



**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

Despite the snow and wind, Saturday night's Ducks Unlimited Frenchman Valley Chapter banquet and auction went on as planned.

Banquet/Auction Co-Chairman Jason Speck estimated 160 to 170 adults and youths attended the event in the Imperial city gym.

Following the social hour and dinner, an auction and several other events were held.

The program listed 37 bid items including numerous prints, decoys, hunting equipment, bronzes, knife sets and even a pub table and stools.



That table and stools were what Jason Burke selected as the "Pick of the Litter" raffle winner. Excluding the gun, he had his choice of any other auction item up for bidding prior to the start of the auction.

Speck noted the top-selling item in the auction was the DPMS AR15 .223 purchased by Shirley Cravey of Imperial for \$1,600.

A new feature this year was the Great Gun Giveaway offered to chapters through the national organization. Chapters had the option of conducting their raffle as they wanted, Speck said.

Three separate raffles Saturday night determined winners, who had their choice of any of some 48 guns pictured on a large poster at the auction.

Speck said raffle tickets were \$10 each, and after sales of 100 were reached, that raffle stopped and a winner chosen. Two more raffles followed, each stopping after 100 tickets were purchased.

Great Gun Giveaway winners were Ryan Johnson, Kendall Dubas and Rob Aslesen.

A number of youths also went home with prizes Saturday.

Speck said the committee is still tallying income and expenses from the banquet/auction so funds raised here Saturday were not yet known.

Funds raised at these events throughout Nebraska are used to protect, enhance, restore and manage wetlands vital to the growth and survival of North American waterfowl.

Nebraska has 11,205 Ducks Unlimited members. Funds raised in the state have conserved 46,500 acres of wetland in Nebraska.

Pat Baughman, senior regional director for Ducks Unlimited, attended Frenchman Valley's banquet and auction Saturday.

Baughman helped present local chapter member Kendall Dubas with a plaque for 10 years of service on the Frenchman Valley banquet committee.

Members of the planning committee included Speck, Jeremy Vlasin, Adam Vlasin, Kendall

Dubas, Ryan Wisnieski and Kelen Fortkamp, who serves as chapter president and is also state president this year.