

City uses beets on streets

BY DAN WARNER
Staff Reporter

Beets were one of early human civilization's cultivated vegetables, and now the Missouri Department of Transportation is using them to break the ice in another area — winter roads.

Geomelt is a by product of the process of manufacturing sugar from sugar beets, which, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, makes up 55 percent of sugar produced domestically.

John Buckwalter, Kirksville's director of public works, said Geomelt helps make rock salt more effective at lower temperatures and is environmentally friendly.

"[Geomelt] is more effective, but it also helps the environment because we don't have to use as much salt," Buckwalter said. "Anything we can do that cuts down the amount of salt we have to put on the streets is good."

Buckwalter said Geomelt helps keep salt from washing off of the roads, thereby lowering the amount of salt in runoff.

Minimizing the effects of runoff on areas surrounding the roads protects the environment against interference

from unnaturally introduced chemicals that can hurt plant growth. Reducing the amount of salt used protects the road as well, which can be eroded by rock salt.

Tim Jackson, maintenance liaison engineer for the Missouri Department of Transportation, said chemicals applied to icy roads can pollute the melting snow and spread to other areas. Because Geomelt is a natural, noncorrosive product, it lowers the ecologically damaging chemical content of runoff.

Jackson said treating rock salt with other chemicals lowers the temperature at which the salt is effective.

"Salt alone does not work very well at those cold temperatures [that Missouri has recently experienced]," Jackson said.

It takes almost 10 times as much salt at 0 degrees as it does at 25 degrees. Jackson said that instead of using 10 times as much salt, MoDOT plows more and treats the salt



Photo Illustration by Brian O'Shaughnessy/Index

to increase its effectiveness. He said adding chemicals like Geomelt increases the effectiveness of the chloride in salt crystals.

Kirksville's rock salt is treated with six gallons of Geomelt for every ton of salt, and Geomelt advertises that it reduces salt use by up to 30 percent. At \$1.78 per gallon for Geomelt, compared to a ton of salt at \$74.80, there also are financial advantages to using Geomelt, Buckwalter said.

Kirksville has used Geomelt since 2003, which was ahead of statewide use by MoDOT,

which Jackson said began in 2005 in the area around St. Joseph, Mo.

The recent rash of heavy winter weather throughout Missouri has put MoDOT to work, but Jackson said road clearance is going smoothly.

"We've had some pretty major storms, but right now it looks like we're about at average salt and chemical usage," Jackson said.

Buckwalter said Kirksville currently has 800 tons of salt to work with.

"We should be in good shape to get through the rest of the winter," Buckwalter said.

New training facility opens in Kirksville

BY MAXIMILIAN ERNST
Staff Reporter

Winter is the time of year for basketball, wrestling, swimming and now baseball.

The Sandlot, an indoor softball and baseball training facility, located at 407 W. Hickory St., opened its doors Jan. 13.

When Preston Sparks, owner of Sparks Constructors, saw his last tenant close his business, he had trouble finding a new company to rent the space. He asked his son, Todd Sparks, whether he had any ideas about how the building could at least generate some money.

Todd said he came up with an idea that sounded a little crazy at the time — an indoor baseball facility. The building had been empty for a little more than a year, which made it easier to accept the idea.

The building process was not too difficult, Todd said, because the building and rooms already existed. The family-owned construction company refurbished the rooms.

"It was basically just a matter of putting some new color on the walls and putting in a new carpet," Todd said.

Most of the money spent on the privately funded project went into indoor baseball equipment such as pitcher's mounds, bases, two pitching machines and security nets. Nets divide the room into four channels, two for batting and two for pitching. The whole room can be adjusted to the needs of the users. Players can pitch and bat in the same channel or remove the nets,

machines and bases entirely to play soccer. Although the room is too small to host regular indoor soccer matches, Sparks said he has seen some interesting soccer practice sessions at the Sandlot.

"Whatever you want to do, the sky is the limit," Todd said.

Todd also said he wants to open his venue for birthday parties and other activities. The facility welcomes everyone, starting at \$12 per hour for pitching and \$24 for batting practice.

