Toys for Tots coordinator for LaPorte County GYSGT Todd Mansfield USMCR is serving his third tour of duty in Iraq. April Stib, Michigan City, is standing in for him and she today announced the Toys for Tots participating toy collection sites.

The Mission of Toys for Tots is to collect new, unwrapped toys during the Holiday season and distribute those toys as Christmas gifts to needy children in the community. The objective is to help needy children to experience the joy of Christmas, to play an active role in our nation’s most valuable resource-our children- and to unite all members of the community in a common cause during the annual toy collection and distribution campaign as well as to better the community for the future.

Toys for Tots, begun in 1947 in Los Angeles by Major Bill Hendricks USMCR with a group of Marine Reservists, originally collected toys for refurbishment, but since 1980, has accepted only new toys. In 1996, the Commander of Marine Forces Reserve expanded Toys for Tots to cover all 50 states by authorizing selected Marine Corps League Detachments and selected local community organization, generally veteran Marines, located in communities without a Marine Reserve Center, to conduct toy collection and distribution campaigns in their communities. In 2000, the Toys for Tots campaign was the most successful campaign in the 53-year history of the program with local campaigns in 350 communities in 50 states and the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Despite the nation’s trauma as a result of the 9-11 attacks, the 2001 campaign was the second best in the 54 year history of the program...388 communities participating.

Toys that are collected in LaPorte Co. will be distributed between the Michigan City and the LaPorte Salvation Army and the County Township Trustees. The last day for drop off is December 16th.

“We are so fortunate that so many people have stepped in to take over while GYSGT Mansfield is in Iraq with his Unit. Everyone wants to help and we have had many volunteers placing the Toys for Tots boxes all over the County.” said Stib. “Last year then SSGT Mansfield was in Iraq for his second tour and the Toys for Tots program brought in 4500 toys for needy children in LaPorte County. With the community’s help, we hope to exceed last year’s donations.” Stib said. From last years experience, we find our biggest need is for toys for both girls and boys, ages 8-14.

There will be many Toys for Tots activities again this year. Local media will provide details of these upcoming events.

For the seventh year, The Great Lakes Museum of Military History will give free admission for each new, unwrapped toy brought to the Museum during its regular hours

Other Locations to drop-off toy donations include: In Michigan City, Al’s Valueland Stores-Franklin St. and Karwick Plaza
AT & T
Big Lots  
Bob Evans Restaurant  
Carlisle Funeral Home  
City Hall  
Page 2-2007 Toys for Tots

City Lanes  
Coldwell Banker (Franklin St. Office)  
Curves For Women-Hwy 20  
Dollar General – Evergreen Plaza  
Fanning/Howey & Associates  
Fifth Third Bank – Main Office & Franklin St. Branch  
First National Bank – 400 North  
Harley Davidson  
Harbor Chrysler - Hwy #20  
Hirsch Ford  
Jewel Food Store (Franklin St.)  
Image House Beauty Salon  
K B Toy Outlet  
Kabelin Ace Hardware – Marquette Mall  
LaPorte Savings Bank – Franklin St.  
Members Advantage Credit Union – Ohio St.  
Mid-City Supply Co., Inc.  
Moose Lodge #980  
Purdue North Central  
Red Lobster  
St. Stanislaus School  
Team Honda – Hwy #20  
Walgreen’s – Marquette Mall  
Wal-Mart  
Weil-Mcclain

Locations in LaPorte include:  
A I’s Valueland Stores East & West  
Dollar General – Hwy #2 & Hwy #4  
First National Bank – West  
Kabelin Ace Hardware  
Kroger Food Store  
LaPorte County Home Builders Association Office  
LaPorte Savings Bank – 710 Indiana Avenue  
Thode Floral

Locations in other parts of the County include:  
American Legion #403-Wanatah  
First National Bank-Westville, Wanatah,LaCrosse  
REMC Office  
Hesston Steam Museum-1000 N

If individuals or businesses would like to participate in the program through a collections box or hold an event to benefit Toys for Tots, please call April Stib at 219  898-1673.

If you, your organization or business would like to make a donation to the program to purchase toys, please make checks payable to Toys for Tots and mail to Toys for Tots, C/O The Great Lakes Museum of Military History, 360 Dunes Plaza, Michigan City, IN  46360. All contributions are tax deductible.
Anyone interested in receiving toys for their children ages infant thru 14 years, please contact your township trustee.