

Off to the (zucchini) races

By Emily Mentzer
The Itemizer-Observer

MONMOUTH — Students at Mid-Valley Christian Academy filled the gymnasium on Friday afternoon to see whose zucchini creations would travel the fastest and farthest down a ramp.

Those were two of eight categories students competed in for the fourth annual Zucchini Car Races, the brain child of head administrator, Gaye Stewart.

“We were trying to do something fun for the kids,” said administrator Mike Stewart. “The first couple of years, we did it out in the parking lot.”

Teacher Michael Dupuis said the event became a spirit day and gave students a chance to work on team-building.

“We had a really elaborate ramp out here, but then the weather wasn’t predictable,” Mike Stewart said. “We had some that were on skateboards for distance, and they went clear to the end of the parking lot.”

After that, Dupuis said the rules were tweaked to discourage strapping a large squash onto a skateboard.

“It’s hard to determine a winner when they all go the distance,” Dupuis said.

Even so, many of the entries for “farthest” were attached to something with wheels — the winner lay on the back of a Tonka flatbed truck.

Other categories brought out the creativity of students — some with a little inspiration from their parents, Mike Stewart said. In the “Most Whimsical” category, one student created a tyrannosaurus rex chasing a cow.

“He’s going to have a hamburger,” Mike Stewart said.

In the “Most Colorful,” a roller-skating zucchini wore the same dress as its creator, while another — the winner — was splashed with all the colors of the rainbow, and looked like a caterpillar.

In the “Funniest,” a zucchini could be spotted taking a nice bath, while another was turned into a whale — complete with Jonah riding inside.

“Some tied in Bible verses that we’re using,” Mike Stewart said.

Five impartial judges had a tough time deciding the winners, he said.

“At one point they had three and asked,



PHOTOS BY EMILY MENTZER/Itemizer-Observer
Students tested their zucchini creations Friday afternoon.

‘can we have a tie?’” Mike Stewart said. “No, we can’t have a tie. They made some selections. All of you did a great job.”

After the winners of the farthest and fastest categories were determined, any student who had a zucchini on wheels could try



Mid-Valley Christian Academy students let their creativity show on Friday.



Zucchini creations were on display on Friday afternoon.

his or her creation on the ramp. Because the squash grows curved, simply putting wheels on it can make the vegetable go crooked.

Students gathered around until all who wanted to race their creation had a chance

to do so before enjoying refreshments of — what else? — zucchini muffins.

“We said the winner is the one who had the most fun,” Mike Stewart said. “I think you all had fun.”

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Harlan Boyce watches as Mike Stewart launches his zucchini car down the ramp.



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