What has been called the “heart” of the Defense Waste Processing Facility (DWPF) at SRS celebrated its 10th anniversary last month, a full eight years beyond its design life expectancy. Melter 2, the 65-ton, teapot-shaped vessel treats high-level radioactive waste stored in SRS waste tanks by blending it with a borosilicate frit to form a molten glass mixture. The mixture is poured into stainless steel canisters, which are decontaminated and stored on-site until a permanent storage facility is identified.

The melter, only the second in the 17-year history of DWPF, is celebrating 10 years of service this month and much success. Melter 2 has poured over 2,200 canisters during its life, nearly double what Melter 1 produced in its life span. Melter 1 was placed into operations in March 1996. Together, Melters 1 and 2 have poured 3,603 canisters through March 31, 2013. The predicted number of canisters needed to dispose of SRS’s hazardous waste is 7,580.

SRR keeps one melter in storage in case the working melter needs to be replaced. Currently, Melter 3 is waiting and is ready, if needed. Melter 3 is projected to replace Melter 2 in late 2014 or early 2015. Melter 4, which arrived on site recently, will become the melter in waiting.

SRR awarded Russell Overton, an operator in Saltstone, the first SRR Safety and Health Achievement Award for modeling exemplary safety leadership.

The SRR Safety and Health Achievement Award is intended to recognize a nominated hourly employee in the company who most actively supports the safety process on both the facility and company levels.

Overton was chosen for this award for his exceptional involvement in many areas of Environmental, Safety and Health in his facility. Nominated by a co-worker, Overton’s input is believed to be especially valuable when overseeing tasks being performed safely.
It was another day of work for about 50 SRR employees, but instead of heading to the Savannah River Site (SRS) on March 22, 2013, they headed to various locations in Aiken County to participate in the annual United Way of Aiken County Project Vision.

Armed with hammers, nails, various tools, rakes and paint brushes, SRR employees tackled landscaping activities, plumbing and electrical repairs, and even ventured under a residence to replace a floor joist.

Sharon Rodgers, President of the United Way of Aiken County, welcomed the volunteerism exemplified by SRR.

“We have a lot of people in our area that have homes in need of repair and they, for whatever reason, cannot afford the repairs,” Rodgers said. “The United Way is grateful for groups like the SRR employees who recognize the need and give back.”