



□ *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

In 1920 Henry Giessenbier founded the Jaycees, or United States Junior Chamber of Commerce, in St. Louis, Mo. It was his vision to provide young people with opportunities which they had little or no access to otherwise attain.

At that time, most young men were out of school and working by age 15, many with jobs they would hold their entire lives.

Giessenbier felt that young men were not receiving the opportunities necessary to develop their skills at a younger age.

The Jaycees were formed to be the leading global network of active young citizens. Their mission is to provide development opportunities that empower young people to create positive change.

The Imperial Jaycee chapter is about 40 members strong. Members must be between ages 18 and 40. Meetings are held the first and third Thursdays of the month at the Jaycee Hall.

The chapter was chartered May 1, 1953.

The chapter sponsors children's events such as Punt, Pass, Kick and Run; Super Shooters; Pitch, Hit and Run; a smoker for hunters during the fall hunting season; a Fathers Day Three-Man Scramble golf tournament in the early summer; a Four-Man Fairway golf tournament in September, and an Exhausted Rooster Night, which initiates new members and honors former members for their services.

The Exhausted Rooster Night this year is March 1 at 6:30 p.m. at the Jaycee Hall on East 5th Street.

Money raised through Jaycee events is directed toward community, school and youth-oriented events.

Local officers include Kyle Sorensen as president; Ben Sauder as secretary; Clint Johnson as treasurer; Garret Paisley as VP of Membership Services; Alex McNair as VP of Community Services; Calvin Weiss as VP of Chapter Development; Josh Moreno as VP of Management; Jeff Rusher as Chaplain; Ben Brophy as Chairman of the Board; Tyler Vlasin as Chairman of the Demolition Derby; and Michal Swanson as Chairman of Golf.