



The Human Ecology Foundation of Canada

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PRESS RELEASE

NEW MEDICAL DATA BANK TO HELP THE DISABLED

send reply to:

H.E.F. (Toronto)
R.R.#1, Goodwood, Ontario
CANADA LOC 1A0

TORONTO, CANADA - JANUARY 21, 1981 Bruce M. Small, a Canadian engineer and environmental designer, today announced the beginning of a super-modern computer project that will be used to help people disabled by environmentally-caused disease.

The advanced micro-computer equipment will be installed shortly in Sunnyhill Farm, the Smalls' 5000 sq. ft. "allergy-free" home and ecology centre that was featured in the January 13th issue of Family Circle magazine. The recent publicity has prompted response from people across North America who, like the Smalls, had been made ill by environmental chemical exposures. Sunnyhill Farm will be used for testing the effects of environment on people's health, and as an information centre on ecological disease.

The computer system, to be purchased and developed by Small and Associates, Mr. Small's design and consulting firm, will incorporate the latest data processing, word processing and communications technologies. The new equipment will be made available to the Human Ecology Foundation of Canada, a charitable foundation, for its work in helping people with ecological illness and multiple allergies.

Mr. Small, president of the Human Ecology Foundation's Toronto Branch, stated that the Foundation has recently reached agreement with other Canadian and U.S. non-profit organizations to co-operate in the development of a special medical and engineering data bank. The Ecology Foundation project will be made possible by the new computer-based system, and will begin to bring together all the present knowledge on environmental illness and clinical ecology - the new medical field involved with treating environmentally-caused disease and multiple allergic sensitivities.

The machinery for the system will cost about \$25,000, and incorporates the latest proven microcomputer technology. The Smalls have decided to proceed in the absence of government funding because of the importance of getting Sunnyhill and the data bank project in operation during the International Year of Disabled Persons.

To date 80% of the funding for the project is in place, but the Smalls are seeking private loan funds for completing both the computer project and the remaining interior construction of Sunnyhill Farm itself. High interest rates and difficulty in obtaining conventional mortgage loans have delayed Sunnyhill's opening by two years. Construction has progressed slowly in the interim with a trickle of private loans. If further lenders can be found*, the Smalls hope to be able to finish Sunnyhill and establish their unique computer setup during 1981, The International Year of the Disabled. The address for inquiries is Human Ecology Foundation (Toronto), R.R.#1, Goodwood, Ontario CANADA LOC 1A0 (Tel: (416)-294-3531).

The medical and engineering data bank is unique, because it will be designed for the layman as well as doctors and researchers. A person in California or British Columbia, for example, could connect with the system by telephone and request all the latest information on housing materials that are safe for people with specific chemical allergies. Research and precedents valuable for legal proceedings involving toxic chemical exposures will be catalogued along with existing medical, architectural and engineering references. The system will be linked to medical and scientific data banks across the continent.

Full development of the project over the next two years will also allow experiments in providing home-based jobs using computers, for persons disabled by a variety of handicaps or illnesses. At Sunnyhill Farm, the 'wired cottage' concept of the future is already taking place. Unable to spend a great deal of time in Toronto's city core or in smoke-filled rooms due to his own illness, Mr. Small has for several years conducted a great deal of his own publishing and consulting operations through convenient computer and telephone links.

The actual hardware for the system will be supplied primarily by Digital Equipment of Canada Ltd. The powerful microcomputer will be connected through Bell Canada's telephone lines to Alphatext Limited, a Canadian computer services corporation. This link will allow more sophisticated word processing and typesetting capabilities through connection with an even larger computer 250 miles away in Ottawa.

The Human Ecology Foundation presently publishes a quarterly magazine for persons affected by allergic problems and sensitivity to chemical exposures, and the new computer will allow expansion of this publication. A less automated version of the system was used at Sunnyhill by Bruce and Barbara Small during 1980 to publish the hardcover edition of their book, "Sunnyhill - The Health Story of the 80's".

Issued at Sunnyhill Farm, Goodwood, Ontario
January 21, 1981

*Personal loans at the going rate of interest, \$1000 and up, 1-yr. term or greater. For further information contact Bruce M. Small at (416)-294-3531 or (416)-649-3511.