

March 11-14 Dine Out to Help Out; March 15 Baked Potato Bar to Raise Funds for Backpack Program

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You will have an opportunity to help the Auburn Backpack program Monday through Friday, March 11 through 15.

Contributions to the Backpack program through Sunday, March 31, will be supplemented 50 cents for each dollar up to \$5,000 by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Four Auburn restaurants are participating in Dine Out...to Help Out the Auburn Backpack Program Monday through Thursday, March 11 through 14.

Each day, a portion of sales from a particular restaurant will be contributed to the Backpack program.

March 11: Pizza Hut, all day. A coupon will be available at the restaurant.

The next three days, the event is from 5 to 8 p.m.

Tuesday, March 12: Hickory Road BBQ.

Wednesday, March 13: Arbor Manor Steakhouse & Lounge.

Thursday, March 14: El Portal Mexican Restaurant.

The weeklong opportunity will conclude on Friday, March 15 with a baked potato bar and desserts served from 5 to 8 p.m. at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Auburn. A freewill offering will be taken. You can also learn more about the program, receive a tour and see how the backpacks are assembled.

"I think it's a great opportunity for the community to show their support, and to raise awareness of the need in our area. I'm excited about it," said Bobbie Jones, publicity chair, Auburn Backpack program.

The Auburn Backpack program is a partnership between Calvert Elementary School, the Food Bank of Lincoln, and church and civic organizations in the Auburn Public Schools (APS) District. A committee comprised of a cross section of representation from the school district has met since last summer.

Since late August, eligible families at Calvert Elementary School have received food-filled backpacks after school each Friday or the last school day of the week. Backpacks are filled by volunteers from organizations in the APS district.

There are 21 families served and 24 backpacks filled weekly.

Nemaha County is among 16 Southeast Nebraska counties served by the Food Bank of Lincoln's Backpack program.

The program's mission is to help alleviate child hunger in Southeast Nebraska by providing hungry children with nutritious and easy to prepare food at times when other resources are not available, such as weekends and school vacations.

The Backpack program primarily targets students who qualify for their school's Free Lunch program. Many of these students rely on their school's breakfasts and lunches for their most nutritious meals of the day. In some cases, these are their only meals of the day. These students are then faced with a food crisis over the weekend. The Backpack program is a way to help these students and their families until students return to school on Monday.