



TEAMMEMBERS Michelle Russ (above left) and Darbi Rouse discussed how to build their car during the construction phase of the Lunch Box Derby last Wednesday at Oberlin Elementary School. Mason Berry (below) ate a

carrot on his way out the door (below). Fourth graders Cody Wurm and Brady Fortin (bottom picture) tested their apple wheels while working on their car in the morning.

— Herald staff photos by Kimberly Davis

Kids build cars

By KIMBERLY DAVIS

Parents may tell their kids not to play with their food at home, but last Wednesday they encouraged it while they helped their fourth- and fifth-grade sons and daughters build cars from fruits and vegetables.

Students at Oberlin Elementary School got to build race cars out of pineapples, apples, cucumbers, oranges, eggplants, bananas, cherries, strawberries and other edibles for the annual Lunch Box Derby.

The derby started 12 years ago when the Washington Apple Association sponsored it. After they dropped the national event, Raye's Grocery continued to sponsor the Oberlin competition.

Each spring, store employees pack up boxes of fruits and vegetables and haul them to the grade school. The goodies are put on a table in the cafeteria so fourth and fifth graders, paired off in teams, can go through the line and pick what they want to build with.

Many of the students' parents come in to help them. Without help from an adult, either a parent or teacher, the students can't use a knife.

Serena Stacy and Amanda Marshall, both fifth graders, made a car using an eggplant as the body and apples for wheels. Inside the eggplant was a banana driver, complete with a tie, ears, nose, eyes and mouth. The girls said the driver was Principal Duane Dorshorst.

First timers Ryan May and Tyler Bruggeman, both fourth graders, agreed that they wanted to win with their car either by going the farthest distance or because of creativity.

Tyler said they picked a cucumber for the body of the car because that is what his dad, Gary, said they should do, and he has experience building cars.

Ryan said they also picked things for decoration, like rad-



ishes. The boys decided to name their car Outta Here.

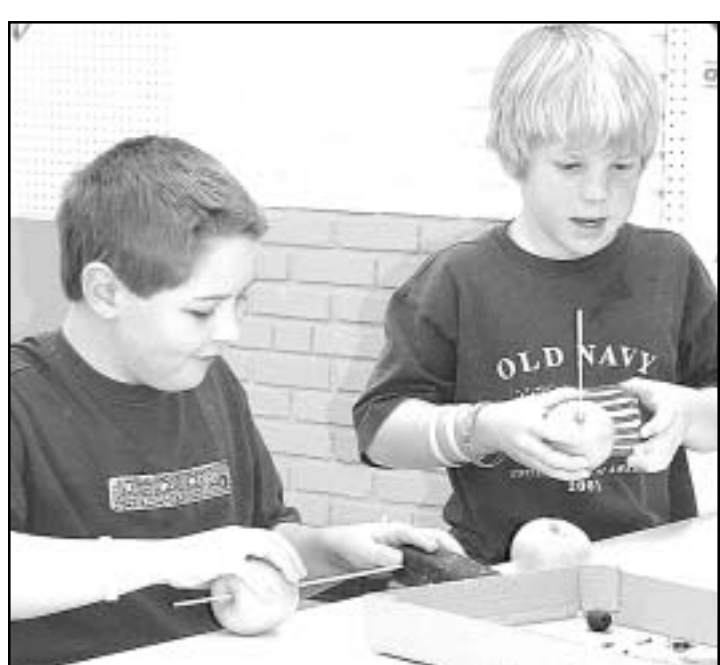
Down a few tables were Elizabeth Nedland and Nicole Russ, who were busy building the Swifty Sweet Racer out of a pineapple. They said they wanted to win most creative.

"We thought of what might look good," said Elizabeth, "and what might run good in a race."

The girls said the main reason they picked the pineapple, strawberries and other fruit for their car was because that is what they like to eat.

They said they didn't get any advice from older brothers and sisters.

"I saw (the derby) in the third grade," said Elizabeth, "and liked (See DERBY on Page 8A)



Elementary to get new windows

Grade school will get safe panes that will open

The Oberlin School Board accepted a bid of \$102,208 last Monday from Norton Glass to replace all the aluminum frame windows at the grade school, including those in the gym.

The board has talked about replacing the windows along the south wall for months now. Some of the windows don't open, while others have fallen out and shattered inside the classroom.

Superintendent Kelly Glodt said the board sent out four requests for bids to Wayne Golt Construction, Fidele Electric and Woodcrafting, McCook Glass and Norton Glass.

The only bids received were from McCook Glass for \$165,703 and Norton Glass for \$102,228. The board decided to accept the lower bid.

Some of the new windows will open, but some won't, he said. In a row of six or seven windows, about three will be vent windows that open.

