



**By Jan Schultz**

***The Imperial Republican***

A gloomy, rainy day here Tuesday didn't dampen the enthusiasm of several Imperial residents as they talked about community improvement projects completed here the past year.

Two judges with the Nebraska Community Improvement Program (NCIP), Mike Davis and Lynn Franzen, both of Lincoln, were in Imperial for a two-hour judging session.

They met with members of Imperial's NCIP committee, and other volunteers who had key involvement in the projects entered in the 2009 competition.

Imperial has entered three areas of NCIP competition this year—The Governor's Community Spirit Award, the Founder's Award and Special Projects Award.

The judges here Tuesday were specifically rating the community for the Governor's Community Spirit Award. It assesses the town on its comprehensive approach to community development, community planning, volunteer and leadership development and project accomplishments.

While here, the judges were given specifics on the Career Academy Program established the past year in cooperation with Mid-Plains Community College and Chase County Schools. The Phase I improvements at Campbell Park and the Memorial Day weekend celebration event at the new pool were also reviewed.

The judges were given a tour of the new, remodeled facilities at Mid-Plains by Extended Campus Coordinator Brenda Ledall, and also viewed a power point presentation there.

A half-hour vehicle tour of the community took them past the improvements at Campbell Park, the new pool complex, the new Frenchman Valley Coop office building, Alco, the airport, the new NRD building, improvements at the Sunrise Apts. complex, the senior care facilities and more.

Ending the day at the Lied Imperial Public Library, the judges also heard more from School Supt. Matt Fisher, Chamber promotions committee member Connie Dart, and park board members Dianne Way and Carrie Terryberry. Mayor Annie Longan also gave a welcome.

The Imperial NCIP committee has entered the Career Academy Program for the Founder's Award, which recognizes one outstanding intergovernmental project that shows creative collaboration between governments.

Phase I improvements at Campbell Park, which included the new playground equipment, demolition of the old pool and the celebration at the new pool, were also entered for a Special Project Award.

The NCIP award winners will be announced at the annual NCIP banquet in Kearney Nov. 6.

Members of Imperial's NCIP committee include Brenda Ledall, Dianne Way, Marilyn Leibbrandt, Mary Deyle, Jo Leyland, Leslie Carlholm and Jan Schultz.