



# EDMONTON TOY RUN ASSOCIATION

Making a difference in the lives of children since 1984

## NEWSLETTER

Issue #10 - December/January 2025

### Santa's Mailbag

The 42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Edmonton Toy Run was an absolute success! I am humbled and somewhat speechless this month because of what we accomplished. The Edmonton Toy Run success was made possible because of so many people. The incredibly dedicated executive members, a great team of volunteers, Edmonton Toy Run Members, Sponsors, the Motorcycle Community, everyone who showed up, purchased a membership, or raffle ticket, brought a toy, or made a donation! Thank you for supporting us and Supporting Santas Anonymous.

The Mission of Santas Anonymous is simple. A wish to see every child receive a new toy at Christmas. The Edmonton Motorcycle Community, family, friends, sponsors, participants you have made a difference. You have changed lives for the better. This is the biggest donation we have ever made. Thank you for all your support!



As we start working on 2026 plans, my wish is for each and every one of you to tell people about the Edmonton Toy Run. Invite your friends and family to our events. Encourage them to participate and support our initiatives. We have several exciting events including the YEG Motorcycle Show April 10-13th. The return of BC/DC April 11th at Blackjacks!! Tickets will go on sale to members first and remember this was a sold out show last

year and it will sell out quickly. We also have a series of bike nights this year, plus our Annual Poker Run August 15th. The 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Edmonton Toy Run is Sunday September 20th! Mark your Calendars!

We are also working on a new raffle coming up, and we thank you in advance for your continued support. Imagine.... winning ACDC floor seats at Commonwealth Stadium for \$10.

LIVE AT  
**BLACKJACKS**

**BC/DC**

PRESENTED BY THE EDMONTON TOY RUN

SATURDAY  
APRIL 11  
TICKETS  
\$35  
DOORS: 6PM  
SHOW: 8PM

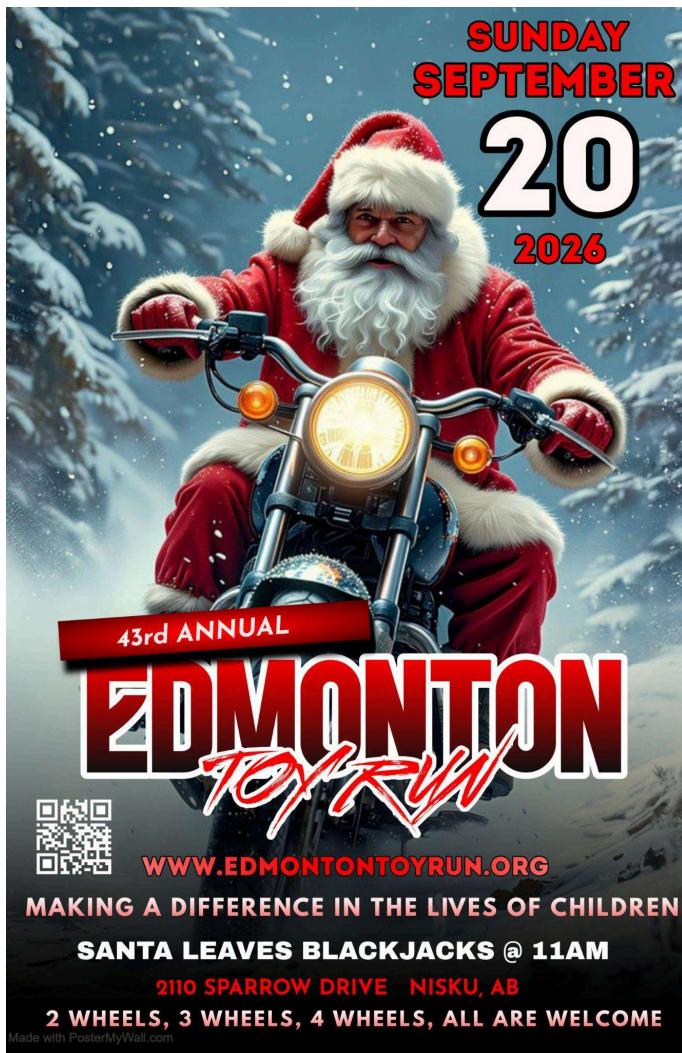
50/50  
LIVE AUCTION  
SILENT AUCTION  
BLACKJACKSROADHOUSE.COM  
2110 SPARROW DRIVE NISKU, AB

TICKETS

PROCEEDS SUPPORTING THE  
EDMONTON TOY RUN

EDMONTON  
TOY RUN





People ask me all the time. Jay now that the motorcycle season is over what are you going to do?

