



By Jan Schultz **The Imperial Republican**

Temperatures hit a sizzling level in the city gym last Thursday, as six contestants vied for bragging rights in the third annual Chamber of Commerce Chili Cook-Off Contest.

Five judges rated the six entries on color, aroma, texture, flavor and "heat."

First place went to Margene Hayes, second to Chris Lee, while Brandon Beard took third. They received \$50, \$25 and \$15 in Chamber Bucks.

As first place winner, Hayes' name will be engraved on the traveling plaque. It will hang in the Lied Imperial Public Library until next year's contest.

Judges were Johnny Miller, Jeri Ann Johnson, Dodie Johnson, Dena Taylor and Justin Owings.

All those coming in to "taste-test" the entries selected Leslie Chavez's Coke chili as the People's Choice winner. She received an embroidered apron.

Those entering had unique displays at their tables, adding to the decor.

Contest chairman Jack Schnieder reminded winning chefs to get their recipes to him for a future booklet of all the top entries.

Plans are already underway for a fourth annual contest next year.

Schnieder said they are discussing different ways to get more cooks involved.