

# THE BLUE BANNER



## Features

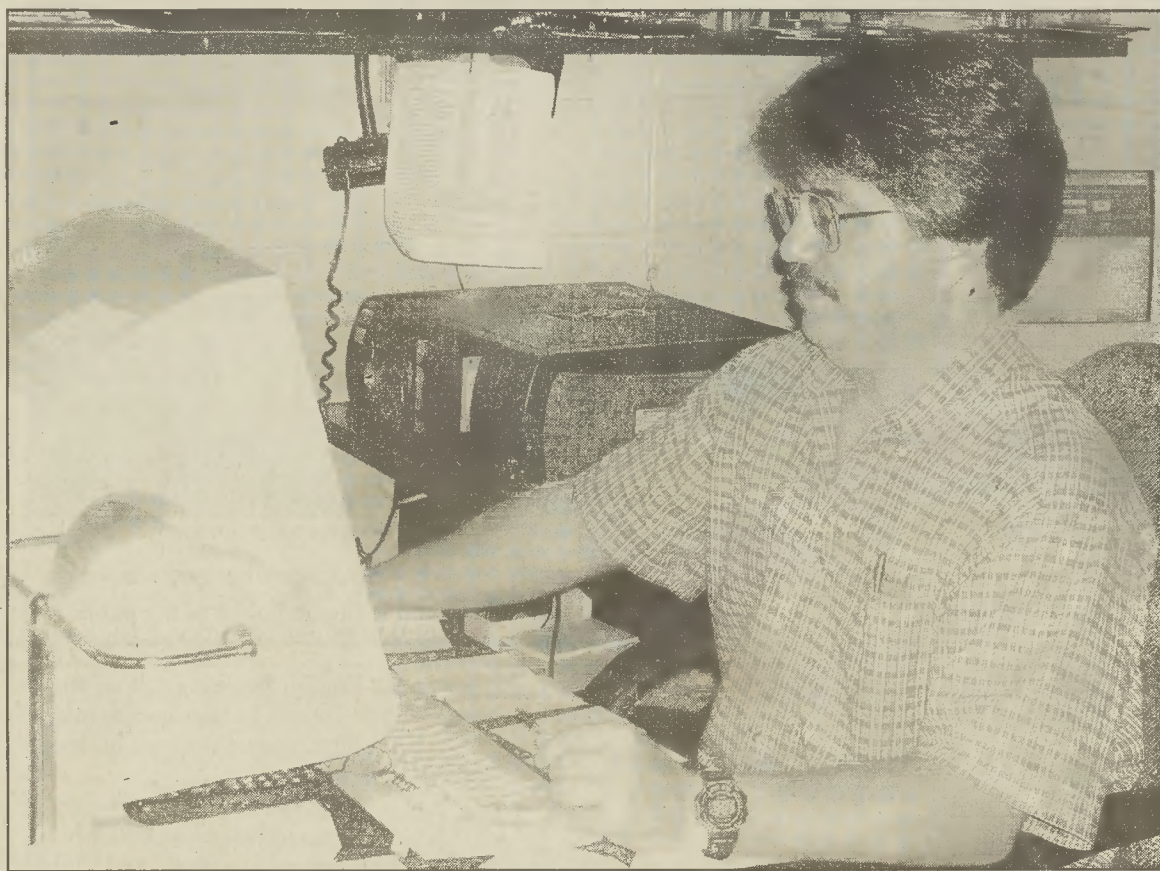
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## Internet virus attacks campus network

Adam Pollock  
News Reporter



JAY ADKINS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Michael Honeycutt, academic computing coordinator, works on clearing up UNCA network resources as an Internet virus causes a backlog of 35,000 e-mails.

UNCA computer and e-mail users suffered communication delays over the past few weeks as the Sobig virus and Blaster worm swept through the campus community, interfering with the university network. Our system manager noticed that e-mail queues were filling up, so we shut down e-mail," said Kern Parker, director of university computing. The Blaster worm, and its numerous variants, infected the computers of college campuses, including UNCA, as well as corporations and individual users around the world. The worm exploited a security weakness in non-updated 32-bit versions of the Microsoft Windows operating system, impeding network communication and interfering with normal system operations. The Sobig virus, a program designed to over-utilize computer resources and disrupt the normal operation of network-based applications, also caused serious problems around the globe. This virus created the most trouble for members of the UNCA community. "We've been hit with both at the same time," said Parker. "The world is infected out there and UNCA recipients were in their address books." The Sobig virus spreads by collecting the e-mail addresses contained in an infected user's address book and re-sending itself to those addresses. Despite having identified the source of the campus network problems, the computer center found no older methods of dealing with computer attacks could not completely remove viruses from e-mail messages before they could interfere with campus services, accord-

