

Computers will alter education in next decade

By JUDITH BERNE

The revolution in electronics will completely alter education, locally and in the nation, in the 1990's. That's the prediction of West Bloomfield School District Superintendent Jerry Herman, who is one of six candidates vying for the top job in the Oakland Intermediate School District.

"The miniaturization of technology via micro-computers will alter our schools and our whole way of life," Herman predicts. "It's there," he says. "It will be almost the magnitude of an industrial revolution."

The difficulties will come in the selection process — what to use, what to teach, he says. "There will be so much to deal with."

He also foresees a new method of funding education, consolidation of governmental units including school districts and far-reaching ramifications of the energy crisis in the next decade.

The current reliance on property taxes for the bulk of school money will give way, says Herman. "If you're depending on that system, you're dead," he asserts. He also sees severe financial constraints on education in the early '80s being relaxed later in the decade as the country re-realizes the importance of schooling its young.

At the same time, he sees school districts and other institutions (including government, business, industry and unions) joining together, forgetting that an area was once "my turf. Needs don't come in tight little packages," he says. As a result, "school district consolidation will take place."

He predicts a more mature union-management structure "so it becomes more like the old unions where everybody understands there have to be joint approaches to problem solving."

Optimistically he sees the transformation of the current win-lose bargaining stance between teachers and school

boards into a win-win situation.

ENERGY CONSIDERATIONS will mean more than tightening up school bus routes, according to Herman's analysis.

It may mean spending money to remodel even recently constructed school buildings to make them more energy efficient.

It may include altering school hours and months of operation so schools are open when it is least expensive to run them.

It could produce new priorities in education such as the Sputnik-era dictates by the federal government to build up science education across the nation.

analysis

The micro-computer and energy cutbacks will lead to more education taking place outside the public schools. "A great deal of education will take place in the home," Herman predicts, "triggering a more flexible, higher quality of system."

It will undermine the current back-to-basics movement and create a whole new educational basis, Herman believes. As an example, he predicts abandoning the system of Carnegie units allotted to each high school course and collected until there are enough for graduation.

At the same time, a differentiated staff of master teachers, regular teachers and teacher aides will have to be

kept up to date on the latest instruction and instructional methods. This added instruction will be paid with federal, state and local funds.

HERMAN SEES the past decade as "a period of retrenchment in terms of curriculum innovation accelerated under the flag of back-to-basics."

He also notes the student activism of the 1960s was all but non-existent in the 1970s. "They need jobs; they put on ties now," he says. "But there's a loss there as well. Their insight and creativity kept us challenged."

Burgeoning bureaucracy bore into all levels of education, Herman reports. He sees "the beginning of a grass-roots rebellion against it." At the same time, he says educators are just starting to use technology in their management systems.

"We're way behind business and industry," he said. That, to some degree, is because the public is on guard against moves to dehumanize education.

He bemoans that education during the '70s dropped as the state and nation's number one peace-time budget priority.

Now it's third, Herman says, and coupled with it is a reduction in the number of resources put into education.

At the same time, Herman believes that the K-12 public school program is probably educating "less than half" the youngsters in the country. He comes to the conclusion after considering the number of students who drop out of school as well as those who are enrolled in community education programs, private and parochial schools,

on-the-job training by the military, business and industry and television education.

"We act as if we're still the biggie," he added.

IF THE 70s had their drawbacks, there were also some thrusts forward. Herman points to "the female species finally getting some recognition equivalent to their numbers."

This showed up in the increasing number of girls' sports programs (at least partly due to Title IX) as well as more women training to become administrators. Both are offshoots of the women's liberation movement.

At the same time laws such as the federal Freedom of Information Act and the declaration of the International Year of the Child were steps toward awarding children proper recognition. Herman calls those moves "long overdue."

Man cleared; brother convicted

By JUDITH BERNE

Daniel Meyers has been found guilty of two counts of first-degree murder in the June 1978 slaying of a West Bloomfield widow.

His older brother, Charles Meyers, was found not guilty of the murder charges. The Pontiac brothers were tried separately in Oakland County Circuit Court for the murder of Gladys Smith, 72, who was found beaten to death in her home on Pontiac Trail near Haggerty.

"Her home had been

ransacked and robbed.

A jury comprised of six men and six women deliberated between 7-8 hours before returning the guilty verdict against Daniel, 22, on Dec. 20.

The verdict was pronounced until after another jury, also made up of six men and six women, found Charles, 24, not guilty the next day.

That jury debated approximately seven hours before returning its verdict, according to Ruhl Kelly, clerk to Oakland County Circuit Court Judge Francis O'Brien.

"I'm deeply disappoint-

ed," said Assistant Prosecuting Attorney James L. McCarthy, who prosecuted both cases. "I understand the difference. But I guess I was surprised."

THE OPPOSING verdicts probably stemmed from the difference in evidence allowed in the two trials, McCarthy said.

In a pre-trial hearing, Judge O'Brien rejected evidence based on some statements made by Michael Marlowe, who was involved with the Meyers brothers in an armed robbery in Texas.

The brothers' defense attorneys successfully argued that Marlowe was deliberately put in a cell with Daniel Meyers to gain his confidence and "get him to talk" about the West Bloomfield slaying.

Search and arrest warrants were obtained after that interview.

A search warrant based on what Marlowe learned from Daniel at that point and all evidence obtained as a result were not allowed in either trial.

Also found inadmissible as evidence was prop-

erty identified by Mrs. Smith's daughter and grandchildren as missing from the Pontiac Trail home, which was later found at the home of the brothers' parents.

However, a digital clock and black-and-white Zenith television set linked to Daniel in another instance were listed as missing from the Smith home. No such link

was established with Charles.

"All we had were Marlowe's statements without any corroborating physical evidence (in the case against Charles)," McCarthy said.

THE BROTHERS remain in Oakland County Jail. No sentencing date was set as of late last week.

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