



Harvest Festival
 St. Clement Fall Festival also this weekend
 SEE PAGE 4A ON ST. CLEMENT INFO

Arrows stymie Hillmen
 It was a blackout for Platteville offense while Lancaster was in black jerseys
 SEE SPORTS

Parents finding it hard to find adequate childcare

Survey shows impact lack of spaces has on families

BY DAVID TIMMERMAN
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To paraphrase President Ronald Reagan, if your neighbor is having trouble finding childcare, it's an issue, but if you are having trouble finding childcare, it is a crisis.

Also, if your employee is having trouble finding childcare, it can also be a crisis. If residents of your community are having trouble finding childcare, and contemplating moving, it can be a crisis, and if businesses and individuals do not move to your community because of a lack of childcare options, it definitely would be a crisis.

So, does Lancaster have a problem or a crisis when it comes to the lack of childcare available? The Lancaster Area Chamber of Commerce and the Grant County Herald Independent looked to find out, conducting an online survey of readers to find out how many people are dealing with this issue.

Turns out, quite a few of you are being impacted.

Earlier this month, more than 170 people responded to an online survey asking residents whether issues with childcare were impacting their families.

Turns out, most of those responded said it was.

On how much time was spent making childcare arrangements in a month, 25 percent of respondents said they spend five or more hours a month making arrangements, while another 18 percent said they spend 3-4 hours in a month making arrangements.

There were 26 percent of respondents who said they spent 1-2 hours making arrangements, while 14 percent said they needed to spend less than an hour a month making arrangements.

Only 15 respondents said they did not need to spend any time making arrangements.

When it came to asking about their current childcare arrangements, 13 percent said they were unable to find childcare, while eight percent said a parent left the workforce to stay at home with their child. There were 26 percent who had found a licensed childcare facility, and seven percent had found an individual licensed provider.

Fourteen percent of respondents are using a person who is providing care out of their home, and are not licensed, while another 15 percent rely on a relative.

For those using small providers who are unlicensed, and running it out of their home, it can be a big leap of faith if you do not have a history or background with the person. "I'm currently having to look for strangers that are not licensed to watch my new born baby. I have been looking for daycare since I found out I'm pregnant and have not found anyone," one parent said.

"A lot of people don't want to put their most prized possessions in the hands of people they don't know," another said.

Four percent of respondents said their child, who is of school-age, go without supervision either before or

Larry waiting to play again

Series of conditions sideline musician



BY DAVID TIMMERMAN
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For a musician, much of it comes down to timing - everyone needs to hit their beat to get it right.

Over the years, I have seen Larry Busch make sure the timing was right, so the music can take its place centerstage. I have seen it when he has practiced with his fellow members of the Lancaster Community Band. I have seen it when he is working with musicians and actors when performing musical numbers for performances with the Lancaster Community Players.

And he was right. If people have been practicing on their own, they may have different timing from one another, and if they get together to perform, if they have not synced their timing, the result is not good, so he spends hours making sure everyone is on the same clock.

Right now, Larry has a new timing he is working with his wife, Cindy on. That beat they have going is every six hours, Larry goes to sit in the chair of the living room of their home, and Cindy has to be the performer, going through an intricate group of tasks to give her husband antibiotics four times a day to fight off infections in his body.

On this afternoon, Larry is sitting in the chair reading the newspaper.

"I was just reading the obituaries to see if I was in there," Larry quipped, actually handling the crossword puzzle that was on the corresponding page.

But to note how dire he felt seven weeks ago, "a couple of weeks ago, I wondered a few days."

And just like I saw him working with individuals on

Symbolizing a couple in sync with one another, Cindy and Larry Busch have their daily routine down as Larry fights off illnesses. Every six hours, Larry gets a treatment of antibiotics in an IV, that Cindy administers, first cleaning out the PICC line Larry has in his arm, before starting the drip, then reversing the process after an hour.

