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# Major Metals brings jobs to KM

**ELIZABETH STEWART**  
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Major Metals Company, headquartered in Mansfield, Ohio and a leader in the steel tubing industry, has hired 12 employees initially and is beginning operations on Industrial Drive off York Road.

The plant, which has been distributing rolled steel products in the Midwest over 40 years, is the third industry to occupy the huge building formerly occupied by Solaris, a Canadian-based steel tubing company which closed early this year, and before that Tube Enterprises, which distributed aluminum tubing.

Joe Yeager, former Solaris plant manager for four years, is heading up the new

operation here. "We plan to be good citizens of the community for a long time," he said.

Yeager said he is excited that he has been able to hire former employees of Solaris on the first shift and expects to expand and hire more employees for a second shift in future months. Major Metals President is Jeff Mason of Mansfield, Ohio who represents the second generation in his family in the steel tubing industry.

The company specializes in manufacturing carbon steel tubing on high frequency tube mills. Having tube mills coupled with steel buying expertise enables Major Metals to be very competitive in the tubing market in flat rolled steel,

See MAJOR METALS, 3A



Mayor Rick Murphrey, left, welcomes Joe Yeager, plant manager of Major Metals, a new Kings Mountain industry which is initially employing 12 people but expects to expand to a second shift of workers in manufacturing and distributing steel tubing.

Photo by ELLIS NOELL

## Armed robbery is second in six days

Kings Mountain Police are investigating a second armed robbery within a six day period.

Sunday morning at 4:54 a.m., police responded to Kangaroo Store, 225 Cleveland Avenue, where two employees told them that an unknown black male entered the store brandishing a firearm and demanded money.

The employees refused the suspect any money and he fled on foot in an unknown direction without any money taken. The employees were unharmed.

The suspect is described as a black male approximately 6'1" of medium build and medium skin tone wearing a black jacket or hoodie with his face covered with

dark material.

Anyone with information, contact Det. Sgt. Chris Moore at 704-734-0444.

Monday, July 14 at 12:44 a.m. police were called to Wendy's, 113 York Road, where an employee told police that an armed robber took an unknown amount of money from the restaurant and forced her to drive him to an unknown location where he fled. The employee was unharmed.

Police describe the suspect as a black male approximately 6'1" with medium skin tone and slim build. He was wearing dark clothing and a blue bandana around his face and armed with a handgun. Anyone with information is asked to contact Det. Sgt. Lisa Proctor at 704-734-0444.

## Investigation continues in worker's death

No foul play is indicated in the tragic death of Larry G. Baxter, 54, who died unexpectedly at the Crypton Plant at Kings Mountain Industrial Park July 15.

Plant spokesmen said this week that a thorough review of the plant procedures and equipment as well as reviews of the multiple in-plant camera footage have been conducted, and the initial conclusion is that no foul play is indicated in the death of the seven year machine operator.

The plant was immediately closed at Baxter's death and a team from Oc-

cupational Safety and Health Division (OSHA) continues to investigate the incident. Crypton officials are fully cooperating with all formal investigators to ensure a complete and factual assessment of the situation, according to a released statement.

The plant was cleared to resume operations Wednesday, July 16. Crypton has operated the plant in Kings Mountain for nearly 20 years and maintains a superb safety record, plant officials said.

A spokesman for the plant said the Crypton family is devastated by the loss of one of their own and extends their continued heartfelt condolences to Mr. Baxter's family and friends.

Baxter was laid to rest on Tuesday, July 22, at the Macedonia Baptist Church in Waco.

## Dixon named Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction

**ELIZABETH STEWART**  
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Dr. William Dixon, formerly with Colleton County Schools, Waterboro, SC, was hired Monday night by the Cleveland County Board of Education as the new Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

He will receive a four year contract and will assume the duties formerly

held by Supt. Stephen Fisher, who was most recently assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction before being elected superintendent succeeding the retiring Dr. Bruce Boyles.

Dr. Fisher also announced the promotion of Charles Smith, former assistant principal at Crest Middle, who became principal of Kings Mountain Middle School July 7. Smith succeeds former principal Mickey Morehead

who became principal of Burns Middle School.

Dr. Fisher explained the process followed for selections. He said the jobs are posted and an interview team from all over the district meets with applicants to make recommendations. He checks references, interviews staff members at each of the schools when a principal/assistant is promoted and

See SCHOOL BOARD, 7A

## School officials say budget talks at stalemate

Three weeks after the start of a new fiscal year, North Carolina state legislators are still trying to find middle ground on how to afford teacher pay raises and fund Medicaid.

Will they be able to compromise this week as their July 25 deadline nears?

Rep. Tim Moore, Republican from Kings Mountain who is chairman of the House rules committee, said from Raleigh this week that "the process must be thorough in order to adjust our budget in an effort to produce an outcome that benefits all North Carolina citizens."

School board members talked at length Monday night about what financial operations director Dr. David Lee called "a stalemate in the budget talk" and how the decision by legislators could affect the school system. "Grade two teacher assistants could go away after this year," he said.

If the legislature just takes no action our same budget would apply," said Lee.

Board member Jerry Hoyle said if the legislature should drop ¼ of teacher assistants it would change the whole complexity of elementary schools. "TA's drive the school bus and do many other things," he added.

"It would be so unfair to our

See BUDGET, 7A

## NC unemployment benefits drastically cut

By Alan Hodge  
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For many folks the recent Great Recession has faded away, but there are still thousands of people still feeling its sting, and the recent decision by the State of North Carolina to drastically cut the number of weeks a person can draw unemployment benefits, as well as a reduction in the amount of money, is not helping.

The latest figures from the NC Employment Security Commission showed Gaston County's unemployment rate at 6.6 percent, Cleveland

County at 7.0 percent, and the state average at 6.0 percent.

Effective July 1, North Carolinians filing new claims will be able to draw unemployment benefits for a maximum of 14 weeks. The previous maximum was 26 weeks. In North Carolina, a sliding scale tied to the overall state unemployment rate determines the number of weeks a person can draw. The number of weeks fell as of July 1 based on the unemployment rate from January-March of this year.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, no other state

See BENEFITS, 7A

## Play organizers hope to make living history

**DAVE BLANTON**  
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Kings Mountain theater-lovers got their first glimpse of the energetic director who will take playwright Bob Inman's Revolutionary War script to the stage Monday night as organizers gave the public a vision of what to expect of the large production set to debut in October.

"We're going to create something that you're going to cherish and be proud of for a very long time," said Caleb Sigmon, a Boone native with extensive theater experience who is also a professional magician, referring to "Liberty Mountain: The Revolutionary Drama." Organizers say the play, set in Kings Mountain at a time when the

See PLAY, 7A

## Beach Blast a bust for 2014

Beach Blast, set for last Saturday, was rained out and will not be rescheduled.

"We are very sorry that rain cancelled the long-awaited event but it would be very difficult to reschedule," said Mayor Rick Murphrey.

The city's events director Ellis Noell had planned a variety of family events for Saturday which included music as well as competitive events. "Just look for next year, Beach Blast will be bigger and better than ever," promises Noell.



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