

Business incubator will help fledgling companies survive

By Jolayne Houtz

Of the Emerald

While seven of every 10 new businesses are failing nationwide, a new business incubator program in the Eugene/Springfield area may help fledgling firms beat the odds.

A business incubator provides a common facility for new businesses where they can pay lower-than-market rent and can share things like conference rooms, reception or clerical services and business planning and consultation.

Eugene Mayor Brian Obie and Springfield Mayor Sandra Rennie recently announced that at least one business incubator could be in place by mid-spring.

"If we can help businesses through the incubator, once they leave it...we've added a major asset to the economy," said Abe Farkas, director of the Eugene Development Department.

With the University's research emphasis, a strong business service sector and low costs locally for starting up businesses, Farkas said the incubator could help as many as

seven new businesses out of every 10 succeed in the market.

"We see lots of new businesses poke their heads out all the time," Farkas said. "We'd like to see the entire body above ground."

A preliminary study of the area and of the potential demand for an incubator is scheduled for completion at the end of January, said Jim Roberts, president of Pryde, Roberts and Co., the Washington, D.C.-based firm developing the incubator.

During the study, the firm will look at potential sites for the incubator, financing possibilities and what kinds of businesses should be included in the incubator.

Roberts, whose firm already is developing or operating six incubators nationwide, said Eugene's success with an incubator may be greater than that of other cities.

The good working relationship between the two cities, the business assistance programs already in place and an evolving economic base make Eugene a good candidate for the in-

cubator, Roberts said.

In addition, the University and Lane Community College could provide important resource bases for the incubator, he said.

In Buffalo, N.Y., a business incubator is located within one of the State University of New York/Buffalo buildings, Farkas said. The incubator houses 11 businesses, all of which are related to university research.

Currently, about 150 to 200 incubators exist nationwide, and Farkas said he knows of none that have failed and had to close.

A new business also could obtain seed capital funds through the incubator to help pay for its start-up costs. The money would be provided through both private and public sources, Roberts said.

With more than 80 software companies in the area, Roberts said one of the firm's first moves will be to determine if there is demand for a software incubator.

Two additional incubators for general manufacturing businesses and for research and

development businesses are also possibilities, he said.

Despite Eugene's struggling economy, Roberts said he is not worried about failure.

"Hard economic times force people back on their own resources," he said. With an incubator to help them, many entrepreneurs may decide to come out of their garages or basements with their

businesses, he added.

Roberts said he is looking for businesses with innovative ideas and whose products have some acceptance in the market. As a rule, the firm does not take on raw start-up businesses. In fact, most of those entering the incubator have been in business about 18 months, he added. Most stay in the incubator three to five years.

ULLR
SKI SHOP
1011 Valley River Dr. 683-1977

Quality Resale
941 Pearl • 485-6631

ONLY \$8.00
ANY 16"
2 ITEM PIZZA
PLUS 2 QTS. POP
687-8600
1432 Orchard, Eugene

ONE COUPON PER PIZZA EXP. 12/18/86

Using VDTs can be risky business

By Chris Norred

Of the Emerald

Video display terminals are being used in more and more work by more and more people. But many questions about the health and safety implications of VDT use often go unanswered, or the answers are unclear and conflicting.

Many of the health and safety issues that arise from VDT use were discussed at an educational workshop on VDTs for University clerical workers Thursday.

The workshop was organized by Bill Nevell, a graduate student in the University's industrial relations department. Nevell conducted a survey of clerical workers who use VDTs on the University campus to find out what issues concerned the people whose jobs include VDT use.

The survey results showed:

- 65 percent of the VDT workers were experiencing problems related to vision they associated with VDT use;
- 60 percent of the VDT workers were experiencing neck and shoulder pain that they associated with the long hours of working at the keyboard;
- and 35 percent of the workers were concerned about mental or emotional stress caused by use of VDTs.

Dr. Steve Hecker, an industrial hygienist from the Labor Education and Research Center, said many of the problems VDT workers experience can be directly attributed to a poorly designed work environment.

Hecker said a work station for

a VDT needs to be adjustable. The table top on which the VDT sits should be of adjustable height, and the machine should be easily rotated. The keyboard should be separate from the VDT screen and should have an adjustable angle, and the VDT screen should have adjustable angles, Hecker said.

"The more the unit is tied together, the more problems the worker will experience," he said.

Because VDT workers spend much of their work day sitting, the chair is the worker's most important tool, he said.

The main concern of VDT workers surveyed at the University centered around effects on vision. Improper lighting in the work environment is a leading cause of vision problems associated with VDT work, Hecker said.

"Most work places have too much light. The lighting is intended for working with hard copy (print on paper), and it is often three to four times what is needed for VDT work," Hecker said.

Another problem for vision is the glare from the VDT screens. Several types of glare-reducing treatments for the VDT screens are available as are glare shades, and filters, Hecker said.

Dr. Rod Gillilan, a local optometrist who served as optometry's representative on the Oregon State Senate Interim Committee on VDTs in 1984, said vision is almost always the number-one concern of VDT users.

Part of the vision problems associated with VDTs are

similar to the muscle problems people experience from VDT use, Gillilan said. "Bodies are not made to sit still, eyes are not made to stare. You need to blink and move your eyes around when you look at a VDT or any small object for a long period," he said.

Gillilan recommended a group of eye exercises VDT users can do at periodic intervals to eliminate some of the eye strain. Gillilan recommended rolling your eyes in circles for a couple of minutes or alternately focusing on objects close to your face and far away from your face quickly.

"Some people don't relax their eyes 100 percent after working with close work. They only relax 90 percent, and they keep doing it and keep doing it," Gillilan said. "In most people it's just a temporary near-sightedness, in some it's permanent."

MONSTER COOKIE CO.
For your gift giving:
• Special packaging and cannisters
• Treats for the Holidays
• Specialty cookies
5th & Willamette 687-1064 We Deliver!

CAL + COM m + c odes
CALculator mode + COMputer codes?
Decimal & binary systems, exponents
Computer arithmetic expose
Volume I
Banned at a bookstore?
Limited amount available at noon today
13th & Kincaid area • Orders will be accepted • 689-2020

Holiday Special
SHARP PC-7000
• 100% MS-DOS Compatible
• 320K RAM, expandable to 704K RAM
• Two 360 K Floppy Disk Drives
• Backlit LCD Display
\$1,069
COMPUTER & SOFTWARE BROKERS
EMU Ground Floor
683-7355

ARCADIAN FARMS N.W.
Horse Riding Lessons
"An Alternative Exercise"
We welcome new U of O rider
Mary Kurlinski
2405 Bailey Hill Road
484-5360

We Create
• Resumes
• Flyers
• Menus
• Newsletters
FAST!!
860 E. 13th • 344-3344
44 W. 10th • 344-3555
Kinko's Copies
Open 7 Days