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Families make a splash-and dash-for cash

'Fund Run' raised money for schools in Eureka district

By Eileen Wilson Special to the Press Tribune

A sea of maroon and green shirts were in evidence as Cavitt and Olympus Junior High School students jostled for placement on the starting line at Eureka Schools Foundation's 5 kilometer Fund Run last Sunday.

But junior high students weren't the only kids in the crowd. Plenty of little ones ran too, as did their parents, all in an effort to have fun, get fit, and to raise much-needed funds for the foundation.

According to Cavitt physical education teacher Brian Robertson, both junior high schools were giving students "free" miles for the last two weeks of school and allowing "make-up miles" to kids who ran or walked in the Fund Run. Students from the two schools were making a friendly competition of the event.

"I came out for some exercise, but mostly to support the Eureka Union School District," said Fund Run participant and Cavitt parent Martha Pinter. "I beat my daughter in the 5K."

Six hundred and forty eight runners were registered, with Jeff Adkins, 48, in first place for men, with a time of just over 17 minutes. Alexa Lua, 15, took first place for women, with a time of 21 minutes.

And the run was just a start to the day. The race kicked off the beginning of the Eureka Schools Foundations' Country Faire, which offered carnival games, a bounce house, Scholastic book fair, school band performances and a barbecue-chicken buffet dinner.

"The fair was very successful," said Julie Guerrero, executive director of the foundation. "We estimate nearly 3,000 people attended, and we attribute a lot of that to the 5K."

Guerrero said she was surprised by the turnout of the race.

"It was the inaugural, but we still had over 300 pre-register, and over 300 register the day of the race. We had such a tremendous response, we're definitely doing it again next year."

The race alone, raised \$16,000 for Eureka schools, and Guerrero hopes to see 1,000 runners and walkers next year.

Both parent and teacher volunteers were on hand to make sure the event ran smoothly, and to participate in story-book reading, Wii tournaments, cake walk, rock band tournaments, and kid-favorite, the dunk tank, with popular teachers as dunkees.

Guerrero said the Eureka Schools Foundation helps fund programs like technology, libraries, music, foreign language and more, and depends on parent and local business donations, and fundraisers like the Eureka Country Faire.