



DANIELLE DARLAND (above left) and Aspen Gallentine worked last Wednesday on their car for the Lunch Box Derby while Carrie Schurr watched. Celianna Shobe and Emily Howland (below right) talked with Raye's Grocery store manager Mory Zodrow about their car. A car with the watermelon rind as its body (below left) was on display in the gym.

Kids and parents build cars with fruits and vegetables

Starfruit, grapes, gummy bears, asparagus, strawberries and cherries decorated the racing machines last Wednesday at Oberlin Elementary School.

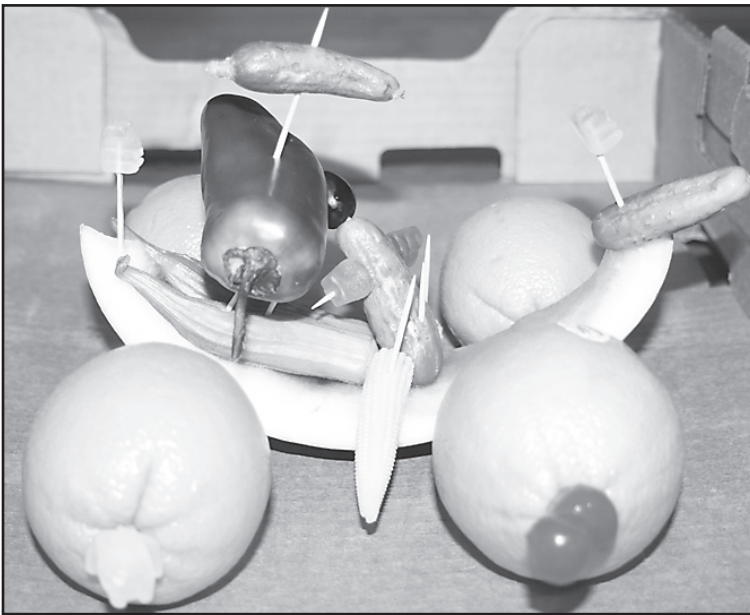
Each had been carefully selected by the builders. The "parts" were attached to the vehicles by toothpicks and skewer parts. Some were stacked on top of each other. Others were put on the vehicles separately.

Each of the fourth and fifth graders got to try their hand at building and decorating a car made of fruits and vegetables for the annual Lunch Box Derby.

The derby started years ago with sponsorship from the Washington Apple Association. When the association dropped out, Raye's Grocery kept the annual event going here. Manager Mory Zodrow said the people at Raye's enjoy seeing the involvement of the parents with the kids and how much fun they all have doing it. The store donates all the fruits, vegetables, rubber bands and skewers for the derby.

The store, said Mr. Zodrow, also provides trophies for first, second and third place. The school provides a trophy for most creative.

Mr. Zodrow said he's not sure how many years the Lunch Box Derby has been running, but it was long enough ago that Ronnie Black made the racing ramp. Glen Stragey, said Mr. Zodrow, did the paint job on the ramp.



The students built their racing machines in the morning and then raced them after lunch.

Often, the cars fell apart as they rolled down the ramp. On some, the tires wouldn't spin, but that didn't stop the kids from cheering for the favorites.

Receiving trophies in fourth grade were:

- Alex Hayward and Alexia Bauer with "Bugsy Wugsy," which went 33 feet, 8 inches for first place.
- Maddie Johnson and Dani Rouse with "Gummy Bear Beach," 33 feet, 6 inches for second.
- Faith Meitl and Isabel Grafel with "Jazza Fashizzle," 32 feet, nine

inches for third.

Winners in fifth grade were:

- Mason Berry, Taylor Brown and Aubrey Sport with "The Pickle Mobile" won most creative.
- Kole Breth, Kel Grafel and Jacob Gee with "Dangerous Dragster," 31 feet, 3 inches for first.
- Cassidy Gillespie, Lily Singleton-Marine and Kelli Bryan with "Orange-Zilla," 27 feet, 9 inches for second.
- Kyleana Blau and Genna Randel with "Gummy Bears' Food Car," 27 feet, 2 inches for third.
- Hannah Vick and Megan Lohoe-fener won most creative with "The Black Racer."



KOLE BRETH (above) tried to find the right spot to put a skewer axle in his cucumber car. Megan Lohoe-fener (left) carried a box to fill up with fruits and vegetables as she chose parts for her car.



— Story and photos by Kimberly Davis