



City of West Columbia
Bridging Past, Present and Future

News Release

Wal-Mart “Pack a Pickup” for Adopt-a-Child Star Tree

Wal-Mart in West Columbia has teamed up with the West Columbia Fire Department to host a “Pack a Pickup” for the Adopt-a-Child Star Tree program on Saturday, December 7, 2013 from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Wal-Mart and West Columbia firefighters encourage holiday shoppers to donate toys to fill up a pickup truck stationed in front of the West Columbia Super Center Store located at 2401 Augusta Road. The donated presents will be wrapped and given out to at-risk children at a Christmas party hosted by Santa Claus on December 20, 2013 at the West Columbia Fire Station.

Sandy Vergara-Duarte, West Columbia Community Liaison, noted this is the 17th year for the Adopt-a-Child Star Tree program for at-risk youth. “These children come from families that are struggling just to meet basic needs, she explained. “There isn’t any extra for Christmas presents. For most of these kids the present they receive from the Star Tree is the only present they will get for Christmas.” She commended Wal-Mart for assisting with the Adopt-a-Child Star Tree program since only two weeks remain to gather enough gifts for all the children with their names on the tree. This is the second year Wal-Mart has participated in the “Pack-a-Pickup” event.

Individuals and church or civic groups also are encouraged to visit the West Columbia Fire Department at 610 N. 12th Street to choose a star-shaped ornament bearing a needy child’s name, age and gender. Buy the child a gift, wrap it and use the ornament as a label then return it to the Fire Station by December 18. The Fire Department lobby will be open every day from 8 a.m. to 9 p.m., through Wednesday, December 18, 2013 to receive the presents.

Vergara-Duarte said coming up with enough presents each year is a big challenge, but since its inception 17 years ago the program has given over 5,000 presents to children. Vergara-Duarte added, “When you see the joy light up a child’s face as Santa calls out his name and gives him a gift you know all the hard work is worth it.”

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Contact: Mardi Valentino, City Clerk/PIO • (803) 939-8603 • mvalentino@westcolumbiasc.gov

