

## Honoring Roger Ballantyne



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LACONIA KIWANIS CLUB members gather at the Belknap Mill on Sunday morning prior to the Roger's Ride fundraiser, which drew more than 85 riders and traveled to Lake Sunapee.

# Roger's Ride thunders through Laconia

Annual fundraiser benefits charities that serve children across Lakes Region

By ED PIERCE

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LACONIA — Somewhere on Sunday morning, Roger Ballantyne was nodding his approval and giving a thumbs up to the charity fundraiser that bears his name.

Ballantyne was a former past president of the Laconia Kiwanis Club who died in 2008 following a battle with kidney cancer and to honor his memory, his wife, family and friends launched "Roger's Ride," an annual fundraiser that helps Kiwanis assist local charities and programs.

Gathering at the Belknap Mill, more than 85 motorcyclists and a 50 passengers traveled to Lake Sunapee and back as a group on Sunday morning and in the process, collected more than \$7,000 for children's charities in the Lakes Region.

During his lifetime, Roger Ballantyne was an unselfish supporter of community volunteerism.

Over a 33-year span, he served as a member of the Laconia School Board and was a member of Laconia Kiwanis Club for three decades, serving as Kiwanis president in 1986.

His interest in helping others also included service as a member of the Lakes Region General Hospital Board of Trustees and as a volun-



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MOTORCYCLISTS DEPART on a trip to Lake Sunapee during the Roger's Ride fundraiser sponsored by the Laconia Kiwanis Club on Sunday.

teer for the Laconia Police Department's Crime Line program.

Many who knew Roger Ballantyne have said that if he were alive today, he would have been the first rider to sign up for "Roger's Ride," as he loved trips on his motorcycle and spending time with his family and friends.

Roger's widow, Betty Ballantyne, said she was pleased to see so many people turn out for the fundraiser once again.

"My late husband loved this community so much," she said. "I know he'd be so pleased that we are doing this and how the proceeds are used."

Local charities benefiting from the fundraiser include Central New

Hampshire VNA and Hospice; the Gilford Youth Center; the Lakes Region Scholarship Foundation; Kiwanis KARES (an elementary school reading program); the Laconia Anti-Bullying Program; DARE; and the Rich Valasquez Youth Sports Equipment Foundation.

Participants paid a \$25 registration fee and were served a continental breakfast before taking off on a 76-mile, three-hour journey to Lake Sunapee.

Even those who don't ride motorcycles were able to help through a raffle sponsored by the Kiwanis club that offered a chance to win a two-night stay at one of the Inn at Mills Falls in Meredith.

"This is my third year of participating in

Roger's Ride and I enjoy doing it because it's for a good cause," said Laconia Kiwanis President John Walker. "It helps us to do a lot of great work on behalf of children including buying books through the Kiwanis Kares program."

Katie Reid of Laconia was participating in Roger's Ride as a passenger on her husband's 2015 Harley Davidson Road Glide.

"I'm here today because my husband is a Kiwanis member and it's a great cause to support," Reid said.

Upon their return to Laconia's Rotary Park, riders and passengers were treated to a picnic barbecue lunch provided by the Local Eatery.