

By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

Popcorn Days activities are already underway with a guessing game contest, and will peak next week with a popcorn sculpture contest and free popcorn treats on Halloween, Oct. 31.

From now until Oct. 31, people can stop into First Bank & Trust and guess the number of popcorn kernels in a jar. First, second and third place prizes will go to those guessing the closest number.

Local residents can also start thinking about a popcorn sculpture creation for next week's contest.

Using popped or unpopped popcorn, people are invited to work alone or in groups to create a unique sculpture. Entries should be at Pinnacle Bank by Wednesday, Oct. 30.

Judging will be held next Thursday, Oct. 31, with winners announced at 4 p.m.

On Halloween Day next Thursday, businesses will be handing out free popcorn treats to customers all day. Trinidad Benham and AK Acres are providing the popcorn to businesses who choose to participate.

Holiday promo drawings

The Imperial Chamber of Commerce is also finalizing plans for its 2013 holiday campaign, which this year, follows a "Celebrate the Charm of Shopping Imperial" theme. This year's holiday promotion will start late next week when punch cards will be included in the Oct. 31 edition of *The Imperial Republican*.

A list of participating businesses will be listed on the punch cards. Shoppers spending money in those businesses will get their card punched in \$10 increments (up to \$100 per store visit).

Once a shopper's card has \$200 in punches, it can be dropped off at Pinnacle Bank, Fine Things Jewelry & Gifts or the city office, where it will be placed in a bin for two drawings in December.

Three winners will be drawn on Dec. 5 and again on Dec. 19 and will win \$250, \$150 or \$100 in Chamber Bucks.

The Dec. 5 drawing will be part of the Chamber's day-long Christmas Festival with special events throughout the community, a soup and pie supper in the evening and a visit from Santa.

Non-winning punch cards the first week will stay in the bin for the Dec. 19 drawing.

Chamber President Jana Pribbeno encourages people to do their holiday shopping locally again this year. The more punch cards they fill, the more chances a shopper has to win the \$1,000 total to be given away in Chamber Bucks.

All Chamber businesses will soon be displaying the "Cele-brate the Charm" poster in their windows.

Last year's "Shop Imperial" promotion may have been a contributing factor to the record sales tax dollars returned to the Imperial community.

December 2012 remains the largest month for Imperial's city sales tax with \$46,500.46 collected, and returned home for use in economic development and community development efforts.