

Chariton Leader



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Fifth grade and high school bands share center stage April 7
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Council given update on HOPE Learning Center

Bill Howes
Associate Editor

The Chariton City Council was given an update on HOPE Learning Center at the city council meeting Monday, March 17.

HOPE Learning Center Director Ashley Jeffers and Assistant Director Bobbi Evans were at the meeting and gave the update to the council.

HOPE Learning Center is the primary day care facility in Chariton and it provides services to children from six weeks to 12 years old. It is located in the Vredenburg Center at 1711 Osceola Ave. in Chariton.

HOPE is an acronym that stands for Helpful, Open, Positive and Educational. The center's mission is to provide a Helpful, Open, Positive and Educational environment for the children of

this community.

Jeffers and Evans stated that HOPE Learning Center currently has 84 children enrolled. They also said the main goal for HOPE Learning Center this year is to update the curriculum in the classroom and to bring in more materials that will benefit the children.

"On top of updating the curriculum, we're also trying to receive funding for an indoor sensory playroom. We're working on a grant for the playroom right now," they said.

"In the last two years we've updated a lot of play structures in the classroom and classroom materials such as toys. A lot of our stuff was outdated. We've updated our outdoor playground as well," Evans said.

"What's your max or maximum number for enrollment?" Council mem-

ber Gary Shutt asked.

Jeffers and Evans said that the maximum enrollment number for HOPE Learning Center is 135 licensing wise and for best practices it's 102 children.

"Do you know why you're not completely full?" Chariton City Manager Doug Anderson asked.

The women gave two reasons why the center doesn't have full enrollment. One is low staffing.

"The second reason is that we're ratio-based and ratio driven and we're limited in terms of how many children there can be to staff members. We currently have openings in our three-year-old classroom and we have a long waiting list of infants for services. But not as many older children are needing services right now," Evans said.

Too close for comfort, Russell fire scared many



Left (top to bottom): Russell Volunteer firemen dash across fields in their brush fire truck. Fire departments from six towns worked together to contain the blaze. About 200 acres were left charred. (photos by Sharon Wilhite) Right (top to bottom): The fire threatened the Knust home and the town of Russell due to dry conditions and high winds. (photo by Tyler Knust) The fire came into the Knust's yard damaging their shed but not their home. (Photo contributed by Brenda Knust)

Sharon Wilhite
Correspondent

On Friday, March 14, the overcast sky looked like extreme weather forming but in reality was smoke billowing up and overhead from a fast moving fire on the outskirts of Russell. On a plot of CRP land, (that in previous years was hard to even get a controlled burn started in order to clean it up), a contained control burn from the day before reignited. Extremely dry

conditions and a powerful wind combined to bring that fire back to life with a roar as it traveled into nearby cornstalks and would soon engulf about 200 acres of land over a period of about three and a half hours.

The Russell Volunteer firemen leaped into action with 21 of the crew working feverishly to contain a fire of a magnitude that they had never before experienced. The call for reinforcements went out, and soon units from

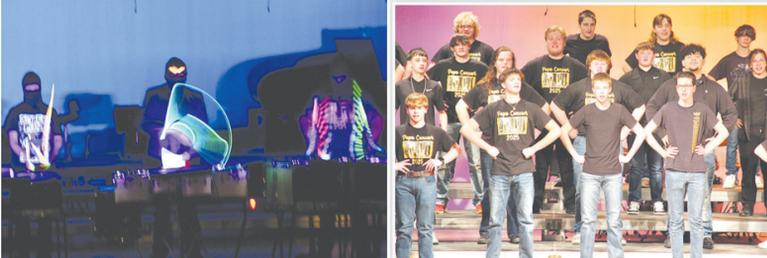
Chariton, Corydon, Lucas, Melrose, and Williamson came to lend a hand and their hoses.

Brenda Knust was keeping an eye on the unfolding events as she and her husband Chris's home sits right on the edge of the fields that were burning. When she saw big flames suddenly coming over the ridge towards their property, she took their car and parked it two blocks away

FIRE

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Chariton High School Pops Concert plays to full auditorium



Top left corner clockwise: Saxophone solo during a Big Band number. Adrian O'Leary (left) and Calvin Allwood perform a duet. Soloist Ellie Lane sings "For Heaven's Sake." The girls in the Concert Choir have fun with the choreography to a number from "Footloose." The guys stand their ground while singing from the musical "Footloose." The CHS Drumline gives a light show. The members of the Chariton Community Big Band jazz it up.

Sharon Wilhite
Correspondent

The annual Chariton High School Pops Concert

took place March 20 and 21 in Johnson Auditorium under the direction of Mr. Tyler Urich. The auditorium was full of fami-

lies, friends and excited students for this event showcasing the musical

CONCERT

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Fire protection agreements extended, appointments approved

Bill Howes
Associate Editor

The Chariton City Council approved a couple of resolutions to

extend fire protection agreements at their March 17 council meeting.

The council approved a resolution to extend the

agreement for fire protection with Liberty Township in Lucas County and a resolution to extend

COUNCIL

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Almost Home Animal Rescue helping local animals find love



Pictured is Josie, the pit bull terrier mix puppy that belongs to Amanda Thompson, the advertising representative for the Chariton Newspapers. Josie is shown lying on her blanket on Amanda's desk by Amanda's keyboard this past Tuesday afternoon, March 25. Josie is four months old and was born in November. She was adopted from Almost Home Animal Rescue in Chariton. Josie is shown with her Mr. Bill toy, from the famous Play-Doh figure of Saturday Night Live. (Bill Howes photo)

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