

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

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Special Ambassadors



From left, Nececa Locklear, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Don Locklear; Havia Qureshi, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Aamir Qureshi and Justin John, son of Sharon John, served as ambassadors at Hoke County's county-wide opening meeting for administrators and staff in the Programs and Services for Exceptional children. The story is on page 2B.

Local Guard to deploy

440 soldiers headquartered here to head for Iraq

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

The 105th Engineer Battalion is getting ready to roll. "We are planning a mobilization in support of Iraqi Freedom," said Lt. Col. Carl Bryant, commander.

With Headquarters and Headquarters Company, located in Raeford, the

440 soldiers-strong battalion has companies in Rockingham, Laurinburg and St. Pauls.

The Pentagon announced last week that thousands more National Guard and Reserve troops may be alerted for duty in Iraq. The Bush administration hopes that other countries will contribute troops for security duty in Iraq, but military planners are counting on the

United States sending more personnel.

Bryant says the battalion he commands has been preparing for the past two years for a major training exercise in Fort Erwin, California. "We're a highly motivated and trained unit. We come from different walks of life but when we come together, we are one."

Capt. Derwin Brayboy, commander
(See *GUARD*, page 4A)

Pates' latest show premieres Saturday

Raeford twins produce 'L.A. Dragnet' for ABC

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

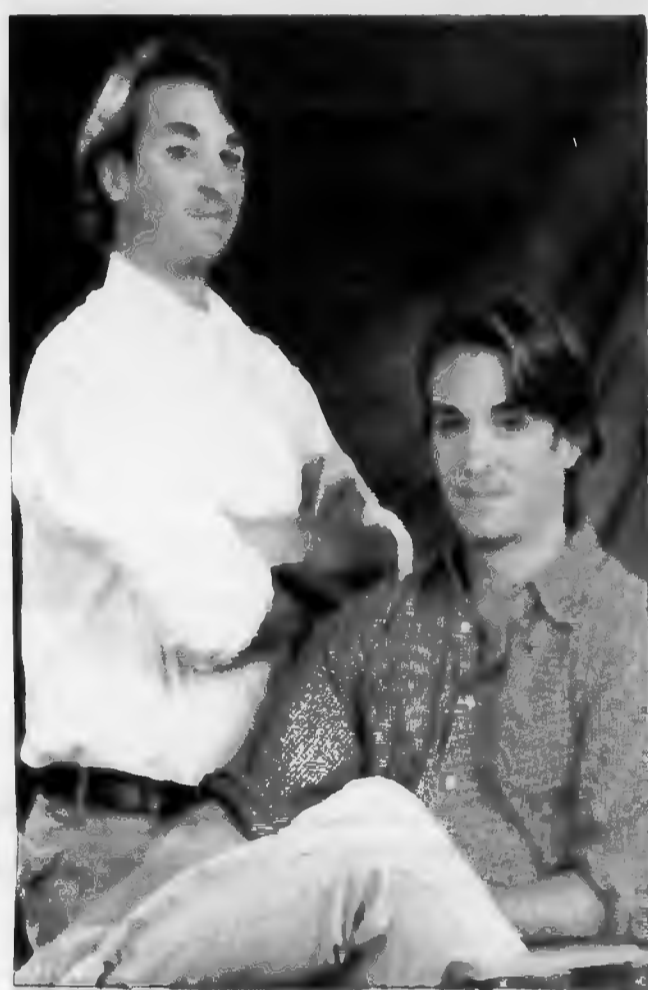
Raeford viewers may recall the classic *Dragnet* TV series of the '50s where "the names have been changed to protect the innocent." Update the police series by almost six decades and pack it with contemporary action scripts penned by Josh and Jonas "Jay" Pate, identical twins who grew up in Raeford, and you have *L.A. Dragnet*.

"We are really excited about this series," Josh Pate said of their continuing shot at success. "It is a great op-

portunity.

"As brothers and as a team, we get it all on the page. At the end of each day, we hope we have written a good script."

Premiering on Saturday evening on ABC at 10, *L.A. Dragnet* is a spin-off of the original Jack Webb "just the facts, ma'am" cop show. Ed O'Neill, former star of *Married With Children*, stars as LAPD veteran sergeant Joe Friday now promoted to lieutenant. The first episode focuses on an actual murder that occurred in Indiana.
(See *DRAGNET*, page 8A)



Josh and Jay Pate

This Week



National Guard soldier hero to family
page 3A

Recovered addicts share stories at Freedom Chapel
page 5A

Clerk's Court hosts info session
page 1B

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State Commerce Department to 'hold Hoke's hand'

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
AND
VICTORIANA SUMMERS

The North Carolina Dept. of Commerce has promised to "hold Hoke's hand" as it helps lead the county into economic development accomplishments.

