



Tuesday, Aug. 23, 2016

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

City of Port St. Lucie's Santa's Summer Toy Drive Collected more than 580 Toys for PATCHES

PORT ST. LUCIE (Aug. 23, 2016) – The joy of the holiday season is about to come early for the children at PATCHES, a medical pediatric daycare in Fort Pierce – thanks to the generous donations from the community and City employees.

Port St. Lucie's 4th Annual Summer Toy Drive to benefit PATCHES, which began in late June, collected more than 580 toys and monetary donations in excess of \$2,200. City employees today gathered and sorted boxes of donations and filled large bags, which were individually tailored for each child at the daycare center.

On Thursday, Aug. 25, 2016, a Port St. Lucie Police Department motorcade will deliver the bags of toys from Port St. Lucie City Hall to the children at the center, which is located in the Orange Blossom Business Center, 4300 Okeechobee Road, Fort Pierce. The motorcade will leave City Hall at 10 a.m. The public and media are invited to attend.

Port St. Lucie Councilman Ron Bowen will speak at the PATCHES center after the toys are unloaded around 10:30 a.m.

Bowen helped start this annual toy drive in 2012 when donated toys were stolen the day before Christmas as PATCHES was preparing to deliver them to the kids. When Bowen and other employees at City Hall heard the bad news, they quickly began gathering toys and within hours, the stolen toys were replaced and delivered.

"City employees really saved Christmas that year. And in the years since, this has become a big partnership between members of the community, local businesses and City employees," Bowen said.

“These are very, very sick children and we try to do whatever we can to make them happy.”

All monetary donations will be used exclusively to purchase toys for PATCHES. The toy drive exceeded its goal of collecting 300 toys.

The children and their parents are eagerly awaiting Thursday’s motorcade, said Gail Steward, administrator for the PATCHES Fort Pierce center.

“They just love it. They’ll be outside waiting for the police motorcycles,” Steward said. “They talk about it for weeks afterward.”

PATCHES is a local not-for-profit licensed nursing facility and medical daycare center that specializes in helping children with serious medical conditions. With professional medical staff attending the children during the day, parents can leave their kids in a caring environment while working or running family errands. The children return home in the evenings to rejoin family.

For more information on PATCHES, please visit www.patchesppec.org/

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The City of Port St. Lucie is proud to be a hometown where people live, learn, work and play, and celebrate all of life’s opportunities. With over 179,000 residents, Port St. Lucie is Florida’s eighth largest city by population (South Florida’s 3rd largest city). The City occupies an area of 120 square miles in St. Lucie County on Florida’s east coast, about 50 miles north of West Palm Beach, half way between Miami and Orlando. The City provides most traditional municipal services including law enforcement, water and sewer, and public works. For more information, please visit: www.cityofpsl.com

