

December 16, 2018



SARATOGA SPRINGS, N.Y. — As Christmas quickly approaches, event-goers enjoyed a breakfast with Santa over the weekend in the Spa City, while helping the 2018 Capital Region Toys for Tots campaign.

The annual Breakfast with Santa event was held both Saturday and Sunday mornings at the Hilton Garden Inn in Saratoga Springs.

New this year, the breakfast included a charitable component, collecting donations for the Marine Toys for Tots Program's Capital Region drive, organized by members of the U. S. Marine Corps.

Additionally, the Hilton Garden Inn made a \$1,000 monetary donation to the Capital Region Toys for Tots.

"We wanted to give back to the community and make sure that the kids were thought of this holiday season," said the hotel's sales manager Michelle Moyer.

Attendees had the opportunity to meet Santa Claus, sit on his lap and have a photo taken while enjoying a buffet breakfast.

They also got the chance to meet Toys for Tots representatives Marine Sgt. Ted Kleniewski and "Gunny Claus" Robert Porter, who was dressed in his signature red uniform for the occasion.

"The mission is to provide every child a Christmas," Sgt. Kleniewski told those in the crowd on Monday morning. "We can't do it without you. It's a team effort."

Though this year's drive is soon ending, donors are encouraged to participate this week by dropping off new, unwrapped toys in the Toys for Tots donation boxes throughout the area. Supporters can also buy raffle tickets for a 2018 Can-Am Outlander 450 4x4 ATV with a new trailer.

Capital Region Toys for Tots is also looking for Marines, whether active duty, retired or reservists, to help run the program in the future.

While this has been a challenging year for the program with the loss of some major sponsors, "The community has stepped up in a lot of different ways," Kleniewski said, noting an increase in local, private events like the Breakfast with Santa.