



Mail-Man

Adam Bliss prepares to fend off the blow of Marie Stewart's wood and duct tape sword. The two were practicing their medieval battle technique for a Society for Creative Anachronism tournament Saturday in Snow Camp.

DTH/Dan Charlson

Voice mail users trade postman for Ma Bell

By BRUCE WOOD
Staff Writer

A new electronic "voice mail" service now available to North Carolina businesses may bring an end to large amounts of paper pushing, according to David Pharr, general manager for the Charlotte office of Async, Inc.

Async provides a central system in which executives and employees of a company each have a confidential mailbox. By dialing a certain number on any telephone, the owner of the mailbox can send messages to other boxes as well as check for recorded messages.

"A non-technical way of putting it is it's a new way of using the phone," Pharr said. "If I were to call (people) direct, chances are I wouldn't get them. If there's no need for dialogue, I will instead call the mailbox and speak the message."

Pharr said a voice mail user would typically check his mailbox a minimum of twice a day. After each message, he has four options: reply to the message and send the response to the original sender, send the message to someone else, save it for later reference or erase it.

"The major feature of voice mailing is that you can get a policy out to all (employees)," Pharr said. "A message spoken one time goes to 30 people simultaneously. Within a few hours everyone will have heard it."

Pharr compared voice mail to the older electronic mail systems of many computers. However, the user can access voice mail through any telephone and is actually speaking a message rather than typing it.

Pharr emphasized, though, that this

service does not replace answering services or personal secretaries. Async recommends that businesses use it only within the company.

"We advise them not to allow voice messaging for outside calls," Pharr said. "We still think that answering services and secretaries will remain for the personal touch."

Judy Wiles, owner of The Mail Drop, a local answering service, agreed with Pharr.

"I can't see how (voice mail) is going to affect my business in a negative way," said Wiles. "Any way that lets a business run more efficiently is good."

Although none of Wiles' customers use voice mail locally, an increasing number of businesses across the state, such as Apple Computers and Carolina Freight, are subscribing to it. The typical voice mail user is the sales division of a company, according to Pharr.

At Carolina Freight voice mail is still in the experimental stage, according to David Sweat, productions analyst for the company. Carolina Freight's national accounts department with 20 field representatives handling business for large national companies, has been testing voice mail.

"We chose to implement (voice mail) in this department because it's a smaller area where we could see the effect on our business," Sweat said. "We're in the process of evaluating right now. We try to cost-justify the expense."

Sweat says this evaluation should be done in two to three weeks when expansion to other departments will begin, one by one.

"We think the industry is really beginning to take off," Pharr said. "The 'plain vanilla' type of customer is sales and marketing forces, but we also (serve) hospitals, clinics and some governmental agencies, such as U.S. Customs in Miami and the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta."

With the expected rapid expansion, Pharr anticipates subscription prices to come down. They currently range from \$20-\$45 per mailbox, depending on the amount of access. Async currently has about 4,000 mailboxes serving 200-400 corporate customers nationwide.

Ellison gives meandering talk on universal topics

By ANDREA BEAM
Staff Writer

Just before taking stage, Harlan Ellison doused his pipe, smoothed his linen double-breasted coat, and strode confidently across the Memorial Hall stage.

He removed the microphone from its stand, asked that the houselights be turned up so that he could see the audience and glided to the edge of the stage.

And for Ellison, called "one of the great living American short story writers" by the Washington Post, it was not an alien position.

Ellison spoke before a full Memorial Hall Friday night as part of Carolina Symposium 1986. There was no organization to Ellison's lecture. He admitted himself that he rambled, and Friday night was no exception.

Ellison, who ran away from home at 13, said that attending Ohio State University was a terrible experience. He only stayed there one year.

"By the actual record," he said, "to this day, my grade point average is the lowest ever recorded at Ohio State; a .086."

"If I had stayed in college, I could have made something of myself," he added.

Often outspoken, Ellison skipped to other subjects, from "Star Trek" anecdotes to religion (Ellison said he was an atheist), to commentary on media icons Merv Griffin, People Magazine and Wally George.

Ellison made it clear that he did not like William Shatner, Star Trek's Captain Kirk, when he recalled an incident during his stint as a writer for the program.

"(Shatner) would take it amiss were there not in each script some nubile young woman he could make it with," Ellison said.

In one scene with a woman, Shatner kept demanding re-takes, even though the shot had been successfully made, Ellison said, adding that Shatner was "copping a feel" every time.

The woman, distressed, told Ellison during a lunch break that she was upset.

"And, with the cooperation of everybody on the set, we made some adjustments to the equipment," Ellison said.

When Shatner went towards the woman under a boom mike, which Ellison said he had loaded with fish hooks, Shatner's toupee went flying over his head.

