



TESTING A BITE OF BARBECUE, contestant Gary Walter made sure of his entry before sending samples to the judges on Friday.

Smokin' on the Bricks

Fun, barbecue take over downtown

The cooks fired up their grills, the judges prepared their palates and folks set up lawn chairs to watch the action Friday at the first Smokin' on the Bricks barbecue contest in downtown Oberlin.

There were as many judges as cooks, but while the judges sat in comfortable lawn chairs, tasting, testing and comparing the delicacies, the cooks were slaving away, basting, roasting, toasting and decorating their concoctions.

Meantime, kids were playing volleyball and digging in the sand at the annual Oberlin Business Alliance Beach Party on Penn Avenue.

Robert Groneweg, owner of R&M Service Center, which sells barbecue grills, won the overall trophy plus plaques for his beef brisket and pork.

David Bergling, advertising manager for *The Oberlin Herald*, won the poultry and miscellaneous prizes for his "drunken chicken" and a vegetable medley of corn, potatoes, onions and peppers from his garden.

Dan Grafel, a farmer and manager of D&S

Grain and Cattle Co. in Traer, took the prize for ribs.

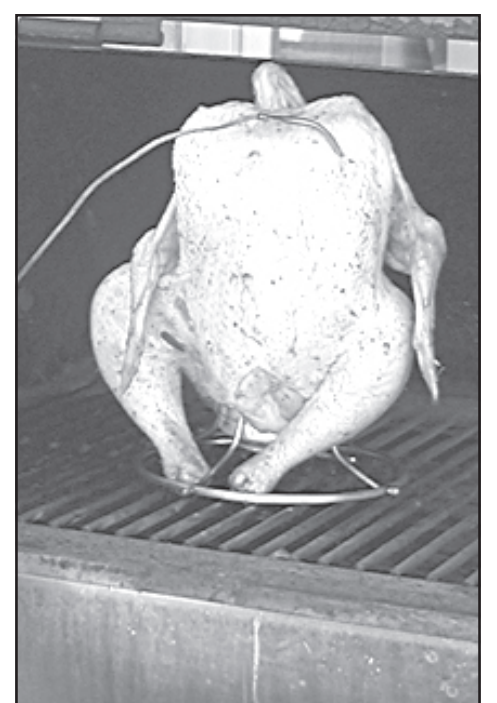
Former Oberlin mayor Gary Walter, president of The Bank, didn't win anything for his fancy cooking but one of the judges was heard to ask for his recipe for corn muffins with grilled pineapple, ice cream, caramel syrup and roasted pecans, which he entered in the miscellaneous category.

Judges were Patty Skubal of the Vault, Gene Soderlund of Decatur Co-op, Wayne Hackney of Oberlin Concrete and Doug Williby, an oil tank truck driver.

