





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THE BATTALION

Jeff Kempf, Editor in Chief

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Breathe easy



Breathing masks line the walls at the Brayton Fire drills Friday morning. Hundreds of fire fighters trained at College Station to attend the training session.

Security experts studying hackers with 'honeypot'

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — As a tank officer in the U.S. Army, Lance Spitzner carefully studied the range of Soviet tanks, their speed and rate of fire. It is called getting to know the enemy.

Later, as a computer security consultant, Spitzner was surprised at the sorry state of intelligence gathering on people who break into computers, steal information, erase data and launch attacks.

Some companies infiltrate hacker groups and hire hackers as consultants. But in this ever-escalating war, little was being gathered about their methods until after the damage was done.

From his worries, the Honeynet Project was born. It is an attempt to uncover the latest and greatest hacking techniques, motivations and targets by setting up a network of systems dubbed "honeypots," solely to watch them being hacked.

"Everything in security has been about prevention, protection and reaction," Spitzner said. "The bad guys have the initiative. We want to take the initiative and

gain intelligence on the bad guys and counter that before they attack."

The Honeynet consists of ordinary computers and software with one difference: The system seamlessly and quietly records every bit of information that passes through, including keystrokes.

In Honeynet's two years of operation, the half-dozen machines locked away in the spare bedroom of Spitzner's suburban Chicago home hosted everything from malicious, virus-like worms to a group of Pakistani hackers intent on stealing credit card numbers and defacing Websites.

At first Spitzner relied on an informal group of colleagues to help solve the problems his computers recorded. Now, the team is 30 strong and includes computer gurus, forensic experts, statisticians and psychologists — all volunteers.

The cost was low: Nobody was paid, and all equipment came out of Spitzner's closet.

Team members have called the FBI when it appeared laws were about to be broken, but their main purpose was to collect data

for research, not prosecution. The bad guys are rarely even identified.

And when it appears a hacker is about to divert a Honeynet computer to launch an attack against other systems, the honeypot cut off to avoid liability.

The Honeynet Project aims to raise awareness and educate other professionals about security risks through papers and a group's book, "Know Your Enemy," soon to be published by Addison-Wesley.

The group also hopes to predict and quickly machines are likely to be violated by hackers begin scanning their targets.

"The fastest one of our honeypots ever been hacked is 15 minutes," Spitzner said. "This should scare the hell out of them. We do nothing to advertise. We just put systems out there. This is my ISDN line in my home bedroom. It's not IBM or something like that."

The team turned off the original network earlier this year and started planning "Operation Poohbear," which will be run through book sales and grants.

ATTACKS

Continued from Page 1

"What's taking place is unusual for Tyler."

All the attacks came between 10 p.m. and 1 a.m., and all but one involved an intruder who crept into a home. Five of the attacks have involved a tan white or Hispanic man who appeared to be in his late 20s to mid-30s, is 5 feet 10 inches to 6 feet tall and weighed 175 to 200 pounds.

Three victims described

their assailant as a fit man of similar size and build with little or no arm hair.

Some of the six women who were attacked said police have had to be prodded to pursue some leads and have overlooked some evidence.

Swindle, however, said his department has acted properly.

He said he formed a task force in May after a woman from a prominent family was attacked in an exclusive neighborhood.

WORM

Continued from Page 1

to do so. At least two mutations have already been found.

Code Red exploits a flaw discovered in June in Microsoft's Internet Information Services software used on Internet servers. It is found in Windows NT and 2000 operating systems.

Only computers set to use the English language will have their Web pages defaced. From the first through the 19 of every month, the worm spreads. From the 20 on, it attacks the White House Website, trying to knock it offline.

The White House took precautions against it, changing its numerical Internet address to dodge the attack.

Even though the target has moved, the infected computers will still launch their attack. This, officials said, could slow down the Internet causing sporadic but widespread outages.

VIEQUES

Continued from Page 1

six decades ago. A federal referendum scheduled for November only allows them to choose between the Bush plan and the Navy remaining indefinitely and resuming live bombing.

"From the time I was old enough to know what they were doing to my island I wanted them to leave," said Candido L. Felix, a carpenter, handyman and mechanic born in 1940, the year the Navy came to Vieques

"We want peace for Vieques, and that means the Navy has to go."

— Geraldo Vegerano, construction worker

and appropriated two-thirds of the 18-mile-long island.

Felix blamed the Navy exercises for his poverty, Vieques' undeveloped fishing and tourism industries and the resulting split in families whose young members go to the mainland to find work.

"We want peace for Vieques, and that means the Navy has to go," said Geraldo Vegerano, a construction worker who has to commute to neighboring Culebra island to work.

Decades of simmering resentment over the Navy's presence exploded in anger and protests after civilian guard David Sanes was killed in 1999

by two off-target bombs on a prized range.

On Sunday, not all of Sanes' family voted to stop bombing.

"People are afraid to come out here," Maria Sanes' cousin of the victim, told pro-Navy rally. "But many of them are going to vote for the Navy to stay, she said.

The Navy says the Atlantic bombing range, which takes one-tenth of the island on the eastern tip and is 10 miles from the biggest town, provides essential training that saves lives in combat.

Efforts to find alternatives have produced proposals for a patchwork of different sites and different types of training on mainland all with one big drawback: nobody wants to be dropping in their backyard.

Two weeks ago the Navy announced a program of compensation that would pay fishermen \$100 for each day that bombing exercises prevent them from working and grants of up to \$25,000 to start small businesses.

Many say that is too little, late.

"If they gave me \$100,000 I wouldn't take it," Felix said. "These years they never gave anything but problems. They want to give us money like trying to buy us."

Anti-Navy activists say bombing has damaged the environment and the health of islanders who say they have higher-than-normal cancer and infant mortality rates. The Navy denies causing health problems.

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