

Showcase Community Award a result of strong volunteerism here

By JAN SCHULTZ, THE IMPERIAL REPUBLICAN NEWS EDITOR

Imperial was recognized with a major award in Lincoln Monday when it received the Governor's Showcase Community Award for 2012.

It recognized the city's economic development efforts and community revitalization, and the importance of volunteers to get things done.

It appropriately was presented as Nebraska celebrates Community Development Week April 8-14.

As Gov. Dave Heineman presented the award, he said there is an important link between volunteers, local organizations, government and the private sector in making economic development a reality.

Imperial is well-known for combining those four areas in getting things done here. I particularly noticed that Gov. Heineman mentioned "volunteers" first among that group of four

aspects of a community that, when working together, make things happen.

How could projects such as the new swimming pool/athletic complex near the school happen without volunteers? Look at the hours that were logged by an unpaid school board and park board as plans for the facilities were developed, let alone the other groups that raised funds for such amenities as the benches and tables on site?

Have you been to Campbell Park in the past year?

There, you will see new playground equipment with a state-of-the-art restroom facility nearby that was built strong enough to double as a storm shelter if needed. City sales tax funds helped with some of those costs, but the vast majority of sweat to build and fund it came from volunteers and local organizations.

With tax-funded budgets getting tighter and tighter everywhere, volunteers will be increasingly important in helping communities thrive.

Get involved in Imperial as a volunteer. It is important and we need you.

It's good to see that recognition like the Showcase Community Award puts a big emphasis on, and rewards, volunteerism.

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