ing to Parker. "We were simply unable to deliver e-mail," said Parker. Members of the UNCA community suffered e-mail delivery delays lasting up to three days as computer services staff used the software tools at their disposal to check and clean over 35,000 individual e-mail messages. Although the virus did not create debilitating disruptions for some departments, it inconvenienced users throughout the university. "It was just a time consuming thing," said Michael Small, UNCA business officer and bookstore manager. The Sobig virus inconvenienced Small and his staff by filling their

inboxes with phony e-mail messages. Some expressed frustration because the Sobig and Blaster infections coincided with the beginning of a new semester and therefore interfered with communication between instructors and students. "I just couldn't get on my e-mail to get to some of the teacher e-mails that were sent out, which was a pain because it was the beginning of school," said Kati Bray, a senior biology major. Others simply found their usual e-mail correspondence blocked. "A couple of my friends that I often send e-mails didn't get my e-mails," said Laurin Cardwell, a junior biology major.

Computer center personnel managed to clean and deliver all of the suspected e-mail messages despite preliminary warnings to the contrary sent to campus e-mail users. "We delivered everything," said Parker. "We didn't lose any mail at all." Most people remained calm and understanding during the campus' recent network difficulties, according to Parker. He attributed this reaction to a well-informed campus community. "Certainly, people called our attention to it, but we've received great support," said Parker. Many students, including Bray, understand the reasoning behind the decision to temporarily shut

down the e-mail system. "It's a pain that it took so long, but if it keeps us all from getting viruses on our computers, I think that's a good thing," said Bray. "Adversity makes you strong," said Parker. Parker and his staff learned about better ways to suppress the spread of viruses on UNCA servers and how to better allocate software tools and resources to protect campus network users. The infections cost the university personnel time and disrupted normal operations of the university's networking and e-mail systems, according to Parker. "We worked through the weekend, several of us did, either monitoring the situation or implementing new solutions," Parker said. Aja Wright, a senior mathematics major, avoided checking her e-mail altogether because of reports issued concerning the virus. Wright also expressed concern over the inherent safety of public computer terminals.

"All campuses are dirty places," said Wright. "When you stick your disk into one of those 'A' drives, you don't know what you're going to get." Some fear that the university may face greater network-defense related obstacles in the future as the campus's dependence on computers and Internet technology grows. However, Parker believes the UNCA community will fare well against hackers and their creations in the coming months and years. "We're going to continue to get assaults like this and the best you can hope for is to minimize the impact and to keep services going," said Parker. "We're about as well positioned as anybody." Users should take some protective measures of their own, like purchasing anti-virus software and downloading current operating system updates, according to Parker.

## Mid-East violence further escalates

Hilary McVicker  
News Reporter

Violence on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict this summer has highlighted conflicting opinions about the United States' involvement in the Middle East. "Nobody's been particularly happy with U.S. involvement, but everybody seems to think the U.S. has to be involved, because it's the only power in the world that's capable of bringing leverage to bear on both sides," said Linda Cornett, director of international studies at UNCA. Opinions on the issue vary on UNCA's campus. "The main issue I see is that Israel has a right to exist as a state, and that's where it ends for me, regardless of what's going on," said Arielle Cohen, a junior interdisciplinary major focusing on religion and the global world. Many feel the issues are not clear. "I've heard the perspective of some Europeans, and they feel like it's kind of a toss-up," said Jason Stallings, a junior music major. "The people have been fighting over those areas for so long, and there are so many ties for both religions to this area." Many feel that the acts of terrorism that marked the conflict's history make the issue a global one, especially in the post-Sept. 11 political climate. There exists a current tension in which the U.S. has a direct interest, according to Caryn Gibson, a junior creative writing major. "It's pretty important, because I think we should have a hand in solving human rights issues and things involving terrorism," said Gibson. Media outlets worldwide have focused heavily on the suicide bombings and other terrorist tactics that militant Palestinian organizations, like Hamas and Islamic Jihad, employ. Most recently, a wave of violence began Aug. 19 when a Palestinian suicide bomber on a Jerusalem bus killed 21 people, including six children, according to *The Associated Press*. Israel's retaliation, however, affects Palestinian civilians as well as militants. The Israeli government's response to the Aug. 19 incident included several missile air strikes into crowded streets in the Gaza Strip. The missiles were aimed for Hamas leaders but wounded several Palestinian civilians and killed at least one, according to *The Associated Press*. "A lot of people defend Israel, but I don't defend either side," said Gibson. "Israel could be called a terrorist state, because they're working through fear. If you're suspected

