

## HELICOPTER EDUCATION



Sentinel Photo/GREG PETERSON

Children at Bumblebee Child Care Center in Mt. Vernon were able to have a hands-on helicopter learning experience Friday. The helicopter landing was part of Bumblebee's educational unit on transportation.

# Local kids get a hands-on helicopter education

*Bumblebee Child Care Center hosted a helicopter landing as part of its month-long educational component on transportation*

**BY GREG PETERSON**  
SENTINEL NEWS STAFF

MT. VERNON — Nearly 50 children from a local daycare were able to get a hands-on educational experience with a helicopter Friday.

A helicopter from Kash Helicopter Services of Mt. Vernon flew to Bumblebee Child Care Center in Mt. Vernon and landed in a cleared parking lot, which allowed the children to see how a how helicopters work.

Toddler room teacher Stacey Burkett stated, "The month of March is our transportation month. Here at Bumblebee, we believe

that kids learn more through hands-on experiences. We thought that it would be awesome to bring in different vehicles for the children to see."

Burkett informed that throughout the month of March, children at Bumblebee have been able to learn about a variety of vehicles that include: A motorcycle, a police car, an ambulance, a fire truck, a backhoe, a dump truck, and, of course, a helicopter.

"Everyone has really jumped in, and the community has been awesome to help us do this for our kids. We are very grateful that they were willing to help us," stated Burkett.

Pilots Don Pruitt and Nichole Miner flew the helicopter to Bumblebee, and Sean Toomey and Ryan Webb were part of the ground crew.

Pruitt informed that the helicopter that they flew to show the children was a Bell 206 B-Model, which is known as a "Jet Ranger." He explained that the helicopter they brought is primarily used for agricultural purposes.

When asked why it is important for kids to learn about helicopters, Pruitt stated, "I think it's important because I love aviation. I'm passionate about aviation, so I think that if you can set the seed early in kid's life, it shows that there is a potential of aviation as a career or recreational activity. I think it's fun to let them experience that yes it is achievable."

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**YOUNG PILOTS** — Aubrey Roberts and Malakhi Jackson sit in the cockpit of the Bell Jet Ranger helicopter that landed at Bumblebee Child Care Center Friday. Children were able to see the helicopter land and take off. They also got an opportunity to sit inside the helicopter.

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Pruitt informed that safety is a major priority for demonstrations.

He stated, "The only reason

we can do these kinds of events is if it is safe and in a controlled environment."

He said that the children were kept at a safe distance during the landing and multiple individuals served on the ground crew to make sure that the landing area was safe and clear.

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3-12-16