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Chadrad Communications, Inc.
226 Bordeaux St - Chadron, NE 69337
308-432-5545 fax 308-432-5601
E-mail: kcsr@chadrad.com

(Neb.)-Cookout For A Cause Provides Fun And Tasty Evening, Benefits 10 Causes



By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 08/19/2013 12:01 PM

(CHADRON)-The third annual Cookout For A Cause at Helen's Restaurant in Chadron on Saturday offered tasty food, a fun evening, and proceeds benefiting a variety of causes. Grillers vied for a chance to win money for the charity of their choice, and participants paid \$15 per person or \$20 per couple to browse each of 10 booths to sample the grilled specialties and then vote on their favorite. Kids enjoyed playing on the inflatable bouncy castle and The Barflies band provided musical entertainment and opportunities for dancing.

Helen's owner Mimi Wheeler Groves said this year "went really really well," even with less grillers than last year. She said the attendance was about the same this year with more than 450 participants and "lots of little kids running around." The Chadron Home Center donated the use of the bouncy castle for the kiddos to play on this year, and Wheeler Groves said that really provided some fun entertainment for them.

A unique occurrence this year was a first place tie between Bauerkempers and their cause, the Chadron High FFA, and Terry Williamson for his cause, Trista Ellis. Each racked up 102 votes. Wheeler Groves says organizers couldn't believe it when they "counted and counted and still came up with the same amount." Between tips donated by Helen's workers, gate fees, and a reduced rate by The Barflies for their performance, Wheeler Groves says organizers were able to give the \$800 first-place prize to both first-place winners instead of making them split the amount. Petersen Drug took second place with 40 votes, earning \$500 for the Chadron Public Library, and third place with 38 votes went to Chadron Community Hospital, benefiting the Circle of Light program with \$300.

Two other fundraisers helped raise money for the event as well – beer sold out of light-up mugs, which netted \$3 a mug for the causes, and The Splash Zone. The Splash Zone featured a large clown face, a bucket of water,

and city manager Wayne Anderson. For \$1 a ball or \$5 for 6 balls, participants took turns throwing their balls in an attempt to hit the clown face and cause the bucket of water to splash down on Anderson. Wheeler Groves says she took several turns under the bucket as well and lost count of all the times it overturned on her. It was worth it, she said, because all the fundraising afforded organizers the opportunity to award over \$262 to all additional grillers this year for each of their charities. Some of the booths also had raffles taking place and other items for sale to earn additional revenue for their featured cause.

Overall, Wheeler Groves says the event was a great success. She said everyone seemed to have a really good time and the grillers this year were "top quality." It was good she couldn't vote, she said, because she wouldn't have known who to vote for since it was all so good.

After all the votes were tallied, the final standings and financial splits are as follows:

- Tied for 1st Bauerkempers--Chadron High FFA, \$800, 102 votes
 Terry Williamson--Trista Ellis, \$830 (\$30 from anonymous donor at the gate), 102 votes
- 2nd Petersen Drug--Chadron Public Library, \$500, 40 votes
- 3rd Chadron Community Hospital--Circle of Light, \$300, 38 votes
- 4th Ponderosa Villa--Ponderosa Villa, \$262.47, 29 votes
- 5th Owen Dental--Shop with a Cop, \$262.47, 25 votes
- Tied for 6th Miss Chadron/Northwest Scholarship--Children's Miracle Network, \$262.47, 23 votes
 Milender White Construction Co.--Red Cloud School track reconstruction, \$262.47, 23 votes
- 7th Trunk Butte Christian School--Trunk Butte Christian School, \$262.47, 20 votes
- 8th KCSR/KBPY--Guardians of the Children, \$262.47, 10 votes

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