

By Carolyn Lee

The Imperial Republican

Imperial's Chelsea Zuege has completed the illustrations for a coloring book to be handed out across Nebraska and elsewhere as part of educating students about weather preparedness.

Zuege, Chase County Schools secondary art teacher, was recommended to Dr. Eddy Weiss of Chasing4Life in North Platte by Cory Schuller, a storm chaser based in Chase County.

The art teacher said the assignment was "meant to be," as her older son, Bryce, 9, "wants to be a meteorologist and is into weather."

She modeled "Chase McCloud" on Bryce, and "Storm," his dog, on the Zuege's black lab Sammy.

Zuege completed the project recently, after beginning in December. She wanted to make the pages of the coloring book simple, so that little children could color them.

Dr. Weiss gave her the titles of the pages, such as "seek shelter when sirens sound," but Zuege could design her own layouts.

She involved her students by showing them her designs and walking them through the creative process. They gave her ideas, and it was a "good experience" for them, she said.

Dr. Weiss said the coloring books will be printed within the month. They will be distributed as Chasing4Life tours 18-23 states each year.

The group visits about 250 schools, fairs, day cares and special events, teaching children about weather.

Dr. Weiss said a testing on the coloring book to children ages preschool through 10 years has been very positive.

He thinks Zuege has done a "fantastic job. She caught the vision quickly as to what we wanted the characters and trucks to look like." He added that the books will inspire conversation in the home.