

DHS provides money to locals

BY KATHRYN ROEBUCK
STAFF WRITER

Local emergency preparedness officials met with representatives from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on Friday to celebrate its first birthday and determine ways to provide local officials with the resources to fight terrorism.

Michael Brown, DHS undersecretary for emergency preparedness and response, attended the roundtable discussion. He and other department officials are visiting 11 sections of the country to discuss possible changes for the 2005 fiscal year.

"We want to get all members together in one room and talk about what we can do differently to be more effective," said DHS spokesman Marty Bahamonde.

The federal government has been generous with funding during the past few years, but could implement different methods to give localities more control over the money, said Ken Taylor, director of the N.C. Division of Emergency Management.

"Locally, there's been the largest influx of funding in North Carolina ever," he said. "We've received \$106 million plus to North Carolina, a large commitment of resources from the federal government."

"We appreciate all of the money, but in order to help us prepare for an incident of terrorism at all, it is important to be open to allow us to decide."

Beginning in the 2004 fiscal year, the DHS deemed local governments better suited to determine where the money should go.

"We wanted Brown to see that this is a process that has been working for us from the beginning," Taylor said. "But now we

have a lot of unspent money, and we hope that they will allow us to use this where we need it."

Bahamonde said the heart of the discussion was teaching localities to understand the limitations of federal grants and how to get around roadblocks.

"We were experiencing difficulties with many of the counties because they were each applying for the same grants," he said. "We want them to understand that they can each apply for different grants and share the materials that they get."

Taylor said since the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, local officials have had better relationships about funding.

"We all get along, the fire department, police department and sheriff's department, because we know that a lot has to be done quickly," he said. "This helps if we have the ability to distribute our own funding."

Bahamonde said that after the undersecretaries have visited all of the areas, they will then meet in Washington, D.C. to discuss their findings.

"We think that we've had a good start since our beginning one year ago," he said. "Now we're going to focus on what's better for the future and for the 2005 fiscal year."

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'Roses' grapples with family tensions

BY BECCA MOORE
STAFF WRITER

Time away from home can do a lot to change a person.

In "The Subject Was Roses," the latest production by the PlayMakers Repertory Company, young Timmy Cleary (played by Brandon Michael Smith) finds this out the hard way after returning to the Bronx after serving a stint in World War II.

His return is celebrated by his parents John and Nettie (J.R. Horne and Tandy Cronyn). They both think their son's presence back in the home could be the missing piece to the puzzle of their dissolving marriage. Nettie always had supported Timmy and placed great faith in her son's future, as any mother would.

John is more skeptical and suggests that "if someone's going to be famous, they usually drop some clues by the time they're 21!"

It takes some time for Timmy to get acclimated to normal life again, and it's slightly uncomfortable for him to rekindle close bonds with his mother.

Smith does an excellent job of portraying the awkward earnestness of a young 20-something who's trying to make his parents proud.

When Timmy is bonding with his father and discussing the war,

THEATERREVIEW

THE SUBJECT WAS ROSES
PLAYMAKERS REPERTORY COMPANY

SATURDAY, FEB. 28

★★★★

Smith cleanly delivers recaps of his war duties. He's not a war hero; he's just a normal guy who did what he was asked for his country, and Smith conveys this with convincing simplicity.

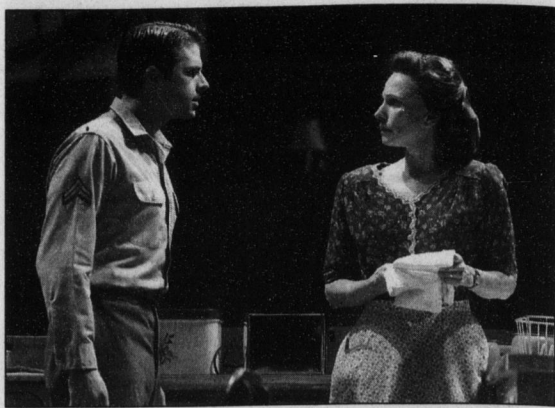
The entire family is like this, as they're not amazing people who have accomplished fantastic things. They're just normal people.