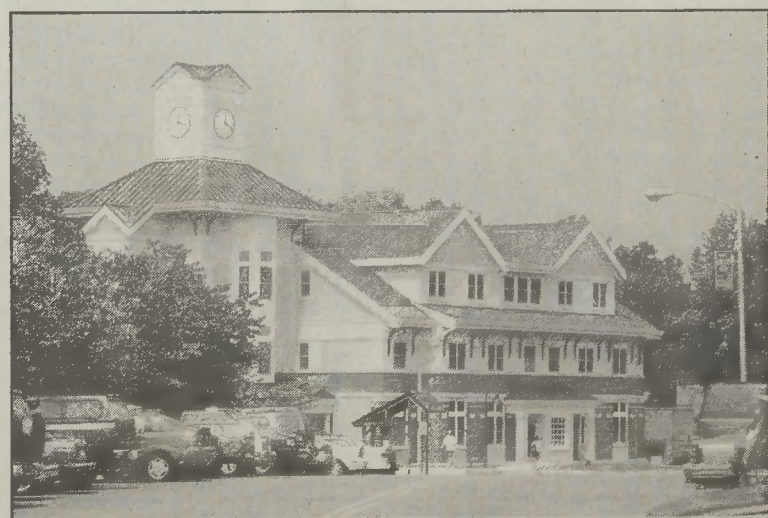
## UNCA completes phase one of Governors Hall dorm

Suzanne Aubel  
News Reporter

Governors Hall, the newest residence hall on the campus of UNCA, officially opened to students Aug. 16. "We are very excited that we opened and we are happy to endure the headaches that that may have caused on the front end," said Melanie Rhodarmer, associate director of housing and residence life. "We were just thrilled to be able to open and have that building ready when students were here." Plans for the three-phase Governors Hall began in 1999, according to Stephen Baxley, director of facilities planning and management. A committee of students and faculty helped contractors finalize the plans that would replace three buildings in the Governors Village dormitory area. The group designed the new residence hall to look like it belongs in Asheville, and some of the inspiration for its design came from build-

ings in the downtown area, according to Baxley. "It's got a lot of neat design features in it, such as a lot of wood in the building, which we don't commonly have in a lot of our other residence halls," said Rhodarmer. "It's an attractive, very modern-looking building and I think it'll be appealing to students." The new building has bed space for approximately 185 students, and amenities such as laundry rooms, carpeted bedrooms, computer labs and lounge areas. These features, along with the demolition of the old dormitory buildings, called for a large budget, according to Baxley. "It stayed within its budget," said Baxley. "The building cost in the neighborhood of \$11.5 million dollars, which includes a lot of things (such as) water, heat and air conditioning." Air conditioning is one factor that makes the new hall, which is now the most expensive residence hall at UNCA, more appealing to some students looking for a single room. Ryan Norman, a junior art/Span-

ish major, chose a single in the new building over a room in Governors Village because for that feature. "I was ready for a room by myself and I really didn't want to go into the old Governors Village," said Norman. "The past two years I lived in Mills and it was great, but I just felt like the facilities were getting worn down and everything was breaking." Its convenient location on campus became another selling point for the building. May Wahdan, a senior drama major, moved back on campus after two years of living off campus to live in the new dorm. "I liked the location because (it's near the) central campus, not on one extreme. South Ridge is really far and Founders is isolated by its own road," said Wahdan. "I liked that it was really close to the gym, really close to the cafeteria and really close to educational buildings." While the excitement over the convenience of the new hall is evident, the first thing that most people talk about is the overall appearance of the building. "I really love the appearance and



MICHAEL KING/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Governors Hall opened its doors to students Aug. 16.

the aesthetic aspect of it because it looks so great," said Norman. "I like being on the breezeway, too." The outdoor hallway forms a prominently featured breezeway that faces a courtyard area. The courtyard serves the function of making the building blend in with its natural surroundings.

"I really like the breezeway," said Wahdan. "You can sit out there and study or watch people play intramural games on the field. I like the fact that there's a lot of nature around. It doesn't look like this big obscene building in the middle of

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