

An American Holiday Tradition

Christmas is a time of joy, happiness, and goodwill. It is a time of giving and helping those who are less fortunate than ourselves, especially impoverished children. For over half a century, one organization - the **U.S. Marine Corps** - is the unchallenged leader in looking after America's needy children at Christmas.

In 1947, Major Bill Hendricks - with the support of members of his Los Angeles Marine Corps Reserve unit - collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children. Bill's program was so successful that in 1948, the Marine Corps adopted it and expanded it nationwide as the **U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program**. In the intervening years, Marines have conducted successful Toys for Tots campaigns each year, collecting and distributing over 418,000,000 toys.

The program has enjoyed the support of an array of notable Americans. Walt Disney designed the logo. Nat "King" Cole and Peggy Lee recorded the Toys for Tots song. Bob Hope, John Wayne, Brooke Shields, Johnny Carson, Garth Brooks, Tim Allen, Kenny Rogers, and Billy Ray Cyrus are but a few of the long list of celebrities who have used their time and talent to promote Toys for Tots. First Lady Barbara Bush served as the honorary national chairperson in 1992, and in her autobiography named Toys for Tots as one of her favorite charities.

Today, Toys for Tots is the Marine Corps' premier community action program. To many Americans, Christmas isn't complete without the image of uniformed Marines collecting and distributing toys to needy children of their communities. Over the past 10 years, Marines have distributed an average of over 15,000,000 toys annually, and brought the joy of Christmas to an average of more than 6,300,000 less fortunate children each year.

How Toys for Tots Works

Marine Corps Reserve Units, located throughout the nation, conduct toy collection and distribution campaigns in the communities near their Reserve Centers each year. To expand the nationwide coverage of Toys for Tots, the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation authorizes Marine Corps League Detachments and Local Community Organizations (LCO's) to conduct Toys for Tots campaigns in communities without a local Marine Reserve Unit.

Campaigns begin in October and last until December 22nd. Caring Americans drop off new, unwrapped toys at collection receptacles located in local businesses. Local Toys for Tots Coordinators pick up, sort, and store these toys in a central warehouse. As Christmas nears, Marines distribute toys themselves and enlist the aid of local social welfare agencies and churches to distribute toys to needy children on Christmas Day.

While Marines and LCO's organize, coordinate, and manage the program, the ultimate success depends on the support of the local community and the generosity of the people who donate toys.

Local business leaders play a key role by allowing Marines to locate collection receptacles in their stores; by providing free warehouse space during October, November, and December for sorting and storing toys; by providing vehicles to collect toys from collection sites; by sponsoring toy raising events; and by helping Marines receive maximum media exposure for Toys for Tots.

How You Can Help

Donate a Toy to your local Toys for Tots Campaign
Donate Your Time to help local Toys for Tots Campaigns
Donate Service Support to local Toys for Tots Campaigns
Collection receptacles at your business

Warehouse space
Transportation support
Media Exposure

Make a tax deductible donation to:
Marine Toys for Tots Foundation
18251 Quantico Gateway Drive
Triangle, VA 22172

Marine Toys for Tots Foundation

The **Marine Toys for Tots Foundation**, an IRS recognized 501(c)(3) tax exempt not-for-profit charity, is the authorized fund raising and support organization for the **U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program**. The Foundation provides support to Marine Corps Reserve Units, Marine Corps League Detachments, and approved local community organizations in accordance with a Memorandum of Understanding with the **Commander, Marine Forces Reserve**, who directs the Toys for Tots Program from his headquarters in New Orleans, Louisiana.

The mission of the Foundation is to assist the U.S. Marine Corps in providing a tangible sign of hope to economically disadvantaged children at Christmas. The focus of this assistance is supporting the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program. This support includes raising funds to provide toys to supplement the collections of local Toys for Tots coordinators; defraying the costs of conducting annual Toys for Tots campaigns; providing administrative, advisory, financial, logistic, and promotional support to local coordinators; providing other support to Marine Corps, as a federal agency, cannot provide; and conducting public education and information programs which call the general public to action in support of Toys for Tots.

For more information about the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program and the Marine Toys for Tots Foundation, visit the Foundation's web site:

www.toysfortots.org