Mr. Glodt said the windows will be tinted a dark bronze on the outside and white on the inside. That means no more shades.

Board member Monte Moore asked if there is a warranty. Principal Duane Dorshorst said he thought it's 15 years. The windows are double-paned and open out, he said.

Will the replacement be a summer project? asked Board Member Barb Olson. Yes, said Mr. Glodt. The worse-case scenario if the parts don't come in on time is that Norton Glass would have to do one room at a time during the school year. The

School Roundup

At a meeting last Monday night, the Oberlin School Board:

- Decided not to hold any late start days in April or May. Story below.
- Accepted new policies on first reading and discussed a cell phone policy that still needs to be written. Story to come.
- Accepted a bid of \$102,208 to replace aluminum framed windows and the ones in the gym at Oberlin Elementary School. Story to left.
- Discussed a new heating, ventilating and air conditioning system at the high school to replace the steam boilers, but decided to table a decision. Story to come.
- Voted to cut the high school band teacher's full-time contract to part-time for next year. Story on Page 8A.
- Agreed to hire six students to work for the summer doing maintenance, custodial work and other jobs. Story to come.
- Denied Maria Sanden's request for early retirement. Story below.

kids in the one room could move out for a day for the windows to be replaced.

If the board decides to do the new windows and then possibly replace the heating system and put in air (See BOARD on Page 8A)

Band program cut to part-time

After three successive closed sessions last Monday, the Oberlin School Board decided to offer the high school band teacher a half time contract for next year.

The board voted not to renew Deanne Spanier's full-time contract and cut her to part time for the 2005-2006 school year. She will receive written notice before May 1 and can ask for a hearing.

Ms. Spanier has worked for the district for three years.

The letter stated that Ms. Spanier's contract was cut to part-time because of the low numbers in band.

The board held closed sessions for 30, 15 and five minute for non-elected personnel before the vote on Ms. Spanier.

The board discussed new wall pads for the junior and senior high gyms. Superintendent Kelly Glodt said the students and athletic department were going to raise money for the pads, which were going to cost around \$7,000 for four. Someone at another school had mentioned to Athletic Director Randy Olson that Pepsi bought them new pads. Since the district has a contract with Pepsi, Mr. Olson was going to call the company and ask for support before any decisions are made.

Teacher Appreciation Week is the first full week in May, and Mr. Glodt said the district may set up some fruit trays or something in the teacher lounges.

The administrators will cook lunch for the teachers on Friday, May 6, he said. The current staff has picked up the slack in the past year or so, said Mr. Glodt, and he isn't sure if they really ever got recognized for that.

In other business, the board:

- Heard there may be some hail damage to the Oberlin Elementary School roof, but it isn't leaking.
- Heard that during a recent rain, the band room did have a leak. Water ruined a clavivova, a laptop computer, some ceiling tiles and some flooring. A power surge caused around \$3,000 to \$4,000 worth of damage to equipment in the technology closet. One of the pieces of equipment damaged was the one that is a back-up for all of the computers and servers. The piece cost \$5,000 originally. It can be replaced for less. Insurance will cover the cost of the new item.
- Heard that the employee recognition dinner will be at 7 p.m. next Wednesday at the high school. The administrators will be grilling (See BAND on Page 8A)

Board cancels last two late starts

The late start days scheduled for Wednesday, April 20 and May 18, have been canceled for students in the Oberlin School District.

At the end of 2004, the school board decided to start classes two hours late on the third Wednesday of the month for teacher training. Superintendent Kelly Glodt said

the teachers said those sessions were some of the best they had. It is worth it to spend time on staff development, he said.

On both the third Wednesday in April and May, though, there will be no training, and school will start at the normal time.

Good Samaritan Center to buy students books

The First Hand Friends program at Oberlin Elementary School will receive \$500 from the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center to buy books.

The center recently received a grant from Wal-Mart for \$1,000. Activities Director Jan Badsky said when she first applied for the grant, she thought that came to mind was

the importance of reading in the schools.

With the budget problems the Oberlin School District has had, she said, she thought the center could help.

The First Hand Friends are first graders who come to the center twice a month and read out loud to the residents. The program, said

Mrs. Badsky, goes through the summer, when students of all ages come in to read.

She said she asks parents to encourage their kids to come read in the summer. Not only is a great way to get kids and older folks together, but it helps kids become better readers.

The center plans an ice cream so-

cial at Tuesday, May 2, with entertainment.

Mrs. Badsky said they will take donations, and the money will be used to match the grant.