"Bill gleamed in the light like a cue ball, gave a shriek like a wounded creature, dashed off, stomped his little feet, ran off to his little trailer and did not come out for the rest of the day," Ellison added.

Ellison also noted his dislike for Merv Griffin. He used his appearance on Griffin's show to demonstrate television censorship.

"There are only two things you can't say on TV," Ellison said. "They are: 'I am an elitist' and 'I don't believe in God'."

"If you really believe this is all someone's doing, and you look around at all the misery, then God is a shmuck," Ellison said.

Not only is Ellison's boldness outstanding, but his works are as well. His award-winning works include "Shatterday," "Memos from Purgatory," and "I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream."

As for his writing, Ellison said he was somewhat of a liar. "I'm a paid liar," he said. "It's what I do for a living. Whatever weird thing that comes to me, that's what I write down."

Ellison, who speaks on many college campuses, commented on the shanties protesting apathy in South Africa erected in front of South Building.

"I travel to a lot of college campuses and they're not doing anything," he said. "This is the first thing I've seen with any kind of social consciousness," he said.

"Another thing I like is 'the wall,'" he added. It's the exclamation point at the end of your argument."

After a 15-minute intermission, Ellison returned and read "Palidium of the Last Hour," an original story that was produced for the resurrected television series, "Twilight Zone."

Films, programs, speakers scheduled for rape awareness series, April 7-10

Monday, April 7

Noon and 12:40 p.m. The Tin Drum Theatre Group dramatization of rape issues. The Pit.

3:00 p.m. Ms. Kathy Shaw of the N.C. Sexual Assault Task Force lead a discussion on the marital rape exemption clause. Sponsored by the Campus Y Women's Forum. Campus Y Lounge.

6:30 p.m. "Dealing with Rape and Sexual Assault" — A joint presentation by the Orange County Rape Crisis Center, UNC Police, and Student Health Services. Sponsored by RHA and STOW government. Spencer Lounge.

Tuesday, April 8

6:30 p.m. "Dealing with Rape and Sexual Assault" (Repeat of Monday program.) Sponsored by RHA and Craige government. Upendo Lounge. South Campus Union.

7:30 p.m. Mock Trial: State v. Doe. Date or Rape? JWith audience as jurors. Great Hall, Carolina Union.

Wednesday, April 9

11:30 a.m., Tin Drum Theatre Group. Theatre in the Pit.

12:40 p.m.

8:00 p.m. Film: "Rape Culture" and discussion. Sponsored by panhellenic and Interfraternity Councils. Delta

8:00 p.m.

Kappa Epsilon House. 132 S. Columbia St. "Dealing with Rape and Sexual Assault" (Repeat of Monday program) Sponsored by RHA and Granville government. Granville cafeteria.

11:00 p.m.

"Northern Hemisphere Live" — WXYC talk show — Discussion on emotional, medical, legal aspects of rape with Marjorie Land of Student Health, Karen Winstead of Orange County Rape Crisis Center, and representative from Orange County District Attorney's office. (89.9 FM)

Thursday, April 10

3:30 p.m.

Self-Defense workshop with Officer Robert Frick Chapel Hill Police Department. Sponsored by Panhellenic Council. Pi Beta Phi sorority, 109 Hillsborough St.

6:30 p.m.

HE SAID SHE SAID: Rape and Miscommunication. With V. Balthrop of Speech Communication Department and A. Bowden of Dean of Students Office. Sponsored by Campus Y. Campus Y Lounge.

7:00 p.m.

"Dealing with Rape and Sexual Assault" (Repeat of Monday program) Sponsored by Scott College government and RHA. Whitehead Parlor.

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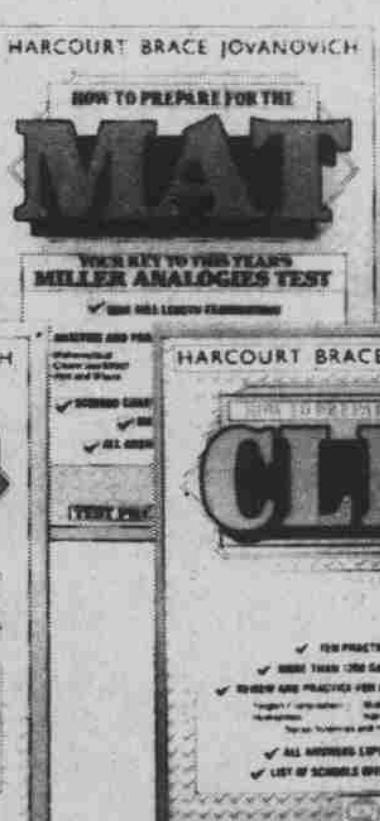
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