

By Russ Pankonin,

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Imperial and Chase County is a better place to live because of the strong spirit of volunteerism that's alive and well in our communities. And because of that spirit, we all benefit.

This past weekend, one of Chase County's own, Dan Kunnemann, was recognized for his volunteerism to the Chase County Fair Board and Nebraska State Fair Board. He received the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers' highest honor —Fair Person of Year.

Like so many other volunteers, his involvement stretches far beyond his fair service, as he also serves as the chair of the Board of Elders at Zion Lutheran Church.

Kunnemann can serve as a model for all of us to follow. Not only did he devote 26 years to the The Chase County Fair, he has dedicated 11 years to the growth and success of the Nebraska State Fair.

The Chase County Fair serves as just one example of the organizations and boards that rely on volunteerism to achieve their goals. The list is long. Our EMTs volunteer hours and hours of their time for the training necessary to save lives when called. Our fire departments rely strictly on volunteer members to protect our property and safety.

Many of the things we have come to take for granted, such as the Chase County Fair, or the Bloodmobile or the community centers, would never happen or exist without the unselfish dedication of many volunteers.

The list could go on and on.

But most importantly, it's the people who are willing to give their time to play a role in the success of their event or effort and make this a better place to call home.

We say "Thanks" to the many volunteers who serve our community and county and challenge you to join the ranks if you're not already volunteering.

When you give of your time, you will also feel the satisfaction of knowing you are helping to make a difference in someone else's life.

The spirit of volunteerism in Imperial and Chase County serves as a foundation for our success and we all benefit as a direct result of the efforts of our volunteers.