

Motorcycle ride raises thousands for high school scholarships

By Robert Tomlinson
News Director

THREE RIVERS — Local motorcyclists revved up their bikes and hit the road Saturday morning, all in an effort to raise money for local high school students.

The Three Rivers Elks Club held its 19th annual Captain's Cruise Saturday, their yearly fundraiser to support the club's college scholarship fund for Three Rivers High School students. The club also recognized three of this year's four recipients of the scholarships during a ceremony prior to the ride.

"It makes you feel proud supporting the youth and makes all of us feel good," Jim Barnes, a Three Rivers Elks Club member, said.

Each year, the Elks gives away four scholarships: A first-place scholarship worth \$1,750, a second-place scholarship worth \$1,000, a third-place scholarship worth \$800, and an upperclassman scholarship for prior recipients already attending college worth \$1,000. The recipients are determined by the club's Scholarship Committee, made up of former teachers, using a number



Winners of the 2023 Elks Club Scholarships were honored Saturday at the 19th annual Captain's Cruise at the Three Rivers Elks Club. Pictured from left to right are Scholarship Committee members Olga Brezden and Kelly Monahan, second-place scholarship winner Gabrielle Charvat, third-place winner Kayden Stratton, upperclassman scholarship winner Sophie Ridge, and Elks Club member Jim Barnes.

of criteria, including an essay on why they should receive the scholarship.

This year's first-place winner was Zach Reus, who will be attending Kalamazoo Valley Community College this fall. He was not in attendance at the ceremony, but Barnes

said he would be honored at the club's Sept. 7 meeting. The second-place recipient was Gabrielle Charvat, who will be attending Eastern Michigan University to study business administration.

Charvat said she was thankful to be receiving

the scholarship she did.

"I feel very honored, and I can't wait to use this to help with my tuition," Charvat said. "I'm going to make them proud."

The third-place recipient was Kayden Stratton, who plans on attending

Ohio Northern University this fall to study pharmacy. He also said he was honored to be a scholarship recipient.

"I also can't wait to use this for my academics and my tuition," Stratton said.

Finally, the upperclassman scholarship award was won by Sophie Ridge, who won a third-place scholarship in 2022 and will be a sophomore at the University of Kentucky this upcoming fall, studying nursing.

"Being out of state and at school, it helps to have as much money as possible," Ridge, who finished with a 4.0 GPA her first year at Kentucky,

said, "I feel honored, and anything helps."

During the ceremony honoring the students, Olga Brezden, a member of the Elks' Scholarship Committee, said there were a lot of great qualities of the students selected for this year's scholarships.

"It's not an easy task.

We are here for hours reviewing and reviewing, and they come so close in their characteristics, their qualities and community service," Brezden said.

Brezden and Kelly Monahan, another member of the committee, said it made them feel good as well to honor the students the way they did with scholarships.

"It gives you a warm, fuzzy feeling to know there are students in our community we are helping succeed in their future plans," Brezden said.

"I feel like it's rewarding to stand here next to them after all their hard work and accomplishments," Monahan said.

Both committee members teased that there could be a scholarship in the future for students who go into studying trades after high school.

Following the ceremony, the dozens of bikers rode around the area, making stops at Sam's Bar, another bar in Burlington, and Gibby's in Mendon before circling back to the Elks for dinner and a raffle later in the evening.

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COMMERCIAL-NEWS | ROBERT TOMLINSON

A group of motorcycles goes over the Pealer Street Bridge during the ride for the 19th annual Captain's Cruise.

SHS Class of 1958 celebrates 65th reunion



On Saturday, August 5, the "Bold & Great" Sturgis Class of '58 celebrated their 65th class reunion. The class had dinner at the Blue Gate in Shipshewana at 2:00 p.m. and then returned to the Community Center in Howe to chat, reminisce and enjoy pictures and DVD's from the past 65 years. Twenty-two class

members and their guests were in attendance.

Front row: Karen (Kitsen) Yoder, Janet (Holshuh) Shields, Dixie Lynne (Wick) DeLaan, Edna (Wilder) Gemmel, Bonnie (Wilson) Reed, Sherrill (Kershner) Ingram, Janet (Reed) Campagnoli, Tom Hickman and Jay Kessler.

Back row: Floyd Yoder, Dwight Sunday, Hurshel Wilder, David Hermann, Ben Crabill, Jim Parker, Frank Wagner, John Kasdorf, and David Mieras. (attending but not in picture: Sara (Perkins) Hennings, Ken Pierce, Dan Arney, Don Church and Vivian (Lego) Fennell).



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