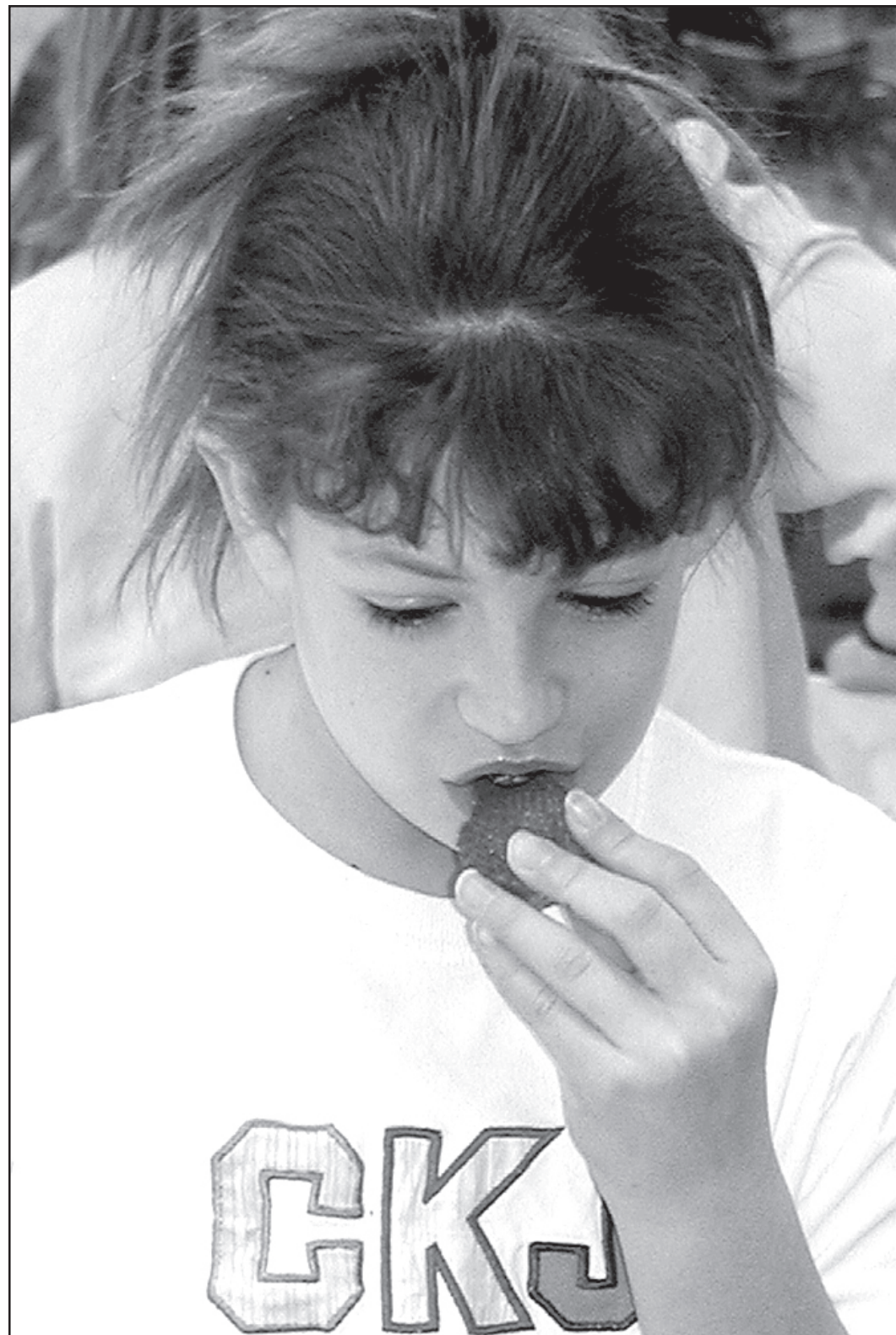




WITH TWO APPLES in his hands, Tyler Bruggeman (above right) compared the shape and roundness while his partner, Zach May, watched. Denae Andersen (below) ate a strawberry while she and her partner got started on their Lunch Box Derby car last Wednesday.



Story and photos by Kimberly Davis

## Kids build race cars out of edible snacks

Apples, oranges, pineapples, strawberries, grapes, cherries, cucumbers, carrots, turnips, mushrooms, black and green olives, brussel sprouts and just about every other kind of fresh fruit or vegetable covered the two cafeteria tables at Oberlin Elementary School.

Pairs of fourth and fifth graders started at the large boxes of green and red apples and oranges. They studied the fruits to pick the roundest and the four that were close to the same size.

The idea was to get four round, matching tires for this year's Lunch Box Derby car, where kids build cars out of edible snacks.

For the most part, the kids used either apples or oranges, though two groups decided to use something else. One group of boys used a pineapple body with grapefruit tires. Another used a carrot for the body and turnips for the wheels.

