



### Spotlight on Volunteers Meet Micky and Jeff

In August of 2022, we had to say goodbye to Katie Wood who had volunteered at Bikes4Kids as the Bike Inventory Coordinator for Bikes4Kids. This position was responsible for the interface with the bike donors on incoming inventory and recordkeeping on the process of repair and distribution to the end users. It was a large undertaking and became very difficult to replace. It was finally resolved by creating two positions. The first or front end of the inventory workload was determined to be the Gatekeeper. This position will serve as the bike donor interface directing the bike contributions and questions from bike donors to the appropriate locations. It also serves as the customer



interface by communicating with those in need of bikes by assessing the need and assuring that the request is in line with the mission statement of the organization. Serving in this capacity is Micky Mekosch. Micky is quite excited to join our organization and comes very well qualified to serve in that role. Micky has been aware of the B4K organization since her husband Dave has volunteered for many years. She knew how much he felt rewarded by the work and once she retired from her job as a Materials Manager for various manufacturing companies she wanted to be a part of B4K. The role of Gatekeeper seemed like a great fit. (She also felt that Al S. was pulling on her sleeve). Micky and Dave have a strong desire to serve others. They now build bluebird houses and place them in various parks throughout the city of Ramsey. They also monitor the bluebird trails and report the results to the Bluebird Recovery Program.

The second part of the Bike Inventory Coordinator involves the maintenance and control of the inventory data and records to assure that we can satisfy the needs of the communities that we serve. This role was assumed by Jeff Skaare. Jeff also recently retired from his years of work as an electronic technician. He has had an interest in working with the great group of volunteers at B4K. He has been a member of Faith Lutheran Church where he knew most of the volunteers already. He is very savvy with computers and software and knows that he can be an asset in controlling the data entry and maintenance requirements of the organization. The job of serving others has always been an integral part of his makeup. Jeff grew up on a farm in South Dakota that he still maintains to this day. The farm allows him the opportunity for a variety of recreation and relief from stress. Jeff is very familiar with the role of service work. He plays bass guitar and is an active volunteer in the church services at Faith Lutheran Church. He also is a FROG (Faith Retired Old Guys) where he works with other retired men in various maintenance activities in the church. His wife and him have been packing meals with a group (Friends Against Famine) at Feed My Starving Children in Coon Rapids for over 10 years.



Both Micky and Jeff are very happy to serve our organization and join in providing for the needs of children and others who meet the mission requirements of Bikes4Kids.



## Thoughts from Julie

Executive Director for  
Bikes4Kids



While Mother Nature may not be ready for Spring, we are at Bikes4Kids! The activity level is picking up, we've been able to open the doors (on occasion), and there is that "spring feeling" in the air. Requests for bikes are coming in every day as

people start thinking ahead to better bike-riding weather. It's so fun to think about all of the people who will have some great bikes to ride this summer because of our work!

The best part of course is welcoming back our snowbirds and seeing faces that haven't been around for a while. It's so good to have everyone back! We welcomed a number of new volunteers over the winter, and we are seeing the shop fill up with activity.

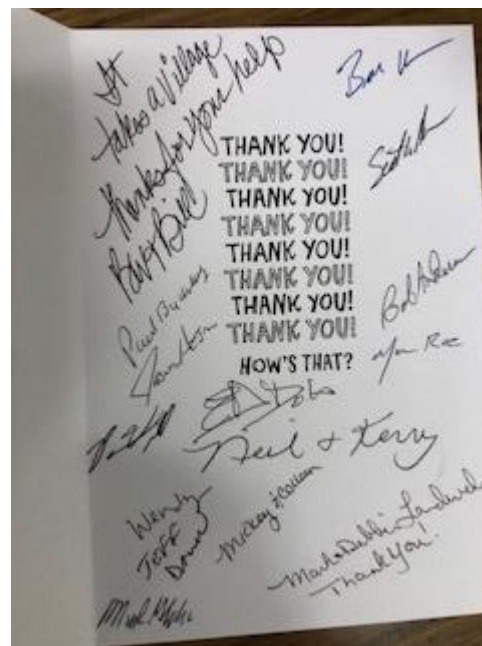
Throughout the winter, we had a busy shop six days a week, filled with dedicated and hearty volunteers. Our volunteers were able to repair and clean a large inventory of bikes, so we had full tents—and every other available space—when the requests started. It was really fun to watch the tents fill up! We are so grateful to those who braved the elements on some very unfriendly days to move bikes to their proper places so they could be ready for repair. It took a lot this past winter to keep the snow and ice at bay and to make sure the units were all handling the wind and snow, so we extend special thanks to everyone who helped with this never-ending work! On May 9th, we will celebrate our volunteers and welcome new friends at a special Volunteer Lunch. Please think about someone you can invite who might be interested in volunteering or getting involved with Bikes. There is always room for more!

