

Y2K Problem, (Millennium Computer Bug) Touches Every Facet Of Life

BY WILLIAM (BILL) TOOMER

What does President Clinton, Monica Lewinski and the Y2K problem (year 2000) have in common? Both are two subjects you are tired of hearing about, but neither will go away.

We live in a superficial looking for quick and easy answers. There are no easy answers for the Y2K problem, in fact there are no answers to date. Our entire society is based on a profit to exist policy. Truth often becomes subjective, complex and difficult to ascertain. The following is the year 2000 problem in common everyday language: It seems that folks who programmed computers several years ago worried little about the coming of the new century. This is how it happened. A computer program will ask the person keying in information for a date, like your date of birth. To save space in the computer's memory, a programmer would write a set of instructions controlling the computer that would allow the person at the terminal to just type in the last two digits. The program would assume that the first of the year would be 19. back in the 1980's, this was nothing to worry about, but now it is a huge problem. Take the case of a child born on Jan. 1, 2000, in

a hospital that has not fixed its computer problem. A hospital employee tries to key in the infant's record, so everyone can keep track of the child, insurance can be billed, the baby can be worked into the feeding schedule, etc., the hospital computer will take only the last two digits for their birth year. When "00" is punched in, the computer treats the year as 1900 and goes haywire: the infant is 100 years old...Why does this 100 year old person weigh 6 pounds and 2 ounces? No information about this patient can be entered until this mess is straightened out.

You may ask why should you care about all this? Here is why you should care: every walk of your life is touched by computers. Your retirement monies, your (401K) Plan and such are more than likely invested in some form or combination with stocks and bonds and with various financial institutions. A test simulating trading on Wall Street around the start of year 2000 showed that some firms with the best resources to overcome year 2000 problems could not handle the transactions smoothly. Those computers that are not fixed may not be able to sort dates, calculate transactions, and perform other opera-

tions.

The security industry is expected to spend between 5 and 6 billion dollars through 1999 to fix the bug. When the year 2000 bug hits many systems will turn information into gibberish, bank ledgers, credit card information, business records are among those. Elevators, assembly lines and other machines may shut down, unable to comprehend the new date.

Cut off a major link to communication for instance power, finance, telecommunications, medical devices, transportation—even for a few days the complications are staggering.

The airline industry promises planes will not fall out of the sky; however, radar and air traffic control admittedly still have glitches.

The Y2K problem is a global peril. Even if the United States fixes its problem the rest of the world is far behind. In Japan, the world second most computerized nation, their financial institutions are running far behind the United States in trying to solve the problem. Venezuela's, an oil producing country, has not even begun examining its computers to assess what repairs are needed.

A survey of 113 countries by the U.S. State Department found that telecommunication companies in 33 countries were having problems with year 2000 fix and that 29 others were unaware of or had not begun to address the problem.

Many U.S. government departments are lagging behind with their solution to the problem. The social security department is doing a credible job; however, the Justice Department and the Bureau of Prison are having problems. To compound the problem further, the insurance industry has asked regulators for permission to exclude businesses' year 2000 losses from their commercial liability policies. The insurance service office, a company that helps insurers deal with regulatory issues. Has received permission from 46 states for insurance companies to deny year 2000 claims.

Alaska, Maine, Massachusetts and Texas are the four remaining states. They are considering granting the same permission. We half-read and half-listen, coming away with half-information. It is a safe bet the Y2K problem will not be solved in its entirety before year 2000 and that it will touch some part of your life.

Recovery is an Important Step for Oregonians

BY BARBARA CIMAGLIO

The word "recovery" is used a lot by people who work in the field of drug and alcohol prevention and treatment. It's a word we hear many of the nearly 318,000 Oregonians with drug or alcohol problems learn more about.

Recovery is a difficult term to understand and use correctly, because people who have used alcohol, tobacco or other drugs are never fully recovered, whether they've been through treatment once or several times. They may use drugs again, and may go through treatment several times. At best, they can be described as "recovering" or "in recovery," but never "recovered." The point is that their lives can slowly improve.

September is National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, a time to focus attention on the recovery process and the benefits of treatment. It's also a time to celebrate the tremendous successes of individuals who are recovering and recognize those in the field of alcohol and drug prevention and treatment who have dedicated their lives to helping others in need. A large percentage of people stop drinking or using drugs following treatment.

Addiction can be managed, but not cured. Understanding that addiction is a chronic, relapse in disorder is an important step in helping ourselves and others either not start abusing drugs and alcohol or stop abusing them.

The danger and temptation of using again is there for the rest of the person's life. Recovery is a process, an ever-ending struggle against powerful physical addictions. The mind and body never completely forget how good those cigarettes taste or how troubles seem to melt away with a couple of glasses of wine or bottles of beer, or a few pills.

In the past 20 years, medical

science has made extraordinary strides in learning about drug and alcohol abuse and the nature of addiction. Scientists have identified the neural circuits that include the actions of known drugs of abuse, and the common pathways that are affected by most drugs.

