

# Press Release: 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Gauteng Motorcycle Toy Run

**WHEN:** 27 November 2022 – 09:00 to 15:30

**WHERE:** Benoni Northern Sports Grounds (John Barrable Hall)  
Brodigan Street (off O'Reilly Merry Street)  
Northmead, Benoni

**WHY:** Charitable collection of toys for less privileged children by the Motorcycling fraternity.

**ENTRY FEE:** Toy (or two) for the children  
Used toys are acceptable as long as they are clean and not damaged.

The Gauteng Motorcycle Toy Run returns for its 12<sup>th</sup> successive year to the Benoni Northern Sports Club on O'Reilly Merry Street. *"A first in itself, historically the end venue had been moved every two years or so, but the venue is so ideal and the community has bought in, in such a big way, we are loathed to move again"* says Pete Beart, trustee of the Gauteng Motorcycle Toy Run Trust and convener of the end venue in Northmead, Benoni.

This annual drive by the biking fraternity of Johannesburg collects toys and gifts for children around Johannesburg and now gathers around 18 000 toys in a single day! (Our record just a few years ago was 55,000). These are redistributed via service clubs and charity organizations so that as many children as possible can celebrate Christmas with a gift. *"We know times are tough and everybody is feeling the pinch, this is reflected in the collections over the past few years, but we hope this has now bottomed out on the 18 000 or so toys collected on the day over the past couple of years, and we can again realize much higher numbers in the years ahead. As long as a toy is useable, it is more than some of the children have that we distribute to"* says Pete, a 30 year veteran of the event.

The event has over a hundred food and curio stalls, a sound stage with 2 bands, a kid's entertainment area and a beer garden to make for a great family day out. Toys are collected from the bikers and the public alike and sorted by volunteers while the attendees enjoy the day's festivities.

## Entrance Fee

The entrance fee is a toy; it's as easy as that. If you forget your toy or would like to add to the collection on the day, cash donation of R50 per person at the entrance is also accepted. This donation method has been utilized increasingly in recent years since we had to enforce the "admission by a toy policy" due to unfortunate and increasing numbers of patrons arriving without toys. The Toy Run asks its supporters to please give consideration to what any 1 to 17 year old child (boy or girl) would like for Christmas that they can call their own – *"whilst the teddy bear is our logo we are always short of gifts for the older children."*

To stage the event costs well over R120,000.00 in equipment & venue hire costs, entertainment, insurance and other ever increasing regulatory costs. Our heartfelt gratitude is extended to those sponsors and stalls for their continued assistance. Please support the many and varied stalls! Without the stallholders and the many hundreds of volunteers the event would simply not happen. Cash inflow from the market traders remains an integral necessity to cover as much of the costs as possible, such as the tents.

## Mass Ride

To facilitate a safe flow of the 10,000 plus motorbikes anticipated, there are 4 starting points with safety marshals, metro and provincial police support. These all start at 09:00 from:

- North: Irene Village Mall
- South: The Blockhouse Garage
- East: Carnival City Casino
- West: Silverstar Casino – long ride

All participating bikes must be street legal and capable of maintaining a controlled 80km/hr speed on the freeways. No pit bikes or off-road bikes are permitted. These mass rides are for bikes only. All cars must go directly to the end venue, which includes the bike support vehicles. Sweep vehicles with trailers are provided.

### **Safety & Road Closures**

The Benoni CPF, Metro and other organizations will be ensuring rider safety through the suburbs to the end venue. This unfortunately means road closures and traffic interruptions, especially on:

...Atlas Rd stretch from the R21 to Elgin Street and Great North Road from the R21 to Hospital Road intersection.

Then all in Northmead,

Hospital Road to Henekam Street,

Hanekam street to Vygie Road (that's behind Oakfields PnP)

And the section of Brodigan Street between O'Rielly Merry and Hanekam Street.

Please be cautious if this affects you on the day – deep breath and think of the children being supported or come along and enjoy a fun day. Just imagine those 18,000+ smiles on the children's faces. Better yet, clean out that toy cupboard, and come and help build that number up again. *“Every year we have to say sorry to our NPO & NGO applicants who have 200 children under their care, but their share of the 18,000 toys is only 120 toys. Yes we have that sort of demand and short supply problem”* reported Peter.

### **Non-Bikers**

Non bikers are most welcome to come in their cars or walk in. There is secured parking provided. Please be aware that the cars and bikes routes are kept separate for safety reasons. Follow the signage and the road marshal's instructions as to where to park and walk into the event.

The 10,000 bikes parked on the sports fields makes for a very interesting spectacle and cars can carry more toys. Toy Run recommended toys are educational and for older age groups as they are always in short supply in the homes we visit. Even school shoes or stationery can go a long way to help those in need.

### **Toy Requirements**

The toys need not be new, just clean and useable. The Toy Run committee would like the attendees to focus on educational toys or toiletries as gifts but the children in need aren't as specific: a toy is a great treasure for them.

Please note that we do not accept toy guns or knives, neither any fancy battery powered toys as these unfortunately are of little use when the batteries die. Rather give two or three less expensive toys for the price of one fancy battery operated one. Games for groups also entertain more than one child at a time!

We look forward to welcoming you there!

### **CONTACT INFO:**

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