

South Tahoe kicks off holiday season

By Kathryn Reed

Even the body heat of hundreds of holiday revelers could not keep teeth from chattering. The cold night air didn't seem to matter to the children who awaited Santa's arrival and the lighting of South Lake Tahoe's Christmas tree.

For more than 20 years, Santa arriving via a Borges horse-drawn sleigh has been a tradition in this ski town.



Jenny Arias, 4, tells Santa what she wants for Christmas. Photos/Kathryn Reed

The Tahoe Schools Choirs sang famous carols that the audience joined in on. This started Friday evening's festivities outside the Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority center in the heart of South Lake Tahoe.

Mayor Jerry Birdwell was on hand to say a few words. One little kid thought he was Santa.

Once the real Santa arrived, sleigh rides were provided for free, Santa's lap was available to all the good boys and

girls, Dianna Maria De Borges was signing copies of "Sleigh Rides in Lake Tahoe: Memoirs of Sam Borges," and hot cocoa and cookies warmed people up.

The tree, with its big balls, bows and candy canes, magically became aglow at the hands of Santa. A menorah was also lighted in honor of Hanukkah, which begins the night of Dec. 12.



Tahoe Schools
Choir sings
carols.



People stood
in line for a
sleigh ride.



South Lake

Tahoe Mayor
Jerry Birdwell