

Delray family's boot camp benefits Toys for Tots

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It's the time of year for Delray Beach's Deborah Rhodes Van Buskirk and her family to once again provide holiday cheer for children.

For the third consecutive year, the Van Buskirks are coordinating their annual U.S. Marines Beach Boot Camp to benefit Toys for Tots. They have partnered with the U.S. Marines of 4th Anglico.

From now through the middle of December, people can drop off toys at the Raymond James office, 2255 Glades Road, Suite 122A in Boca Raton.

The boot camp event is slated to start at 6 a.m. Dec. 3 at Spanish River Beach in Boca Raton (just south of Spanish River Boulevard and ALA). The Van Buskirk family is no stranger to the winner's circle having teamed as the Van-tastic Four in winning the mother/son race in Delray Beach last May.

Deborah and her three sons — Tyler, Mark and Drew — captured the title.

"The US Marines help us with our event on their own time as a community service — all they ask is that we collect toys," Deborah Rhodes Van Buskirk said. "I wanted my boys to see the connection between being a part of where they live and helping others."

"I wanted them to be a big part of the entire process and actually see the faces of the children that they are helping. This

event is growing every year and we expect 20 U.S. Marines to run the boot-camp this year."

Mom hopes to pass this tradition down to her sons.

"My dream is to have the children continue this wonderful event that they have helped to create and be a part of their adult lives," she continued. "We run lots of races as a family to help various charities, but this event is one that we can plan and do together...they can also see who is benefiting from

their efforts."

The Van Buskirk family helps load up the trucks with toys as well as helping to organize and pass off toys from the Marines' warehouse when the families come to collect the toys.

"They don't actually count the toys from each location, but base it on how many times they have to pick up filled bins," Deborah Rhodes Van Buskirk added.

The Marines are in charge of the one-hour

boot camp with official items that they would use during their physical training.

"We encourage people who can't come that they can still drop off toys at my office as well as bring a check made out to 'Toys for Tots' for the two months that we are collecting," Van Buskirk said. "We are quite passionate about this event."

For more information contact Deborah Rhodes Van Buskirk at 561-999-4326.



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