

# **Fort Hood Group Donates Toys to Children's Hospital**

By Kim Steele  
Killeen Daily Herald

**TEMPLE** — Workers from Fort Hood's civilian-based Division of Materiel delivered a truckload of new toys Wednesday to the front entrance of the Children's Hospital at Scott & White. Using a forklift, workers unloaded 4-by-4-foot hand-constructed and painted boxes of toys that will brighten the eyes of young patients staying in the new hospital for a variety of illnesses, accidents and surgeries. The Division of Materiel collected 1,200 toys, crafts, books and games. Kelcie Phillips, administrative assistant for the Division of Materiel, said the outfit typically organizes two annual community service projects. This year, the children's hospital was chosen, with 550 civilian government employees and 600 contractors pitching in to gather toys. "We hope our donation will bring happy holidays for these children and make their stay here more bearable," said Phillips. "We're excited about this. We do a lot geared toward children, because they can't help themselves. All our workers are happy to have jobs in this economy and they want to give back." Harker Heights resident Taylor Smith, 10, colored a picture of Santa during a break from his room. Smith has been a patient at the hospital for about four weeks and will be going home this week. He also has been the happy recipient of a variety of donated toys. "I have 10 or 12 stuffed animals that the hospital has given me since I came here," said Smith. "I have a bear with a banana that says 'I love you' and a tiger with big eyes. When they give me toys here, it makes me feel cared for."

The Division of Materiel is composed of maintenance, aviation, supply and business management branches. The maintenance branch maintains equipment at the post, while the aviation branch repairs aircraft. The supply branch receives and distributes supplies, and the business management branch handles data, human resources and information technology. "Every year, we try to do something for charity," said Martin Roberts, a worker in the maintenance branch. "We all try to give or build something. In fact, we put together and painted the toy boxes. It makes us feel good to help the children in the hospital. Anything that brightens their day is a good thing." The hospital, which opened Oct. 4, has 64 pediatric beds, 48 neonatal intensive care unit beds and 14 emergency department beds. A total of 400 staff serve the needs of the children. Jan Upchurch, director of patient and family support services, said some of the toys will be available free for parents needing Christmas presents for their sick children. But most of the donations will be used for other therapeutic purposes at the hospital, she added. "This toy drop is the most important single event every year," she said. "We use some of the toys to restock the playroom, some toys are good for distracting children during procedures, some are rewards after a child does well in treatment, and others just make the children feel like normal kids."

