

Computerized wine expert offers vintage tips



Winnipeg wine lovers who cannot decide which of 3 100 wines available in Canada to select for a meal can now ask a computer. The Manitoba Liquor Control Commission recently unveiled a new computerized wine expert called the *Electronic Gourmet*. The computer offers advice and recipes from gourmet columnists in Toronto and Ottawa and from the Wine Institute. Left, Harold Irwin, general manager of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission asks the machine to recommend a dinner to match a \$108 bottle of *Château Mouton Rothschild*. Its answer: beef steaks, filet, lamb or turkey.

Canapress

News briefs

Marine Industries Ltd. of Sorel, Quebec, is involved in a major hydro-electric program in India and soon will start building generating units for a power-house in Kenya. This is the result of efforts to diversify the work of its hydro-electric division, now that the final generating units for the LaGrande no. 4 project of Hydro-Quebec are almost complete.

A Montreal company has won \$16-million worth of electrical equipment orders from countries throughout the world. The equipment, says ASEA Inc., consists primarily of transformers, relays, and protection and control systems. ASEA will be supplying the equipment to the United States, Honduras, India, China, Argentina and the Ivory Coast.

Ontario manufacturers specializing in telecommunications and energy products brought home \$4.5 million in initial export orders from a recent trade mission to India. The mission, involving 17 companies, was organized by the Canadian Manufacturers Association with the Electrical and Electronics Manufacturers Association of Canada and sponsored by the Ontario Ministry of Industry and Trade and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Over two million top business names from four data bases are now available through Info Globe, the online information division of Toronto's *Globe and Mail*. The data bases maintained by Canada Systems Group are: corporate names, with summary information on over two million federal and provincial incorporations and business

names; Canadian federal corporations and directors, with information on 125 000 federally incorporated companies; inter-corporate ownership; and trade marks, with information on over 200 000 registered and pending trade marks.

A compact super-minicomputer has been introduced by Prime Computer of Canada Ltd., Mississauga, Ont. The 2250 is designed for commercial transactions, scientific and computational processing, and computer-aided design, engineering and manufacturing. A system can support up to 64 users and is compatible with the current Prime 2250 and 250-II systems.

A software cartridge that transforms the Commodore 64 microcomputer into a videotex (NAPLPS) terminal has been introduced by Avcor, a division of Southam Communications Inc. of Toronto. For \$99.95, the Jordan Video-tex Decoder allows users to access a videotex data base. For owners with a disc drive, the cartridge will allow for the storage of individual frames for later recall. Graphic and text capabilities are incorporated in the cartridge.

Vanadium production from oil-sands plants could save Canada \$12 to \$14-million a year in imports, says Robert Geisler, president of Renzy Mines. He plans to build a \$4 to \$10 million plant at the Fort McMurray oil sands to extract vanadium pentoxide from the fly-ash of the Suncor oil-sands plant. This could make Canada self-sufficient in steel-strengthening vanadium, a strategic metal now imported.

Three Canadian retailers ranked among the best in North America by an international research firm reporting to the recent annual convention of the Retail Council of Canada. Black Photo Corp., Canadian Tire Corp., and Shoppers Drug Mart were singled out for their planning, positioning and productivity from a select group of 46, themselves the leaders among 472 companies followed by Management Horizons Inc., of Worthington, Ohio. The three retailers were praised for management preoccupied with consumers' needs and wants, and for substantial investments in consumer research, competitive analysis and monitoring of goods.

Housing starts in Canada during 1983 amounted to 162 645 compared with 125 860 in the previous year, an increase of 29 per cent, the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation reports. In terms of housing units actually completed, the total was 163 008 compared with 133 942 in 1982. The increase in starts was due entirely to single-family detached units whose numbers rose from 54 457 in 1982 to 102 385 in 1983. However, the number of rental units declined. It is expected that construction of rental units will be encouraged, at least for the first quarter of 1984, by the large number of units approved in December for assistance under the Central Rental Supply Plan.

Ottawa's Bell-Northern Research Ltd. (BNR) is establishing a new laboratory in Atlanta, Georgia, for research and development in telecommunications network technology. The Atlanta laboratory is the fifth US research plant for BNR, the research-and-development arm of Northern Telecom Ltd. and Bell Canada. The laboratory will be at the new Advanced Technology Development Centre of the Georgia Institute of Technology, which will also be a source of technical talent and expertise for BNR. BNR president John Roth said the lab will work with telephone companies and other local and long-distance carriers to develop better telecommunications networks.

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