

## Worms infest university network



PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

Stephanie Powell, a second-year nursing student, visits Computer Services to rid her processor of the Blaster worm.

Computer services receives more than 1,000 calls after students lose Internet as worms, viruses clog system

JON TURNER  
THE GAMECOCK

It's unusual for USC's Computer Services office to receive more than 900 phone calls in a day. Yet on Thursday, the Internet help desk received more than 1,100 calls from students and faculty after e-mail viruses and computer worms swept through the university network, almost stopping the flow of data.

Melissa Javier, a first-year political science student, said her Internet connection has been dysfunctional for several days.

"It's really inconvenienced me, because I'm a freshman and I'd like to talk to my friends and family and use my e-mail," she said.

Such worms as Blaster and Nachi and a new virus, Sobig, are loose on the Internet. Students brought the worms and viruses back with them when they connected their computers to the USC network, Computer Services staffers said.

USC's Computer Services staff has been working overtime to fight the spread of the virulent worms.

"Universities are especially hit with it because, you know, we have 6,000 students coming in one week," said Ronni Wilkinson, the information technology security officer.

Universities, businesses and government organizations worldwide are being hit hard by the epidemics.

"Sobig hurt the administrative e-mail system," Wilkinson said, "but none hurt the main systems like VIP or the registration system."

Sobig, an e-mail virus, was discovered about a week ago. It comes in an attachment and, when downloaded, searches through a computer's address book and sends a copy of itself to each of these addresses. By spreading rapidly, it can overload such mail systems as the university's Gamecock e-mail (GEM).

About a month ago, a vulnerability was discovered in some Microsoft software, specifically, every Windows operating system after '98. Microsoft quickly released a downloadable patch to mend the problem, but the response wasn't fast or comprehensive enough to prevent the spread of Blaster, a worm that clogs network data transfers and copies itself onto every computer it can find.

The biggest visible symptom of

Blaster is a continual pop-up message saying that the computer is going to turn off "in one minute."

Blaster hit USC at about 10 p.m. last Thursday.

The next worm, Nachi, exploits the same weakness as Blaster to spread; however, Nachi deletes the Blaster worm and downloads the Microsoft patch.

Despite its positive effects, Nachi has an even worse network-clogging effect than Blaster.

Moreover, it's much harder to detect than its predecessor.

At least one variant of the virus was also programmed with an expiration date, Jan. 1, 2004. So, an easy way to get rid of some versions is to set a computer to 2004 and reboot it, causing the virus to delete itself.

"The first afternoon Nachi hit, it almost stopped our Internet connection," Wilkinson said. "All the switches in the dorms can't process it fast enough."

She said it was normal for about 250 to 500 packets of

**"The first afternoon Nachi hit, it almost stopped our Internet connection."**

RONNI WILKINSON  
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECURITY OFFICER

◆ WORM, SEE PAGE 4

### IMPORTANT SITES

FOR THE PATCHES THAT PROTECT AGAINST BLASTER:  
<http://reg.csd.sc.edu/patches/patches2.html>

TO INSTALL CURRENT ANTIVIRUS SOFTWARE (PROVIDED FREE OF CHARGE TO USC STUDENTS AND FACULTY):  
[www.sc.edu/aris/virus](http://www.sc.edu/aris/virus)

TO INSTALL CRITICAL SECURITY UPDATES FROM MICROSOFT:  
<http://security.sc.edu/library/WindowsUpdate.html>

TO UNINSTALL AND PREVENT SPYWARE FROM ATTACHING ITSELF TO YOUR COMPUTER:  
<http://spybot.safesite.com/networking/de/index.php>

TO VISIT THE COMPUTER SERVICES HELP DESK ONLINE:  
<http://cshelpdesk.csd.sc.edu>

## Business school gets high ranking

BY ALEXIS STRATTON AND MICHAEL LAFORGIA  
THE GAMECOCK

The Moore School of Business and USC's first-year programs were recognized alongside programs of Harvard, Princeton and other universities in the U.S. News and World Report's "America's Best Colleges Guide," which hits newsstands today.

Carolina's first-year programs, which were ranked No. 1 nationally in last year's guide, were listed this year under the heading "Programs to look for."