Frank D. Gilroy wrote these characters in a way that everyday people could identify with because they have realistic problems, and the entire cast does a wonderful job of portraying the personal tensions.

Horne plays a true-to-life role of the father and husband who has been questioning if he's taken the right path in his life.

There's obvious discontent in his marriage, but the reasons cannot be acutely pinpointed.

John is a hardworking character, yet he's silently struggling with his unmet life ambitions. Horne portrays this underlying self-consciousness with ease and invokes sympathy from the audience.



COURTESY OF PLAYMAKERS REPERTORY COMPANY/JON GARDINER
Brandon Michael Smith (left) plays Timmy Cleary and Tandy Cronyn plays Nettie Cleary in the PlayMakers production of "The Subject Was Roses."

Cronyn is incredibly empathetic as Nettie, who has spent her whole life caring for those around her but still feels disconnected. She's confused by John sometimes and can't seem to figure out exactly what he wants. She's disillusioned when Timmy comes home, and he's matured.

Nettie wants Timmy to grow up, but it's difficult for her to accept that change, and Cronyn successfully carries many scenes where she's

coping with this struggle to adapt. The striking suggestion of "The Subject Was Roses" is that honest communication is essential for all relationships.

Effort needs to be made by all parties in a family in order to find out what drives the people you love and what they really need from you. It's as simple as that.

Contact the A&E Editor at artsdesk@unc.edu.

Frustrating 'Goat' mixes self-pity, promotion

BY PHILIP MCFEE

ASSISTANT ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

Here's how it goes. Literally. There's this new memoir.

It's called "Goat." It's written by Brad Land, a disenfranchised twenty-something who got an M.F.A. from UNC-Wilmington.

It's about violence. Fraternities. Brad Land's recovery from a brutal attack and his journey to Clemson University to pledge his brother's frat. It's loyalty. It's love. Other things.

The style: a mix of fragments and musings interjected into the narrative. Disjointed. Or fragmented. Or charmingly disjointed and fragmented. Testing. Another in a long line of jaded,

200-page pseudo-postmodern literary entries by young authors.

This is "Goat." The beast, the burden, the book.

Here's a sentence: "It's like ripples on a pond, opaque heat moving from the center and then his heart speeds and the hairs on his forearm and neck stand like soldiers."

Here's another: "I nod."

And you'll nod. Nod knowing that what you're reading is like a weak mix between Ernest Hemingway and David Foster Wallace with all the booze and pretensions intact.

It's not a fraternity exposé, he says. He means it. It isn't.

"Goat" is a compelling, if infuriating portrait of a young man and

BOOKREVIEW

BRAD LAND
GOAT

★★★★

IF YOU GO

Date: Tuesday
Time: 3:30 p.m.
Location: Bull's Head Bookshop

the pressures he faces. And the strength required not to give in.

Although a painful subject, it reads choppy, hasty. Readers might remember Chuck Palahniuk. After fighting a friend, Land writes: "I do this because it makes me forget. Because the pain is real. Because it's in my gut and not behind my eyes."

It's tough to call the true events of one's life contrived, but as memoirs go, this one smacks of reliable "underground" elements.

Like the best annoyances, the story has promise. And it falls short.

The reasons: Land's young. The subject is difficult, and he has an inside perspective, making it hard to be objective. Or clear. To reflect on life when the author is still young

is difficult. Especially when the subject is so graphic. And moving.

A convoluted style can convey manic energy or confusion. Sometimes. Here, it detracts from the strength of the work.

Something was there. Was.

Most writers spawn a memoir after a slew of novels. His style would lend itself well to fiction, but biography comes off labored.

It's thick. Built for fiction. But that's Land's memoir. It never quite finds home. Never balances. Take it or leave it.

It's strange. But it could be the kind of thing that gets your goat.

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BRAD LAND

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