

Krugerrands sell despite controversy

By RICHARD SEVEN
Of the Emerald

Even though the investment firm of Merrill Lynch has decided South African Krugerrands, as well as other gold coins, aren't worth handling, private coin shops around the area say the sales have been "terrific."

Last week, Merrill Lynch, announced it was temporarily halting Krugerrand sales because they're no longer "economically feasible."

However, Gary Thomas of Eugene Coin Gallery, reports that he sold or took orders for 110 Krugerrands at \$184 apiece on Wednesday alone.

"It's been strange, but since the protest has started, my sales have really jumped."

Thomas says. "We're selling a much higher percent of the coins this year than the previous three years." Thomas also adds that the Krugerrand is the most preferred coin in his shop.

Panic buying and advertising by protestors have been the main reasons for the jump in Krugerrand sales, according to Thomas.

"A lot of people want to buy the Krugerrand before they shut down the mines in South Africa," Thomas says. "They want to get their investments and gifts before the prices go up or the sales are banned."

The coin dealers of the area agreed that the protest over the gold coin has stimulated the demand because the word "Krugerrand" has been placed in people's

vocabularies.

Dan Bell of Merrill Lynch's local office, hints the difference between coin shop's booming demands for the coin and the lack of demand his firm has been receiving may lie in the difference in clientele.

"I guess it would just have to be a fluke of nature," says Bell. "It might lie in the difference between our investors and the coin shop's customers. We tend to be more conservative, long-time clients. They usually are more interested in gold bullion."

Thomas says most of his buyers want the Krugerrand for investment reasons. Many of them, he says, "want them because they're afraid of the future of the dollar."

The Krugerrand has also been a big gift item, with customers ranging from Merrill

Lynch investors to grandmothers and children.

Like Merrill Lynch, the coin dealers don't see the sale of the coin as a political issue. They claim they are simply offering a service and people are not coerced into buying Krugerrands over any other coins and bullions they carry.

Thomas says a decision to ban the Krugerrand wouldn't accomplish much.

"It would be interesting to go to the minority council meeting to see how many of those people own gold watches or own cars partially built with platinum, which also comes out of South Africa," Thomas says. "I'd imagine you'd see a great deal of hypocrisy."

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Move over typewriter, video's here

By NANCY MARSHALL
Of the Emerald

Five big, shiny new machines joined the University's journalism school recently, to aid journalism students in keeping up with many of the major newspapers in the country.

Room 302 Allen was remodeled to welcome its new occupants — five video display terminals (VDTs), a computer and a line printer.

These machines are used in most major newspapers in the United States. Apparently typewriters are devices of the past and the computer era has arrived.

Newspapers were introduced to VDTs in 1970, but progress has been slow in converting from typewriters to the new machines because of the cost and the elaborate sophistications, according to Roy Halverson, journalism professor.

The Eugene Register-Guard was fully equipped with 60 VDTs in September, 1976. The entire newsroom became quiet when the VDTs were put to use.

"The staff really likes them," says managing editor Barrie Hartman. "It's a good system. I doubt that any of our reporters would go back to using the typewriters."

The student advantage to these shiny machines is journalism majors will work in an electronic newsroom. When journalism students apply for jobs, Halverson explains further, "applications are now frequently asking about familiarity with VDTs, and now it will be possible for students to be current and to have some experience working with the modern facilities."

Classes using the VDTs this term include Newspaper Editing, Reporting I and II and Magazine Editing. Students will have a total of about 40 hours typing time with the machines during the term.

Half of the VDTs looks much like a typewriter — at least the letters are all in their right places. But instead of rolling paper in and ripping it out, writers look directly into a blank screen, until they become brave enough to punch a key or two. A little green rectangle moves along as they type. Upon the screen appears little green letters forming words which will eventually be a story.

It is then possible to command the computer to store the words. The line printer is used to print the stories from the computer onto paper. The professor or editor examines the story from his or her own VDT.

Typing on the VDT machine can be mastered in approximately two hours, according to Halverson.