Hoke was one of five North Carolina counties — chosen from 35 applicants — to be named a 21st Century Community. "What this means for Hoke is the N.C. Dept. of Commerce will provide a concentrated effort to work with the leadership in Hoke County to pinpoint prob-

ably three or four economic development initiatives that need to be implemented," Steve Yost of the DOC's Southeastern Regional Office said in May when Hoke was selected as a 21st Century Community.

As a 21st Century Community, Hoke is to work hand in hand with DOC staff, and the county will receive preferential treatment for some grants, including the Golden Leaf Grant.

DOC personnel were in Hoke Wednesday to hear an overview of what is available. They heard luncheon briefings from Raeford Economic Development Com-

mission Executive Director Don Porter and Hoke County Manager Mike Wood before visiting the Dundarrach area to look at possible industrial park sites. They then went to Carolina Horse Park at Five Points, East Hoke Middle School and Sandhills Community College.

County civic and business leaders, called "stakeholders," were the guests Wednesday evening at a 21st Century kickoff dinner at the Raeford Civic Center, where Deputy Secretary of Commerce Clev Simpson was the speaker.

The state began the 21st Century program to restructure the economy after

manufacturing jobs were lost; more than 130,000 North Carolinians have lost jobs since January of 2001 and the unemployment rate was pushed to more than 10 percent in 19 rural counties.

A pilot program, targeting 10 counties and begun in September 2001, was designed to "help counties to remake themselves and become competitive economically," according to Simpson.

Each program was tailored specifically to a particular county with each county looking at its own strengths and weaknesses and devising a plan to maximize its
(See *COMMERCE*, page 7A)

Hoke officials threaten to sue, report Lumbee Tribal Council

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke County officials have threatened to sue the Lumbee Tribal Council or contact the federal government concerning serious building code violations found recently at the home of Hoke resident Shirley Bullard, a recipient of repairs from the Indian Housing Program.

An investigation is also being initiated regarding other Lumbee homeowners who may be dissatisfied with repairs, according to County Manager Mike Wood.

"Your immediate response is needed before our office has no choice but to turn this matter over to state and federal authorities," Michael W. Sans, Hoke's chief code enforcement officer wrote to Milton R. Hunt, tribal chairman, on September

17. "I am writing to inform you of some major complaints."

Sans, who was fired last week after the controversy went public, told Hunt issues that needed to be addressed included workers failing to obtain all required permits, and not calling for inspections by county inspectors on work that had permits pulled; plumbing deficiencies and raw sewage flowing from the septic tank

into an adjacent pond; an unsafe electrical system in the house; and the alleged use of some unlicensed workmen.

Alex Baker, Lumbee Tribal public information officer, said the Tribal Council has done nothing wrong. Contractors hired by the Tribe applied for necessary permits, he added.

"We always try to abide by the law."
(See *TRIBAL COUNCIL*, page 7A)

Health Director Womble may retire

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke Health director Don Womble said he is planning to retire this year after 32 years of service as a state employee. As an alternative plan, Womble proposed to the board of commissioners in a closed session last month that he remain as the director on a part-time basis.

Womble's Raeford home is on the market in anticipation of his retirement. He currently earns approximately \$73,000 annually after nine years of tenure with the county.

"I asked the commissioners to consider allowing me to contract half-time hours to receive half of my pay," Womble said. "I would actually be in the office two or three

days each week, but available for any emergencies or special situations that might arise.

"Things are running so well and our staff is operating the health department smoothly. I would be putting out the fires."

According to Womble, Hoke's board of health has unofficially endorsed his request. If accepted by both boards, his request would permit him to receive full retirement benefits and still be partially compensated separately as health director. He said Commission Chairman Bobby Wright, also a member of the health board, seemed agreeable to his request, but he received negative feedback from most commissioners.

"I think our health director needs to be permanently employed on a full-time basis so we are not liable during any crisis," Commission Vice Chairman Charles
(See *WOMBLE*, page 6A)



Children in Ann Shannon's first grade class at J.W. McLaughlin School dressed as characters from the book, "Charlotte's Web" last week. Pictured are Austin Byrd, Anthony Neal, Tammy Beeler, Nikki Inman, Tyessa Daniels, Brittany Edwards, Amber Greer, Austin Jacobs and Thamal Chambers.