

# B4K Newsletter

July/August 2018 (vol. 18.4)

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 Bike Odyssey

Meet **Mel Baker** one of our bicycle repair mechanics who recently took up the challenge to give recognition to the Bikes4Kids organization by completing a 300

mile round trip to Duluth. His bicycle trip resulted in a total of \$2,000 in contributions to B4K. Having never completed such a grueling task, Mel trained vigorously before setting out.

But one thing that he could not train for was the unexpected weather.

With temperatures in the upper 80's along with humidity in the upper 70's Mel completed the first

75 miles with a stopover in Hinckley MN. On the second leg from Hinckley to Duluth, he encountered some storm damage that created some obstacles in the form of downed trees over the bike path. But persistence paid off and with a strong effort and willpower he proceeded on to Duluth which he said was a nice reward of cool breezes off the lake. He met up with some friends in Duluth who accompanied him on the return trek. The only injury reported consisted of a cramp in his leg muscle. His trip comrades provided him with a drink of pickle juice that seemed to re-energize him so he could complete the trip. He is willing to do it again next year and encourages others to join him.

Bikes4Kids gives Mel a Big Thank You for his support and contributions!



## Bikes4Kids Community Involvement

Bikes4Kids is a volunteer organization. The involvement is not always limited to the collection, repair and distribution of bikes for the needy. Recently Lowell Kutches, in conjunction with Senior Pastor Kevin Doely of Faith Lutheran Church distributed over 3,000 blankets and pillows to people in need. The blankets and pillows were overstock items from a local warehouse. A member of Faith Lutheran Church made the pastor aware of the items. Lowell Kutches took it upon himself to handle the distribution. With volunteer help from Kiwanis, B4K and FROGs, (a Faith Church men's group), the blankets and pillows were distributed to various non-profit organizations including Hope 4 Youth, Hope, Eagle's Nest, NACE, Manna Markets in Anoka and Blaine and several other local Churches. This was a giant undertaking and well received effort. A great big Thank You to Lowell Kutches for spearheading this effort!

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## Youth Volunteers

Bikes4Kids is always in need and welcomes volunteer help. Recently, Ken Johnson, contacted a Boy Scout troop to help with a building



expansion/renovation project. Jordan Albe of Boy Scout Troop 509 accepted the challenge and is completing his Eagle project as a result. He and other members of the troop are completing the renovation under the

supervision of Ken Johnson and with Jordan serving as the general contractor.

A great contribution to B4K and opportunity for the scouts.

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## Meet the Volunteers!



There are many volunteers for the Bikes4Kids organization and it seems impossible to meet all of them. Some of them such as Andrea Castillo, do not work on site.

Andrea serves in the capacity of working with the Partner organizations who provide the bikes. She communicates with them and



arranges the pick-up of contributed bikes. All of this is from her home and she loves her work! Here is her story:

*"In my life time I have chosen many different career paths I have worked in the food industry for several years ranging from Hostess all the*

*way to General Manager, administrative secretary, payroll specialist, worked in hospitals and hotels as a cleaning lady, I've been a Para professional in one of our school districts, and have been an EMT, and have worked in the manufacturing field for several years as well.*

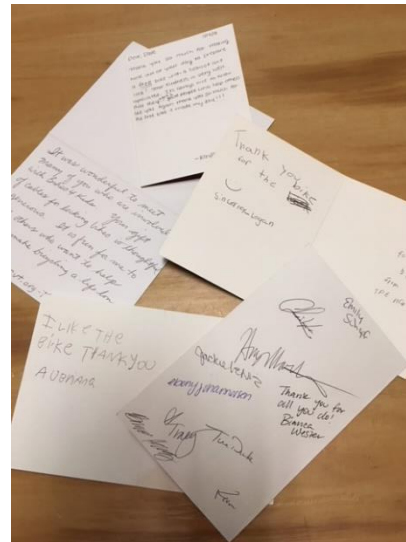
*Why I choose to be part of the Bikes4kids organization is because to know I was part of something bigger than myself makes me feel good, and to know I am helping others experience the freedom biking that for me when I was a kid I absolutely loved the wind whipping in my hair and on my face as the pavement raised beneath my feet that I truly miss as an adult.*

*I have also done volunteer work with the Animal Humane society*

*I enjoy spending my free time with my family and friends; whether it's BBQing and celebrating an event or just kicking back by way of fishing, volleyball, Bingo or just having some laughs at a movie."*

**Thank You Andrea! We give you a hearty Welcome!**

## Why We Do What We Do...



We do get many thank you letters from the people we serve. Pictured on the left are some of the more recent correspondence.

In addition, we had a nice thank you from Arthur P. Biah II who is the Chief Executive Officer for the Liberian Health Initiative. He writes: *"Team Bikes4Kids, Please accept our*

*thanks and appreciation for your generous to the African immigrant community through LHI. Your donation continues to help families keep active and stay healthy. We're always grateful."*

And this from the Interfaith Outreach:

*"Dear Cindy, Please extend our "Thank You" to all the volunteers and hard workers at Bikes4Kids for the 20 bikes and helmets you donated to Interfaith Outreach!... Interfaith's Community Engagement Director, Liz Erstad-Hicks said: "The bikes are always appreciated by our families and kids, but this year more than ever, families were lining up early before our 10:00 am start time. By 10:45 all the bikes were gone! I don't think it's ever gone that quickly! Target donated helmets and families left the event very excited to enjoy their bikes this Spring and Summer"*

And this letter from Cindy Blumer in St. Louis Park:

*"Thank you so much for all of the bikes for our students! We really, really appreciate all your hard work of getting bikes for our kids. This helps us on our yearly bike trek of 15 miles into Minneapolis! Also teaches kids a life skill which we love. We couldn't have done this with the 105 kids we work with. The 15 bikes you provided and delivered were perfect! Thank you again!"*



## Operations Statistics

