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# Western Roundup dinner slated

## Major fundraiser to benefit Auburn schools

By Loryll Nicolaisen, Journal Staff Writer



Ben Furtado/Auburn Journal

Ben Furtado/Auburn Journal E.V. Cain seventh-graders, from left, Taylor Eichman, Meg Billing, Brittany Bartle, Kaela Turner, Zachary Hecker and Melissa O'Neil hope to wrangle community members into attending the Auburn Education Foundation Western Roundup Dinner Thursday.

Hankering for some good barbecue? The Auburn Education Foundation hopes local cowboys and cowgirls will mosey on down to E.V. Cain's Draglla Gym for the Western Roundup Dinner Thursday evening, loading up on chicken, ribs and all the fixings in order to lasso support for local schools.

"Schools need our community support and this is a unique way to help our schools do better," said Ken Nittler, Auburn Education Foundation president.

The Western Roundup is one of two dinners the foundation hosts each year, in addition to a St. Patrick's Day feast. Fundraisers like these dinners enable the foundation to give back to the Auburn Union Elementary School District. Last year's fall dinner wrangled in somewhere between \$5,000 and \$6,000, between the dinner and the raffle, Nittler said.



Funding goes back to the Auburn Union Elementary School District in the form of enrichment and sustaining grants, Nittler said. The foundation awarded \$15,000 in enrichment grants this spring, as well as \$30,000 — \$7,500 for each school site — in sustaining grants, used school-wide for purposes like retaining library services.

"We're very thankful to have that group," said Meg Billing, an E.V. Cain Middle School seventh-grader considering volunteering at Thursday's dinner. "They could be supporting any district but they're helping us, and that's special."

Those attending Thursday's dinner will get to hear the musical stylings of the E.V. Cain honor band. Seventh-grader Rachel Fajardo, who plays clarinet with the band, appreciates what the Auburn Education Foundation does for Auburn Union's schools.

"They give money to good causes, for extra opportunities," she said Monday.

Shirley Paris, event co-chairwoman and a teacher at E.V. Cain Middle School, said Thursday's dinner should be fun for all.

"Kids generate excitement, and E.V. Cain kids are so excited to host this dinner," she said. "The funds go to their school and into their classrooms."

The dinner is sure to please the taste buds, Nittler said.

"What's special about this year is the Auburn Rotary barbecue crew is doing the barbecue," he said. "It's world famous, or at least community famous, is how I refer to it."

A silent auction and special raffle round out the meal. Auction items include gift baskets created by the school sites, gift certificates to local restaurants and free lodging at the Peppermill Reno.

For the third year in a row, will also have a special drawing for an iPod Touch. Only 100 are available for this drawing, and cost \$5 each, Nittler said.

The Auburn Education Foundation realizes the dinner is scheduled to occur the same night as the vice-presidential debate. The solution? Take dinner home, Nittler said.

"We have takeout so people can swing by, get their takeout and get home in time for the debate," he said.

To-go orders are the same price as dine-in tickets.

Tickets for the dinner are available at the Auburn Union Elementary School District office as well as the district's school sites. Tickets will also be available at the door Thursday evening.

The Journal's Loryll Nicolaisen can be reached at lorylln@goldcountrymedia.com, or comment

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