By Jan Schultz

The Imperial Republican

While many hope for a white Christmas, coordinators and volunteers planning the fifth annual Christmas Day dinner in Imperial are hoping for just a nice day, snow or not.

During two of the last four dinners organized by the Southwest Nebraska Ministerial Association, it's been a blizzard that curtailed attendance.

Coordinator Jody Bopp said he has asked several pastors to pray for good weather.

The free meal is for those who will be alone on Christmas or for others, families included, looking for someplace to go for a traditional meal.

Site for the dinner is the Imperial Eagles Club from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. It's served buffet style, so people can come anytime during the two hours.

All of the traditional Christmas dinner foods will be served—turkey, ham, potatoes, sweet potatoes, dressing, salads, rolls, pie and beverages. Tamales will also be on the serving line again this year.

An RSVP is not required but is appreciated, Bopp said, so they can gauge the numbers attending. Call Bopp at 308-882-0151.

He said they served 220 people last year.

All of the food for the meal is donated through local churches and other individuals, Bopp said. Members of the Knights of Columbus prepare the turkeys the day before and peal potatoes.

Another slew of volunteers, about 30 in all, will assist to get the buffet prepared and served.

Some of those volunteers help take meals to staff working Christmas Day at the hospital, senior care facilities and the Chase County Jail in Imperial.

Anyone who would like to volunteer on Sunday can contact Bopp, David Kahle, 883-5655 or Fr. Bernard Lorenz, 414-1195.

For those who choose to do so, there will be a basket for free will donations at the dinner. That resulted from individuals attending in the past who wanted to donate, Bopp said.

However, contributing is not required by any means, he noted.

“We don’t want to turn anyone away,” he said.