In a newsroom, these machines of the future speed up the entire process from typing to printing. And Halverson adds, "They can be a lot of fun to work with too."

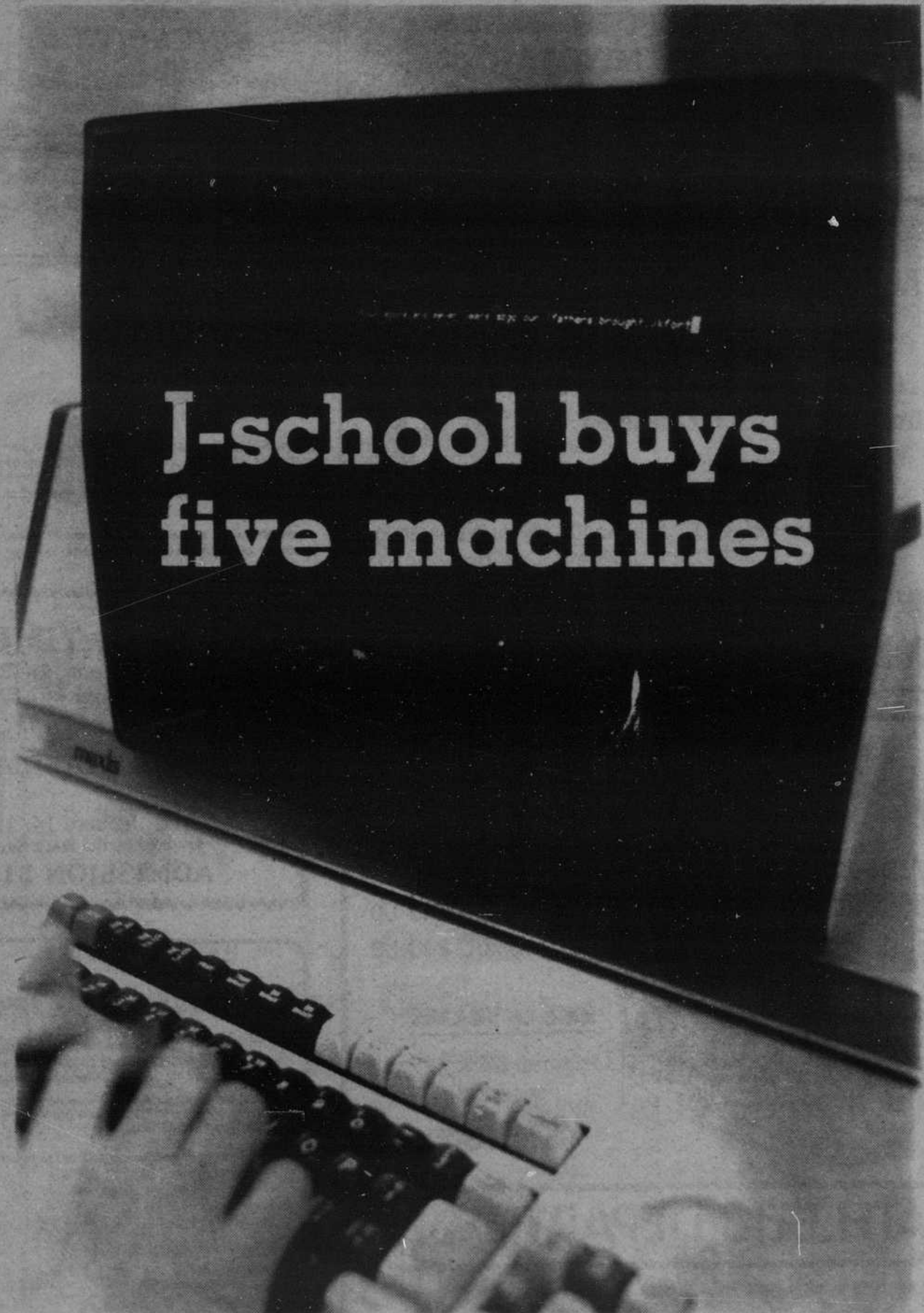


Photo by Steven Scher

Video Display Terminals: Up-to date technology hits UO.