The first Lunch Box Derby was held at the grade school 13 years ago when the Washington Apple Association sponsored it. The group dropped the national event, but Raye's Grocery picked it up and now sponsors the event every year.

As a result, last Wednesday, Karen Padgett and Mory Zodrow

packed up fruits and veggies to take to the grade school.

Each year, many of the parents come in and help build the cars. With the supervision and help from adults, the kids can use a knife and ice pick to build their cars.

Fourth graders Alexis Hissong and Caitlin Leitner got help from Alexis' dad, Dr. Travis Hissong, a veterinarian.

Caitlin said they picked a cucumber for the body because it is lighter. Alexis said she hoped it would be a fast car.

The girls said they came up with a lot of names, but decided on the "Hawaiian Getaway."

Fifth graders Jordin Wasson and Cheyanne Soderlund decided to use a squash as the body for their "Buggy Boy." Jordin was on the fourth-grade team last year that took first in the "most creative" category while Cheyanne was on the team that took second.

With the help of Jordin's dad Tom, the girls put their car together with apple wheels. They also decided to put in a driver.

After assembling, the teams placed their cars back in their boxes and placed them on the stage. That afternoon, a large wooden ramp was

brought out, and it was time to race.

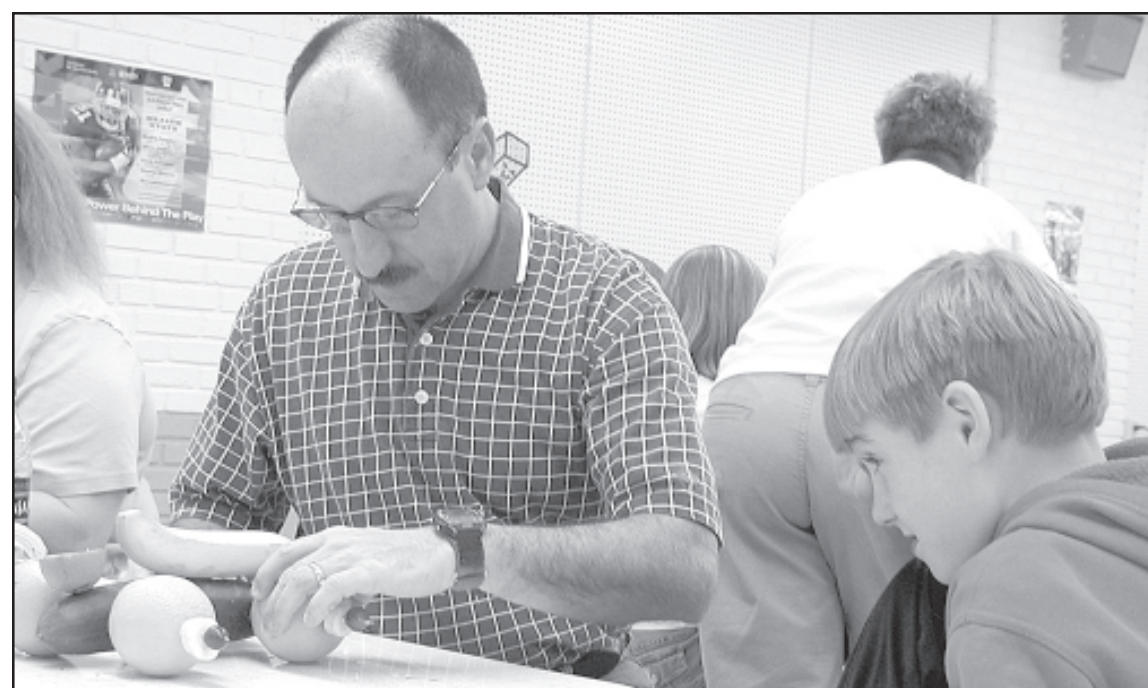
Each team got to race in two heats. The students placed their cars at the top of the ramp and let 'em go. Some made it to the bottom of the ramp before they started to fall apart and some got past the center-court line.

In the most creative category, fourth graders Nick Ashley and Justin Gee won with "Granny's Hot Rod" and fifth graders Soderlund and Wasson won with "Buggy Boy."

In the race for distance, winners were:

- Fourth graders Ashley Witt and Hannah May, first with "The Fruity-Tooty Thunderbolt," 28 feet, 9 inches; Chris Anderson and Baron Green, second with "Slice 'n' Dicer," 29 feet, 4 inches; and Brit-tany Urban and Katlyn Klima, third with "Cucumber Express," 27 feet, 4 inches.

- Fifth graders Jesus "Chuwy" Hernandez and Dakota Cook took first with "David C Car," which went 40 feet, 10 inches; Jordin Wasson and Cheyanne Soderlund, second with "Buggy Boy," 38 feet, 6 inches; and Zach May and Tyler Bruggeman, third with "2 T Cruiser," 37 feet.



TIMBRETH fixed the wheels on son Kyle's car after he and his partner finished building the fruit-and-veggie machine.