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Group declares city, county "sanctuary for soldiers"

A staff report

A group of volunteers dedicated to making troops and their families feel more at home unveiled today a campaign declaring Fayetteville and Cumberland County a "sanctuary for soldiers."

Several dignitaries spoke at the ceremony held in the Fayetteville Independent Light Infantry Museum, including Col. John McDonald, commander of Pope Air Force Base, and Brig. Gen. Art Bartell, who was representing Lt. Gen. Lloyd J. Austin III of the 18th Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg.

U.S. Rep. Robin Hayes, a Republican from Concord, also spoke.

The volunteer group — called the Army's Army — designed the sanctuary concept, which will soon feature road signs, billboards and newspaper ads.

The goal is to promote the community as friendly toward the military, especially as thousands of new people are expected to move to the region in a few years as part of the base-realignment process.

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