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# A Ride So B.A.D. That It's Good

## RIP'S BIKERS RAISE MONEY TO FIGHT DIABETES



For Judy Gerard, a 56-year-old biology teacher at a Southern California high school, hopping onto her Harley-Davidson is a great way to spend a sunny Sunday. It also happens to be a

great way to raise money to fight diabetes.

For the past four years, Gerard has been riding in the American Diabetes Association's Rip's B.A.D. Ride. The B.A.D. stands for Bikers Against Diabetes, and the ride is named for Rip Rose, a biker and photojournalist who came to ADA 12 years ago with the idea to host a fund-raising motorcycle ride in Southern California. Rose died in 2000 from complications of diabetes and cancer, but his event continues to grow. What began with 300 riders in Southern California in 1997 has expanded to 3,000 participants in Southern California alone, and there are now B.A.D. Rides in Northern California, Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Texas. The rides culminate in festivals that include concerts, bike shows, children's activities, and food. This year in Southern California, the ride was on Sunday, June 14, ending at Orange County's Oak Canyon Park.

Gerard's passion for riding began at 7 years old, when her older brother first plunked her down on the back of his motorcycle. Today, she has an entire biker community to ride with, including her husband, Doug, and she shares her enthusiasm for motorcycling with her students, too. To raise money for the Southern California Rip's B.A.D. Ride, Gerard coordinates a week of fund-raising activities at Sherman I. Burroughs High School in Ridgecrest, Calif., where she teaches. There's music, raffles, and a fund-raising competition between the freshman and senior classes. All the while, Gerard tries to raise awareness among her students about who is at risk for diabetes and what its symptoms and long-term complications are.

"Over the course of the years, I've had many students with diabetes," says Gerard. "There's one kid on campus who goes into seizures because of his diabetes. There's a teacher here who's been through kidney transplants, and it's from diabetes."

This year, the students and staff of Burroughs raised \$2,825 in four days. "People think high school students are so self-absorbed, and they're not," adds Gerard.

She also coordinated with school administrators and staff to hold a student B.A.D. day. Students who made a \$10 donation to ADA were permitted to bring street bikes and dirt bikes to campus. At the school's spring pep rally that week, Gerard's biker

### events

To find a B.A.D. Ride in your area, visit [diabetes.org/badride](http://diabetes.org/badride). These rides are scheduled for the remainder of 2009:

- ❖ **Des Moines, Iowa:** August 15, Gigglin Goat Bar and Grille, Boone, Iowa
- ❖ **Wichita, Kan.:** August 22, Alefs Harley-Davidson, Wichita, Kan.
- ❖ **Northern California:** September 13, Napa Valley EXPO, Napa, Calif.
- ❖ **St. Louis:** September 27, Route 66 State Park, Eureka, Mo.
- ❖ **Houston:** October 4, Hawg Stop Bar, Houston
- ❖ **Arizona:** October 25, Pinal County Fairgrounds, Casa Grande, Ariz.





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friends roared into the school's gymnasium to show off their Harley "hogs" to the 1,500 students in grades 9 through 12.

The Southern California B.A.D. Ride has raised \$3 million over the past 12 years, according to Jessica Streit, associate manager for ADA in Orange County, with much of the credit going to the same core group of volunteer bikers. "We call it the 'B.A.D. Ride Family' because there's so much loyalty and so many people who keep coming back," Streit says. "Seeing the passion and dedication that people like Judy [have]—it's so motivating." ▲