

Home, a nail at a time

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A girl needed money for her house.

According to Zaniya Edwards, age 6, that was enough reason to bring coins day after day to her elementary school.

The students of Eastern Wayne Elementary raised \$380 in their Nickels for Nails coin drive earlier this spring.

That's a hefty amount, said Beth Rose, Habitat for Humanity external relations director.

The money went to help them buy supplies for Habitat for Humanity of Wayne County. The students also made a welcome banner for the Greene family, who are the new owners of the home they helped build -- and whose children will be attending Eastern Wayne this fall.

More than 300 students signed their name to the banner, which was hung at the house for the rededication ceremony.

The children of Hall A were surprised when they walked outside on Friday and saw the parking lot filled with a bouncy house, corn hole and games.

The staff of Habitat for Humanity planned a celebration of Hall A's fundraising success. They won the competition for raising the most money.

The hall is the first grade and kindergarten classes, but the age disadvantage was not a problem for the 10 classes' fundraising efforts.

They raised almost \$150.

But they did not know there was a reward for raising the most nickels.

That was just a surprise reward.

"They weren't buying a prize," Ms. Rose said. "We wanted to show them that good things come from helping others."

Ms. Rose ran the spoon race station, where students were challenged to race with wooden spoons balancing golf balls.

The students rotated stations every five minutes. The bouncy house and Plinko game were the favorite stations.

While Plinko involved just dropping a disk down a pegboard, the prize boxes at the end were the most coveted station of all.

"I won a prize," Zaniya said, displaying her sticker book.

A few of the students thought the money was for their principal's house. That misconception was straightened out later.

Ian Montgomery, age 5, thought it was for building blocks, but he said he likes blocks.

He understood, however, that the class had built something together --



and that it was special.

But Madison Thorton, age 6, hit the nail on the head.

"We helped build a house," she said. "You should help people."

That was the message that Ms. Rose wanted to convey.

"It was a way to say thank you," she said.

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