



THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER™

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TOYS FOR TOTS KICKS OFF 2011 SEASON AT THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE CENTER *Organization's Coordinators Convene from Around the Nation to Plan for 2011 Holidays*

LEESBURG, Va. – Toys for Tots, once again, selected The National Conference Center (NCC) to hold its annual Toys for Tots Coordinator Conference. Nearly 500 coordinators from around the nation attended the event. They learned everything from handling donations and coordinating toy drop offs to basic understanding of how IRS tax rules affect the campaign. The meeting also provided participants the opportunity to learn from each other and share experiences.

To celebrate Toys for Tots return, NCC held a holiday tasting luncheon complete with holiday music. Guests were treated to a variety of gourmet samplings prepared by NCC's Executive Chef Craig Mason. The setting also reminded guests that NCC is available to host holiday parties.

Toys for Tots is a national charity program run by the United States Marine Corps Reserve which collects and distributes toys to less fortunate children whose parents may be struggling financially and unable to purchase gifts during the traditional Christmas holiday season. It is the only charitable endeavor associated with the Department of Defense that reaches out to local communities. The program was started in 1947 in California by Major William L. Hendricks and was inspired by his wife, Diane, when she tried to donate a doll to a needy child but could not find an organization to do so. At Diane's suggestion, he gathered a group of local Marine reservists who coordinated and collected 5,000 toys for local children. Hendricks used his position as director of public relations at Warner Brothers Studio to enlist celebrity support and later asked his friend, Walt Disney, to design a poster for a national campaign. The result was our three-car, red train logo.

The program took off nationally and in 1980, shifted slightly to accept only new toys as reservists were no longer able to dedicate the time required to refurbish used toys. As of 2009, the Toys for Tots program and foundation, has collected and distributed almost five hundred million toys.

Some of the coordinators attending the NCC meeting were there from the beginning of the program, others are new. "It's a great place for us to hold our training and education sessions," stated Major Brian A. Murray, USMC (Ret), vice president for operations of Marine Toys for Tots Foundation. The very first meeting was held at the Marine Base at Quantico in the Officer Candidate School where the group had meals in the mess hall and shared showers. "We're excited to be at NCC again this year. We believe the training facilities will ensure a better experience for our coordinators, and the accommodations will be very much appreciated," Murray added.

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“We are honored to have been selected again by this prestigious organization with such a worthy cause,” explained Kurt Krause, general manager at NCC.

The National Conference Center (NCC), located in Northern Virginia 12 miles from Dulles International Airport and 35 miles from Washington, D.C., is one of the largest and most comprehensive conference centers in the nation. With 917 guest rooms and over 250,000 square feet of meeting space, NCC has become a hub for productive meetings and is on the GSA schedule. NCC is also home to West Belmont Place, Northern Virginia’s largest ballroom with 16,500 square feet for holding an elegant wedding or accommodating a large trade show or special event. For information call 800-640-2684 or visit www.conferencecenter.com, or www.westbelmontplace.com.

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