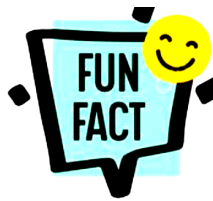


Challenging Year

Another year has gone by and **Bikes for Kids** has had a very interesting year. Almost **1000** bikes went out the door and our number of donated bikes inches toward **24,000!** The Covid virus has presented us with challenges within the wheelhouse, with requests from new groups and with fundraising opportunities that have had to be curtailed.

A **big thank** you to all who have donated to the cause whether it has been in the form of bikes or a supporting check. You are the folks who keep us rolling.



Paved roads became popular not because of autos, but because of bicycles. Although cars could pass easily on cobblestones, bikes could not.

Hans and Margaret Rey fled Paris in 1940 on bikes that Hans built. They escaped just hours ahead of the arrival of the Nazis. They carried few possessions but one was a manuscript of the first Curious George book, later to be published in New York.

UPS was founded by two teens on one bicycle and \$100 loaned by a friend.

Every year between 12,000 and 15,000 bikes are pulled from canals in Amsterdam.

Susan B. Anthony once said that the bicycle has done more to emancipate women than anything else in history.

Holiday Giveaway

We are all experiencing tough and difficult times due to the arrival of Covid. Stores and restaurants have limited hours and many people are out of work. Even the Essex North Pole Express will not run this year. In spite of missing the train this year, BFK has decided to continue with their bicycle give away at the Wheelhouse. We are in the process of determining, with the help of several schools and their social workers, 40 young people who may not have a bike or have the means of owning one in the foreseeable future. BFK plans to have a brand new bike, helmet and set of lights all ready with each recipient's name on them and ready to take home just in time for Christmas. We all feel how important it is to keep the magic going, especially during these hard times when people may be struggling. Our founder, Chuck Graeb felt that every kid should have a bike when he began this organization 31 years ago. We look for every opportunity to continue his work to this day. Thank you to all who have helped us with the donation of bikes, parts or a check. Your support keeps the group going.



2019 Holiday Giveaway



A Special Thank You

Our newsletter wouldn't be complete without a special thank you to Swanson Insurance of Waterford. Greg Swanson has been providing us with our insurance coverage each year and has donated a generous portion from the company each time. A big thank you to Greg.

We also wish to Thank Servicemaster of Essex for donating over 10 hours of cleaning Services to BFK. This was done in cooperation with Covid guidelines suggested by the state.

A big thank you goes out to Pat Devito. Pat is an accomplished grant writer and has written the last four grant applications for us. Thank you, Pat, for your time and expertise spent in furthering the mission of BFK.

We also wish to thank Thayer and Claudia and the good people at the Community Foundation of Middlesex County. Their group honored us with a grant that helped purchase several new bikes for our Christmas fundraiser. Also, thanks to the Cornelia and Michael Bessie Foundation for their generous gift to our program. And finally, many thanks to Greg Wind, Hillary Kumnick and the gang at Killingworth Lions for their donation of 12 new bikes to the organization.

Toys for Tots

Lt Col Edward Barrientos (center) is an active Reservist at Westover Air Force Base, donating six bikes and new helmets to the Marines for the Western Massachusetts Toys for Tots toy drive. Ed is currently President of Bikes for Kids with the help of several board members including past President Dave Fowler. He also recently stepped up to donate new and used bikes and helmets to the children of Westover AFB Airmen. Bikes for Kids will be donating approximately 80-90 bikes to the Westover AFB base community by December 2020, just in time for the base holiday party.



Virtual /Scavenger Hunt Ride

Our first time around with the virtual/ scavenger hunt ride proved to be fun and interesting. Several families participated. It isn't too late to post some of your pictures on our web site. We plan to try this again in the fall next year.



Volunteers

BFK always welcomes volunteers. Are you mechanically minded? Maybe you'd like to come in and help to repair the several bikes that are donated to us. We would also like to speak with anyone interested in Wheelhouse management, communications or outreach. We have taken several precautions to keep both our volunteers and patrons safe. We follow guidelines from the state which include social distancing, face masks, limiting the number of volunteers in the building at one time and having a break between "shifts". The warehouse has been thoroughly cleaned, high use objects like door handles and light switches are disinfected regularly and masks, gloves, anti bacterial soap and disinfectants are available for all volunteers.





bikesforkidsct.org

BFK Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 94
Centerbrook, CT 06409

Wheelhouse
36 Plains Road
Essex, CT 06426
(Opposite Essex Steam Train)

860-388-BIKE (2453)



Donate Donate on-line through PayPal. Go to bikesforkidsct.org.

Use the enclosed envelope, insert a check, add postage and mail to Bikes for Kids.

Here are ways your donation helps:

\$130 - 60 tire tubes

\$60 - 5 new bicycle seats

\$530 - New parts for 12 bicycles

\$30 - 2 helmets

Donate Bikes Drop gently used bike(s) that you are no longer using at the BFK Wheelhouse.

Repair Bicycles No experience is necessary. Join the crew on Tuesday or Thursday mornings from 9-12 or Thursday evenings from 6-8 at the Wheelhouse.

Shop AmazonSmile Sign-up on AmazonSmile.com and choose Bikes for Kids (Bikes for Kids Inc listed in Centerbrook) as your designated charity.

Organize a Helmet Drive Host a helmet drive within your local community (religious organization, school, community group, etc). It's super easy. BFK has a template and will help.