not it is problems like these that threaten us all. If teenagers can hack the government and get away with it, what will a criminal mind that has been plotting planning for sometime do?

Along with these potential dangers we could experience terrorist attacks. The best time to attack someone is when he or she is distracted and not paying attention, like on New Years Eve or in the midst of a big celebration.

Utilities could be interrupted and banking systems could crash. A prime example of our banking systems failing occurred one day after Hurricane Floyd.

A customer living in an area affected by Floyd went to the bank to withdraw cash and the MAC statement said that she had already withdrawn all of her cash. She tried not to panic. She went to the super market and tried to use her debit card to pick up a few items and her card was rejected. She called her bank to get some answers and they told her they would take care of it. She didn't get the problem resolved until two weeks later.

The banks main branch, located in devastated South Carolina, had crashed, causing a lot of confusion. She also experienced looting in her neighborhood, causing the National Guard to be called in. This can happen with Y2K too.

Y2K will affect everyone, not just people who use computers. It will affect the simple things that we all take for granted daily.

Doomsday Prophecies Prey On Fearful

By Doris Ruiz

Lion's Eye Staff Writer

When asked what her plans for New Year's Eve were, freshman Elizabeth Fuller confessed, "After watching the movie End of Days, I did become a bit paranoid. I don't think the world is going to end on that day, but it probably will soon."

Since the beginning of time, people have been "predicting" future events. They have preached endlessly, and repetitively, people have listened. Phrases such as "the end is coming", "the world as we know it. . ." and the

famous Y2K phenomenon have been repeated throughout this past year.

Unfortunately, with the approaching millennium, people all over the world are in fear. Fortune tellers, cult leaders, and computer hackers have programmed fears into susceptible minds.

But the question is, will a massive disaster occur on January 1, 2000?

"This millennial curiosity is a part of human nature. We all have an interest in how the world began and how it will end," stated Bruce Stephens, Associate Professor of Religious Studies.

Obviously, religion plays some part in

Is Your PC Compliant?

By Scherrie Bailey

Lion's Eye Staff Writer

As the new millennium dawns, people are either afraid of apocalyptic destruction or digital disaster. Reasonably so, many are stocking up food, updating their computer software and hardware, canceling flights, or withdrawing cash for unforeseen occurrences. Interestingly, the White House is setting up a Y2K war room to oversee CIA operations planning for survivalist mode. And what is Penn State doing to plan for Y2K?

Since the beginning of this year, members of Delco's Computer Services Department have been evaluating the situation to monitor potential problems. "These problems include fixing outdated hardware/software, items embedded with computer processors (e.g., air conditioning, heating controls) and some faculty computers to ensure that they are Y2K compliant," said Jim Morgan, Director of Computer Services. Since the tests have been completed, all systems have been found to be Y2K compliant.

The most affected programs are those that are time sensitive. For example, software that contains outdated programming language is at risk of misreading the year 2000, interpreting "00" as 1900. Banks, airlines, utility companies, and the healthcare sector will be most affected since they rely on software and equipment that reads dates to operate. Penn State students need not worry because all of the software on our campus is Y2K compliant.

Students who have questions or a problem can directly consult Computer Services regarding Y2K compliance. In fact, diskettes have been distributed by Computer Services to test computer systems. Additionally, students and faculty who are using Windows 3.1, 3.11

or lower should consider upgrading the system to something higher such as Windows 95 or Windows 98.

Additional questions can be answered at the PSU off'cial website at <http://www.psu.edu/year2000/action/intro.html> or <http://ftp.cac.psu.edu/pub/year2000/PCFixes.html> The first website provides an introduction to issues concerning Y2K, asks computer users basic questions about their personal preparation, and describes what is functional and defective in the year 2000. Similarly, the other website provides concrete steps for correcting Y2K problems and offers several download sites to upgrade software that may be affected.

Since December 2, registered Penn State students with a valid PSU student ID and access account have obtained their free Microsoft Off-ice 2000 Premium CD (and FrontPage 2000) in the Vairo Library. Dates and times have been posted around campus for software training seminars.

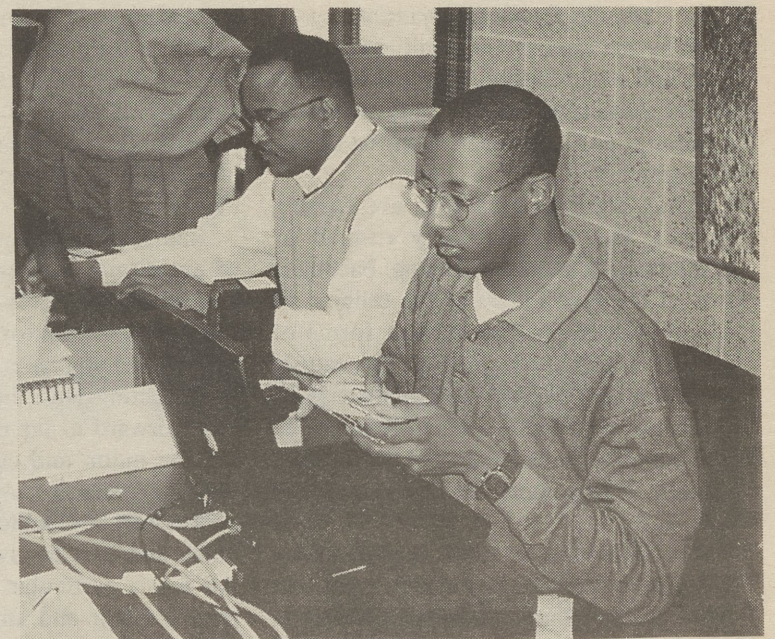
To combat the misuse of software, Microsoft has devised a way to prevent illegal mishandling of the CD. Each student will have 50 uses on the software before they are asked to register with Microsoft. After 50 uses (and 2 downloads), the software will lock and be unusable unless the student registers online or through email.

Jim Morgan explained, "Microsoft Office has specific demands on PCs and should be installed properly. This software is not like any other applications because it has several requirements that must be met by its users." These requirements include a Pentium processor of 150 mhz or faster, 32 MB of RAM, 500 MB of hard drive, and an operating system of Windows 95 or higher.

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Technology staff members Donnell Tillery II and Jim Morgan hook students up with Microsoft Software.

Photo by Cherjon Bailey



this quest to know the future. And according to Dr. Stephens, two main sets of believers preach this inevitable theory. There are those who say that the world is getting worse, day-by-day-, and that only divine intervention can rescue civilization. And of course, there are those that believe that humans will first improve the world and then divine intervention will follow.

Are people really worried because 2000 is a new year (okay, I won't say the "m" word), or are people just naturally apprehensive of not knowing the future? The reality of this "quest for truth", is

that the world only seems to be ending for those who want it to end.

Most people are edgy, but not worried in excess. The majority will just sit around and wait. And if you are hesitant (regardless of spiritual beliefs) about the forthcoming year 2000, take this advice: Rather than tormenting yourself about what tomorrow will bring, worry about today before it becomes yesterday.

And to those of you in the future who are reading this article from Delco's archives and are afraid of what the year 3000 will bring: Don't worry, it's not the end of the world. Happy New Year!!