

The News-Journal

If it happened, it's news to us

50¢

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RAEFORD & HOKE COUNTY N.C.

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Land sought for state park on Lumber River

Group hopes to protect portion of Hoke's side of river for future, recreation

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Hoke County may soon become home to a tract of the 7,936-acre Lumber River State Park. Framed in the spring by wild azaleas and laurel on its banks, the

Lumber River runs through Hoke and Scotland counties as a natural border, but the state park land is only established currently on the Scotland side, according to state park officials.

A winding waterway with dark pools and swamp land, the Lumber River has

been threatened by some "clear cut" logging up to its banks in recent years, causing runoff sedimentation and pollution. By expanding the natural buffers along the river in Hoke, conservationists hope to protect more rare aquatic life and endangered species.

The Sandhills Area Land Trust and the Lumber River Conservancy hope to receive a \$143,000 grant they requested from the state's Clean Water Management Trust Fund to help preserve the riverside in Hoke for future generations to enjoy recreationally and as a water

source, according to Richard Perritt, executive director of the Sandhills Trust's program. Approximately 500 acres is already located inland and on the banks of Scotland in the 115-mile long river park.

(See LUMBER RIVER, page 7A)

MMG partners salvage jobs

Companies to operate separately, new building to be put to use

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Former partners in the MMG company have apparently settled their differences and a lawsuit resulting from the rift should soon be settled.

When the partnership that formed Military Manufacturing Group Inc. failed last month, a million-dollar plant on Doc Brown Road and several dozen jobs hung in the balance. But the former partners say the plant will reopen and the jobs are secure.

Raeford residents Tim and Colleen D'Annunzio filed the lawsuit. They are seeking damages of more than \$200,000 against SunPath Products, according to Tim D'Annunzio.

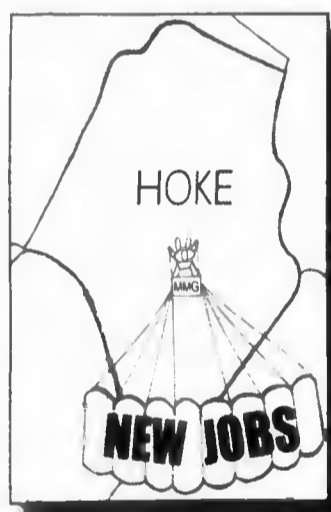
After filing the complaint in February against Derek and Pat Thomas, owners of SunPath Products, D'Annunzio, owner of Paraclete Body Armor in St. Pauls and a former partner of MMG, announced on Monday that a mutual agreement has been signed. He indicated the settlement would enable him to recoup some of his investment. The Thomases had still not filed an official response to the complaint as of Friday.

D'Annunzio said he plans (See MMG, page 4A)



A kayaker paddles the water of the Lumber River, which begins in Hoke County and forms its western border, and flows through Robeson County to meet the Little Pee Dee River in South Carolina.

This Week



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Federal grant helps Tylertown FD to survive

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

Tylertown Volunteer Fire Department faces challenges ahead in a struggle to pay its bills, keep up training for firefighters, and remain financially sovereign while offering fire protection to the poorest fire

district in Hoke County, according to William Kershaw, Tylertown's fire chief.

Yet Kershaw said what they may lack in financial resources is made up with pride as the only traditionally black fire department manned in the county. During this critical time, Kershaw said, he was pleased that Tylertown has tentatively been awarded

a \$117,000 grant from the Federal Emergency Management Fire Protection Act. The fire department in February received notification of the grant, which requires a five percent match in funds contributed by county commissioners.

"It is real great to know we will receive this grant as long as we have been strug-

gling to get equipment," Kershaw said. "Now we have a chance to get what we really need."

"Each fireman will have his or her own individual protective mask. We will not have to share anymore."

"Our biggest challenge out here (See TYLERTOWN, page 5A)

Main Street merchants hear of redevelopment plans

By PAT ALLEN WILSON
Editor

With the beautification and revitalization of Main Street Raeford coming closer to reality, the Downtown Redevelopment Commission held an open house and in-

vited downtown businesses in particular to view preliminary drawings of downtown's new look and to have any of their questions answered.

The redevelopment project includes changes in pavement, sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, signs, traffic control,

and adding street furniture. The project will cover Main Street from Prospect to Campbell avenues.

Involvement in the redevelopment encompasses more than just the city. The NC Dept. of Transportation is a major player and is currently looking over plans drawn

up by the Raleigh engineering firm, The Wooten Company. Also involved are Time-Warner Cable, Sprint, Progress Energy and Aberdeen & Rockfish Railroad. The county is also involved in that the expansion of the jail just off Main Street is a part of the plans. (See MAIN STREET, page 8A)

Debate over dam road at Twelve Oaks North may end up in court

By VICTORIANA SUMMERS
Staff writer

One way in and one way out. Homeowners in the Twelve Oaks North subdivision

must cross over Twelve Oaks Lake on a paved dam road, the subject of a civil lawsuit filed by Hoke County officials last Friday.

The county is concerned that the road,

which enables access to Camden Road, is not up to par, according to County Manager Mike Wood.

Wood said the county is suing Averitte Engineering's developer David Averitte for the \$110,000 bond that Averitte initially put up more than seven years ago. Averitte guaranteed the road would be brought

up to state Department of Transportation standards, Wood said.

Since a letter of credit unofficially serving as a bond has expired, Averitte said, the county does not have a valid reason to force him to bring the road up to DOT standards. In fact, Averitte said, he does not think the (See DAM ROAD, page 7A)



David Averitte on the road that enters Twelve Oaks North and is the subject of a seven-year controversy.

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News

Other stuff

By KEN MACDONALD
PUBLISHER

What have I done?

My father-in-law was down a few weeks ago, and I was on entertainment detail. The females had all jumped ship to take naps. With a ballgame on in the background the conversation turned to computers. "Hey, watch this neat trick," I said as I opened my wireless laptop and looked to see if Leighanne was online. She was. I clicked

the little icon of a telephone by her name and spoke into my screen. "You there?" I asked. "Yup," she replied. We were audio chatting - using the laptop's built-in speakers and microphones to converse.

"Can my computer do that?" my father-in-law asked.

"Uh oh. What have I done?" I thought.

"Um..." I stuttered. "Well, it's a Macintosh, and um... I guess if I put (See OTHER STUFF, page 4A)