



WEATHER

TOMORROW'S FORECAST:
Mostly cloudy
HIGH: 66 LOW: 49

Computer virus wreaks havoc in A&M computers

By CHRIS VAUGHN
Of The Battalion Staff

A highly efficient computer virus that has been on the Texas A&M campus since early this month struck hard last week, wreaking havoc on Macintosh computers and leaving frustrated students with scrambled or even erased programs.

The computer virus, named WDEF, has been controlled by two anti-virus computer programs and a group of computer experts that worked feverishly Friday and Saturday to minimize the damage.

A computer virus is an invisible piece of software that works inside the computer. WDEF affected every disk that was put inside an infected computer, even blank disks.

"This virus is the most efficient virus I've ever seen," said Michael Suggs, a senior engineering technology major who worked over the weekend to help students cope with the virus. "All you had to do was put the disk in, and it was there."

Michael Farlow, a graduate student in industrial engineering, said he noticed the virus in early February in the graphics lab in the Teague Building. Farlow said he and others have taken steps to stop the virus's growth.

"We are making great efforts to keep the labs clean," said Farlow, who works in the graphics lab. "With the number of students involved, it's really hard to keep everything under control. Eventually, though, everything will be stopped."

Suggs said he didn't discover the virus until Thursday when his personal Macintosh computer crashed. He fixed his computer after several hours, but lost two programs completely.

Suggs said he figured he got the virus from the Learning Resource Center in the Heldenfels Building. "Every system disk in Heldenfels was infected," he said. "I worked right then to remove the virus because I didn't want anyone else to lose information."

Much of the damage was being done right then all over the campus. One student lost 20 pages of a 60-page document, while another lost an entire program after it scrambled, he said.

The computer virus originated in Belgium, but worked its way to the United States within days, he said.

"It was only a matter of time before it got to A&M," Suggs said.

A group of experts at Northwestern University in Chicago wrote a program titled Disinfectant to combat the virus in January. Another program called Eradicate was written shortly after as a preventive program.

Both programs were used all over the A&M campus Friday and Saturday to fight the virus. They are available now to any student at any computer lab on campus to copy.

The damage, however, has been done already, Suggs said.

"There is no telling what damage it has done to people's disks," he said.

Suggs said that students who just

use the Macintosh computers on campus don't have to worry about losing any more programs.

But, he said, if a student owns a Macintosh or uses one somewhere else, then the anti-virus programs must be copied immediately in order to stop the spread of the virus through the disks.

Suggs said the WDEF virus was not meant to cause harm, although viruses can be written to do specific damage.

"Any person with knowledge of computers could write a program that hides itself," he said. "If someone is sinister enough, he can write one that does things the user doesn't want."

He said he has seen a virus which caused a shamrock to appear on the screen on St. Patrick's Day and a virus that systematically erased everything in use, but WDEF had no pattern to its damage, he said.

Suggs, who does not work for the University, said his involvement with combating the virus was out of necessity.

"I knew exactly what was happening, and I was one of the few who did," he said. "I'm just a concerned student."

Farlow said since he first spotted the virus early this month, he is not sure why it is now news.

"Why it became noticeable and newsworthy, I don't know," he said. "It's been here for awhile."

He said students should keep copies of important papers and documents in order to guard against viruses and computer crashes.

Guard duty



Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Members of the bass section of the "Fightin' Texas Aggie Band" guard the sousaphones before the Military Weekend Review Saturday at Simpson Drill Field.

Filing for spring semester's student body elections begins today

Filing for spring semester's student body elections begins today.

Students interested in running for office must stop by 214 Pavilion this week between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. to pick up an application. A \$5 filing fee will be charged upon application request.

The offices to be elected include the student body president, yell leaders, class officers and certain posi-

tions in the Student Senate, Graduate Student Council, Residence Hall Association and Off Campus Aggies.

Applications must be returned by 5 p.m. Friday.

Election campaigning will begin March 18, with the election scheduled for March 29. Election results will be announced later that day at the Lawrence Sullivan Ross statue. If necessary, a runoff is set for April 3.

Once elected, the students will serve for the 1990-91 school year.

A&M's International Week emphasizes 'age of unity'

By ANDY KEHOE
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas A&M's 10th Annual International Week will begin today with a ribbon cutting ceremony at 10 a.m.

The theme for International Week 1990 is "Bringing Down the Barriers: The Age of Unity," which is a fitting title, Diana Glaindo, president of the International Students Association, said.

"It's a week full of different cultures and traditions," Glaindo said. "It's also a time for everyone to learn about one another, and hopefully break down some of the stereotypes."

Forty-six different international organizations will participate in the week's events that include a talent and fashion show, a cultural display and an art exhibit.

