

Computers ease writing strain

By Dotti Krist
Staff Reporter

In Andrews 17, amidst cool air, green carpeting and freshly painted white walls, is WILLA.

WILLA, the Writing Laboratory for Liberal Arts, is the new microcomputer lab available for classes, students, teachers and faculty. It houses 24 Macintosh computers with word processing capabilities. WILLA was created by the Computing Resource Center in cooperation with the English department. Anyone with a UNL ID card may use the lab by checking with the Computer Resource Center for general use time. Some English classes require lab time for students.

Although WILLA was created to meet rising demand for computers by students from all subject areas, the Computing Resource Center has humanities students especially in mind.

"Everyone can take advantage of this lab. The liberal arts and humanities majors are extra welcome because there has not been a whole lot of computer education for them in the past," said Kathryn Alderman, education

coordinator for the Computing Resource Center.

Les Whipp, English professor, is requiring all of his students to use computers in submitting papers and is teaching students how to use WILLA. He does this, he said, because computers "eliminate artificial barriers" so that students can "do the best they can as writers." Instead of the time spent in writing and rewriting and in correcting mechanical mistakes, a student can "work with ideas," Whipp said.

To those who might object that computers demean the art of writing, Whipp said, "I can remember people objecting to the ball-point pen." And, he said, "even persons who are machine phobic can love" the computer.

It doesn't take students long to learn how to use the Macintosh computer, said Bruce Kube, a computer science senior who is a consultant staff member at WILLA.

"Students like using them," he said. And according to Roger Holmstedt, facilities manager, there have been a lot of new users at WILLA since it opened this fall. One of the reasons WILLA was created was to meet the overflow of students that were using

the microcomputers at Selleck Hall last semester.

According to Holmstedt, at the end of last semester people were waiting in line to use the computers at Selleck.

"I suspect that will happen here as well," he said.

However, these two facilities will have to do for a while, said Douglas Gale, director of the Computing Resource Center. Because of the high cost of operation maintenance and unexpected costs in creating WILLA, it might be a couple of years before the center can afford another facility, he said. Gale said it is worth the cost because students both in the humanities and sciences need to be exposed to computers.

"Students need that exposure to be competent in today's job market," he said.

For people interested in learning how to use the facilities at Selleck and Andrews, the Computing Resource Center is giving free classes Monday and Tuesday in the basement of the Selleck Quadrangle. The instruction runs from noon to 5 p.m., 7 to 9 p.m. on Monday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday. People can stop in at any time.



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Crew discovers rare fossils at scuba outing

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This is the first dive for fossils in any state besides Florida, he said.

"As far as we know," Voorhies said, "this is brand new for the Great Plains."

A sort of "underwater vacuum cleaner" was used to dredge or remove a blanket of sediment from the fossil bed, he said. The divers spent about six hours each day diving to fossil beds in

depths of 15 feet.

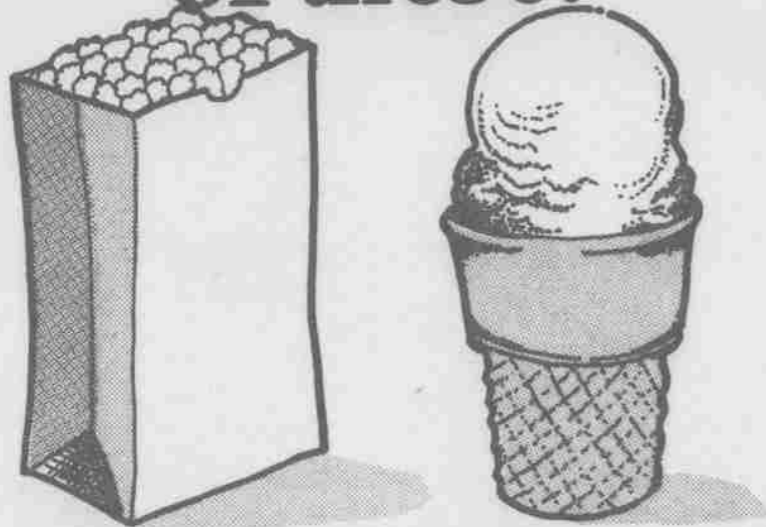
Brown said he and the other divers hope to return to the site next summer. Later this fall, they plan to do more excavating when the lake's water level drops. The fossil bed should be exposed then, he said.

The fossils will be on display at a gem and mineral show in Kearney this weekend. Voorhies said the display should return to the museum within the month.

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