

Facility: Junee Correctional Centre
Media: Daily Advertiser, Wagga Wagga, NSW
Published Date: 03 December 2012

Fun toy run has serious side too

FOR many Wagga residents it's a familiar roar early in December as a convoy of motorbikes completes the toy run.

While early morning rain on Saturday discouraged a few more riders from heading out, more than 160 riders from Wagga, Junee, Batlow and West Wyalong covered the 80-kilometre route.

It's not just about motorcyclists getting together for a bit of fun, but it aims to help Wagga's children in need before Christmas.

Sponsored by Ron Crouch Transport and the GEO Group, the run raised more than

\$15,000 worth of donated toys, which will be split between St Vincent de Paul and the Salvation Army.

Run co-ordinator Pat Coombs said businesses in Wagga had been supportive of the run, with many donating toys or money.

The money is used by the run organisers to buy toys from local shops.

Admitting the weather had done the annual event no favours, Mr Coombs said it was about wanting to help out others.

For more than 20 years the toy run has been helping Wagga's children before Christmas and Ulysses Club member Neil Purvis has been riding on for the past seven years.

"It's giving a bit back to the community," he said.

"We're not what the press make us (motorcyclists) out to be.

"There's a bit of freedom riding a bike around without a roof and four wheels," Mr Purvis said.

It's not just Harley-Davidson riders or club members either, Wagga resident Mark Twiner said the atmosphere of the run was one of the highlights of the event.

"It's good when people can get together like this and do some good for others," he said.