Well for starters motorcycle season never ends... maybe a break in the riding, but never really ends.

There is a countdown clock to the start of motorcycle riding season at my desk. Currently it is 116 days. I count down the days daily. Motorcycle riding season will be here soon, right.....

Currently, I have a few things on the go. Planning Edmonton Toy Run Events, looking at the motorcycle rides for 2026, or at least see when the major rides are going to happen and make a plan to be there.

I also plan on the things I want to do with my motorcycle. This time period is officially customization time! Lights, Bars, seat, pipes and let's not forget engine upgrade time!! If there is ever a time to upgrade a motorcycle, it is over the winter. Call your favorite dealer and get those mods done!

I have received several suggestions on things to do over

the winter. Some say to switch to winter activities. Sledding, skiing, ice fishing, skating!! All are awesome, but I tend to curl up by a fire with a good book and a favourite beverage. Regardless of your winter activities, spend as much time with loved ones, and complete as many items on your to do list as you can. Motorcycle riding season is not that far away, and we all know nothing gets done in riding months!!!

Remember to take a picture of your Edmonton Toy Run Ornaments on your Christmas Tree and send them to us!

From the Edmonton Toy Run family to yours, Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and all the best in 2026!!! See you all in the New Year.

**Jay Padilla**

**Planning Committee Chair**

[www.edmontontoyrun.org](http://www.edmontontoyrun.org)



*Merry Christmas  
and  
Happy New Year*

## **Edmonton Toy Run 2025**

### **Year in Review**

What a year! The 42nd Edmonton Toy Run once again brought riders, families, businesses and community partners together to make the holiday season brighter for children in need while strengthening ties across the riding community and beyond. From early season fundraisers to the main ride and postevent collection at the Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre, our volunteers and sponsors helped fill the trailer with new toys and cash donations for local children served through Santas Anonymous and other community partners.

### **Community Impact**

Through the donations collected at The Edmonton Toy Run, families who face financial hardship received new, unwrapped toys and gift support that made a measurable difference at holiday time. The Edmonton Toy Run continues to be a major kickoff for our local Santas Anonymous efforts, generating both toys and visibility for programs that support children across the region. Event photos and postride stories captured moments of joy and relief with children opening gifts, volunteers sharing time, and riders handing over donations all of which are reminders that this is about relationships as much as it is about gift giving!

### **Building and Strengthening Community**

The Edmonton Toy Run remains one of the largest community motorcycling events in the region, bringing more than a thousand riders and supporters together each year to demonstrate visible solidarity and care for local families in need.

Local businesses, hospitality partners, law firms, motorcycle dealerships and small businesses joined as sponsors and on the day

helpers, deepening ties between riders and the broader Edmonton community and building goodwill that endures year round.

Our volunteers, from route marshals to registration crews and donation sorters, deepened relationships with local charities we support and with one another. Those relationships support getting the gifts and cash donations where they are most needed, creating a stronger safety net

for children and families in subsequent months.

### **Highlights and Milestones**

The annual run from Blackjacks Roadhouse to the Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre drew strong participation and culminated in a huge collection of toys and cash donations to support our local charities and programs.

Poker runs, motorcycle shows, and community days extended the Toy Run's reach through the year, helping maintain momentum and build new volunteer and sponsorship avenues for the work we do over the winter to build our capacity to give back in an even bigger way!

Special thanks to our sponsors- we cannot do this without our generous sponsors!! A heartfelt thank you to all levels of support, with special recognition for headline and longtime partners including James H. Brown Injury Lawyers, Blackjacks Roadhouse, Cycle Works Edmonton, Edmonton Inn & Conference Centre, Martin Motor Sports, Grover Law Firm, Windsor Plywood, Joyride Financial, Acera Insurance, Indian Motorcycle of Edmonton, Harley Davidson of Edmonton, VIP Wear and the many other businesses, service providers and individual donors who made the 42nd run an incredible event for all!! Your financial contributions, in kind

donations and onsite support made possible the essential acts of care for Edmonton's in need children and families.

