



# PRESS RELEASE

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*Please note: a press kit (featuring graphics and photos) is available on our website at [www.OperationToyTrain.org/press](http://www.OperationToyTrain.org/press)*

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## **NJ & NY TOY COLLECTION TRAIN WILL NOT RUN IN 2020**

BRANCHVILLE, NJ – It is with great sadness and very heavy hearts that Operation Toy Train, in conjunction with our host railroads, have decided that we will not run a 2020 train in our traditional format due to the continuing issues with the COVID-19 pandemic. The health of our volunteers, attendees, and communities is always our top priority. Unfortunately, the regular operation of our train would necessitate the close proximity of volunteer personnel to each other on board the train, as well as to members of the public at each of our collection stops, making proper social distancing impossible.

We know this is a disappointing decision, but we feel it is the only way to ensure the safety of the hundreds of people involved in the success of our annual train. Operation Toy Train has been running for 11 years with a flawless safety record, and while this year's specific circumstances have forced us to temporarily revise our operations, there are absolutely no plans to end this long-standing tradition. In the coming weeks, we will be announcing an alternative collection method for the 2020 holiday season that reflects the realities of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We will be working closely with the Marines and the Toys for Tots Foundation to adapt our 2020 collection efforts to the extent possible, and we will find a way to continue spreading holiday cheer along our regular routes in a responsible and healthy manner.

This current worldwide crisis has forced many unwanted changes this year, and this decision was a painful one to make. When it is safe for our volunteers and the community as a whole, our train will return in full force. Please stay tuned to our website ([www.operationtoytrain.org](http://www.operationtoytrain.org)) or our Facebook page (@OperationToyTrain) for news of our alternative collection plans 2020's holiday season. In the meantime, we will continue to develop the Port Jervis Transportation Museum and acquire additional equipment, all of which can be worked on either remotely or with proper social distancing measures in place. For more information on those projects, visit [www.pjmuseum.org](http://www.pjmuseum.org) or follow @pjmuseum on Facebook.

We hope you all stay safe and healthy.

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*Operation Toy Train, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that operates a special annual collection train in northern New Jersey and southern New York during the holiday season. Each year, the train collects over 25,000 donated toys for the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve Toys for Tots Foundation, which redistributes them to underprivileged children within the collection area. For more information, please visit [www.OperationToyTrain.org](http://www.OperationToyTrain.org).*