

CCRS Toys for Tots Exceeds Expectations

Rocky Hill, CT - December 16, 2008 — “We did it!” , says John Curren, CCRS Community Awareness Chairman, regarding the toy drive that the collision repair association sponsored during November and December for the Toys for Tots Organization. “We established a challenge to our members – and we have filled the room with toys,” Curren reported.

There was little room to walk at the recent meeting of the Connecticut Collision Repair Specialists (CCRS). “I am truly overwhelmed with the response of our members – they kept coming in with their arms full of toys – including 2 tike bicycles!” says CCRS Executive Director, Lisa Siembab. The Community Awareness Committee launched a four week toy drive to benefit the Toys For Tots organization in Connecticut.

The night was not without it’s challenges, however. Sergeant Zach Britt, from the 1st BN 25th Marine Corp in Bristol, sent his team out with a box truck to pick up the donated toys in the downpouring rain – they had an accident on the way. Thankfully – no one was hurt. This did not deter Sergeant Britt, however, he went back to Plainville and retrieved another truck to come back and gather the toys. “This is what we do – it’s not about us – it’s about the kids.” says Sergeant Britt. CCRS members formed an assembly line to fill the truck and in no time the toys were back to the distribution center in Plainville. “We are truly thankful for CCRS’ support with our toy drive – they have helped us make a difference.”

Toys for Tots was established in 1947 when Major Bill Hendericks of the United States Marine Corps and a group of Marine Reservist in Los Angeles collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children. The idea came from his wife Diane who in the fall of 1947 handcrafted a Raggedy Ann doll and asked him to drop it off at a place that provided toys for underprivileged children. He came back home to tell his wife that there was no place that did this. Upon hearing this, she suggested he start one and the rest is history.

Over the years of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots program has distributed more than 351 million toys for 166 million needy children. They have supplemented local toy collection with more than 64.5 million toys valued at more than \$344 million and provided promotion and support materials valued at over \$3.9 million.