"It will tell current students as well as future students that the University of South Carolina cares about its first-year students and has a program that is dedicated to their success," said Mary Stuart

Hunter, director of USC's National Resource Center for the First-year Experience and Students in Transition.

Dan Berman, director of Carolina's acclaimed University 101 program, said he is proud of the attention the university's first-year programs have received, but that he isn't surprised about it.

"We feel that we probably are the most caring and the most concerned first-year program in the country," he said. "We really want our students to succeed, and other schools know what we do."

In addition, USC's international business department was ranked No. 1 in the undergraduate international business category.

Comments on this story? E-mail [gamecockudesk@hotmail.com](mailto:gamecockudesk@hotmail.com)

## Custodians take time for own olympic games

BY Z'ANNE COVELL  
THE GAMECOCK

USC's first Custodial Olympics, held Friday in the Blatt Physical Education Center, gave university custodians a respite from their everyday duties.

The event was sponsored by Sertoma, a civic organization that

sponsors such projects to benefit the community. Ron Farkas, president of Columbia's North Lake Sertoma club, said the Custodial Olympics reflect a wave of custodial recognition spreading across the nation.

"There have been a number of

◆ OLYMPICS, SEE PAGE 2



PHOTO BY MORGAN FORD/THE GAMECOCK

Marijuana legalization supporters rally outside the State House on Friday waving signs as drivers honk while passing.

◆ PRO-MARIJUANA GROUP NORML HOLDS RALLY TO EDUCATE ABOUT THE DRUG, PAGE 2

## Sororities welcome new members

BY KEVIN FELLNER  
THE GAMECOCK

It's not every day that hundreds of sorority girls flood the Horseshoe reciting cheers and handing out memberships to a new class of female freshmen. But on an overcast Sunday afternoon, they arrived sporting brightly colored shirts with prominent Greek letters and ready for Bid Day 2003.

It's the culmination of Rush Week. It's a time for hundreds of eager freshman students to open their envelopes in front of McKissick Museum to find out which sorority has invited them for membership and then sprint across the Horseshoe toward Sumter Street to the open arms of their new sisters.

"I've been working out at the Strom Thurmond Center all

week," said first-year nursing student and potential new member Mary Ellen Horn, who vowed beforehand to be the first one to reach her new sisters.

"It was exciting and a little bit reckless not knowing where you're going," said first-year business student Kim Perlick, who had been accepted to Alpha Chi Omega just moments earlier.

"It definitely pumps you up when you're running toward them," she said.

Sorority members huddled together behind signs and under balloons matching their shirts as much as an hour before the potential new members opened their envelopes. The groups were strewn well past the Maxcy Monument.

Many of the sororities sustain friendly rivalries from year to year, and nearly every member

**"You get to let the girls know what your philanthropy is and what your sisterhood is about. We get to meet tons of them, as many as possible, and then try to get a feel for what they're like and if they would fit in."**

ANNA RASMUSSEN  
SECOND-YEAR BUSINESS STUDENT AND ALPHA CHI OMEGA MEMBER

strives to pump the crowd up the most.

"We are the loudest and most spirited sorority out here," boasted fourth-year English student and Alpha Delta Pi member Katie Glaze, even though other sororities were making the same claim. Glaze said much of the group's spirit this year stemmed from them accepting their largest group ever with 70 new members.

Since students went through a series of interviews and parties throughout the past week, many were relieved to see it end and were ready to focus on schoolwork.

"You get to let the girls know what your philanthropy is and what your sisterhood is about," said Anna Rasmussen, a second-year business student and Alpha

◆ BID DAY, SEE PAGE 3

### Index

Comics and Crossword	8
Classifieds	11
Horoscopes	8
Letters to the Editor	5
Online Poll	5
Police Report	3

### Weather

TODAY		TOMORROW	
High	94	High	93
Low	71	Low	71

### In This Issue

- ◆ NEWS Local organization lobbies for legalization. **Page 2**
- ◆ VIEWPOINTS Anna Lake tells why school is her vacation. **Page 5**
- ◆ THE MIX The new GMP shocks and amazes. USC students sound off on the revamped Grand Marketplace. **Page 6**
- ◆ SPORTS The SEC strives to get back on top in college football. **Page 9**