Busch | SEE 5A

Old World Wisconsin looks to revise Pleasant Ridge section

Underdeveloped portion sees less traffic than other parts

BY DAVID TIMMERMAN
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Pleasant Ridge - for people from Grant County, the name flashes to mind the history of the settlement formed by free slaves outside of Lancaster that stood for a century. The name serves as a sense of pride, of unity, where a people that looked to get away from the country's original sin were welcomed in.

But for those who are not from the area, Pleasant Ridge is an unknown. It is not part of fourth grade state history lessons, and the name itself has been coincidentally used in numerous places across Wisconsin.

At Old World Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Historical State Site in Waukesha County, the open-air museum is dedicated to telling the origins of the people that make up the Badger State, and has a portion dedicated to the Pleasant Ridge story. But, according to Anna Altschwager, Assistant Director of the site, the section for Pleasant Ridge is underdeveloped, and does not quite fit with the composite narrative of Old World Wisconsin.

This leads to the Pleasant Ridge portion being visited less than some of the other sections, and something

Altschwager wishes to change.

She and consultant Dena Bailey, were in Lancaster and Platteville Monday, holding listening sessions as part of a planning grant the museum received to redevelop the site. The hope is to improve the story of the

people of Pleasant Ridge, as well as the African Americans who came to the state before and after the Civil War to give a better understanding of their part of the Wisconsin story.

For those unfamiliar with Old World Wisconsin, it is a sprawling

600-acre site with multiple 'villages' attempting to tell the tales of settlers to the state (think Stonefield multiplied by five).

Those villages cover different

Pleasant Ridge | SEE 12A



UW-Platteville Archivist James Hibbard speaks during a breakout session at a community meeting about the Pleasant Ridge section of Old World Wisconsin. The State Historical Society wants to revise the section devoted to the African American settlement in Grant County as a way to better inform visitors to the Waukesha County open-air museum about the impact of Black settlements during the early days of the state.

