

<https://www.thetonmag.com/blog/2020/11/5/2020-olympia-toy-run>

2020 Olympia Toy Run

As a kid living in Olympia, Washington in the early 1980s one of the marquee events of the year was the annual toy run. Each year, during the first week of December, thousands of motorcycles line up in a parking lot adjacent to the former South Sound Mall and parade down Pacific Ave (a remnant of the old Pacific Highway) to drop toys off on the westside of Capital Lake in Downtown Olympia. The event would draw hundreds of onlookers lining the streets to share in the holiday cheer. The Toy Run has a piece in the hearts of all Olympia kids of the era, held equally in regard as the Pet Parade and Bed Races.

My memories of the Toy Run include walking down the street to the “main drag,” ready to grab the candy thrown from the bikes (no longer part of the ride), see family and friends’ bikes parade down the road to bring smiles to hundreds of us kids. My eyes peeled for my favorite bikes, rarely as a kid can I think of anything as instantly exciting as the sight of thousands of bikers riding down the street throwing out candy to all my friends from the neighborhood.

This year, of course, things will be a little bit different. It’s an understatement to say that 2020 has been a challenge for all us. Each of us, and our community, has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, which makes this year’s Toy Run even more important and meaningful. While we will not be able to see bikes from all across Washington rally down the streets of Olympia, we can still share in the cheer, enthusiasm, and charity that fulfilled the run for the past 43 years.

This year the Toy run will have boxes in over 30 locations to support the Salvation Army’s “Toy & Joy” program. Your contributions provide well-deserving children with gifts during the Christmas season In Thurston, Lewis, Mason, and parts of Grays Harbor counties. The spirit of the Toy Run has always been “all about the kids”, and this year they need us more than ever.

For a list of drop off locations and more information on the Toy Run, visit: <https://nwharley.com/olympiatoyrun>