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Chris King takes Ford Motor Co. executives on a tour of his brand new facility in Murphy, NC on May 19. Photos/Shawn Jarrard

conglomerate. We're just family, and we're right here with it six days a week."

King moved to Union County with his family in 1971, and he got his start in the automotive industry working on his father's used car lot throughout high school.

Following graduation from Union County High in 1974, King married his high school sweetheart, Patsy, and he later became involved in Ford sales in 1985.

In 1996, with 11 years of experience in Ford Country under his belt, King entered into a business partnership with Union County native W.C. Nelson, and it was in 1997 that he first opened the doors to King Ford.

His relationship with Ford Motor Company has grown ever since, with the company contributing substantially toward the cost of the new building on U.S. 64, which serves as a testament to Ford's faith in the King family and business model, as well as to Ford's commitment to the Tri-State area.

"I'm very proud to be a part of this organization," said Nelson, who visited King Ford on May 19 to join in the President's Award celebration. "This is well-run, and Ford is very happy with the performance here. I'm just extremely pleased that we were able to get into this new facility with the help from Ford Motor Company."

"Their stepping up to the plate really made it possible. It's a big expenditure for the market we're in - you really couldn't afford to spend the amount of money that was spent, but it's a partnership with Ford to get a facility like this here in this area."

The new facility houses the same extensive inventory as the former location, only now conveniently located on one level so customers can drive or walk around with greater ease to view any number of King Ford's truck, car, crossover and SUV inventory.

In back of the house, the shop area has been expanded, and moving forward King Ford plans to bring on more service

technicians to serve more customers faster.

Just inside of the new King Ford building sits every comfort available to customers, with an interior showroom and complimentary concessions area, where people can peruse inventory, make coffee, speak with customer service representatives, and enjoy plenty of reading material or view a live broadcast of work being done on cars in the shop.

"It's theirs," said King. "That's what it was put here for, the customers. Ford made the investment and we made the investment - it's for everybody to enjoy, and that's what I tell them. Come enjoy it and make yourself at home."

The new King Ford building is located at 2450 U.S. 64 in Murphy, North Carolina. For more information about King Ford and to experience the full suite of online customer service applications, visit KingFord-Sales.com.

Members of the Ford Team in attendance for the presentation of the President's



Chris King talks customer satisfaction with the Ford Motor Co. team that came up from Atlanta to give him the President's Award.

Award that Thursday, May 19, were Giacomini, Malcolm Suttleff with Ford Customer Service Division, David Carnegie with Ford Sales Division,

Molly Morris with Ford Sales Division, Chris Garrison with Ford Motor Credit, and Paul Szatkowski, Regional Manager for Ford Motor Credit.

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to the State of Georgia.

Associate Superintendent Dr. Jeremy Williams said that Local Fair Share would cost Union County taxpayers about \$5 million, as it does each year as schools statewide pay into the Quality Basic Education system.

Local Fair Share is the Robin Hood system of richer schools making up for the financial shortcomings of the state's less fortunate school systems.

"Based on our allotment and based on the students we serve that amount that goes to QBE is the equivalent of 5 mills," Williams said. "That's around \$5 million that is distributed throughout the state. It funds education across the state."

With that said, the Fiscal Year 2017, which begins July 1, is slated to cost Union County taxpayers \$28.626 million. That's a \$607,022 difference between expenditures and revenues from Fiscal Year 2016, Superintendent Steppe said.

The expenditure increase

is being absorbed through the county's fund balance, so no increase in millage rate is due, both Steppe and Williams said.

"We don't anticipate any increase in millage rate," Williams said. "The ad valorem taxes are \$14 million, which is what it has been for the last five years. That means more than likely, we'll be rolling back the millage rate."

In 2016, the school system expenditures were \$27.484 million.

Personnel is the big ticket item for 2017, as it is every year, Williams said.

"Part of it is every year teacher salary scales and other employee salary scales automatically go up," Williams said. "There's over \$200,000 a year just for Step Increases for years of experience."

"This next year there is an additional \$100,000 per month per classified staff," he said. "That kicks in this January."

Health insurance is the culprit for the cost increases.

Personnel costs

for the school system are \$19,250,636.

The BOE is proposed to cut \$17,504 from General Administration costs, and \$42,773 from Support Services, bringing in an expenditure increase for 2017 at \$1.142 million.

The difference in revenues versus expenditures between 2016 and 2017 is \$607,022. The expenditure difference is covered by the county's fund balance, which stands now at \$8.794 million minus the \$607,022.

In other business, the BOE spent \$219,438 on Summer Technology projects. The project included the purchase of more than 500 Chromebooks for students.