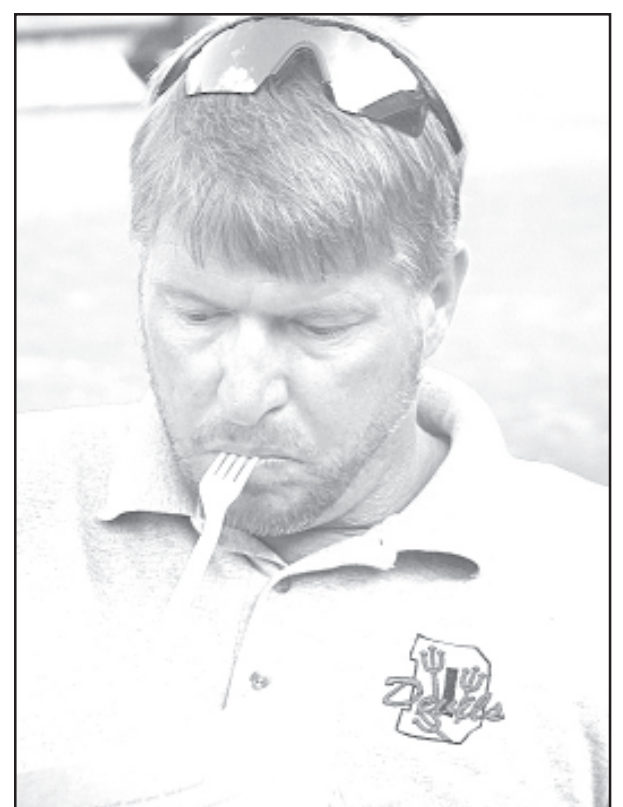
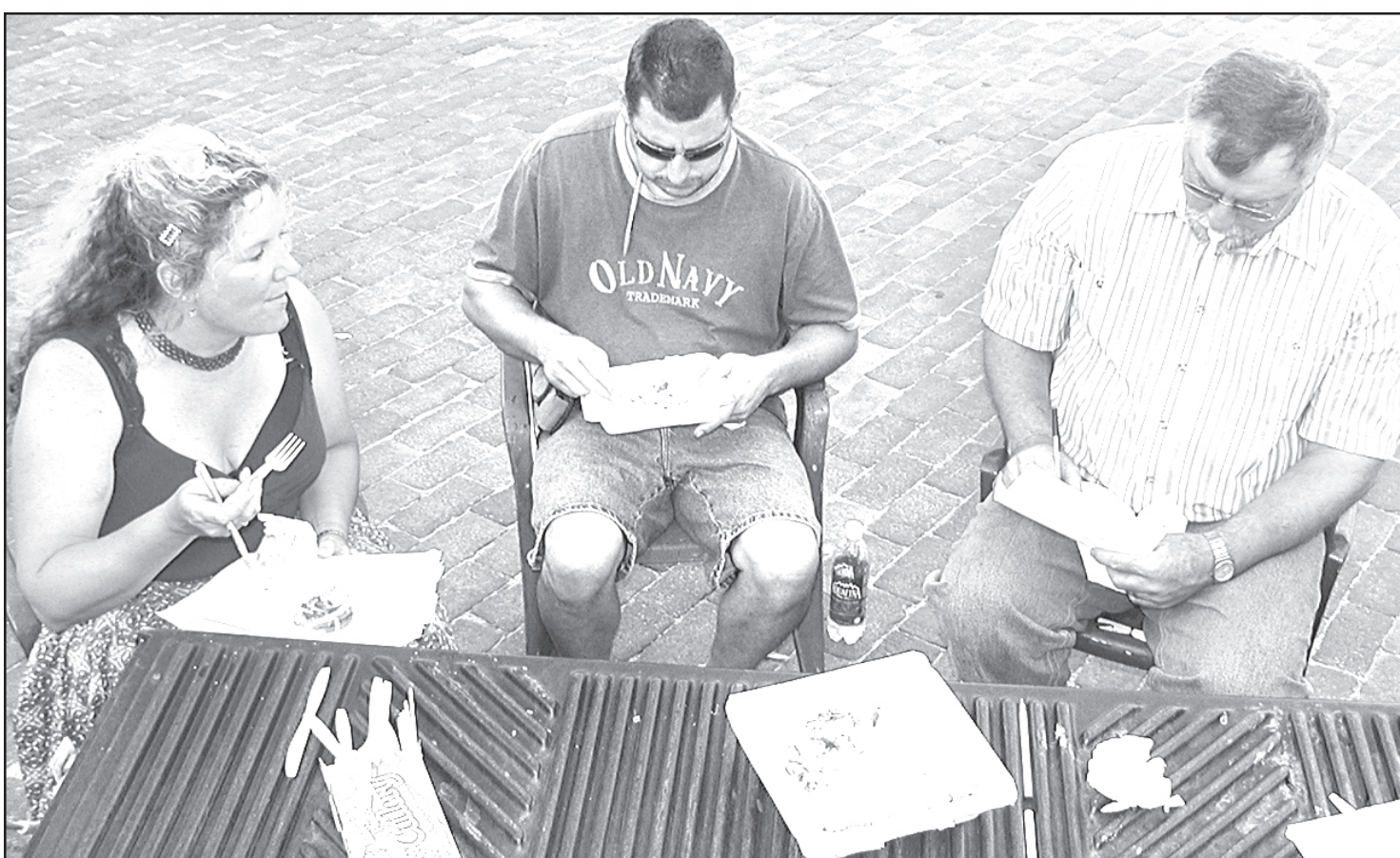
While the Oberlin Business Alliance, which sponsored the contest and the annual Beach Party, had planned to auction the leftovers after the judging, the cooks, their families and friends didn't leave much.

Everyone had to taste test each other's efforts.

While no money was raised for the Alliance's Christmas decorating fund, the cooks, judges, helpers and friends all seemed to be having a great time and said they were looking forward to a rematch next year.



THE PRIZE-WINNING CHICKEN (above) was wired for cooking during the contest on Friday. Robert Groneweg, (left) the grand-prize winner, checked a cooker to make sure all was well as the contest began.



BITING HIS FORK IN CONCENTRATION, Gene Soderlund (above) filled out the judging sheets for the contest. The other judges (left) Patty Skubal, Wayne Hackney and Doug Williby (writing), were also working hard.