This year we celebrated hundreds of volunteers whose quiet dedication made the logistics seamless: registration crews who welcomed riders, safety marshals who coordinated routes, collection crews who sorted toys, and administrative teams who kept sponsors informed and sponsorship connected. A special thank you to The Edmonton Toy Run Chairs Hazel Gillis and Jay Padilla who have spearheaded many of our long term and newly developed events and programs, making the reach of The Edmonton Toy Run ever expanding! Volunteers are at the heart of our ability to turn community generosity into tangible outcomes for children.

### **How the Toy Run strengthens the riding community**

Riders from diverse clubs and backgrounds converge around giving; that shared mission strengthens relationships and mutual respect across the motorcycling community.

Seasoned volunteers mentor younger riders and new volunteers on event safety, logistics and community engagement, creating continuity for future runs.

Sponsor engagement builds ongoing relationships between the riding community and local businesses, supporting reciprocal visibility and community investment year round.

### **How you can help next year:**

- Donate toys or funds early to support sorting and distribution.
- Volunteer on collection day or with pre-event logistics.
- Encourage local businesses you know to consider sponsorship or in-kind support.



- Spread the word on social media to expand reach and participation.

### **Important Dates: Mark your calendars!!**

- Sponsor and volunteer signup opens: spring 2025 (watch the Edmonton Toy Run site for details).
- Toy Run-related events (poker rally, motorcycle show, community collection days): scheduled through summer 2026 — check the Event Photos and Calendar pages for specific dates and locations.
- Looking ahead: the Toy Run has already posted the next major date — September 20, 2026 — so set aside the weekend for the 43rd run and related community events.

This year's Toy Run demonstrated the power of local generosity, the practicality of organized giving, and the deep relationships that form when riders, businesses, volunteers and community agencies work together. To everyone who donated time, toys, funds, sponsorship or goodwill: Thank you!! Your efforts change lives, strengthen community ties, and light up the holidays for children who need it most. Visit [edmontontoyrun.org](http://edmontontoyrun.org) for photos, sponsor details and ways to get involved for the 2025–2026 season.

### **Featured Rider(s)/Business**

#### **Meet Hazel, Co-Chair, Edmonton Toy Run Association**

Hazel Gillis is a long-time executive member of the Edmonton Toy Run Charitable Organization, known for her steady leadership and deep commitment to community service. She has played a central role in organizing annual fundraising and toy-drive efforts that support children and families across the region. Hazel is respected for her collaborative approach, working

closely with volunteers, community partners,

and the motorcycle community to ensure events run safely and effectively. Her dedication and practical problem-solving have helped sustain the Toy Run's impact year after year.



**Hazel, what inspired you to start your relationship with and maintain your dedicated commitment to the Edmonton Toy Run all those years ago, and how has that vision evolved over the decades?**

*Originally, I got involved with the Edmonton Toy Run when my boss asked me if I could attend the meeting that evening and take minutes.*

*All these years later, I am still involved because even though the committee has gone through many changes, our vision has not and that is to make a difference in the lives of children.*

**Can you share a defining moment or personal story that reaffirmed your commitment to organizing the Toy Run each year?**

*Every year I am overwhelmed by the generosity of our community,*

*this is what brings me back each year. Even when times were tough, right after the pandemic, the Edmonton Toy Run had community support. When I see the trailer full of donated toys each year, it warms my heart to know we are making a difference and that is what it is all about.*

*I know what it is like to wonder how I am going to give my kids a Christmas and I do not wish that feeling on anyone.*

*I also have an extremely supportive family who have worked alongside me year after year with the Edmonton Toy Run.*

**The Edmonton Toy Run has grown to include events like the annual Poker Rally and bursary program—what was the impetus behind these expansions, and how do they align with your core mission?**

*Unlike many other charities out there the Edmonton Toy relies on word-of-mouth promotion instead of media like radio and tv. By expanding beyond the one-day event to include bike nights, the Poker Rally, and BBQs it allows us to not only increase what we can donate each year but also increases community awareness.*

*The Bursary program is geared towards youth aged 17 to 24 looking to improve their lives, through learning.*

*Everything the Edmonton Toy Run undertakes is focused on how we can make a difference in the lives of our youth.*

**How do you cultivate and sustain partnerships with local businesses, riding clubs, and sponsors to ensure the Toy Run's continued success?**

*Communication. We never take our supporters for granted. Be it a sponsor, partner, participant we*

*make it a priority to recognize and thank those who take the time to support our cause. It is amazing how far a simple “thank you” will go.*

