

Family business changes with times

Christmas tree season keeps pilot busy

by SCOTT NEWTON

Christmas tree growers aren't the only people who are busy during the holiday season. Dan Johnson, owner of Johnson Aerial Applicators in Sandy, will move about 150,000 trees in a four-week period from about Nov. 15 to Dec. 15.

The trees will go to such disparate places as the East Coast and Hong Kong, but Johnson and his wife, Pam, are primarily concerned with getting them from the field to where they can be loaded on a truck.

With his Hiller 12-E helicopter, Johnson can pick up about 20 trees at a time, depending on the size. He can lift 1,000 pounds, so he aims for a 900-pound load, which allows him to make up for any discrepancy in weight.

Pam is often in contact with him, via radio, on the ground. She also hauls fuel, and takes care of the office. Since they may work for as many as three people in one day, it is important to have a person on the ground. They often move the helicopter on a trailer as it saves on

fuel.

They used to hire a "field man," but Pam said she enjoys the work and being involved in the business.

Dan Johnson was recently hauling trees for Steve and Kim Spiegelman, who lives a few miles west of Sandy. It was their first harvest, and they harvested about 4,200 trees in what Kim Spiegelman described as kind of a dry run in preparation of a larger harvest next year.

She said they would harvest from 20,000 to 40,000 trees from their 25-acre farm next year.

Johnson said he regularly hauls trees for farmers in Eagle Creek and Estacada. By removing the trees with a helicopter, a farmer may plant the area that would otherwise be a roadway. In addition, there are no ruts and no stuck vehicles.

That isn't the most important consideration, though. "It's mainly the time factor," Johnson said. "You can haul out so many more trees with a helicopter than you can with a truck."

Johnson said he started getting serious about flying when he was 17. He's 31 now, with a good 14 years of experience behind him.

He has been involved with the business for eight or nine years, and three years ago purchased it from his father, John Johnson, the owner of Rich's Airport.

The Johnsons formerly used an airplane, applying pesticides and insecticides to a wide variety of crops. In the winter months, business slowed down. With the helicopter, there are advantages in both the spray work (accuracy and safety) and in the variety of work available.

He has a commercial applicators license from the state, and attends training sessions yearly to keep up with new regulations and developments in the field.

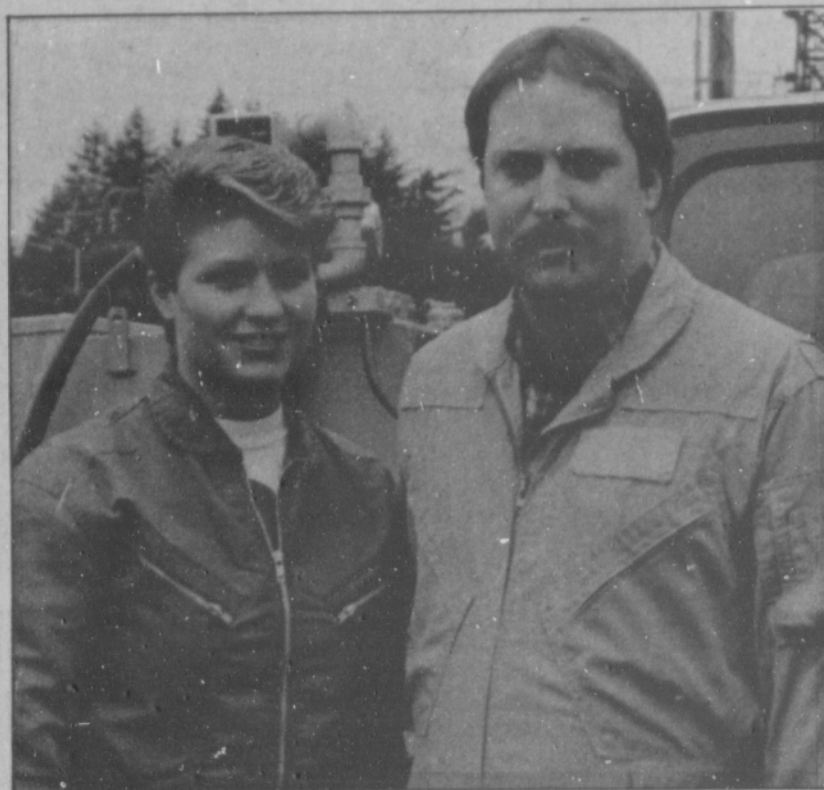
In addition to working for local farmers, he also works for timber companies and governmental agencies spraying in the forests.

