



Knoxville musicians excel at contest

Knoxville High School band and choir students participated in the solo/ensemble contest on Saturday.

“Choir did really well; we sent 21 events (for reference, we only had 6 or 7 go three years ago when I started at Knoxville) and had great success,” Director Ian Heetland said. Below is a list of the choir’s results.

* Designates first time

performing at Solo/Small Ensemble Contest

Division 1: Superior (Highest Rating)

Chamber Singers (Perfect Score and Outstanding Performance Award; Second time this group has gotten both of those accolades in 4 years)

Bekah Bennett - Vocal Solo (one point away from a perfect score)

Kaylynne Anderson - Vocal Solo (one point away from a perfect score)

Malichi Swan - Vocal Solo *

Kyl Bauer - Vocal Solo

Zjair Hernando - Vocal Solo *

Bekah Bennett & Kaylynne Anderson & Kaeding Phillips * - Vocal Trio

Division 2: Excellent

Willow Kam - Vocal Solo

Regan Roberts - Vocal Solo *

Bailey Heath - Vocal Solo

Sophia DeMello - Vocal Solo *

Thalia DeSocio - Vocal Solo *

Ryan Peralta & Keegan Binns - Vocal Duet *

Zjair Hernando & Jason Krasko - Vocal Duet *

Division 3: Good

Jason Kaplin - Vocal Solo *

Jude Daniels - Vocal Solo *

Lilly Hummel - Vocal Solo *

Lilly Hummel & Holly Evenson - Vocal Duet *

Addison Hake - Vocal Solo *

Brianna Murphy - Vocal Solo *

Jason Krasko - Vocal Solo *

For the band, there were 12 acts who participated. Of those, seven earned Division I ratings. They included:

Saxophone trio: Bailey Heath, Cooper Mattox, Zachary Boender (perfect score)

Percussion choir

Bailey Heath - Alto sax solo

Zachary Boender - Bari sax solo

Kyl Bauer - Horn solo

Jason Krasko - Marimba solo

Austin Bishop - Trombone solo



Chamber Singers (Perfect Score and Best of Center Award Winners)
Back row L to R: Malichi Swan, Regan Roberts, Willow Kam, Taylor Newendorp, Landyn Gibson, Jason Vinsick, Reagan Oye, Miley Garrison, Joey Woods, Keegan Binns.
Front Row L to R: Kaylynne Anderson, Bekah Bennett, Bailey Heath, Ryan Peralta, Kyl Bauer, Nikkaila Lovell, Ethan Cahill, Jiaxin Jiang, Abi Dovganyuk, Reid Sinclair, Isaiah Picard. **Not Pictured:** Elen Petty & Kaeding Phillips



Soloists, from left to right: Bekah Bennett, Kaylynne Anderson, Kyl Bauer, Zjair Hernando, Malichi Swan



Trio, from left to right: Bekah Bennett, Kaeding Phillips, Kaylynne Anderson

City of Pella sets maximum levy

By Steve Woodhouse

Prior to a budget meeting late last week, the Pella City Council set its maximum levy rate at \$10.75 per \$1,000 of taxable valuation. This is not what the levy must be, rather it is the most the City can levy. The council may choose to set a lower rate at its next meeting on April 15.

Each department head reviewed his or her plans for the coming year, as well as plans for capital improvement projects over the next five years. Costs for the five-year capital improvement plan are estimated to be \$129 million.

The proposed long-term facilities plan, which the council will also vote on April 15, includes \$7.6 million for community center and \$35.8 million for rec center. The council has previously approved parameters that the rec center must operate on a revenue neutral basis, and that the community center’s subsidy will not increase.

The \$35.8 million figure includes contingency and engineering fees. The City’s portion is \$17 million and the remainder, \$18.8 million, is from other sources including private donations. These figures are also for the full, 78,000-square-foot facility with two pools and four gymnasiums.

City Administrator Mike Nardini informally polled the council at the end of the second budget workshop regarding proposed rate increases for water and sewer, while maintaining existing rates for other utilities. Council members did not verbally object.

Nardini also asked the council if they were comfortable keeping the long-term facilities plan as part of the 2025-26 fiscal budget. This includes the rec center. There were no verbal objections to keeping the projects in the budget.

There were several children at the April 1

council meeting to share their support for the rec center with the council. Most of them are swimmers whose parents no longer want to travel to Newton or Oskaloosa to allow them to participate in their team sports.

The council also heard from Ann Summit, who said fiscal responsibility is paramount. She quoted a study released last year that indicated that Pella does not have sufficient population to sustain a recreation center. The facility would theoretically have to pull patrons from as far away as Pleasant Hill and Ottumwa, according to the study.

“This is not an essential service,” Summit said. “Please be wise with your fiscal responsibility.”

The proposed budget also includes a 1.5 percent salary scale increase for employees and a 3 percent merit-based increase. The City’s proposed budget is included in a graphic in today’s legal notices.



Traffic was redirected Tuesday as this home was transported from Pella, all the way to Albia. Moving a house takes a great deal of cooperation among everyone, including Marion County deputies who helped the driver safely navigate the way out of the county. (photo courtesy of Monte Goodyk/Pella Fiber)

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