

Continued from page 2.

Before they return home for the semester break, however, the students will be presented gifts from a Southeast Sertoma Club Santa Claus.

The young men and women at Villa Marie are all mentally retarded, some of whom have secondary physical and emotional handicaps, explained Sister Patricia. She said they come from as far away as Lexington, Edgar and Stanton, and will return to their homes after Thursday's Christmas luncheon and play.

Meanwhile, 27 children at the Cedars Home for Children, 6601 Pioneer Blvd., are busy decorating their dormitories in preparation for the holidays.

A toboggan will be awarded to the student with the most original decoration, said Anna Kuklish, superintendent of Cedars. Kuklish said Cedars' youth, whose parents are either deceased or too ill or feeble to care for them, will be well taken care of this year.

"We receive many gifts from the Lincoln community," said Kuklish. "The nurses at Lincoln General Hospital send mittens, scarves and hats.

"KFOR radio will be sending us a color TV or a record player and La Sertoma, which has sponsored Cedars for all of our 30 years, will also donate a TV for our bed-

ridden children."

Additionally, said Kuklish, Don Anderson Studios annually sends a personalized gift-wrapped present for each of the children.

At the Nebraska Center for Children and Youth, 2320 N. 58th St., the 66 residents housed in the center's eight cottages are preparing to host a series of mini-Christmases.

The idea, said Doug Fleischer, cottage life supervisor, is to try and keep the Christmas spirit as intimate as possible.

"Not only at Christmas, but all year round, we try and give the kids what they don't have—a family. We want each of the cottages to come up with their own decorations and have their own Christmas parties," Fleischer said.

The center's residents include boys and girls, blacks and whites and are aged 10 through 19. They come from throughout the state and are sent to the center by courts who have ruled that their families are unable to provide proper parental supervision.

This year, Fleischer said KFOR's "Operation Santa Claus" will donate between \$300 and \$400 to the center.

Additionally, state funds allow the center staff to spend \$15 on each resident for a gift of his or her choice.

Santa Claus hired to fit suit

By Barb Richardson

The man who sports a white beard, has white hair to match, wears a red suit with black boots and who is usually found sitting in big chairs at department stores is familiar to everyone. The man, who brings Christmas joy into the hearts of both young and old, is unmistakably Santa Claus.

Each year at this time department stores across the nation hire men and women to portray the role of the jolly old man.

While each department store has their own method of selecting a Santa, a local store personnel manager, Elda Reinhardt, looked for three things in the applicants

she interviewed. "First, I looked for a man who could fit the large suit we had from previous years. I also tried to determine if the applicants really enjoyed children," she said. Reinhardt added that the applicants had to be healthy because they would come in contact with so many children.

"Age makes no difference in selecting a Santa," Reinhardt said. "It's all in the make-up," she added. "We put rosey cheeks on our Santa and color in his eye brows with white shoe polish to make him look more realistic," she said. Reinhardt added that their Santa does not have to be stuffed and he adequately fills the large suit from last year.

Continued on page 15.

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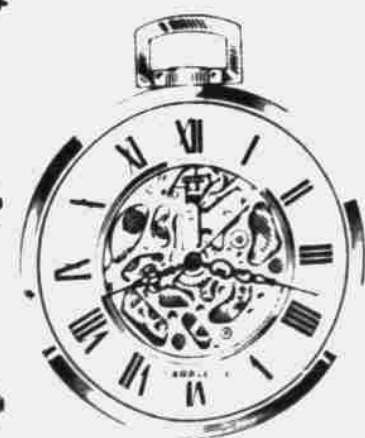
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