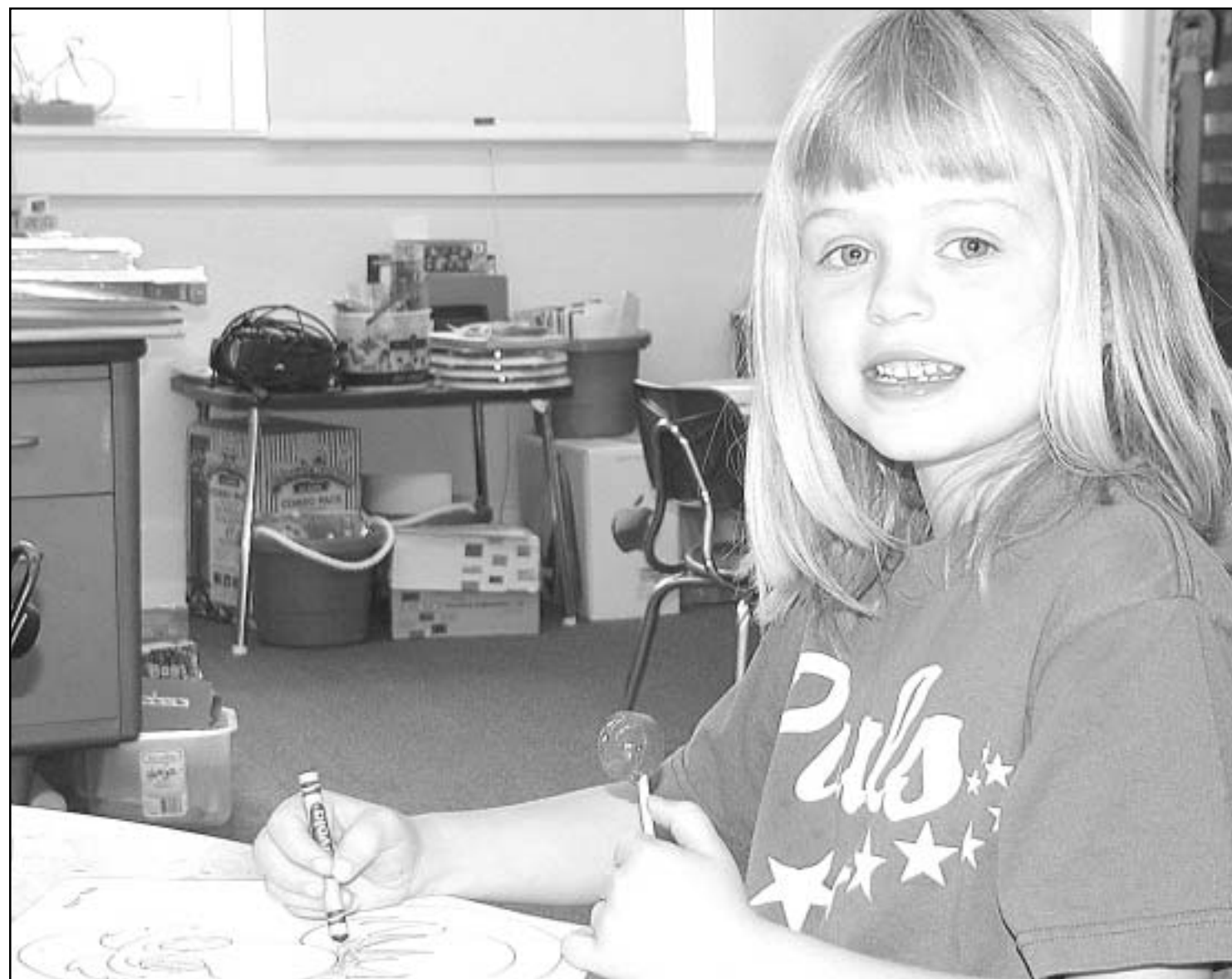
She said she would like to take some of the \$500 left from the grant money to purchase books for the center so youngsters don't always have to bring their own.

* Derby features food

(Continued from Page 1A)
the pineapple cars.”
Students built the cars in the morning, then raced them in the gym in the afternoon. In the fourth grade heat, Cassidy Shields and Jordin Wasson took first in the most creative category with the “Buggy Mobile.” Cheyanne Soderlund and Mika Hackney took second with the “Sunday Blast.”
In the fifth grade, Shay McChesney, Connor McHugh and Andrew Russ took first in creativity with “Veggielizer 22” and Samantha Anderson and Megan Huntley were second with the “Crazy Mr. Cullen.”
In the race for distance, winners were:

- Fourth graders: Kade Brown and Channing Farr, first with the “Lean Green Fighting Machine,” which went 41 feet; Cody Wurm and Brady Fortin with the “Crusin’ Cory,” 36 feet, 7 inches; Taylor Macfee and Kaylee May with the “Mrs. Granny Smith,” 33 feet, 3 inches.
- Fifth Graders: Brianna Klima and Brooklyn O’Hare, first with the “Cucumber Crusher,” 43 feet, 5 inches; Matthew Wittman and Tyler Shields with “The Islander,” 36 feet; McChesney, McHugh and Russ with the “Veggielizer 22,” 35 feet, 3 inches.