A&M's celebration of International Week began in 1980 simply as a one-day program.

"It has really grown over the years," Glaindo said. "Today, we have hundreds of students participating in the activities. I expect that it will continue to grow."

Preparations for this year's celebration began in the fall.

The schedule for International Week 1990 is:

- Monday — The cutting of the ribbon in the MSC Flag room during the opening ceremony to symbolize the beginning of International Week.

- Also, a cultural display and art exhibit will be presented from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the first floor of the MSC. Each participating country will present its culture with goods and crafts. Artwork showing the students' heritages will be on display.

- Tuesday — The cultural display and art exhibit will continue from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the first floor of the MSC.

- Wednesday — A Buffet International will be held at 7 p.m. on the second floor of the MSC. Students can taste a wide range of international cuisine prepared by the international students. Admission is \$8.

- Thursday — Round table discussions will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. in Room 701 of Rudder Tower. It is an

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Hance outlines tough policy Plans call for harsher punishment for criminals

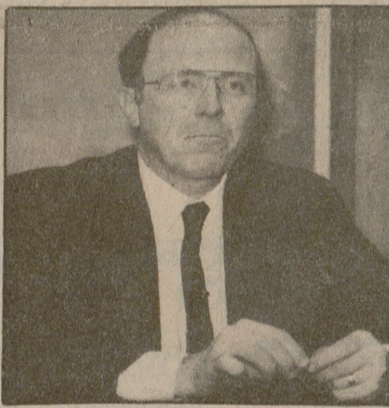


Photo by Mike C. Mulvey

Hance

By JILL BUTLER
Of The Battalion Staff

Texas Republican gubernatorial candidate Kent Hance said his criminal justice program includes more drug education, tougher punishment for criminals and better treatment of the victims of crime.

In a press conference at Eastwood Airport Friday, Hance said he wants to end plea-bargaining in drug sale cases, minimize overcrowding in the jail system, deny bail to certain drug dealers, deny state benefits to anyone convicted of use or possession of drugs, implement a state-wide drug education program and address the needs of crime victims.

Hance said his proposals are based on recommendations made by a criminal justice task force Hance

recently established.

"We can turn the corner on fighting crime and fighting drugs," he said.

The former senator and congressman said his 15 years of experience enable him to implement his proposals into law.

Hance said he will build 25,000 additional prison beds to minimize overcrowding in county jails and stop the early release program.

He said the Brazos County jail is overcrowded because convicted prisoners can't be sent to the overcrowded Huntsville state penitentiary.

Brazos County must pay for these convicted prisoners to stay in the county jail, but Hance said he will pay for the extra prisoners with state money.

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Students say pageant discriminates

By SEAN FRERKING
Of The Battalion Staff

A group of Texas A&M students, dressed in chains and carrying posters saying "We're all beautiful" and "We're not cows," staged a protest of the Miss Texas A&M Scholarship Pageant Saturday night.

The students, who are not officially part of any organization, demonstrated outside Rudder Auditorium before the pageant began.

Melissa Cuthbert, a junior English and women's studies major from Wisconsin, said the group staged the protest because the University was promoting the stereotype that women are useless unless they are beautiful.

Cuthbert said the scholarship pageant should be based on a woman's academic achievements. Physical beauty should play no part in determining the winner, she said.

