

Top brands hit holiday wish lists

By SUSAN ROGERS

It used to be the dream of many small boys to be the proud owner of a shiny new "Flexible Flyer" sled on Christmas morning.

Or little girls may have wished for a dimpled Shirley Temple doll, dressed in red and white with a head of golden curls.

Times have changed, and sleds or dolls that merely smile seldom make the most-requested Christmas gifts anymore. Children are now asking Santa for the "Star Wars" toys and dolls that do everything—including getting a diaper rash.

"They're asking for 'Baby This and That,' and 'Star Wars' toys, trains and race cars," said an expert on the subject, the daytime Santa Claus at Livonia Mall.

"Baby Wet and Rash and dishes and doll clothes are big this year."

The small fry climb up into his red velvet lap and whisper their secrets in Santa's ear. They come from all over the area to make sure Santa knows exactly what toy it is they want.

Rob Nordin, 5, of Livonia and his sister Shannon, 2, this year approached Santa to request a dolly and some "Star Wars" toys.

Santa was greeted with a big, happy little boy smile by Brian Robinson, 2, of Livonia, who said he wanted "a horsey."

"I want a Baby This and That, a Charlie's Angel doll and a dollhouse," said Nicole Richardson, 5, of Southfield. Her big brown eyes sparkled as Santa listened to her wishes.

THE SAYLES CHILDREN of Detroit traveled to Livonia to ask for lots of toys. The 10-year-old record player, records and an Easy Bake Oven.

Richard, 5, wants a new tape recorder, a race car and a Wonder Woman doll. Brother David, 8, wants a race track, a train track and a "Star Wars" ship.

Little brother Darren, 3, said he'd settle for some gingerbread men and some toys.

A "dolly" was the wish of two-year old Jamie Cooley of Farmington Hills. Big sister Vickie Black, 10, hopes she'll get a Barbie doll.

Melissa Cooper, 5, of Southfield summoned up all her courage and asked jolly old St. Nick for "Baby This and That, a 'Star Wars' game and a Hungry, Hungry Hippo game."

Three-and-a-half-year-old Jason Tucker of Farmington Hills, with long, dark eyelashes, hopes to be the owner of a "riding truck like Timmy has." He gave Santa a big smile and Santa gave him a striped candy cane.

Red-haired Michael Forbes, 3, of Garden City greeted Santa with a big hug. "I would like a race track and a choo choo train," he said.

Stevie Shultz, 5, of Northville wants some race cars, a track and some trains. Sister Stacey, 4, decided to wait til next year before approaching Santa.

MELISSA MATSEN, 4, of Farmington Hills timidly asked for a "Dollie's" doll, a piano, a Knock It Off game and a Hungry Hippo game.

Children of all ages visit Santa. Six-year-old Mariah Bailey of Farmington stared at the white fluffy beard with wide blue eyes, while holding his thumb with her tiny hand. Mariah didn't mention what she wanted for Christmas, but her mother Delena, 18, said she'd like a house.

Mary Gould, 87, of Livonia asked Santa for continued good health when he came down from his chair to talk to her.

Steven Kish, 2, of Detroit cried when he was placed on Santa's knee, but his mother confided that Steven wants a bike and some trucks. Brother Michael, two months, smiled at Santa.

Well-behaved Reginald Witsell, 6, of Detroit and sister Tebra became wide-eyed and serious when placed in front of Santa. Reginald hopes for an Armour Man doll and a train, and Tebra wants a Baby This and That.

Simone Yancy, 7, of Detroit has a big order for Santa to fill. "I want a cake machine, Baby This and That, a Charlie's Angels game, a cassette player, a record player and a Texas Instruments Spelling Bee," she told him.

Melissa Porzadek, 5, of Redford wants a Wonder Woman doll, and a Holly Hobby oven. She continued to tell Santa all about a camping trip she took with her family last summer. Sister Sophia, 3, said she wants a necklace and something for her puppies.

BLONDE-HAIRED Heather Staker, 2, of Livonia, in a red snowsuit, wants "Toys." The shy children are led up the stairs to Santa by helpers Karen Marion of Livonia, Christina Lujan of Garden City and Janice Spooner of Westland. She and Shelly Pethesough of Farmington Hills slowly made their way up the stairs to Santa. Heather, 3, wants a "Whoopie" doll and Shelly, 6, wants a Baby Wet and Care.

Santa is James Johnson, 28, of Westland. He said he sees about 1,000 children each day and loves every one of them.

"They're really sweet," he said. "They love Santa and they care that he cares for them. This is more than just a job—I am Santa."

And, from the looks of things, Santa has his work cut out for him when he takes to the skies Sunday night.

Racquetball class offered

Farmington Hills Parks and Recreation Department in conjunction with the Racquetball Court of Farmington will conduct four one hour beginning racquetball lessons beginning the week of Jan. 2.

Classes are scheduled for Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:11 a.m. and from 11 a.m. to noon. On Saturday and Sunday, classes begin at 3:45 p.m. and from 4:55 p.m.

For further information, call 474-6115.

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