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For Immediate Release

Area Children to Benefit from SRS Toys for Tots Campaign

AIKEN, S.C. (December 10, 2009) – U.S. Marine Corps Reservists collected their largest area toy contribution today at the Savannah River Site (SRS). Employees at the Site donated an estimated 12,115 toys (this includes clothing and accessory items to Angel Tree recipients) and \$16,000 during the site’s 19th Annual Toys for Tots Drive.

The annual event is sponsored by SRS construction employees with the support and participation of the Department of Energy-Savannah River, Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, Savannah River Remediation, WSI Savannah River Site Team, Parsons, Shaw Areva Mox Services, The Augusta Building and Construction Trade Council, Tyler Brothers Construction and Stone Ridge Construction. These companies and employees contribute in a variety of ways, including the donating of unwrapped toys, filling holiday stockings, adopting a “Christmas Angel” or making a monetary contribution.

For the ninth year, SRS construction employees sponsored the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree program, enabling SRS employees to adopt 300 area children. Many SRS employees chose to give more than 4,500 clothing and accessory items to Angel Tree recipients. About 300 Christmas stockings were also filled by employees for area children. Other fund-raising events were also part of the campaign.

SRS Toys for Tots Chair Sheri Still said, “Our hearts go out to area parents who so badly need a little help this time of the year to do something, however small, to brighten Christmas day for their children. Many of these families are headed by single women and, largely due to the recession, the working poor. It’s so impressive that each year employees strive to meet this need and contribute more than the year before.”

Since the origination of the SRS toy drive in 1991, employees have contributed more than 159,750 toys to the Marine-sponsored program.

Toys for Tots began in 1947, when Major Bill Hendricks, USMCR, and a group of Marine Reservists in Los Angeles collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy

children. The idea came from Bill's wife, Diane. In the fall of 1947, Diane crafted a homemade doll and asked Bill to deliver the doll to an organization, which would give it to a needy child at Christmas. When Bill determined that no agency existed, Diane told Bill that he should start one. He did. The 1947 pilot project was so successful that the Marine Corps adopted Toys for Tots in 1948 and expanded it into a nationwide campaign.

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