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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Fred MacFarlane – (213) 369-8425

Vernon firefighters use ‘Spirit of Giving’ to bring aid, comfort and joy to residents of surrounding communities during 2013 holiday season

Vernon, CA – Every year, the members of the Vernon Fireman’s Association (VFA) Local 2312 contribute their time and efforts to make Christmas a special time for families in need, donate blood to aid hospitalized children and mount special fundraising drives to help researchers find a cure for breast cancer.

As Christmas 2013 approaches, Vernon firefighters – working collectively as a surrogate Santa Claus – received more than 3,000 donated toys to distribute to children who might otherwise not receive gifts on Christmas Day. The Vernon Fire Department’s participation in the ‘Spark of Love Toy Drive’ brings heartfelt joy to children’s lives through its firefighters’ close collaboration with community-based organizations from Compton to Los Angeles.

Vernon Fire Captain Michael Langer said, “Giving back to our city and residents of our surrounding communities has long been a part of our mission in the Vernon Fire Service. This year, we are pleased to be able to bring joy to children’s lives on Christmas Day by distributing thousands of toys to families in need through our partnerships with Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, Maywood Community Center Salvation Army, Vernon Rotary Club, Vernon School, Holy Angels Church, Los Angeles Plaza la Roca, Huntington Park Police Department and Compton Fire Department.”

In October, Vernon firefighters raised \$6,000 from sales of pink t-shirts and wristbands purchased by Vernon businesses and city employees to contribute to The Breast Cancer Research Foundation to commemorate Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Earlier this year, Vernon firefighters staged a fundraising blood drive to aid children needing transfusions at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, shaved their heads for their annual St. Baldrick’s Foundation ‘Conquer Kids Cancer’ fundraiser, and stationed members at key intersections in Vernon for their VFA ‘Fill the Boot’ campaign to raise thousands of dollars to support the work of the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA).

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Vernon was founded in 1905 to create jobs in California. Vernon's 1,800 businesses create more than 105,000 jobs in the Los Angeles area – including 55,000 jobs within the city's 5.2-mile boundary. The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation designated Vernon as California's 'Most Business Friendly City.' Vernon generates more than \$330 million in state income and sales taxes, \$1.1 billion in taxable spending. Vernon's businesses provide more than 4.4 billion in salaries and wages annually for workers in Los Angeles County. For more information, go to www.cityofvernon.org.