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Holton High School junior Chris Luker was one of about a dozen students in Bob Phillips' residential architecture class this year who helped build this new house at 825 Ohio Ave. Luker said he plans to take the class again as a senior and help with the class' 2006-07 project house at 10th and Pennsylvania. Luker also was busy this past weekend, participating in discus and shot put events at the state track meet.

Photo by Brian Sanders

HHS residential architecture class finishes second house

■ Next project set for 10th and Pennsylvania

By BRIAN SANDERS
Recorder Staff

Ask Holton High School junior Chris Luker — you can learn a lot from building a house.

"I wouldn't mind getting into construction," Luker said. "It taught me how to line things up straight and do it your best the first time, so you won't have to go back and do it again. And, be patient doing it."

Luker was one of about a dozen students involved in Bob Phillips' residential architecture class at HHS this past year, building a house that marked the class' second collaboration with USDA Rural Development and Homestead Affordable Housing. He said building the home was a good experience, and he plans to help build another house with the class during the 2006-07 school year.

The new 1,064 square-foot, three bedroom house, located at 825 Ohio Ave. in Holton, is similar in construction to a house built last year by Phillips' class, but Luker said work on the new house flowed a lot more smoothly than the class' previous project.

"I heard that last year's house didn't go too well, and the deadlines came too fast," he said. "At this point in time last year, they were still working on the other house. This one just came together pretty easily."

Luker also noted that while students involved in the class "pretty much helped around everywhere," his main projects while building the house included caulking and siding.

Homestead Affordable Housing officials said Phillips' class participated in "an excellent and model program (which) teachers students job skills that are in demand, provides new homes in older Holton neighborhoods, and provides a great opportunity for local first-time homebuyers." A similar program has begun in Hiawatha, which will build its first new home with high school students over the 2006-07 school year, the company noted.

As it did with the other house, Homestead will work with Rural Development to help a first-time buyer purchase the home. The completed home also will be sold with the down payment and closing costs covered by a $4,000 grant, which Homestead provides through GNB Mortgage and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Topeka. Proceeds from the sale are then split with the school, which uses the funds to purchase tools and equipment for the class.

Phillips' class will build its next home on a lot located at the corner of 10th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, where a 1,130 square-foot home with three bedrooms and two

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House construction...

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baths is planned. Lots for homes built by the class were purchased by Homestead, which worked with Denison State Bank on loans to cover lot purchases and construction costs.

Most of the construction work for the new home was done at the site, with one exception being the house's cabinets. They were built at Eubanks Wood Works under the company's supervision.

Homestead officials cited DSB and Eubanks for their assistance in building the house, also noting the help of Home Depot, which donated about $1,000 in tools to the class.

Other local businesses involved include Kellerman Real Estate, Holton Lumber Company, Holton Farm and Home, Riley Electric, Modern Air, Coder Plumbing, Haug Construction, Jayhawk TV and Appliance, Dean's Tub and Tile, Mick Tree Service, Fox Seamless Gutter, Mark's Overhead Door, Eisenbarth Construction and Midwest Construction.