By Jan Schultz
The Imperial Republican

The Imperial Chamber of Commerce will be celebrating the 2012 Christmas Festival next Thursday, Dec.6.

Approximately 47 Chamber businesses will be offering drawings, food, refreshments and specials throughout the day.

The Lied Imperial Public Library will again have a free movie and story-reading for the youngsters, and Santa will be at the St. Patrick's Hall from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. that night. People are encouraged to bring a camera as Jolly Ole St. Nick visits with the kids.

New to the event this year, noted Chamber President Jana Pribbeno, will be the location for the annual soup and pie supper next Thursday.

This year's event will be held at St. Patrick's Catholic Church Hall at 740 Broadway from 5 to 7 p.m. with a free will donation. Funds this year will be earmarked by the St. Pat's Altar Society for the hall's sound system. The Altar Society is providing the soup at next week's event.

Rounding off the evening at the parish hall will be the first drawings for the Shop at Home punch card winners. Three prizes will be drawn that evening for $250, $150 and $100 in Chamber Bucks.

A check on Tuesday shows about 70 filled cards have already been turned in for the first drawings next Thursday. Another drawing for $250, $150 and $100 will be held on Dec. 21.

When a punch card is filled, Pribbeno suggests they be turned in right away to one of the three collection points in Imperial—Pinnacle Bank, the city of Imperial office or Fine Things Jewelry & Gifts.

More cards are available at the 31 Chamber businesses who are participating in the punch card promotion.

Many other drawing winners sponsored by the businesses that day will also be announced at the soup and pie supper, along with the winners of the Chamber Festival stamped green flyer.

City staff were busy early this week hanging the downtown Christmas decorations, which will be turned on for the first time next Thursday night.

Chelsea Zuege and her CCS art students will be painting downtown windows with Christmas themes again this year for the celebration.

A flyer that includes all the special events and offerings at the Christmas Festival will be mailed late this week to area post office boxholders and rural routes.

On the back of the flyer will be spaces for stamps from Imperial Chamber businesses that shoppers visited prior to and including next Thursday.

When filled, the flyer can be dropped off at Pinnacle Bank before the soup and pie supper or by 5 p.m. at the St. Pat's Hall to be included in drawings for Chamber Bucks in several increments.

Lighting contest

The Chamber is also sponsoring the residential Christmas lighting contest again this year with

some changes.

Outside lighting efforts in Imperial will be automatically entered in the contest for first and second place awards.

There will be just three categories this year—Judges' Choice, religious and best tree. However, the Chamber Bucks prize money has been increased to $50 for first and $25 for second in each category.

The lights will be judged Sunday, Dec. 16.