



Aaron Richards reads to kindergarteners at Forest Park.



Richard Crews reads to Diggs students.

## LIONS CAN READ AND LEAD

Middle school students at Kennedy take part in mentoring effort

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

At 6-foot-4, Richard Crews strikes an imposing figure as he towers over his fellow middle schoolers in the halls of Kennedy Learning Center.

But, as Richard read a book to a first grade class at Diggs Magnet School recently, one first grader was obviously unimpressed with his size and commanding presence.

The diminutive youngster interrupted Richard and yelled, "Shut up and show us the pictures!" when Richard failed to display the colorful pictures after reading each page.

Richard is a member of Young Lions, a recently established male mentoring group at Kennedy Learning Center.

Eight Young Lions read to first graders at Diggs earlier this month, while 18 members of the group read to kindergartners through second graders at Forest Park Elementary School.

Young Lions member Calvin Mackey said the experience was memorable.

"I really enjoyed reading to the little kids. It's a way that we can give back and have fun at the same time," he said.

Fellow member Bryant Gaddy echoed a similar sentiment.

"We (older students) need to set a good example for the younger kids. It helps us and helps them to see us doing something positive," Gaddy said.

Khalid Griggs, Young Lions Coordinator, said more attention should be paid to the

positive contributions that youths, like members of the Young Lions, are making each day.

"So much is made of the social ills plaguing our youth today that it is refreshing to be a part of a process that helps to empower our youth to make positive contributions to soci-

ety. Our children don't need our blaming them for conditions that they were not responsible for creating," Griggs said. "They need more of us to roll up our sleeves and help them work through one of the most difficult periods for African American youth since slavery."

## Local private working toward progress in Iraq

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

Forsyth County native Army Pfc. Robert P. Shields is serving a 15-month tour in Iraq as a member of Task Force Marne, one of more than 20,000 soldiers from the Fort Stewart, Ga.-based 3rd Infantry Division and elements of the 101st Airborne Division from Fort Campbell, Ky.

The force works to provide security to the more than 53 patrol bases within their area of operation. The military says that since the arrival of the task force more than a year ago, violence in the region has been reduced by more than 75 percent. The decrease in violence, according to officials, has allowed the task force to focus on rebuilding efforts, including local governance and economic development, along with medical treatment missions, providing fresh drinking water and working with local security forces and volunteers to provide a broad blanket of stability to

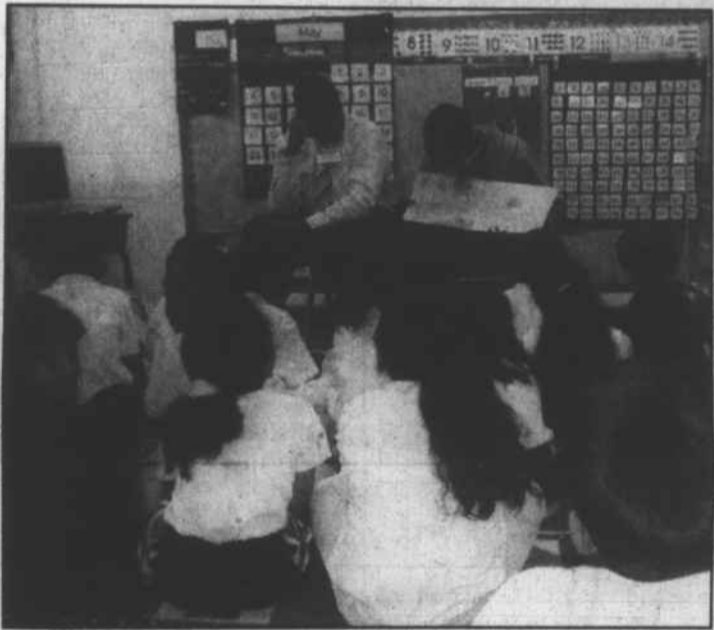


Pfc. Robert P. Shields

the region.

Shields is a signal support systems specialist with the 3rd Signal Company. He has served in the military for more than one year.

He is the son of Robert R. Shields and Joann P. Shields, both of Clemmons. His wife, Katelyn, is the daughter of Marla McKenna of Clemmons. The private is a 2001 graduate of West Forsyth High School.



Demetrius Harmon (l) and Trevor Bennett-Jarvis read to kindergarten students at Forest Park.



Members of the city's Fire Department share details about their line of work with a group of young people.

## Rolling Hills

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CenterPoint Human Health Services also took part.

Ramona Hambrick, who has been a Rolling Hills resident for more than two years, said Agape has been a positive influence in the community. Hambrick is a member of Agape, which provides transportation to residents of the community to church services in Clemmons.

Despite the church's efforts, Hambrick admits that the community still has a long way to go. She said that had something positive not been taking place in the community that day, like the health fair, drug dealers would've been hanging around in its place.

"I feel that Agape outreach is a blessing to Rolling Hills," said Hambrick. "I truly think it's a blessing because some of these children, all they see is the drug dealers and police coming over here and this is an intervention that's needed."

Hambrick said she's also thankful for the involvement of fellow Agape members



Ramona Hambrick

Joseph Neal, of Agape's outreach ministry, and his wife, Teresa, come and spend time with youths at the apartments. They take them out to minister to them and mentor them, showing them that there is more to the world than what they see outside of their doors each day.

"Just because you live in this environment doesn't mean you have to become what this environment does ... you can live in this environment and still be a man or woman of God or be a man or woman of character," said Teresa Neal.

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