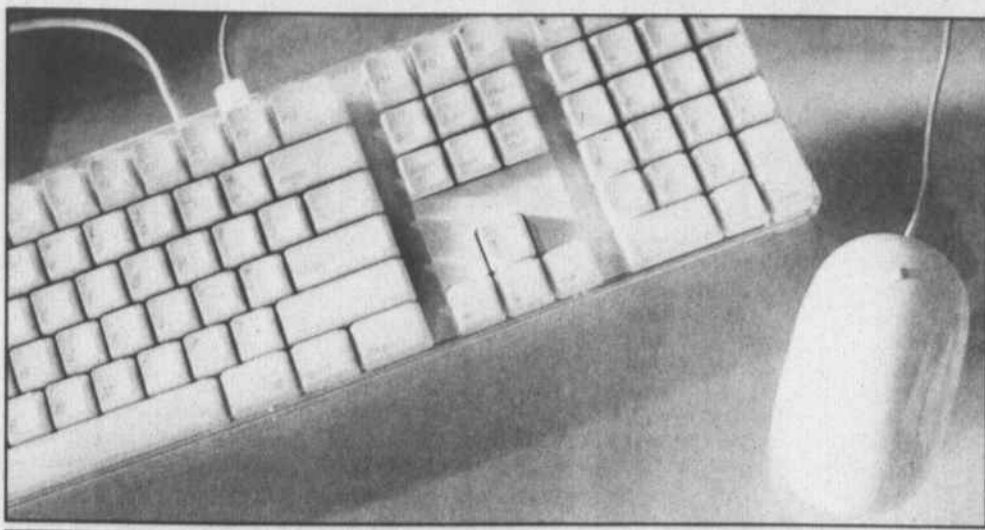


BBB sounds alarm about computer scam



SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Better Business Bureau of Northwest NC (BBB of NWNC) is warning consumers of recent scam under the pretext of computer safety. Scammers are calling consumers and pretending to be technicians from companies like Microsoft and making the claim they have detected viruses, malware or error messages on the computers of those they call in an attempt gain remote access or sell software.

"These scam artists are taking advantage of legitimate news stories and warnings about the need for computer security software to prevent

hacking and identity theft," said Brian Wright, CEO, BBB of NWNC. "The scammers will often have your name and other basic information from a public directory and will say they represent a well-known software company or use confusing technical terms."

The scammer will ask you to go to your computer and perform a series of complex tasks often targeting legitimate computer files and claim that they are viruses to gain your trust.

Wright encouraged scam victims to report any incidents to the FTC at ftc.gov/complaint and NC Department of Justice at www.ncdoj.gov.

Market

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known locally as an author and motivational speaker.

Richie Brooks, who now oversees the project as the city's Business and Community Development wing, said he knows that Gonzalez had conversations with the Liberty CDC, but was unaware of what was discussed. He said he does not know of any conversations with the CDC about running the market without going through the bid process.

Brooks said the construction of the market was paid for with a federal Urban Development Action Grant (UDAG) and Capital Reserves, not RUCA funds, which Shaw said he was unaware of.

Brooks said since the funds generated by the market go to the operator - who will be solely responsible for its upkeep and operations - the decision didn't come down to the lowest bid, but, instead, to who would run

the operation best. He said Miller's proposal addressed all the city's concerns.

Brooks said once a fence and sign are erected, the vendors market should be open for business. He said it'll be a place for the many outdoor vendors who are often seen in the area to come to sell their wares.

The two covered structures have fans, lights and electrical outlets. One shelter includes restrooms and heat; it has aluminum garage-like doors that can be closed so that it can operate in the winter. The shelters are surrounded by a parking lot with more than 70 spaces.

Mayor Pro Temp Vivian Burke - who represents the Northeast Ward, which includes the market - said she too was unaware of any plan for the CDC to run the market in lieu of a bidding process. She said she was pleased with the direction the city has gone and that the market will be beneficial to area street vendors.

"It'll be a little more structured and organized, so they can go and have a good place to sell their products," she said.

Miller said she hopes to make the market a major attraction. Each structure can hold 18 vendors, and she plans to use some of the parallel parking spots to dock food truck vendors. She said the city has gotten many inquiries from a variety of vendors and expects to have no trouble filling spaces.

"There's a list of about 22 vendors ready to go, that includes local farmers, jewelry makers ... so it's a wide variety," she said.

Shaw said the market would've been a great source of revenue for the CDC, which works to revitalize the heart of Liberty Street.

"Sure, we would have loved to have opened that because we think it would've been good for the city and for the community for the people to come and shop," he said.

Shaw said he is still glad that community and the Liberty Street Corridor will have the market and has full faith it will be well run.



Miller

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