As a licensed aircraft mechanic, he is able to save himself money and insure that his own craft is safe. Insurance and fuel are major expenses. A new helicopter similar to the one he uses would cost \$130,000.

Johnson said he enjoys his work and being his own boss, although one gets the idea his work isn't as fun as it looks. This year he has flown in every kind of weather, including rain, snow and sleet. Wind gusts can put a halt to a day's work, he said.

When he moves Christmas trees he keeps his door open so he can look down, keeping an eye on his load. Keeping his door open didn't appear to contribute to his comfort when he was working at Spiegelman's.

Asked about the danger involved



Dan and Pam Johnson

with his work, he compared it to agricultural work, logging and even driving a car. Apparently if it bothered him, he wouldn't be doing it.

Johnson said he has considered expanding, but it isn't in the cards as yet. "Sometimes small is better," he said. Moving 150,000 trees in a month's time is enough for now.

Benefit over 20 years old

Christmas Basket drive is underway

The Kiwanis Club of Sandy has sponsored its Christmas Basket Project for over 20 years and looks upon the project as a community effort in which the Kiwanis Club takes the initiative and organizes it, but asks all boys, girls and adults in the community to help.

Members of the committee are Frank Marcy, chairman, Roy Brook, Mort Spence and Pete Sulzbach. It is expected there will be 180 to 200 applications this year.

The Christmas Basket distribution is planned for the morning of Saturday, Dec. 21. Contents of the baskets will be a generous supply of food, and gifts for children when appropriate.

As in the past, the committee will seek the help of children in the schools of our area to gather the 5,000 canned and packaged food items. The area served will be the Sandy High School District, which includes

Bull Run, Cedar Ridge, Cottrell, Firwood, Kelso, Sandy and Welches schools.

The Sandy Community Action Center will process applications, which are now being accepted. Hours are 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. on weekdays. The Action Center is located at 38983 Pioneer Blvd. in Sandy. Telephone number is 668-4746.

Other applications will be made through the Clackamas County Social Services Division, with applicants being referred to the Kiwanis Club through the Salvation Army Christmas Basket Clearing Bureau, which attempts to prevent duplication of applications.

The Community Action Center has been saving the best of the toys it has received during the year. As in many past years, Dr. Al Lamke and his wife, Helen, are cleaning and repairing toys for the project. Citizens wishing to offer toys or other gifts suitable for children may take them to the Sandy Fire Hall, 17460 Bruns St., or to the Community Action Center. Organizations having

meetings in December may wish to bring wrapped gifts labeled according to the suitable age and sex of a child. Gifts for older children are especially appreciated since most gifts received are for young children.

Through the generosity of Mercury Development Corporation, the building formerly occupied by Thriftway at the intersection of Highways 26 and 211, has been secured as a place to assemble the Christmas Baskets. Those recipients who can do

so will be asked to pick up their baskets between the hours of 9 and 11 a.m. on Dec. 21. Others will be delivered by friends of recipients or Sandy Kiwanis Club members.

Members of the Sandy community are invited to help the Kiwanis Club finance the purchase of meat, bread and fresh vegetables for the baskets. Contributions may be sent to Mel Barnes, club secretary, at 42451 S.E. Wildcat Mountain Drive, Sandy, 97055.

