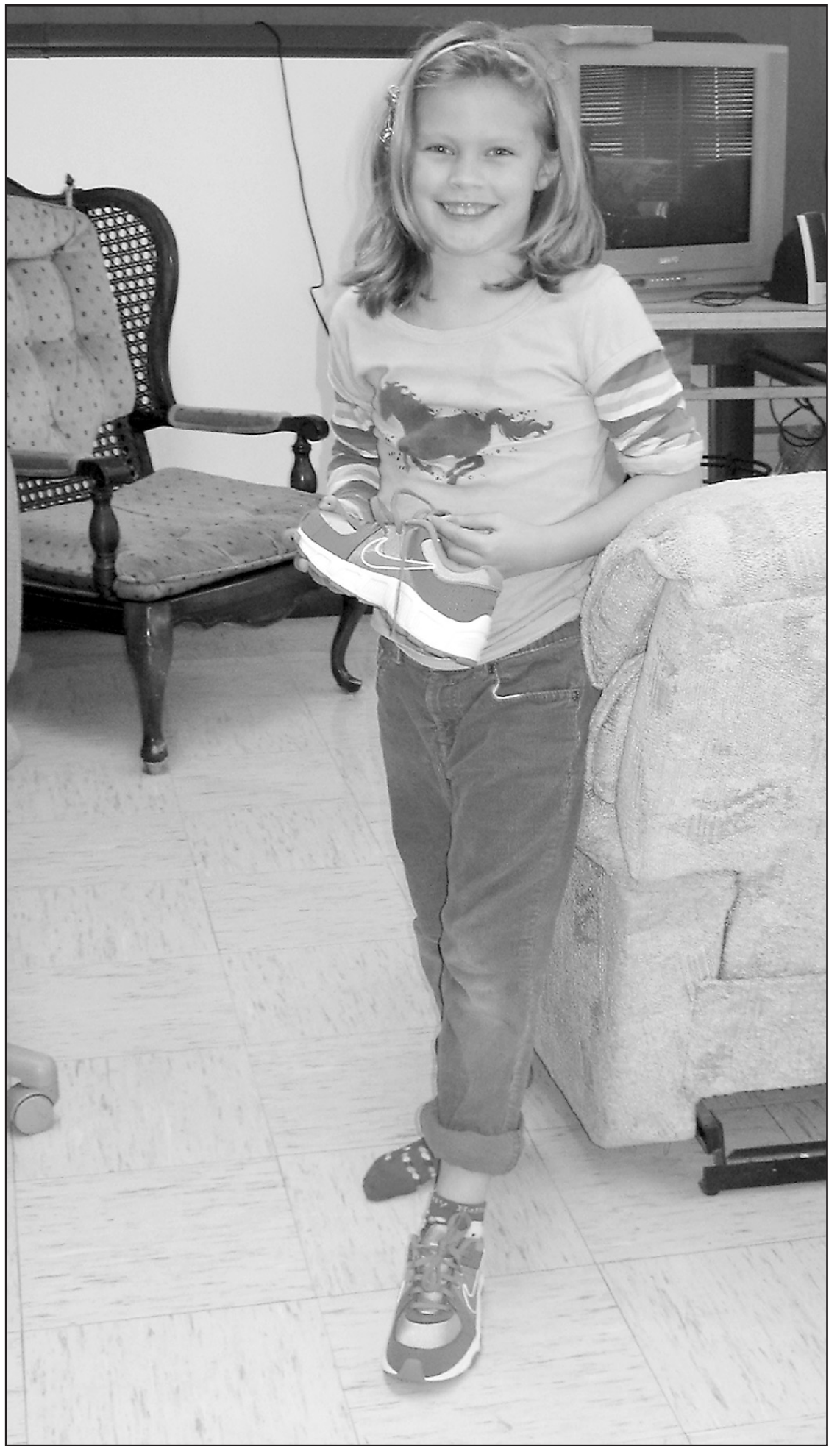


**SECOND-GRADER** Collin Mumm (above) joined his classmates on the floor during their Christmas party Dec. 21 when a Secret Santa surprised them with new tennis shoes. Alana Bishop (right) modeled her new Nikes for teacher Kimberly Witt.