Todd said he expected there would be a demand for such a place because some people from Kirksville travel to Columbia so their children could work on their batting or pitching techniques in the middle of winter.

His expectations were right. Last Saturday, during the opening weekend, he already had training times set up with about 20 interested players.

"We had a few calls from college students, but mainly 13 to 18-year-olds and their parents use the facilities," Todd Sparks said.

Many of the Sparks' friends use the facility, but Todd expects more customers as word spreads.

Kelsey Jacques, Kirksville High's Sophomore School catcher, said she was excited to use the facility to practice. As a friend of the Sparks family, she was one of the first to use the facility.

"Before the Sandlot opened, my only chance for practicing was going to camps or playing outside," Jacques said. "I didn't really practice much in the winter, but now



Krista Goodman/Index

An indoor softball and baseball facility opened Jan. 13 at 407 W. Hickory St.

I will come here at least four times a week."

Truman head baseball coach Dan Davis said he hasn't seen the place yet, but it might be a good facility for them to use.

The team starts its season in the middle of February and

is in the middle of practice.

"If we are going to use The Sandlot, it will most likely be in fall, though, when we do individual practice," Davis said. "I don't think any of my players will use it in the next few weeks."

NEWS | In Brief

Minor Detail to host auditions

Minor Detail, Truman's all-female acapella group, will host auditions from 6 to 8 p.m. Jan. 26 on the third floor of the Student Union Building. Students can choose what they would like to sing, but each audition must be less than three minutes long. Callbacks will be at 6 p.m. Jan. 28.

Theater faculty present "Art" play

The Truman theater faculty will present "Art" in Ophelia Parrish Black Box Theater Jan. 22 and 23 at 8 p.m. Joan Larkins-Mather is directing the play, which stars auditorium manager Randy Bame and theater faculty Ron Rybkowski and David Charles Goyette. The play follows three friends as they debate the value of an abstract painting.

Travel council offers scholarship

Currently enrolled sophomores, juniors and seniors can apply for \$1,000 scholarships from the Missouri Travel Council. The Council will accept applications from students pursuing hospitality related majors including hotel and restaurant management and parks and recreation. Applicants must have a grade point average of at least 3.0 and must submit applications by March 2. For more information, go to www.missouritravel.com.

SAB presents movie screening

The Student Activities Board will host a screening of "Zombieland" at 7 p.m. Friday Jan. 22 in Baldwin Auditorium. Woody Harrelson and Emma Stone star in the horror comedy about two men trying to survive in a world filled with zombies. The movie is Rated R for horror violence/gore and language. Admission is free. For more information contact David Sherwood at 660-785-4722.

Students celebrate MLK Day

The Multicultural Affairs Center and the Center for Teaching and Learning hosted the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Challenge on Monday. Students celebrated by volunteering for local organizations including Out Reach Mission, Victim Support Services and the Salvation Army. The day concluded with a reflection dinner where students shared their experiences.

University sponsors presidency forum

The University will sponsor an open forum today for Provost Troy Paino, the sole finalist for the University Presidency. The forum will be in Violette Hall 1000 at 1:30 p.m. for students and 3:30 p.m. for faculty and staff. Attendees are encouraged to meet with the provost and ask questions about his plans for the University.

Local organizations receive grants

The United Way raised \$225,400 for their 2010 campaign, 82 percent of the \$275,000 goal. The organization gave \$162,000 in grants to several local organizations, including the Adair County Family YMCA, Girl Scouts of Eastern Missouri and the North Central Missouri Red Cross.

Fireside Fridays provide music

The Student Union Building will host the first Fireside Friday of the semester from 3 to 5 p.m. Jan. 22. KTRM will play live music and refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact Dave Lusk at 660-785-4186.

Student Senate | In Brief

- Student Senate passed a resolution to purchase 1,000 recycling bins.

Crime | Reports

- 1/18 Freshman David McDonough was issued a Missouri Uniform Complaint and Summons for Minor in Possession of Intoxicants.
- 1/15 Sophomore Brittany Newton was issued a Missouri Uniform Complaint and Summons for Minor in Possession of Intoxicants.
- 1/15 Richard Barnhardt was arrested in the Ryle Hall Cafeteria for a probation violation

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