



**AT CITY PARK** last Wednesday, Wesley Geihlsler (left) and Jacob Gee (above) looked at the goodies they could eat for dinner during the Back-to-School Picnic. Anita Hirsch (below) sang several songs and played her guitar while people ate in the park.

## Crowd gathers in park for annual picnic and to meet new teachers

The weather was perfect, the food plentiful and church-potluck good, the speeches short, and one lucky teacher took home \$1,000.

In fact, the only problem for many people at the annual Oberlin Back-to-School picnic was which of the 26 desserts to pick.

The picnic and informal meet-the-teachers-and-coaches get-together is put on each year by the school district, the Oberlin-Decatur County Area Chamber of Commerce and the Oberlin Business Alliance.

For most of its history, the main course has been fried chicken and baked beans supplied by Raye's Grocery. This year, organizers asked the store to supply barbecued beef and baked beans for a change of pace.

Between 225 and 250 people went through the buffet line, getting a sandwich and beans, then choosing side dishes from the more than 60 salads and hot dishes before getting to the overloaded dessert table. Culligan Water Conditioning Co. provided gallons of water and cups, ice and tea were available.

After filling their plates, people took their supper at picnic tables provided by the city, on lawn chairs or on the grass, and listened as Anita Hirsch sang and played the guitar.

After dinner Calista Isbel helped *Oberlin Herald* publisher Cynthia Haynes and advertising manager David Bergling draw a winner from a big barrel of names of people who signed up at participating merchants for the newspaper's annual \$1,000 Shopping Spree promotion.

The first entry pulled belonged to Spanish teacher Carol Brown, who skipped up front to collect \$1,000 in scrip to spend with participating merchants over the next week or so.

After the drawing, Decatur Community High Principal Charles Haug introduced the new teachers. Jeni Henningson will teach first grade after working as an aide for several years. Belinda Jones will teach eighth-grade English and be the at-risk tutor while her husband



**WITH HIS PLATE** in his lap, Kelden Breth sat in a lawn chair at City Park while he ate his dinner during the picnic last Wednesday.

Jeff will teach physical education and be the boys basketball and track coach. Rachel and J.D. Johnson will both teach history and social studies and Mr. Johnson will also be the head football coach and assistant boys basketball coach.

Activities Director Joe Dreher introduced the high school coaches, Dick Ahlberg, cross country and

golf; Sherri Ruf, volleyball; Mr. Johnson, football and track; Mr. Jones, boys basketball; Terry Ream, girls basketball; and himself, wrestling, then each gave a short update on their upcoming season.

Then everyone picked up their serving dishes and chairs, cleaned up the area, said goodbye to neighbors and friends and headed home.



— Story and photos by Cynthia Haynes