



Jan Busse helps Santa out as not everyone was excited to see him.



Mitchell Howard opens the bag of toys brought by Santa Claus on Saturday.

## Santa Day draws many to Bird City

By Melinda Basnett

Once again the hard work of volunteers in Bird City brought people of all ages together for a fun-filled afternoon on Saturday.

Community Club prepared a luncheon with a least three different kinds of soup, hot dogs and an array of desserts to tempt the most dedicated dieter.

Gwen Boswell entertained everyone on the piano while they enjoyed their dinner.

Excitement was heavy in the air as each child clutched their ticket with the winning numbers. Added to the cash prizes this year there were tricycles, bicycles, televisions, a computer, MP3 player, portable Playstation, portable DVD player, video games, and a table running over with smaller prizes.

The Blizzard was back with new bell ringers Gene Young and Bud Frisbie. Adults and children alike got the chance to step in the phone booth size box amid the flurry of cash and snatch their pockets full.

The winners of the lighting contest were announced. If a household won last year they were not eligible this year.

First place went to Sharon and Jim McCann, 216 W. 2nd. St., second place to Ned and Deb Smith, 221 W. 5th St. and third to Gary and Jane Brubaker, 321 E. 6th St.

Everyone was happy to have a visit from Santa Claus later in the day. He arrived with two sacks of toys. One for a lucky boy, and one for a girl. Winners were Mitchell Howard and Cheyenne Hewitt. Each child got a chance to tell Santa their Christmas wishes and have picture opportunities.

The Santa Day Committee honored Bradley Waters with a plaque upon his retirement. He had been involved with Santa Day a great number of years. Area sponsors continue to donate funds and prizes every year to make the event possible, and each child goes home with a prize to make their holiday special.



Colleen Montevilla shares her Christmas wish list with Santa on Saturday.

Times Staff photos by Melinda Basnett

## Commissioners buy new road grader for county

By Karen Krien

The Cheyenne County Commissioners agreed to buy a Caterpillar road grader for the county when they met on Friday.

At the last commissioner's meeting, there were two representatives talking about their company's graders. The bids were submitted with John Deere's bid being \$132,600 and Caterpillar, \$149,340; a difference of \$16,740.

Andy Beikman, chairman, said he had two major concerns between the two graders: fuel economy and resale.

He had researched the equipment. Norton County demonstrated both graders, side by side, and discovered

a fuel savings with the Cat machine by 2.3 gallons per hour. He pointed out 2.3 gallons by 800 hours per year by \$2.10 per gallon equals \$3,864 per year times five years equals a saving \$19,320.

Concerning the resale value, he had found one 2005 John Deere 770D with 139 hours for sale at \$177,000. There were 12-2003 Cat graders for sale at \$206,625 average. The difference is \$29,625 even with a two-year older cat grader.

The John Deere representative pointed out that the John Deere models have not been on the market long enough to really make a fair comparison.

However, road and bridge super-

visor, Dave Flemming said he preferred a Caterpillar grader because this is what the county already has and he has been satisfied with performance and maintenance.

Even though there was over \$16,000 difference in the price, the commissioners agreed to purchase the Cat grader.

### Ambulance department

Janelle Bowers, emergency medical service director, talked to the commissioners about getting a new ambulance for Bird City. They agreed to keep the ambulance in mind when applying for Community Development Block Grants next year.

After much discussion, the com-

missioners agreed to raise the base rate for making a loaded ambulance run from \$300 plus \$7.50 per mile to \$400 plus \$8 per mile.

The write-off for ambulance runs was \$3,220.

The commissioners also approved the purchase of a new computer program for the ambulance department. The cost will be over \$1,000.

Mrs. Bowers said she will be ordering needed supplies for the ambulance before the end of the year.

### Business incentives

Carol Redding, Cheyenne County Development coordinator, along with Kim Zwegardt, Development chair, presented the two

businesses asking for help through the county's incentive plan. Dorothy Smestad, Sainty Stitches, had submitted all of the paperwork and her plan was approved. Since the amount needed was less than \$400, the commissioners agreed to pay for the incentive.

Aimee Northrup, Main St. Coffee, was missing a lease agreement of the paperwork because of illness in her attorney's family so the commissioners will wait until the paperwork is complete.

The county does not have the incentive money budgeted for 2007 but plans to have \$5,000 budgeted in 2008.

### In other business

In other business:

• Dan Schlittenhardt, prairie dog control, said some of the farmers and ranchers with problems were making an attempt to treat their prairie dogs. He also said he would like to start looking at good used pickups to replace the department's 10-year-old pickup.

• The voucher for Troy Porter's work on the courthouse steps was rejected until more research is done. A special meeting was held on Tuesday to further discuss the matter.

### Next meeting

The next meeting of the commissioners will be held at 8 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 29, in the commissioners' room in the courthouse.

# Merry Christmas