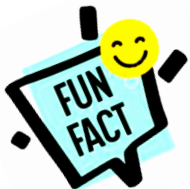


Greetings from the Wheelhouse!!

Another year has come and gone and Bikes For Kids has had a banner year. We have remained strong through the pandemic and have averaged over one hundred donated bikes each month this year. We are on track to give away 1200 bikes by the end of December. On November 18, our 25,000th bike left the wheelhouse on the way to Kelleyville, Oklahoma.

A big thank you goes out to all of our volunteers work come each week and work tirelessly on bike repairs for distribution. We couldn't do this or reach the numbers we do without you all. Thank you .

We would like to thank all of you who donated bikes this year. In joining us in our mission, you are a vital part of our organization and we couldn't be doing this without you all, either. Thank you. Our rack outside our door is always available for you to drop a bike or bikes that are no longer wanted. Our volunteers will repair and safety check each one before they go out to deserving young people and adults. As many of you know, we also accept adult sized bikes because more parents are wanting to ride with their kids. Requests also come from folks without homes or jobs at the moment, veterans hospitals and women's shelters. When dropping bikes, please leave a note with your complete contact information so we can acknowledge your donation and put you on our newsletter list if you are not already there.



- * There are an estimated 1 billion bikes in the world today.
- * 364,000 bikes are being produced daily.
- * In 2016, Copenhagen announced that for the first time, bikes outnumber cars in the city.
- * About 15 million bikes are discarded each year. Many of our volunteers feel that they all end up at our wheelhouse for repair and turn around again.
- * Favorite bike types: Road, Mountain, Hybrid, Gravel, Fat, BMX
- * A study in England shows that the average cyclist has the fitness of someone 10 years younger and a two year higher life expectancy.
- * People exercise longer outside rather than in a gym.

North Pole Express.

Although BFK deals mostly with gently used bikes, we do give away new ones for our fundraiser each year. Partnering with the Essex Steam Train's North Pole Express, we obtain tickets for 30-40 young people to ride the train to Deep River Landing and back. During the trip the kids meet Santa and Mrs. Claus, enjoy cookies, hot chocolate, Christmas music and great sights before arriving back in Essex. Unbeknownst to them a surprise awaits at the BFK wheelhouse. On arrival, each person is presented with a brand new bicycle, helmet and light set. The kids are always excited and many ask if it's ok to ride their new bikes in the driveway when they get home. Even though the train did not run in 2020 due to Covid, we were still able to provide bikes, helmets, and light sets to children with the help local social service groups.



Race for Chase

Lynn and Dave Fowler attended the culminating triathlon again this year at Camp Sloper in Southington. Over 600 athletes were in attendance, with many riding bikes donated by BFK. Over 45 YMCAs in four states took part in the event this year. It was quite a sight to see so many participants swimming, riding, and running. They also attended the triathlon in Newport, RI on a spectacular day in August. Participants from Massachusetts and Rhode Island made this event just as special. BFK is proud to honor the memory of Chase Kowalski and to partner with the CMAK Foundation each year to provide needed bikes.

See Cmakfoundation.com for more information.



One of Our Operating Principles

The majority of you already understand that Bikes For Kids has never sold a bike. Once in a great while we hear of someone who may believe otherwise. Please be assured that BFK has, as one of their operating principles, a clause stating that no bikes are to be sold by the organization under any circumstances.



Sam one of our volunteers putting together this years scarecrow display in Old Saybrook.

Big Requests

We had three fairly large requests this year. First, 151 Bikes went out to Oklahoma right after the newsletter was mailed. Some folks arrived one evening from Kearney, OK and filled up an entire cattle trailer. The fire dept. and police dept. work together each year in Kearney to provide a large number of young people with bikes. Upon wishing everyone a safe trip back to Oklahoma, we were met with the following comment: "Heck, we aren't going home yet. We're going to Niagara Falls next." We heard the falls were spectacular and that everyone arrived safely home with their bikes!

Another request for 100 bikes was received from Cherry Baldwin. Cherry runs Cherry Kids, a year round program to promote character building and to build social and life skills. It was wonderful to meet Cherry. She just couldn't believe the bikes that were lined up for her kids. She kept asking us if they were all really for her to take back to the Bronx! Yes, Cherry, they really were and we were glad to be able to send them your way.

Lastly, we have sent a couple of trailers full of bikes to our friends at Beat the Street in Meriden. The group welcomes young people after school and offers programs in boxing, hip hop dance, career exploration and now, biking. BTS makes a big difference in keeping kids off the street by offering a place to explore unique and positive experiences.



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.