Scientists have a substantial understanding of the biochemistry of drug use at the cellular level. They are making progress developing anti-addiction medications. Today we are applying this good medical research and hard science to our prevention and treatment efforts.

Our latest statewide survey shows that almost 318,000 of Oregon's 3.2 million residents abuse or are dependent on alcohol or drugs, and we estimate that 20% of those with problems will seek treatment. Of those 20%, up to one-third, or 21,000, will "enter recovery" from their addictions.

We're working hard to get as many people as possible into treatment. We know treatment works. People who have had any treatment have fewer criminal problems, higher incomes, and a better chance of succeeding in their jobs and relationships. Also, for every dollar spent on treatment, Oregon research shows that society saves \$5.60 in reduced crime, medical, public assistance and other costs.

September is also a time when most Oregon students return to school. Education is one of the key weapons in our fight against abuse and addiction. And that means education of students, teachers, parents, employers and employees, and anyone who might come in contact with someone who is using or exposed to drugs or alcohol. In other words, all of us. Help is available for those who need it. If you or someone you know needs help, please call one of these organizations: the Oregon Partnership toll-free, 1-800-923-HELP (4357).

The Village Hangs Tough: At Home and Abroad

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

Most readers seemed pleased with my far ranging analyses of the "village" concept as we know it today.

Admittedly, a number found this approach to the urban lifestyle to be terra incognita (foreign land). But only at first, the curtain rose quickly.

Of course, it was at other times and in other places that I and many other writers across the country zeroed in on 'urban renewal/removal' and the inevitable social and economic consequences for African Americans in the inner-cities. Today, most of the story has been told, but there is little satisfaction for those who clearly perceived the decline of inner city landscapes.

I said "most of the story," speaking in the venue of that television series which always advised viewers, "now for the rest of the story."

In Portland, as in other cities, the 'other shoe did drop' following the destruction of

the Williams Avenue principal black business district, there followed the further social incoherency produced by the Emanuel Hospital/federal 'Taylor Act' devastation (the best laid plans of mice and physicians).

No need to repeat that dreary tale for now, the grandiose planner's scheme that was to wipe out even more of the African American "village"

—fell flat in its goal of replacing another third of the northeast village with "forward-looking" high rise gentrification and upscale latte commercial sites, neither of which the original residents could afford.

However, many acres of valuable central city property were removed from city tax rolls for years, an abandoned sub-city inhabited by rats, vermin and drug pushers, the ugly vista was like a panorama of war-torn Bosnia.

The true story has never been told, but we do know that the hospital complex was bailed out

by the federal government.

But a number have asked, "weren't the pressing health needs of the 'village' apparent from the beginning?"

That is the urgent need for a 'village trauma center' for a convenient location to diagnose and treat those pathologies with a high ethnic incidence

—diabetes, high blood pressure, kidney disease, sickle-cell anemia?"

However, a remaining village might ask, "isn't it possible that a 'third shoe' might be ready to drop?"

Just what route is the North-south leg of this omnipresent, light rail monster going to take?

Just whose homes, streets-of-dreams and villages will be devoured this time by the subsidized, \$7.85 a passenger monstrosity?

Just thought I would mention a few pertinent facts of life. I know that many readers were still intensely interested in the very special amenities that still exist in the remaining African

American neighborhoods.

Standing out is the description of "the school room as an extension of the home."

Definitely a 'village' concept as was the neighbor's stern and welcome interaction with one's own children as well as her own.

And oh, they do learn from us don't they, Marian Wright Edelman?

Even President's wives have looked at our strengths and concluded that the African is right at home and abroad.

It does indeed "take a whole village to raise a child." was that affirmed on the "million" marches?

How many of you noticed in the details of that horrible bombing in Nairobi, Kenya, how many of the victims were the sole support of as many as a dozen kin back at the village?

Or how many of the staff were paying for the education of six or seven siblings?

Business Association Hosts City Council

The results of the up-coming city council election could have significant impact on the Northeast Portland community. The chosen candidate will play a significant role in setting policy and making decisions on how the city will grow jobs, improve transportation and continue economic development within the central part of the city.

The North-Northeast Business Association has invited former county commissioners Tanya Collier and Dan Saltzman, the two candidates for the city council position, to present their goals and visions for Northeast Portland. The NE Portland community is a strategic part of the city, especially Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Their views for the area will be crucial for business owners to hear.

The candidates will speak at the N-NEBA quarterly Membership Luncheon Forum on Thursday, September 10 at Kaiser Permanente Town Hall, 3704 N. Interstate Avenue. Scheduled from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, the cost is \$12.50 per person.

The Membership Luncheon Forum is held quarterly (except during 4th quarter) and is an opportunity for business owners to network and obtain information vital to their growth and development. Those interested in attending the luncheon forum or obtaining membership information may call the Association office at 284-3093.



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