**Collecting and distributing toys is at the heart of your work—what logistical challenges do you face each season, and how does your team overcome them?**

*In the last couple of years, we have set-up collection boxes in several businesses to boost the number of toys we collect each year. Our planning committee is small, so finding the volunteers to drop off and pick up the collection boxes can be a challenge. The majority of our toys are collected at our event in September. We are fortunate enough to have a great support network of local bike groups who volunteer to collect and bag the toys. As for distributing the toys, we have a longstanding relationship with Santa’s Anonymous, allowing us to donate the toys to them and they handle the distribution.*



**In 2024, you broadened toy-collection efforts into Sherwood Park, donating to the Strathcona Christmas Bureau. How do you identify new communities in need, and what have you learned from these partnerships?**

*We identify communities in need by relying on feedback and communication from our supporters. Being able to have these*

*communications has helped us broaden our horizons on what communities are in need and how we can help them in the best way we can. For example, in 2024, we set up collection boxes in Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan; all toys collected through these boxes were donated to organizations in those communities.*

**The Edmonton Toy Run also awards a bursary to deserving students. How did this initiative come about, and what impact have you seen it has on recipients like Sairyn H.?**

*We introduced two programs in 2024, our Adopt-A-Teen – this program supports organizations that work with youth aged 14 – 17. In 2024, we made a donation to the Old Strathcona Youth Society which allowed them to give youth in their program a gift card for Christmas.*

*The second was the Bursary Program to assist those youth aged 17 – 24 with the cost of attending a program of learning. This can be post-secondary education, continuing education, or skill enhancement/development.*

*Attending school or courses of any kind is expensive, it is our hope that this bursary can help alleviate some of these costs.*

**Can you highlight a few of the most memorable “impact stories” you have heard from families or children who benefited directly from the Toy Run?**

*Because the Edmonton Toy Run donates our donations through other organizations, recipients are not aware of our donation. Many of our participants have told us that they participate in the Edmonton Toy Run because they received toys for their kids when times were tough.*

*Our feedback comes from the organizations we support. Santas*

*Anonymous always expresses their appreciation for our donation. In addition to telling the committee, they will attend our annual event to thank our participants personally.*

*Last year the Old Strathcona Youth Society expressed to us that without our donation they would not be able to provide their youth with a gift card for Christmas.*

**Beyond the one-day ride and festivities, what volunteer and engagement opportunities exist year-round for community members who want to support your work?**

*The Edmonton Toy Run is always looking for volunteers. Currently, volunteers are needed to acquire silent auction items for the BC/DC concert or help at the motorcycle show in April. We also need people to distribute save the date cards and posters to businesses in the Edmonton area starting early in the new year. As we move forward volunteer opportunities will be listed in the newsletter and on Facebook, but anyone wanting to help out can drop us a line at [edmontontoyrun@gmail.com](mailto:edmontontoyrun@gmail.com)*

**Looking ahead, what new goals or innovations do you envision for the Edmonton Toy Run over the next five years—whether in scale, programming, or the populations you serve?**

*To say, I would like to see the attendance at our events increase scares me, but I’d love to see it double over the next five years.*

*Every month, we try to feature a rider or business within the community. Do you know of an individual, either in the biking or car world, or a business you would like to see featured? Would you like to be featured in our next newsletter? Send an email to:*

[Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com](mailto:Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com)



### **Bursary**

Did you know the Edmonton Toy Run has a bursary that is available for anyone who is applying for post-secondary education?

Applications are now being accepted. Click on the link below for more information and to access the 2026 Bursary Package.

<https://edmontontoyrun.org/bursary-1>

### **Last Month's Event Recap:**

On November 5th we were out at Six Pak Saloon for their Bon Fire Night. We collected toys and cash

donations that will be given to the Fort Saskatchewan Multicultural Association.

