



By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

Imperial was given a “10 out of 10” for its response to a project that is placing 34 steel benches throughout the community.

Walter Lewis, sales director with JLB Welding in McCook, said that of the six communities that have been approached about the project, Imperial has had some of the best response.

“There is so much community support there,” Lewis said of Imperial.

The company will complete the installation of the final nine benches this Friday, he said.

In addition to a number of downtown businesses, the benches have been placed in all three city parks (Campbell, Schroeder, Max), at the courthouse and in front of the theatre and library.

The most popular site for the benches is Chase County Schools and the football field/swimming complex across the street. Eighteen, or more than half, of the benches have been installed there.

There has also been a memorial bench installed at Enders Lake Golf Course.

After the okay from the city and county several months ago, Lewis began contacting local businesses of their interest in purchasing a bench, and could request where they wanted it placed.

For the purchase price, the sponsor could advertise its business for the lifetime of that business. Others chose to remember a loved one.

The bench, in turn, was either donated to the city or county, he said.

According to the agreement, the city or county paid for a cement base if needed.

Other communities in the area that have participated in a similar bench placement project, or soon will be, include McCook, Oberlin, Kan., Benkelman, Arapahoe and Cambridge.