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Survey

FROM PAGE 1A

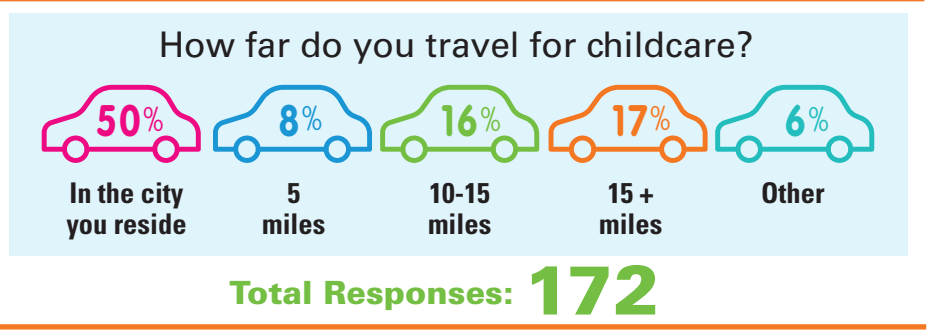
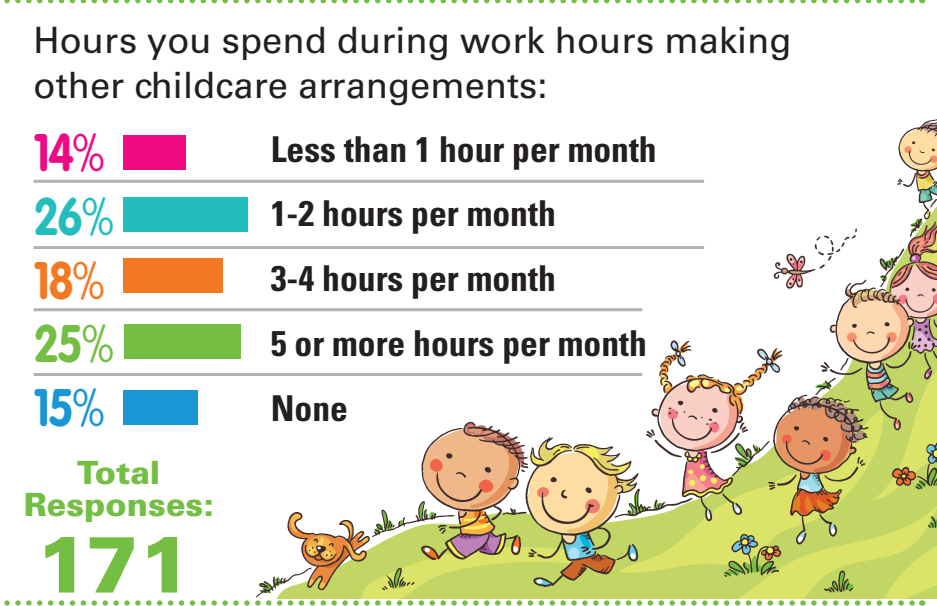
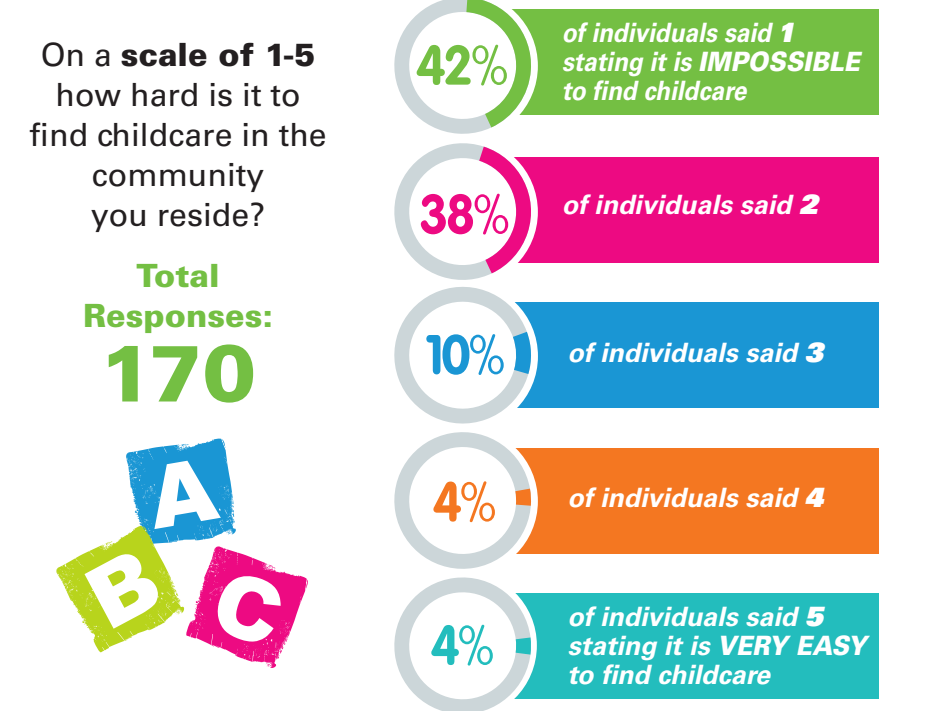
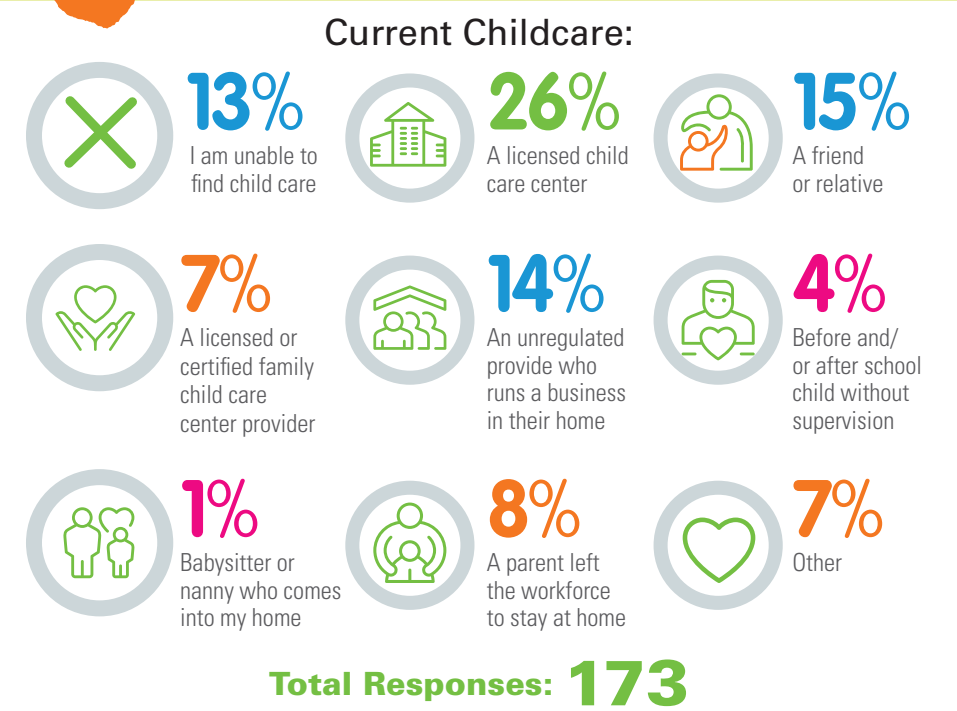
after school. And while finding a provider is very difficult, if your child has special needs, it may be impossible, as one person said. "Difficult finding trustworthy part time sitters that can assist with special needs children in a reasonable price range," one respondent shared. "Nearly impossible to get an overnight sitter for night shift coverage." Same too if you need support outside normal business hours. "I am self-employed and work inconsistent hours," one person said. "Finding someone to help with my kids in the evenings and weekends is nearly impossible and I end up bringing them with me (which is unprofessional and very much not ideal)." Whether the parents have found care or not, the journey on trying to find adequate care has definitely given them an opinion on the availability of care in Lancaster. Ranking the availability, from impossible to easy, 42 percent of survey respondents said finding childcare is impossible, while another 38 percent felt it was close to impossible. By comparison, only four percent thought it was very easy, and