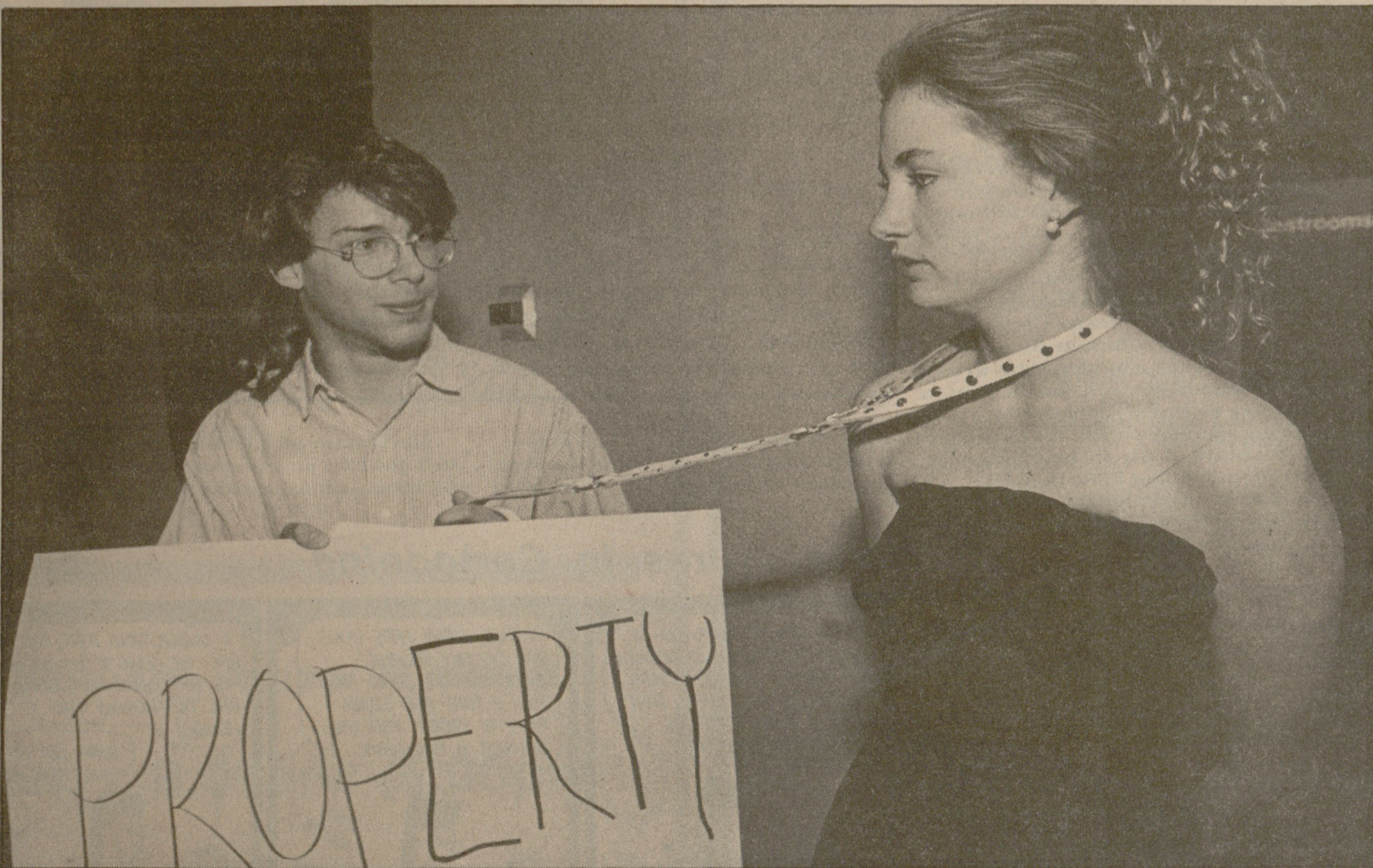
Karen Bell, a senior psychology major from Dallas, said A&M should not emphasize the importance of a woman's body.

"It (the pageant) is making women purely sex objects," Bell said. A representative for the pageant, Kerry Schatzer, said he disagreed with the protesters.

"I think it's kind of ridiculous that they're doing this," Schatzer said. "All the girls (in the pageant) are doing this of their own free will."

Bell said that although the contestants may be participating in the pageant voluntarily, they are hurting women as a whole.

Beauty pageants, Bell said, have a detrimental effect on society's perception of women. She said many



Sophomore John Welch and junior Aimee Norton present their impression of the Miss Texas A&M Pageant Saturday in Rudder

Auditorium. The two were among ten other students who demonstrated before the event.

Photo by Phelan M. Ebenhack

Cuthbert said.

Schatzer, a junior business major from Plano, said the \$1,000 prize was helping the contestants put themselves through school. He said the judging was based mainly on the talent of the 15 finalists.

"They (the contestants) don't

think it's sexist at all," Schatzer said.

He said the protesters do not realize the finalists had been working on the pageant since October. They also had spent many weekends preparing for the contest, Schatzer said.

Ken Ballard, director of the pageant, was not available for comment.

Horn wins Miss TAMU pageant

She sang "A Sunday Kind of Love" but she won a Saturday kind of pageant.

Rhonda Jo Horn, a senior speech communications major from Seymour, was crowned Miss Texas A&M at Saturday's pageant.

Horn, 21, won a scholarship for \$1,000, a \$500 wardrobe allowance, a gold and diamond pendant and the use of a 1990 Cadillac during her reign.

Julie Broyles, 19, of Gainesville, was the first runner-up and Paris North, 21, of DeSoto, was the second runner-up. Charlotte Marie Bertrand, 20, of Knoxville, Tenn., was the third runner-up and Alisa Zak, 19, of Plano, was the fourth runner-up.

The runners-up won scholarships for \$500, \$400, \$300 and \$250.

Danielle Moore, of Port Arthur, won the talent competition as a non-finalist winner. She performed a dance routine with popular television songs as music. Becky Brown, 18, was the non-finalist winner in the swimsuit competition.

The competition consists of an interview with the judges, a talent competition, a swimsuit and an evening gown competition.



Horn