

Portland Fire Toy & Joy Makers

Source: Portland Fire Yearbook

It all started in 1914 when Portland Firefighter Eddie Boatright fixed a broken wagon and gave it to a neighborhood kid. The idea caught on and by 1924, Portland Firefighters decided to organize in the effort to supply toys to the area's needy children at Christmas. By 1926 the effort was officially recognized as "Toy and Joy Makers" with the motto, "Every Child Deserves a Christmas."

As a totally volunteer effort, Toy & Joy has changed over the years from different fire stations repairing different types of toys (e.g. bikes at one station, dolls at another station, etc.) to the collecting or purchasing of new toys to the distribution of the same toys to over 12,000 children. That equates to 3,000 families, on average, each year.



Toy & Joy canvasses the city for donations in 1931

Toy & Joy Shoppers (volunteers staffing the effort) give each child four age and gender appropriate gifts, plus a few fill-in stocking stuffer items.

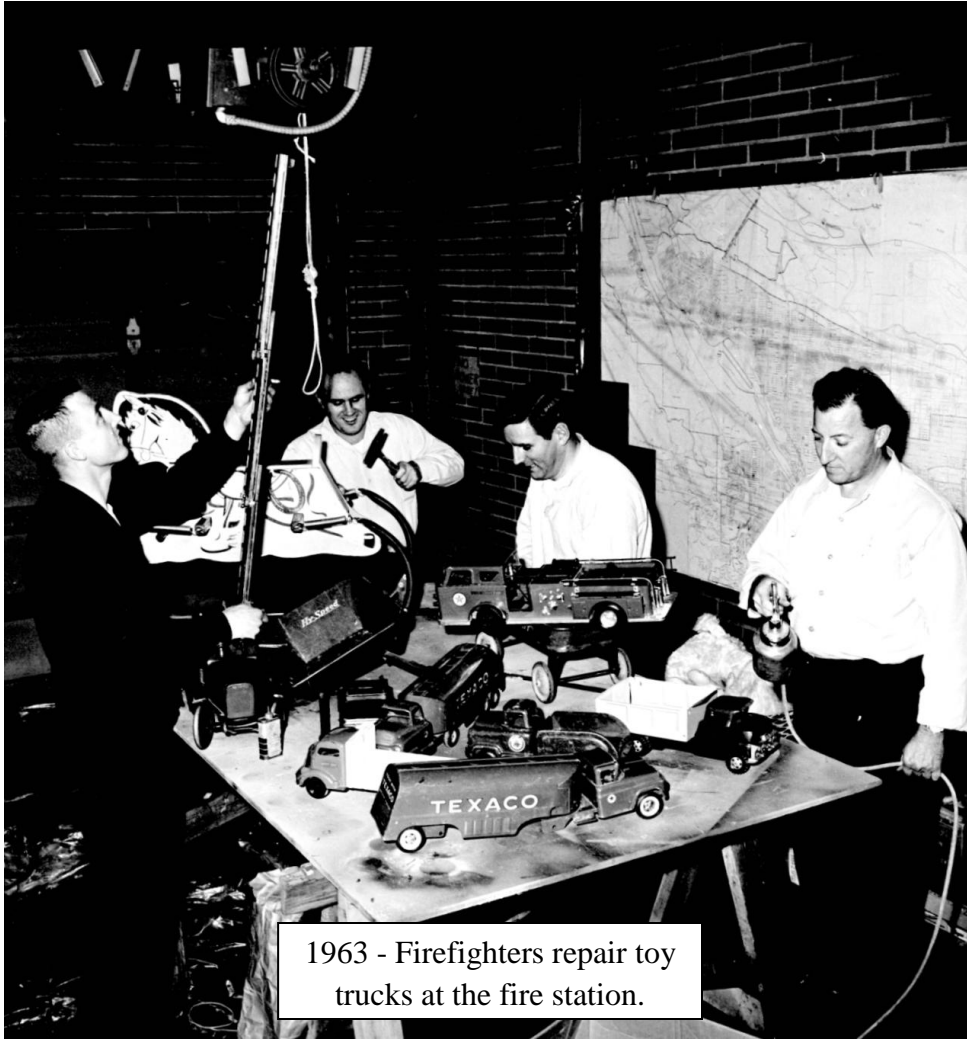


1955 - Eddie Boatright brings Dinah Shore to town

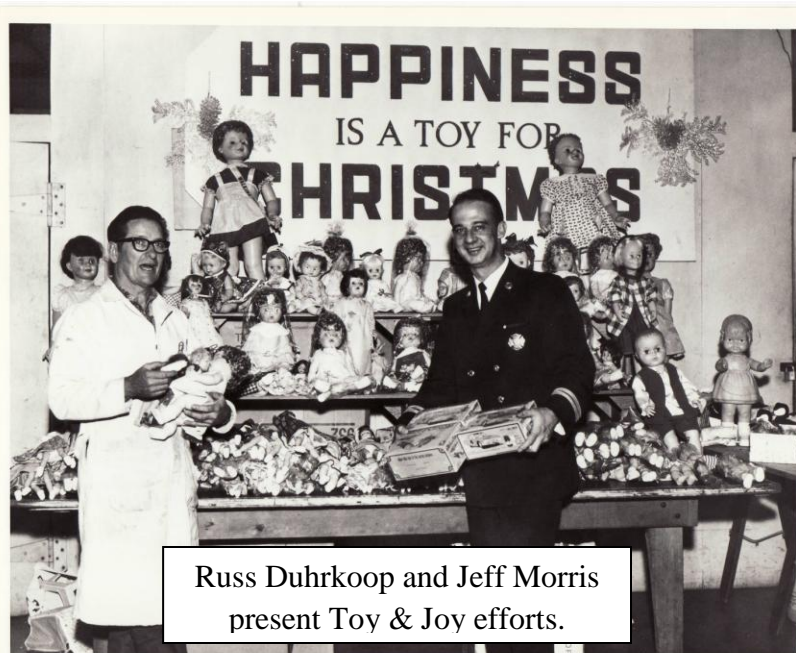
Portland's Toy & Joy Makers have turned the job of "Santa's Helper" into quite a creation. Throughout the year they also assist Portland Fire & Rescue by giving gifts to children whose homes have been struck by fire or other types of disasters. The program has been recognized by Readers Digest and the White House for its work. It has served as a model for over 1,700 similar programs across the United States.

As an all volunteer program, it would be impossible without the many helpers who work tirelessly throughout the year. Volunteers include working firefighters, retired firefighters, Portland Firefighter Association members, and members of the community at large.

For information, visit www.ToyNJoyMakers.org or call 503-823-0922.



1963 - Firefighters repair toy trucks at the fire station.



Russ Duhrkoop and Jeff Morris present Toy & Joy efforts.