

Bikes4Kids Newsletter

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This newsletter is published with the intended purpose of providing information for all volunteers, suppliers and known supporters of Bikes4Kids. To subscribe or unsubscribe please contact B4K at 763-234-4790.

A New Record!!! 1,000 BIKES!

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as reported by Olivia Alveshere, reporter for ABC Newspapers.

Bikes4Kids volunteers and supporters gathered Dec. 27 to celebrate the organization's 1,000th refurbished bike of 2017.

It was a record year for the Ham Lake nonprofit in that respect.

Bikes4Kids, the Robert and Wilma Burbach Bike Foundation, formed six years ago with a mission to collect and refurbish bicycles to donate to children and others in need. Helmets and locks are provided with bicycles.

Since its inception, Bikes4Kids has given away more than 5,000 bicycles.

With an increasing volume of bicycles being donated by the community, the need for volunteer mechanics has risen.

Last year, mechanics refurbished approximately 600 bicycles.



This year they set a lofty goal of 1,000, and approximately 35 volunteers put in thousands of hours to achieve that daunting task.

Instead of having volunteers on the

Sannerud farm three days a week, volunteers stopped by five days a week with regularity, sometimes even on Saturday. Ken Johnson, shop coordinator, put in approximately 700 hours himself, but the entire team steps up to get bicycles in working order.

"Every time you need something ... somebody



steps up to do the work," he said.

At a celebration Dec. 27, Al Sannerud recollected the nonprofit's humble beginnings. Volunteers repaired bikes in a garage on his farmland.

Today, there are a number of buildings used in the operation with a heated five-stall workroom for the mechanics.



Quality is key at Bikes4Kids.

"These bikes go out of here, and they are oftentimes in better shape than when they went out of a store," Bikes4Kids President John Gillis said.

Many community businesses, organizations and police departments collect bikes to donate to Bikes4Kids and help with distribution of the refurbished models.

Occasionally, Bikes4Kids volunteers get to make a delivery themselves.

Gillis recalls making a delivery to a Woodbury family with seven children.

"It was amazing," he said. "To see the looks on their faces, you just can't beat it."

Most bikes go to children, but some are given to adults in need each year.

Bikes4Kids has connected with the new Eagle's Healing Nest in Anoka and intends to provide nine bicycles for veterans, according to Sannerud. The organization has previously donated to HOPE 4 Youth and Stepping Stone to help the homeless secure reliable transportation.

The nonprofit has and will continue to serve those in need, Sannerud said, attributing successes to the people who give of their time and talent.

"Volunteers are number one in the organization," he said.

1,000 BIKES continued:

New volunteers are always welcome.

“You don’t have to be a mechanic to come out here,” Gillis said.

Volunteers are also needed to clean and move bicycles.

Financial contributions are also appreciated.

“We run on a really tight budget,” Gillis said. “We really can use your help.”

For more information about Bikes4Kids,

visit www.bikes4kidsmn.org.

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marketing materials and made a note to myself to donate to this worthy cause.

When I learned of the connection between Bikes4Kids and Al Sannerud, the decision to volunteer was no decision at all! I'm happy to say my duties ended up being less number crunching and more manual shop labor, and under the tutelage of very knowledgeable mechanics I've even learned new skills. My fellow volunteers have become dear friends, and I've found a new love.....turning handle bars and removing pedals on bikes that are shipped to Gambia, Africa!!

Helping others in need, developing new skills and friendships, laughing and getting my hands dirty..... I can't think of a better way to spend time in retirement, and I can't think of a better organization to volunteer with.”



In the
Spotlight

In the Spotlight

Our spotlight for this issue of the Bikes4Kids Newsletter is on one of very busy and ambitious volunteers, Paula Foley. Here is her Bikes4Kids story:

“I retired from a 36 year career in Premium Auditing on 3/1/16. My friend and former coworker Duane Chumley

called me in August of that year to tell me that Al Sannerud was looking for a volunteer bookkeeper for Bikes4Kids, and wondered if I would be interested. My first question was "what does Al Sannerud have to do with Bikes4Kids"?! I'd known Al through his accounting firm since I started auditing in 1980 and had only recently heard about



Bikes4Kids while golfing in a tournament two months earlier.

As an avid bicyclist, I was very impressed with the mission and operations of Bikes4Kids. I remembered thinking what a great concept it was, to collect and refurbish used bikes for kids and adults in need. I loved riding my bike as a kid, and loved it even more as an adult! I also love helping those in need. I took their

Why We Do What We Do...



We get letters and responses from the large population of people that we serve. Recently the B4K crew made a special presentation of bikes for some of our military people who have served their country so well. Our B4K volunteer Gary Nereson was there to assist. This is his account:

“We (B4K – Bikes4Kids and People in Need) brought 9 bikes to Eagle's Healing Nest in Anoka today (located at the old Anoka Hospital Complex). Like B4K, Eagle's Healing Nest is a 501c3 non-profit. It provides healing and housing to homeless veterans suffering from the invisible wounds of war, and to help them reintegrate back to their families and society. Our bikes are just one more tool to aid in that mission.



Eagle's Healing Nest's first project on this old Anoka Hospital Complex has been to renovate the first of three

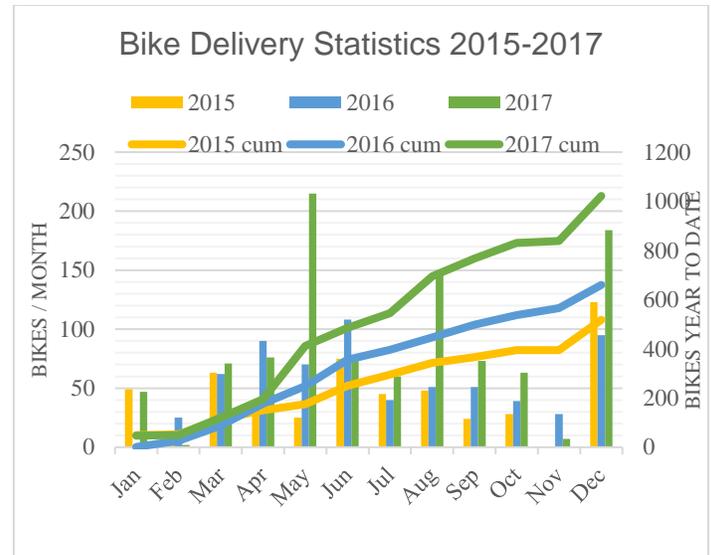
buildings – this one for male veterans. Throughout the

Why We Do What We Do....cont.

year they will work to renovate the other two buildings – one for females and one for families. B4K's plan is to provide additional bikes when those buildings are ready to be occupied (giving away refurbished bikes is what we do!) And, we are thrilled to be able to provide these bikes for the veterans to use.

As we unloaded them, we were warmly greeted by Melony Butler (founder and director), Lora (Anoka location manager), and Senator Jim Abeler (a supporter and liaison); as well as by some of the veterans who live there. These first 9 bikes were carefully chosen to suit their adult male riders. (One of whom couldn't wait to take the Diamond Back he spotted out for a spin.....)

Each bike is stenciled with a number and "Veteran" for easy identification. We also provided helmets and a lock for all the bikes."



Operations Statistics

