

Special Olympics teams currently being organized

Written by Carolyn Lee, The Imperial Republican

The Chase County, Neb., area may soon be home to Special Olympics teams. At a meeting Tuesday night, Sept. 10, area residents expressed interest in forming “unified” teams, which consist of youth with special needs and those without special needs.

Regional directors Julie Schwasinger and Susan Gieschen of Ogallala, Neb., presented a program to interested persons. They said Special Olympics is more than sports.

“It benefits athletes and adults, with courage, joy, respect, learning, hope, friends and attitude changes,” they said.

Jason Gieschen of Ogallala, a Special Olympian, said he began participating as a freshman in bowling. Now he’s playing 10 sports and sang the national anthem at one event.

“Special Olympics has opened up a whole life for me and my family,” he said. “What matters is I’m accepted just for who I am. Special Olympics is more than sports. It’s giving us chances, understanding, belonging and making friends. It’s changed my life.”

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