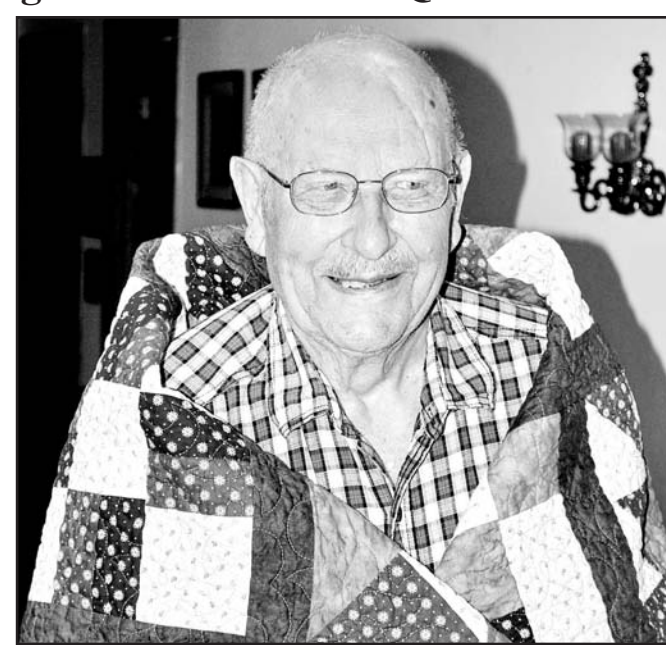
The BOE also spent \$123,000 for outdoor lighting for the Union County Fine Arts Center parking lot. The purchase includes the installation of 39 LED lights and poles. The monthly costs for the outdoor lighting is \$119.23.

Prior to the new light system, the county school system had been renting outdoor lighting from Rick's Rental.

WWII Veteran Vaughn Barrett receives Quilt of Valor

On May 7, 2016, with his family and friends present, it was an honor for the Misty Mountain Quilts of Valor Outreach members Bonnie Garrett and Linda and Jim Gorman to present a Quilt of Valor to Mr. Vaughn Barrett, a U.S. Army World War II Veteran. Mr. Barrett was nominated for the Quilt of Valor by Virginia Fisher. Mr. Barrett was presented his quilt at his home in Hiawassee, GA.

Mr. Vaughn Barrett was assigned to the 554th Engineering Boat and Shore Regiment from February 10, 1943, when the Regiment was activated, until he returned from Japan to be honorably discharged from the U.S. Army. Mr. Barrett commenced his overseas duty upon arriving at Oro Bay, New Guinea on May 24, 1944. He then was assigned to the South Engineer Special Brigade at Maffin Bay, Dutch New Guinea where he



U.S. Army World War II Veteran Vaughn Barrett

staged with his Regiment for their initial combat landing.

His unit joined a larger task group for the assault landing on the Japanese held island of Morotai, Netherlands, East Indies, in mid-September 1944. He then participated in the Solomon Island campaign with the 37th Infantry Division as part of the amphibious assault on the island of Luzon, Philippines. He landed with the initial assault at Lingayen Gulf, on March 1944. In 1945, he was assigned to the staging area for the assault on the Japanese home island. When the Japanese accepted the terms of surrender, Mr. Barrett joined the occupying forces and was with the first troops ashore at

Wakayama, Japan on September 25, 1945.

His medals and awards include World War II Victory Medal, Luzon Campaign w/ Bronze Star, Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, Philippine Liberation Ribbon w/Bronze Star, and four Overseas Bars.

Quilts of Valor are presented to those veterans and active duty military who have served in combat zones. Information about Quilts of Valor may be found at www.qovf.org. The patriotic quilt presented to Mr. Barrett, represents a thank you to him for what he has done to defend and protect our nation. Each Quilt of Valor presented is registered with the National Archives. NT(May25.23)CA

2016 Brasstown Community Center Concert Series schedule

2016 Brasstown Community Center Concert Series: 2nd and 4th Saturdays of the month from May through August. Music starts at 7 p.m., \$5 admission, kids under 12 free. Food and drinks available on premises, located on Settawig Road in Brasstown, NC. Call

(828) 837-3797 or email us at info@clayscorner.com
 May 28 Raven and Red
 June 11 Lonesome Sound
 June 25 Southwind
 July 9 Wilson Family
 July 23 Davenport Brothers
 Aug 13 Just Us
 Aug 27 Nations Band

You're Invited

Please join us for a

Retirement Reception

honoring

Gary Steppe

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

(Drop In)

Union County Board of Education