



□ *Editor's note: This is one in a series of feature stories concerning organizations that benefit the Imperial area. Volunteering in a community, through organizations, is a way to pay back for the benefits that the community offers an individual.*

**By Carolyn Lee**

***The Imperial Republican***

Investing in the Imperial Community Foundation means investing in Imperial's future. The organization was formed in 1999 as an affiliate of the Nebraska Community Foundation.

As of the end of 2012, \$240,000 had been given back to the Imperial area through grants and scholarships. Some gifts are donor advised, while others are selected by the Fund Advisory Committee.

The Foundation has \$620,000 in assets, of which 97 percent is endowed.

A donor may either designate what their money goes for, or just donate to the general fund.

One of the original founding members of the Foundation, Lori Pankonin, said that when Dean Mitchell was mayor of Imperial, he appointed a committee to set up a foundation. Other communities were doing it, and "Communities benefit by gifting from charitable dollars," Pankonin noted.

"Imperial is what it is today because people years ago had the foresight" to create things such as the Chase County Fair.

"It is in our best interest to focus on future generations," Pankonin stated. You may plant a tree now and won't live to see it grow tall, but other generations will, she explained.

Take a deep breath and then read the list of recipients of grants and gifts from the Foundation: Health care and continuing education students; Imperial Science Camp, the city/school swimming pool and locker room project; Imperial housing study; 4-H Ag Safety Day; 4-H livestock barn project; Lions Club park bathroom project; Rainbow Promise Preschool scholarships;

Community betterment leadership training; Little Readers library program; Imperial Lied Library expansion and equipment; Imperial Volunteer Fire Department; Chase County Emergency Services; Chase County Fair; Chase County Food Pantry; Chase County Freedoms Foundation trip; Chase County Hospital car seat safety program;

Local student clothing and food needs; family food and utility assistance; Champion Community Center; Imperial Jaycees; school music and athletic programs; city baseball/softball programs; ball field scoreboards; city gym project; soccer program; Imperial welcome banners; National FFA trip; school construction class;

Golf course project; Imperial Manor fencing and sidewalk project; Imperial Parkview/Heights ice cream machine and guest room.

Imperial Community Foundation officers are Chairman of the Fund Advisory Committee Elna Johnson, Vice Chairman Dillon Harchelroad, Secretary Lori Pankonin, Beth Bremer, Jane

Moreland, Tyler Pribbeno, Doug Gaswick and Becky Carman.

“Our younger generation has brought an enthusiasm to the board,” Pankonin observed. “They care about Imperial.”

To become a member of the Foundation, or to make a donation, contact any of the above or view the website at [www.imperialfoundation.org](http://www.imperialfoundation.org).