another four percent thought it was easy. "When I was first looking for daycare in Lancaster years ago, I had a list of 15 contacts between daycare centers and private in home," one parent recalled. "Only one had an opening at that time and I got lucky because a kid was going to start school. Lancaster can't grow and offer new jobs if there is no child care. Something needs to be done." One respondent awaiting the arrival of their child didn't know if she could find childcare in time. "I am 14 weeks pregnant and looking for child care which is currently very hard. I have been on many waiting list with the words of we don't know if we will have opening for our infant room then," the person stated. That has impacted how much they can work, as users of the survey said what different scenarios had impacted them. Forty-four percent said they were unable to work overtime hours for their employer, and 47 percent said they had to start work late to deal with childcare. "Our issue right now is that my wife and I both work before our daycare is open," one person stated. "Most days we also work until after daycare is closed. We try and rely on family to help us but that is sometimes a struggle." Local employers are very considerate, as 59 percent of

respondents said they leave work early to handle their children, and 55 percent said they have had to miss a day of work to deal with childcare needs for their children. Young school-age children who cannot stay home on their own before or after school spotlights a dilemma for many parents who need a few hours covered, and wish the community did more. "I think our community should provide before school and after school activities/homework study since a lot of working parents have to work before school and after hours," one parent shared. "I personally know of some states that provide this but charge a weekly flat fee of like \$40 that gets put back into the schools." "I think after school programs to help with homework would be helpful also, not just sports," another parent said. "Another struggle currently for our family is 'older' kids," one parent shared. "They are too young to stay home themselves, but getting old for daycare. 4th/5th grade. We live in the country and I'm a working parent until 4:30. I work a full time job and with three kids, my daycare in the summer costs about the same as what I make." There were 15 percent who said that childcare did not

Childcare | SEE 3A

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