

# News from the Savannah River Site

U S DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY • AIKEN • SC 29808

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## SRS Employees Give Over 15,000 Christmas Gifts to Local Children

AIKEN, S.C. (December 12, 2014) – With only two weeks until Christmas, Savannah River Site employees celebrated the 20-year tradition of collecting toys by the truckload, partnering with the Marine Corps Reserve's Toys for Tots and the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program to benefit less fortunate children in the Central Savannah River Area.

“To me, the greatest joy is putting a smile on a child’s face. Our mission is to find local families in need and help provide for them,” said Chief Warrant Officer Gregory Smith of the Marine Corps. “What the Savannah River Site does is phenomenal. When I started volunteering with Toys for Tots five years ago, I couldn’t believe the amount of toys that employees had collected, and continue to provide year after year. SRS makes our mission possible.”

The annual event is sponsored by SRS construction employees with the support and participation of the Department of Energy-Savannah River; National Nuclear Security Administration-Savannah River; Savannah River Nuclear Solutions, LLC ; Savannah River Remediation LLC; Centerra



*Employees at the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site celebrated more than 20 years of support for the Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program with the collection of more than 15,000 toys, and over 235,000 toys since the start of SRS Toys for Tots campaigns in 1991. The 2014 campaign marked one of the largest toy contributions to date at SRS, an effort requiring several large trucks and numerous volunteers.*

Group, LLC; Augusta Building Trades; URS; and Parsons. These companies and employees contribute in a variety of ways, from donating unwrapped toys to making monetary contributions.

“When I wake up on Christmas morning, I stop and think about the number of children who are surprised with presents under the tree because of Toys for Tots and the Angel Tree program. At that that moment, it’s more important than seeing what’s going on in my own house. I think to myself, right now a child has just woken up, and they are screaming with excitement because Santa brought them a bicycle.” said Julie Kirby, Chair, SRS Toys for Tots Campaign.

For the fourteenth year, construction employees also sponsored the Salvation Army’s Angel Tree program, enabling SRS employees to adopt 820 area children. Many SRS employees chose to give more than 6,000 clothing and accessory items to Angel Tree recipients.

“The Angel Tree program is one of our longstanding traditions, and it benefits not only the recipients but also those who donate gifts,” said David Phelps of the Salvation Army. “Although the angel’s identity is kept confidential, the gift giver can enjoy picking out toys and clothing for a particular child and know their name. This is my first time visiting the Savannah River Site, and I’ve never seen as many Angel Tree items donated in one place.”

In addition, both Savannah River Nuclear Solutions and Savannah River Remediation corporate personnel demonstrated their support with monetary gifts to further add to the success of this year’s program.

Several tractor-trailers of presents from the “SRS Toy for Tots Pick Up” are sorted at Salvation Army locations. Aiken Marines distribute the gifts to children in Aiken, Allendale, Barnwell and Edgefield counties, as well as the towns of North Augusta, Beech Island, Belvedere, Williston, Salley and Coughton. The Marines from Augusta supply toys to Burke, Columbia, Glascock, Hancock, Jefferson, Jenkins, Lincoln, McDuffie, Richmond, Taliaferro, Warren, Washington and Wilkes counties and the town of Wrens.

Toys for Tots began in 1947, when Major Bill Hendricks, Marine Corps Reserves, and a group of Marine Reservists in Los Angeles, collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children. The 1947 pilot project was so successful that the Marine Corps adopted Toys for Tots in 1948 and expanded it into a nationwide campaign.

*Savannah River Nuclear Solutions is a Fluor-led company whose members are Fluor Federal Services, Newport News Nuclear and Honeywell, responsible for the management and operations of the Department of Energy’s Savannah River Site, including the Savannah River National Laboratory, located near Aiken, South Carolina.*

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