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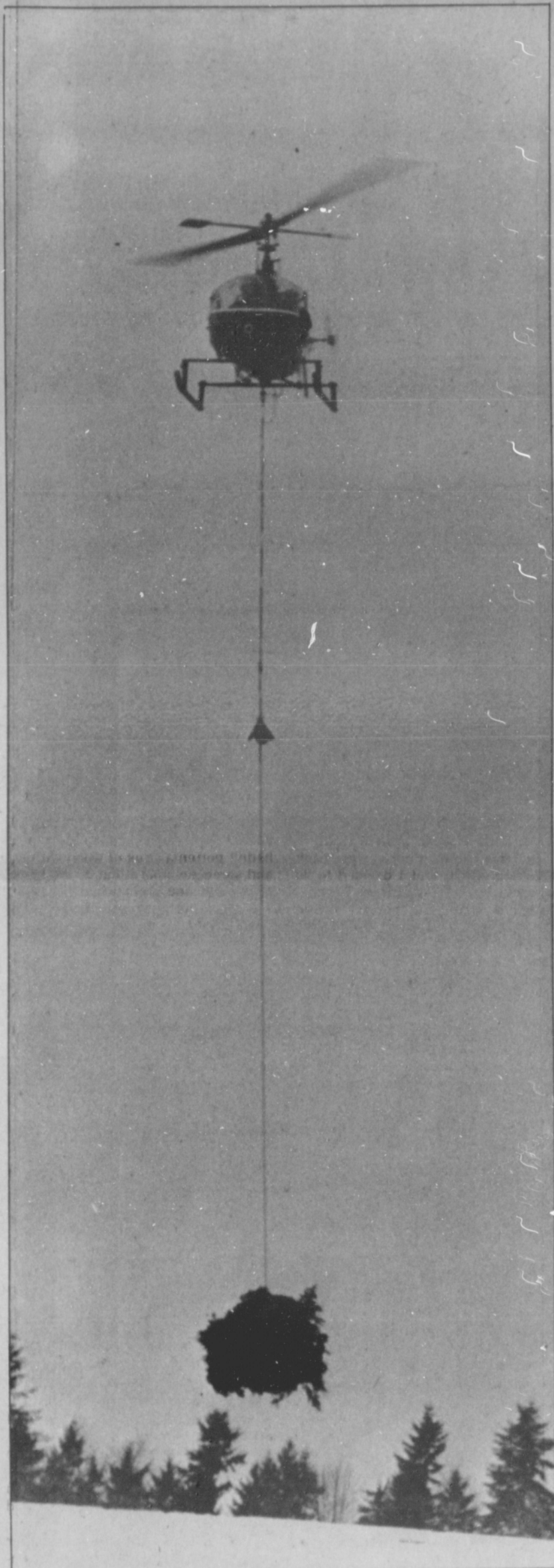
Santa to visit Sandy Dec. 14, 21

Santa Claus will be coming to town Saturday, Dec. 14 and Saturday, Dec. 21. On the 14th, a breakfast with Santa has been scheduled at T.J.'s from 10 a.m. to noon.

Cost of the breakfast for youngsters will be \$1.49, which will include a choice of dollar pancakes or scrambled eggs, and milk or hot chocolate.

Also on the 14th, from 1 to 3 p.m., pictures will be taken at the Heritage Square Mall. Family portraits, pictures of couples and pictures of children with Santa will be among the options. The event is a fund raiser for the Greater Sandy Business Association, which is also sponsoring the breakfasts.

On Dec. 21, the breakfast will be held at Hubbell's Longburger and Breakfast Country.



Dan Johnson lifts a bundle of Christmas trees.

Safeway

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marketing survey taken two years ago showed many Sandy shoppers driving to Gresham and Portland to buy groceries.

There are 5,000 employees in Safeway's Portland Division. The company invested \$190 million in Oregon fruits and produce in 1984, Flanagan said.

Safeway has been in Oregon and Southwest Washington since the 1920s, and the store in Sandy will be the 103rd in the Portland Division.

Safeway is the largest food distributor in the world with 2,500 stores and 375,000 employees. They made profit of \$19.6 billion last year, Flanagan said.

The Sandy store is due to open Jan. 15, and will be open 24 hours a day.

Flanagan pointed out that public relations people get to paint a nice picture of what will be. It is "your store," she added. "You vote with your shopping dollar."

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