A touch of color



WITH A CRAYON in one hand and a sucker in another, Stephani Noone colored during kindergarten class last week in Jennings. She is the daughter of Bill and Marilyn Noone. — Herald staff photo by Cynthia Haynes

* Board says yes to bid

(Continued from Page 1A)
conditioning at the high school, is there money in the capital improvement fund for all of that? asked Board Member Delayne May.
Mr. Glodt said the district has \$590,000 in capital outlay right now. After paying for the windows, the district will have around \$490,000, and they will get \$108,000 next year from property taxes.

If the board decides to do heating, he said, he wouldn’t recommend paying for all of it at once. Instead, he said he would look into financing.

Mr. Glodt said the district has the money to do the windows and he thought it needed to be done.

The rest of the windows that are aluminum framed aren’t in bad shape, said Mr. Glodt. It will also take major construction to change the windows.

* Band teacher cut

(Continued from Page 1A)
steaks.

• Held a 15-minute closed session for negotiations. There was no action taken.

• Held 10-minute and then 15-minute closed sessions with the board and superintendent for non-elected personnel. There was no action taken.

County building leaking

After the recent rains, Decatur County commissioners agreed that the north wall of the courthouse needs to be tuck pointed and the cracks need to be sealed so it doesn’t leak.

Custodian Bob Berls said he had to clean up plaster and a mess in the back of the courtroom. Sheriff Ken Badsky said he had some items ruined and dispatch had to put out trash cans and towels on the stairs so that water wouldn’t run down them.

The commissioners asked Mr. Berls to call Mid Continental Restoration and get a bid.

Sheriff Badsky asked if he could go after a Byrne grant to hire an employee for a year. The federal grant would pay 75 percent of the salary for a year.

He said Randy McHugh is hoping to be back to work in the sheriff’s office at the beginning of May after National Guard service in Iraq.

The commissioners talked with Ken Rhor of Pitney Bowes about new postage machines which will be required by the Postal Service starting in July. The machines will be more secure and will be hooked directly to the phone line, he said. The county will have to pay for the new machine, but the commissioners haven’t made any decisions yet.

County Attorney Steve Hirsch called the museum to see if they have the census from 1900.

Curator Sharleen Wurm said she did and could provide it on CD.

At a recent meeting, commissioners talked about using names of pioneer families for county roads.

Paper wins awards in state competition

The Oberlin Herald won three awards in the Kansas Press Association’s annual Better Newspapers competition.

Awards were given at the association’s annual convention Friday and Saturday at the Holiday Inn in Lawrence.

Managing Editor Kim Davis took second place for best news story in the division for medium sized weekly newspapers.

Her story, “Down the Rope,” detailed an escape last May from the Decatur County Jail. An 18-year-old prisoner left the four-story jail in a classic manner — by tying bed sheets together to make a rope, and then lowering himself to the lawn.

He left the sheets flapping in the wind for officials to find the next morning.

Mrs. Davis and Editor Steve Haynes won third place for community service for articles and an editorial that galvanized state officials to action when a service project was overlooked.

The stories focused on the Oberlin Jaycees’ annual Angel Tree project, which matches donors to children who need a little Christmas cheer. After the closing of the state welfare office here, though, Department of Social Services workers failed to spread word of the project. Few families applied.

That changed after the stories and editorial appeared, and the Angel Tree produced a bounty of gifts for youngsters.

The Herald won third place for special sections for a tribute last year to Decatur County veterans of

World War II.

Around the area, The Norton Telegram won 11 awards in the division for small weekly papers, including five for Carolyn Kelley Plotts of Norcat, who writes the Out Back column for The Herald.

Mrs. Plotts, society editor of The Telegram, won first place for feature photography for a picture of a girl at the county fair. She won another first, for agricultural writing, for a story on a buffalo ranching operation. She also received awards for feature writing, investigative reporting and photo package.

Vernoica Monier of The Tele-

gram won four awards, and the paper took first place for headline writing.

The Goodland Star-News won seven prizes, including first place for feature writing for a story about the recovery of a dog burned in a kennel fire. Writer Kathryn Burke detailed the struggles of the pooch and its owner, a Goodland business-woman.

In Colby, Editor Tom Dreiling won third place in the class for small daily newspapers for editorial writing.

All the papers are owned by Nor’West Newspapers of Oberlin.

Dancing the night away



AT THE JENNINGS HIGH prom April 9, Queen Rocki Bochert and King Kyle Kinser danced. — Photo by Julie Carter

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