Thank you for all you do—Bikes4Kids cannot happen without all of you.

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## Why We Do What We Do...

Here are some thank you letters from our satisfied recipients:



## Bikes4Kids Legacy Ride 2023

Join us Saturday September 16<sup>th</sup> at the Coon Rapids Dam (Anoka side) for the 2023 B4K Legacy Ride. This annual event is a fund-raiser for Bikes4Kids; a 100% volunteer organization that collects discarded used bikes, refurbishes them and gets them to families in need. Last year, Bikes4Kids refurbished and distributed nearly 1,500 bikes! The Legacy Ride is a fantastic family-centric event with three ride lengths: 8 miles for families with little ones, 18 miles for the more adventurous and 35 miles for those with stronger legs! All rides are on the Elm Creek paved trails, all rides have ride leaders and sweeps and all rides have rest stops with snacks. After a fantastic ride return to the Coon Rapids Dam Pavilion for a BBQ lunch, games and prizes. Everyone who rides will get a T-shirt, snacks, water, gift bag, prizes for all and the lunch. Tickets go on sale shortly with various prizes including an electric bike! The cost of the tickets go to support the mission of Bikes4Kids. For more information, please refer to eventbrite.com at the following link. information please refer to eventbrite.com at the following link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bikes4kids-legacy-ride-2023-tickets-624382443697?aff=ebdssbdestsearch>.

## Some Bike Humor

The other day on a ride, I was speeding down a narrow, twisting, mountain road. Along comes a man who was driving very slowly uphill toward me, honking his horn and shouting at me.

"PIG! PIG!!" he yelled. "PIG! PIG!!"

So I flipped him the finger and, as I buzzed by him, shouted back some things I dare not repeat. Still fuming about this awful man and his shouting, I turned the corner and promptly collided with a pig.

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A tandem rider is stopped by a police car.

"What've I done, officer?" asks the rider.

"Perhaps you didn't notice, sir, but your wife fell off your bike half a mile back..."

"Oh, thank God for that," says the rider - "I thought that I'd gone deaf!"

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## Bikes4Kids Performance Card for the year 2022

- **Bikes Donated to B4K:** 5337
- **Bikes Repaired in 2022:** 1247
- **Repaired Bikes Redistributed:** 1354
- **Bikes Sent to Africa:** 1314
- **Bikes to Recovery Bikes:** 489

**“Generic” Requests: 338 Bikes (25% of bikes)**

Christmas Committee: 109

Florida: 75

Other Organizations: 63

Events: 91

### Requests:

**186 requests were received and filled**

**67 Unique organizations requested bikes;**

**29 organizations had multiple requests**

### Volunteers:

Active Volunteers: 46

Volunteer hours recorded: 9036

## Repair and Distribution Statistics

The following two charts represent the activities of the B4K repair shop (chart 1) and the B4K delivery of repaired bikes to the requesting parties (chart 2). Note that there are two axis portrayed on each chart. The left axis shows the volume per month and the right axis shows the monthly volume totals as they accumulate throughout the year. The eight year average uses data from the years 2015 - 2022 as a comparison to the current year. (2015 is the first year that the data was maintained for the newsletter). The growth is something that is attributed to the skills and enthusiasm of our wonderful volunteers and the needs of the community.

