

Wheels Make Wishes Come True for Children

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ALTON - Motorcycles, dune buggies, and classic hot rods came together to raise \$27,000 for area children facing life-threatening ailments in the sixth annual Ride For Wishes Saturday, Sept. 21.

“This was the best ride yet because of all the different, wonderful vehicles,” said organizer Norma Glazebrook, the state’s top volunteer for Make-A-Wish. “It was wonderful to see so many fantastic machines. Two wheels, three wheels, four wheels. Wow!”

The 70-mile ride took off from Ted's Motorcycle World at noon with the assistance of the Madison County Sheriff's Department and ended at the Alton Godfrey Sportsman's Club escorted by an Alton Police Department SUV. At the club, a stock car driven by Tri-City Speedway Rookie of the Year Brandon King and a 1941 Chevrolet pickup truck owned by Lonnie Kimbro of Godfrey joined the vehicles on display.

"It looked like a car and bike show there on the parking lot," co-organizer Jeanne Wuellner said. "That was quite the parade when they all pulled in."

Riders and passengers were treated to a lunch catered by Carvers BBQ and heard from five Wish Children who have had their wishes granted. There were also silent and live auctions, contests and prizes for participants.

"These wishes mean so much to the children as they go through months of treatment, Wishes help give them the courage to face their challenges," Glazebrook said.

The ride and activities were organized by the Southern Illinois Volunteers for Make-A-Wish of Illinois. Glazebrook and Wuellner are both members of the council that administers the group.

Proceeds from the ride will be used only for children in Madison, Jersey, Calhoun, Macoupin, Greene and St. Clair counties. In the last year, some 75 wishes were granted in Southern Illinois. The average cost to make a child's dream come true is about \$6,500, including in-kind contributions from airlines and other corporations. Throughout the state, 750 wishes were granted.

For the first time, the bikers were joined by members of the Great River Road Dune Buggies as well as four classic hot rods, including a fully restored 1966 Pontiac GTO.

"We are grateful to all of the people who came out for the ride and, especially our key donors, our

Signature Sponsor Granite City Savings Credit Union and our Exquisite Diamond Sponsor Eaton B Line in Highland," Glazebrook said. Eaton B Line is part of a global manufacturing business and has long been a supporter of Make-A-Wish. GCS Credit Union has been the ride's signature sponsor for four years.