Nearly three inches of snow fell on the UNCP campus Jan. 20 beginning around 3 a.m. causing classes to first be delayed until 11 a.m. and then canceled. At 5:43 a.m., Brave Alert, the emergency information web site for UNCP, reported that the university would be closed, but then changed it at 6:13 a.m. to classes beginning at 11 a.m. and faculty and staff on a two hour delay. Finally, at 9:30 a.m. Brave Alert announced that all day and evening classes were canceled.

Newly elected governor Bev Perdue issued a state of emergency for North Carolina.

Several buildings on campus closed early. The University Center, UC computer lab and the Hawk’s Nest game room closed at 7:30 p.m. The cafeteria closed at 6:30 p.m. and Bert’s was closed for the day.

The first snow clearing priority for the Physical Plant Department was the residence halls and the cafeteria. “Our first priority was to get the residence halls and cafeteria walkways cleared off because when the students start coming out, that’s where they are going,” said Larry Freeman, director of the Physical Plant Department.

There were 25 Physical Plant workers working to clear entrances to various buildings on campus with more people coming to help out, he said. The workers put out salt late at night on Jan. 20 and early morning Jan. 21 to help with the snow and water freezing over night.

“There is really not much we can do before the snow falls, but we can clean it up after it happens,” Freeman said. “Our whole department is supposed to be here as soon as they can without endangering themselves in this type of weather. It’s not just our department; everyone works together.”

The students especially enjoyed an extra day off from classes as the snow fell steadily throughout the day.

Many participated in snowball fights, building snowmen, creating snow angels and just walking around campus.

“I’m glad classes were canceled so we didn’t have to trudge through the snow! It’s way too slippery,” said junior Katy Thompson.

Some students ignored the snow and decided to stay in and catch up on homework. “I’m using this day as a chance to catch up on assignments,” said freshman Topher Mclean.

As for classes being canceled for the next day, sophomore Chantel Moore said, “I’m not going to get my hopes up about it, but it would be nice!” Classes on Jan. 21 began at 11:30 a.m.