

# AUBURN SPIRITS

## Auburn Spirits to host special event benefiting Kyle Hicks

STORY BY PAUL RHODES

Auburn Spirits has made a name for itself reaching out to help customers with their wine, beer, spirits and cigar selections. Monthly tasting events have become major social settings, and opportunities to help educate the public on the finer points of wine, beer and cigars.

Now, Auburn Spirits is reaching out to help a young WestSider who is waiting for medical procedure that will change his life. On Saturday, May 30, Auburn Spirits will host a fundraising event for Kyle Hicks, with all proceeds going to help Kyle and his family with their medical expenses.

"We were so touched by Kyle's story," said Auburn Spirits operating manager Jessica Oines. "A lot of our customers know Kyle and his family, or know about his situation, and we just wanted to something to help."

Hicks has a painful skin disease called Epidermolysis Bullosa, and the condition has caused "webbing" of

the skin between his toes and fingers, along with other health problems. A pioneering treatment will require a bone marrow transplant, estimated at \$500,000. The family's insurance provider has declined to pay for the procedure.

On May 30, from 5-9 p.m., Auburn Spirits will have a comfortable tent facility set up in its parking lot. For \$35 per person, visitors can join the knowledgeable Auburn Spirits staff for a unique "under the tent tasting event."

The evening will feature wine, beer and cigar tasting for visitors, and other activities.

"We'll be doing raffles, and also will have a bidding event for some really unique wine and cigar packages," Oines said. "It's going to be a great evening, with everything going to a really, really good cause."

Kyle Hicks is a student at Wichita Northeast Magnet High School, and has an especially severe form of the skin disease. At four feet tall and 51 pounds, he's only about the size of a typical 7-

year-old. He constantly battles infections that consume calories, and spends his days wrapped in bandages, a ritual that literally takes hours to complete.

The "webbing" of the skin between his toes and fingers makes basic tasks challenging. Skin constriction behind his knees causes Kyle to walk with a hunch.

A team of physicians in Minnesota has pioneered a treatment that can provide dramatic improvement for Kyle. That process requires a bone marrow transplant, and expenses are estimated at

\$500,000. Many fundraisers have been held to help Kyle, and Auburn Spirits hopes that customers and other visitors will join in for this important benefit on May 30.

For more information, call Auburn Spirits at 440-1111, or visit [www.auburnspirits.com](http://www.auburnspirits.com).

Or better yet, clip out one of the coupons below, and stop by Auburn Spirits at 13303 W. Maple, Suite 111, just east of the Dillon's Store at 135th and Maple.

