The Toys for Tots program was created in 1947, when Major Bill Hendricks and a group of Marine Reservists in Los Angeles collected and distributed 5,000 toys to needy children on Christmas Eve. The original idea came from Bill's wife, Diane, who crafted a homemade Raggedy Ann doll and asked Bill to deliver the doll to an organization that would give it to a needy child at Christmas. Bill searched for an organization to distribute the toy; however, one did not exist. So he and his wife created one. The 1947 project was so successful that the Marine Corps adopted Toys for Tots in 1948 and expanded it into a nationwide campaign. Marines have conducted successful nationwide campaigns at Christmas each year since 1948. During the 62 years of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Program, Marines have distributed more than 400 million toys to more than 188 million needy children.

The Houston Yacht Club held a very successful Toys for Tots drive on Dec. 9, collecting more than 300 new toys for needy children. The toys were generously donated or funded by HYC members, Why Not Toys in Old Town Spring and Texas Citizen Bank. A wonderful contingent of three United States Marines attended the event on behalf of Toys for Tots, and activities included a visit from Santa Clause (who delighted young and old alike), excerpts from The Nutcracker (performed by dancers from The Amy Blake School of Dance in Friendswood), and a reading of “Merry Christmas, My Friend” by Past Commodore Mike Bordelon.