

2018 Barbie Hensler Memorial Toy Run

Hosted by
ABATE-AZ's High Country Chapter

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Members of High Country Chapter of ABATE of AZ were joined by their brothers and sisters from Rim Country District of MMA of AZ in the parking lot of the Buffalo Bar & Grill in Payson Arizona on Saturday morning, Dec. 8th, to set-up for the 16th Annual Barbie Hensler Memorial Toy Run. Eager to help out the area's children and families in need this Christmas, they arrived even before the doors were unlocked. The wait was not long however as Mike McKinnon, the Buffalo's owner, soon arrived also very eager to host this year's run.

Shortly thereafter the pickup trucks arrived after picking up the toy collection boxes that had been distributed to various area business for the last 30 days. The haul was impressive, but not as impressive as it would be by the end of the event.

By the scheduled start time of 11 am, bar and staff were ready, silent auction items, raffle and door prizes were arranged and ready. People started to arrive almost immediately. Some came there for the Toy Run but many regular patrons, surprised to find the event going on, seemed to relax bit once they discovered what was happening. Run attendees and regular customers all gladly took their free door prize tickets as they entered and some were even happier as they left with either a door or raffle prize tucked under their arm.

The 50/50 is always a big draw. A couple, Rick and Stephanie, who recently moved to the area, had stopped by to drop off some toys and say hello before heading out on a ride on a glorious fall day. They wanted to participate in the 50/50, but were only hoping they would win so they could donate the money back to the kids. So they purchased a \$20 dollar stretch of tickets and promptly donated them to the treasurer before heading out for their ride. We can't wait to see them again as, sure enough, they won half the \$364-dollar pot which went immediately back into the Event. Incidentally, every single penny earned at the toy run is donated to the Women of the Moose who use the money to make sure each and every child on their vetted list enjoys a happy Christmas. The Women of the Moose also take care of any of the families of these kids that needs a little extra help. So the toy run ends up helping more than just the kids.

For the 5 hours of the event, we had regular door and raffle prize drawings, great music by our KRIM

DJ Chris, great food and drink, and a lot of laughter. New friendships were made and old ones celebrated. This is definitely one of the most fun events of any year.

The end result was about 5 pickup trucks of toys, 10 brand new bicycles (with 7 more still to arrive), and \$3,000 cash.

This event is always the result of a few months of coordinating by our Event Coordinator, CC Ransom, with extra help from the Rim Country District of MMA who, this year, stepped up in a really big way to help with the actual execution of the event. So we want to start by thanking the Rim Country District MMA. We could never ask for better brothers and sisters. Thank you.

There is a very long list of businesses that need to be mentioned here as their support is invaluable. These include: Bandit's Restaurant and Dirty Cowboy Saloon in Strawberry, HB's Place and the Pinewood Tavern in Pine, The Spur Bar in Star Valley, The Pinon Café in Payson, and Jake's Corner Bar, all of which hosted toy collection boxes. Also, thanks to Miller Autoworks and Tonto Silkscreen & Embroidery in Payson for their very generous donations.

Special thanks go out to our brothers and sisters at the Old Bastards MC in Payson, the Loose Cannons in Payson, and the American Legion Riders from Post 69 in Payson who turned out in force. Also, thanks to Toys For Tots for their generous donation of toys.

Then there were those who really stepped up. These include Joy's Sweet Shoppe & Espresso Cafe in Pine and El Rancho Restaurant in Payson who both had completely full collection boxes. Then comes the Ponderosa Market in Pine with almost 3 full boxes of toys collected. But the most outstanding support came from 2 locations. The Sportsman's Chalet in Strawberry stepped up in a big way and brought us a full box of toys, a large cash donation AND they purchased, and delivered, the 17 brand new bicycles. And, once again, Punkin Center Bar in Tonto Basin handed us 3 overfull boxes of toys as well as over \$1,200 in cash. They do this each and every year and we cannot thank them enough.

Also needing special mention is Sawmill Theaters who promoted the event, free, on every screen of each showing for the last month and KRIM FM 96.3 in Payson who not only promoted the event, but collected toys AND provided their DJ Services free. Thanks so much Chris!!

Definitely not least in all of this is Mike at the Buffalo Bar & Grill in Payson; the permanent home of the Barbie Hensler Memorial Toy Run. Thank you Mike. You are a rock star!

Finally, and most importantly, thank you once again to the Women of the Moose who take all the

toys and money to make sure every child on the vetted list they create and oversee is given an excellent Christmas. They work extremely hard to get all donated, and purchased, toys, clothes, and other family items, sorted and wrapped in just under a week. Then, no doubt exhausted, they throw a huge party for the kids and their families complete with Santa and Mrs. Claus (who are generally escorted by the Hellsgate Fire Department). Ladies, you are all Christmas angels. Thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

As you can see, if you have read all the way down here, this is a community event and requires the support of many many folks to pull off each year. For the 16th time we are able to say "Thank You, have a very Merry Christmas, a safe and prosperous New Year, and see you next year for the 17th annual Barbie Hensler Memorial Toy Run".

We love you Barbie! We hope we are making you proud.

Online readers can click the title above to view the photo album.

View the Live Stream from the event here: <https://www.facebook.com/KrimFm/videos/260720001271222/>

Complete list of supporting businesses & organizations:

- The Sportsman's Chalet – Strawberry
- Bandits Restaurant & Dirty Cowboy Saloon – Strawberry
- HB'S Place – Pine
- Ponderosa Market – Pine
- Pinewood Tavern – Pine
- Joy's Sweet Shoppe & Espresso Cafe – Pine
- El Rancho Restaurant – Payson
- Buffalo Bar & Grill – Payson
- The Spur Bar – Star Valley
- Greater Payson Moose Lodge 852 – Star Valley
- The Women of the Moose – Star Valley
- Miller Autoworks – Payson
- Tonto Silkscreen – Payson
- KRIM FM 96.3 – Payson
- Sawmill Theaters – Payson
- Pinon Café – Payson
- American Legion Riders – Post 69 – Payson
- Loose Cannons MC – Payson
- Old Bastards MC – Payson
- Jakes Corner Bar – Jakes Corner
- Punkin Center Bar & Grill – Punkin Center
- Toys For Tots
- Rim Country District of the Modified Motorcycle Association (MMA) of Arizona
- High Country Chapter of ABATE of AZ
- And all the folks that live between Tonto Basin and Strawberry that made this possible.