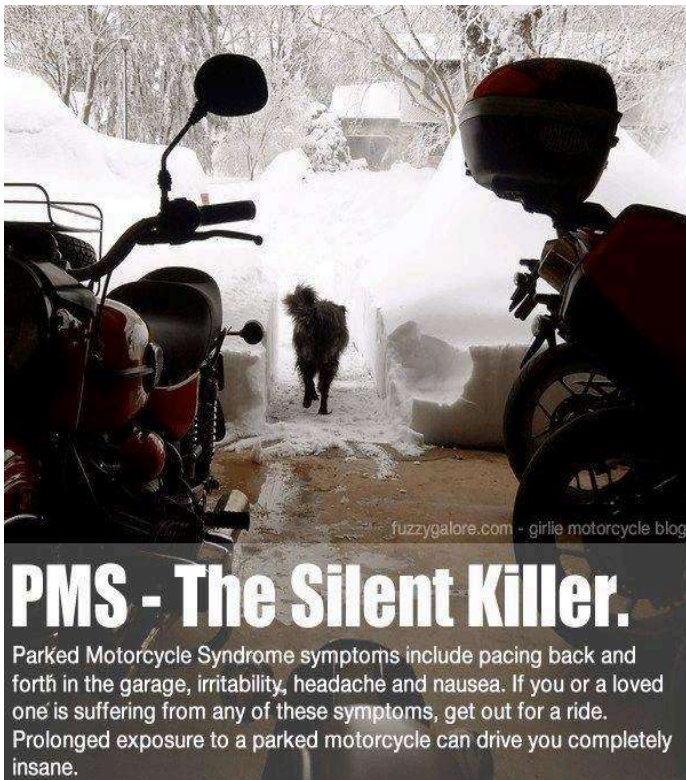
### **Sponsorship**

Every year, our sponsors play a big part in what we do by donating to a great cause.

If you would like to become a sponsor or know of a business or individual that would like to become a sponsor, please let us know by sending an email to [Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com](mailto:Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com)



### **Dad Joke:**



### **AC/DC Concert Tickets Raffle**



**1st Prize:** 2 Floor seats at AC/DC's August 9th 2026 concert at Commonwealth Stadium

**2nd Prize:** \$200.00 gift card to  
*Cycle Works Edmonton*

**3rd. Prize:** \$100.00 gift card to  
*Blackjacks Roadhouse, Nisku*

Only **500** tickets are printed and are \$10.00 a ticket.

Winning ticket will be drawn at the  
**BC/DC concert April 11th, 2026**

Tickets will be available on the website  
**December 1st, 2025**

**Get your 2026 Membership through the website @**  
**<https://edmontontoyrun.org/memberships>**



## Volunteers Needed!

The Edmonton Toy Run is always in need of volunteers to help with our events. We would welcome your help at one or all of our events.

### Events That Need Help 🧑

#### Bike Nights

The next night is June 23rd  
Help is needed with setup/tear down  
Directing parking  
Tent and building monitors  
(basically to remind people not to exit the tent/building with alcohol)  
50/50 sales

#### Poker Rally

Next Event August 15th, 2026  
Help is needed with setup/tear down  
Food prep and/or service  
50/50 sales  
Registration Desk  
Check point monitor

#### Main Event – Annual Toy Run September 20th, 2026

Signage set-up and/or take down.  
Set-up is the night before the event, and take-down is directly after the event.  
Set up/tear down at the starting point (Blackjacks Roadhouse)  
Set up/tear down at endpoint (Edmonton Inn and Convention Centre)  
Directing Parking  
50/50 sales  
Toy collection

#### Annual YEG Motorbike Show - April 9th - 12th 2026

Set up and/or tear down the booth

Booth coverage (minimum three-hour shift)

#### BC/DC Concert at Blackjacks Roadhouse April 11th, 2026

Door coverage  
Set up/tear down silent auction  
50/50 tickets

#### We also need people to help with:

Deliver/pick up toy collection boxes  
Sponsorship – we need people to help obtain event sponsorship  
Promotion – can you help with PR

#### We can be reached at:

[Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com](mailto:Edmontontoyrun@gmail.com)

### Upcoming Events by Edmonton Toy Run

April 11, 2026 - BC/DC Fundraiser @ Blackjacks

June 23rd, 2026 - Bike Night @ Blackjacks

August 15, 2026 - 3rd Annual Poker Rally

September 20, 2026 - 43rd Annual Toy Run

Check out our web page for even more events!

<https://edmontontoyrun.org/event-calendar->

### 2025 Committee Members:

Jay Padilla, Hazel Gillis, Heather Gillis, Nevin Kublik, Landon Kublik, Gabe Barrington-Moss, Nik Hewlett, Denise Chenier, Daphne Dowbush, David Dowbush, Freya Giroux

### Contact Information:

Edmonton Toy Run: [edmontontoyrun@gmail.com](mailto:edmontontoyrun@gmail.com)

### Links to Edmonton Toy Run:



### CHRISTMAS SONG PICTURE GAME

