

**By Carolyn Lee**

***The Imperial Republican***

Chase County resident Dan Kunnemann has been elected treasurer of the Nebraska State Fair Board. At a meeting in Grand Island Feb. 12, Kunnemann joined the following on the executive board: Sallie Atkins of Halsey as chairman, Tam Allan of Lincoln as vice-chairman and Joe Andrews of Bassett as secretary.

“Fair’s in my blood,” Kunnemann commented recently. He will complete his 25th year on the Chase County Fair Board this summer, in charge of entertainment.

He filled the late Ed Burke’s term on the state board, serving one and one-half years, and is now serving his second term on the state board. A state board member can run for three three-year terms.

“I love fairs,” Kunnemann said. He exhibited livestock and 4-H projects at the Chase County Fair as a child. His brother and sister, children, and now nieces have also exhibited at fairs.

The number one priority of fairs is the families and young kids, he observed.

Kunnemann is serving on the state board that is responsible for moving the state fair from Lincoln to Grand Island. It’s been a good experience so far, he said.

“Their support is really good,” he said of the Grand Island residents. “We didn’t go to them, they came to us” to choose the new location.

Kunnemann said the building process at Fonner Park, where the fair will now be located, is on schedule, but there’s a lot of work still to be done by the end of August, when the fair begins.

Several new buildings, for livestock and 4-H, are being built. The fair will also use the Heartland Event Center and some horse barns during the fair, as well as the race track for the demolition derby.

The biggest challenge about the location change, Kunnemann said, is moving from a more populated area to one with a smaller population base. “We’re not going to have 300,000 people walking through the grounds. But, we’re looking at the 4-H and FFA factor and catering to the agricultural community.”

There are probably many challenges coming up, but, “People are going to be impressed with our facilities,” he stated.

As treasurer of the Nebraska State Fair Board, Kunnemann keeps track of the finances, although a company provides the bookwork. There are 13 members on the total board.

Serving takes quite a bit of Kunnemann’s time. Besides the monthly board meetings and the additional executive board meetings, he’ll spend all 11 days of the state fair in Grand Island.