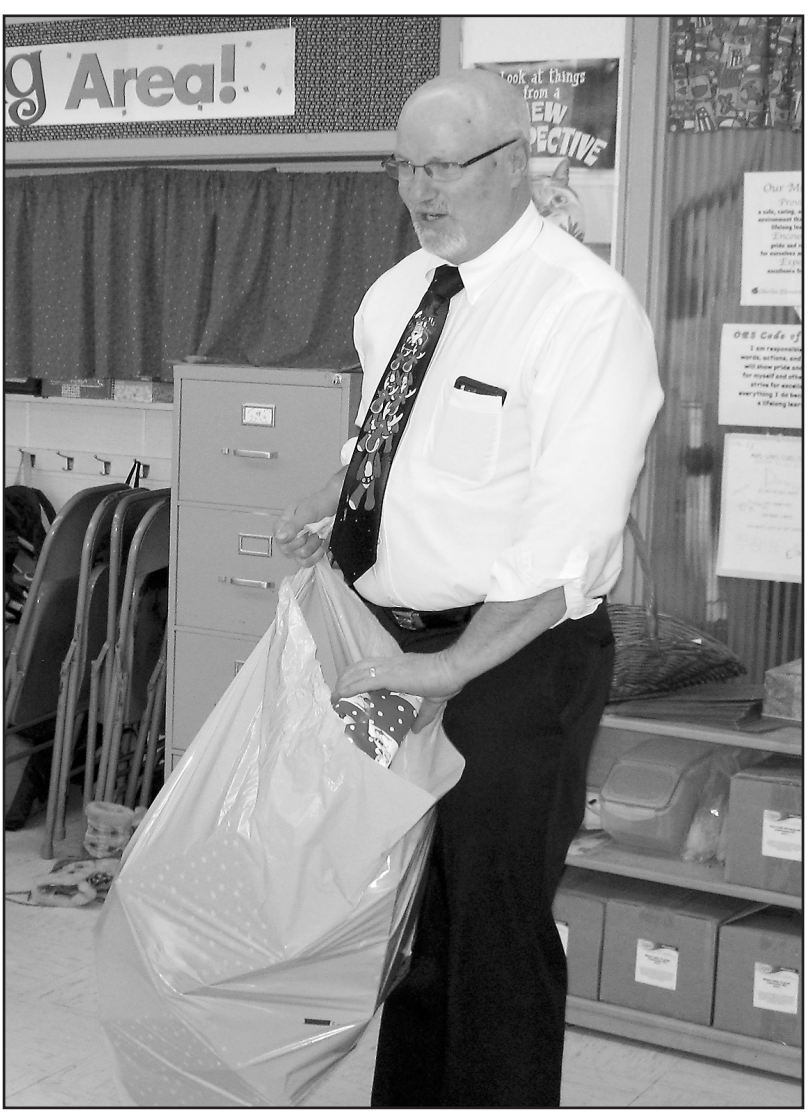
# Secret Santa surprises second graders

Both classes at Oberlin Elementary School get brand new tennis shoes

By **STEPHANIE DeCAMP**  
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 A Secret Santa was at work this year at Oberlin Elementary School. Working with second-grade teachers Kathy Tacha and Kimberly Witt, as well as Principal Duane Dorshorst, a mysterious donor gave all 21 second graders a brand new pair of tennis shoes for their Christmas party on Friday, Dec. 21. "They were high-quality tennis shoes from the Sports Shop in McCook," Mr. Dorshorst said, adding that he promised not to reveal the identity of the donor. "The kids' teachers might have done a math activity graphing every kid's shoe size." "It was just so amazing, you would not believe it," said Mrs. Tacha. "This person

individually wrapped the shoes, and when they saw them, there was all this squealing, and old shoes flew off and new shoes went on. "It was a total thrill. I wish everybody could have been here to see it. The kids knew absolutely nothing. I don't remember how long before Christmas, but it was a couple weeks before that we did the math assignment." The math assignment was the best part, she said. "(Mrs. Witt and I) had the kids take off their shoes to figure out their sizes because we were studying graphs in math," she said. "So we did our tally marks and made a graph and the kids had no idea what we were doing. It worked out really nice and they made a

beautiful graph to go with it. "So we got the sizes to Duane and we bumped them up a bit for growing room, and they all got shoes. It was very generous; they're amazing gifts. As you know, kids can always use the shoes." Mr. Dorshorst said that the Santa told him that he always liked to teach children about giving back, and that this was one of the ways he could give back to others. "When I took the shoes up to the classroom," Mr. Dorshorst said, laughing, "it took a long time to convince the kids that they weren't from me. It was hard for them to grasp the "Secret Santa" thing. But they were all excited, tearing into them and happy, just thrilled to get something like that at the school Christmas party."



**PRINCIPAL DUANE DORSHORST** (above) got to deliver the shoes to the classrooms, but said he was sworn to secrecy on who the Santa might be. Alicia Salem (from left, left photo), Jessie Tate and Hunter Kelley were all surprised by the shoes, and said they couldn't believe their teachers had tricked them into giving up their shoe sizes weeks before for a math assignment.



**Photos by Kimberly Witt**