

By Merylyn Leibbrandt Imperial Chamber President

The Imperial Chamber of Commerce welcomes two new member businesses: Champa Group/Rod Keiser of Wauneta and All Inclusive Massage Therapy/Hillary Lucero of Imperial.

It is exciting to have these new members and we welcome other businesses who would like to be part of our Chamber.

At our March meeting, Dan Hughes, chair of the U.S. Wheat Associates, was guest speaker, explaining what the Association does and how extensively our Nebraska and U.S. wheat crop is shipped abroad, affecting economies around the world.

Chili Cook-off

The third annual Chili Cook-Off was another fun Chamber event with Margene Hayes winning top honors. Her name has been added to the traveling trophy currently on display at Fine Things Jewelry and later to be moved to the Imperial Library.

Other winners were Chris Lee, second; Brandon Beard, third; and Leslie Chavez, People's Choice award. Thanks to judges John Miller, Justin Owings, Dee Taylor, Dodie Johnson and Jeri Ann Johnson for their expertise.

Easter Egg Hunt

Mark your calendars for the Easter Egg Hunt to be held Saturday, April 12, at Campbell Park at 1 p.m. sharp. Please plan to have your children there early, as it only takes five minutes or less for all of the eggs to be picked up. This year there are 2,000 eggs that will be scattered for the different age groups to retrieve. Bring your cameras and enjoy the egg rush!

Chamber awards

In conjunction with the city of Imperial, the Chamber is preparing for the Business Retention and Expansion awards again this year, giving special recognition to outstanding member effort in several categories. Ballots have been sent electronically to all Chamber businesses. Awards will be presented on May 6 during the After Hours Chamber event held at Pinnacle Bank.

Scholarships

Graduation at Chase County Schools is scheduled for May 17. The Chamber presents \$500 scholarships to two deserving seniors. Judging is based on both academic merit and financial need. Trent Herbert, Guidance Counselor at CCS, will have the applications. Deadline for applications is April 30. This is just one more way the Chamber is happy to give back to the community.

Ice cream

May 22 is the last scheduled day of school for this year, and the Chamber will be dishing up ice cream cones at 1:30 p.m. that day. This will be done at the Great Plains gazebo on Broadway. Watch for details later and prepare for "Kim Kones!"

Garage sales

For you garage salers, the City Wide Garage sale is scheduled for June 14, so you might want to start cleaning out those closets, etc. now. Last year there were over 30 mapped sale sites and the event continues to grow each year.

State Fair

The Chase County Tourism Committee is planning to have a booth at the State Fair again this year. The Chamber gave a financial donation toward this and will have volunteers helping man

the booth, as well.

Don't forget that Chamber Bucks in \$5 and \$20 denominations are a great gift idea. These can be used just like cash at any Chamber business and are available at Pinnacle Bank.