

# TRIPS FOR KIDS

newsletter  
summer/fall 1998

## Volunteer gives gift from the heart

**D**AVIDSON MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT aid Joel Segura kept noticing that the Americorps volunteers in the Communities

in Schools office kept "looking around, asking around" for a computer to use, but were having no luck. So Joel decided that the computer he had just earned as a student in the Trips for Kids/Re-Cyclery Earn-a-Computer program would be a great gift. Americorps put the computer to use, and Joel gained some instant fame and

appreciation. The Pacific Sun even published an article in their *Heroes* column about Joel's philanthropy (June 24-30, 1998 issue).

Joel first came to Re-Cyclery in January, 1997, at the age of thirteen, and participated in our Re-Cyclery youth training programs.

Joel grew up in San Rafael, except for the three years his family lived in Jalisco, Mexico. By the time he started our Earn-a-Computer program he already knew how to operate and take apart an older PC that his parents brought home. He quickly learned our class material, and his aptitude for both software applications and hardware configurations became apparent to the Re-Cyclery staff. It wasn't very long before Joel was helping us maintain our classroom computers and helping to teach other kids in the program.



Joel Segura and Earn-a-Computer students show off computer lab sign

He is one of those rare kids who offers his help automatically when someone is in need. In fact, Joel is spending his summer as an un-paid intern in the San Rafael Recreation Department's Counselors in Training program at Gerstle Park. The

"He...offers his help automatically when someone is in need."

program initially required two weeks participation, but Joel is volunteering an

additional two weeks helping counselors work with kids between 6 and 11 years old.

Joel loves to "talk to friends on-line and play games like Nova Storm," and hopes to go to college one day, maybe even MIT (the prestigious Massachusetts Institute of Technology), and study "something with computers." At the ripe old age of fourteen, Joel Segura has already managed to find ways to help others get a step closer to their dreams, we hope Joel manages to find ways to get close to his own...

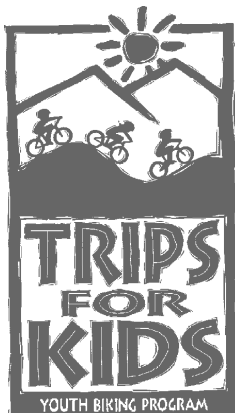
### contents

news.....2

people...4

kids.....5

thanks...6





## news...

### Volunteer Spotlight: Max Deleuse

(Article to be finished early next week)

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Newsletter**  
published by

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### Overheard

The day has come. Up 'til now I have avoided buying a decent bicycle, making do with the rusted out, superfly Schwinn cruiser that has logged many a mile on desert flatlands. But one gear just doesn't cut in on Marin's slopes and valleys, and I've pushed that durned spray-painted junker up the hill for the last time. I've been biding my time, not wanting to shell out the thousands of clams necessary for a fat mountain bike, knowing that in this place where cycling is practically a religion, I could score a sweet deal from someone looking to upgrade. Praise the heavens, I was right. Trips for Kids held their annual bike swap over the weekend at San Rafael High School, and the spandex-clad from all over the Bay Area came to stock up on parts, accessories and used gear. Volunteer Walt Custer, a gregarious gent with a handlebar mustache, helped me pick out a sleek little black number with toe clips and good brakes, then sent me off to pick out a new saddle (five bucks) and decent gloves (at eight dollars, quite a deal to protect these precious palms in the likely event of a wipeout). Add in an H.G. Gyger-style helmet and a chic plastic water bottle, and the total price tag came to under \$200. You can understand why I did a little victory dance before hopping on and cruising the neighborhood. As if matching new riders up with used bikes isn't enough, Trips for Kids keeps its volunteers quite busy for the rest of the year. Its mission is to provide fresh air outings, job

training, after-school tutoring and an environmental education for inner-city and low-income youth. A few high school students, like Julian Garfalo and Joel Segura, have signed on as part-time employees, tending to the computers and clothing racks in [the] organization's two Re-Cyclery stores. Director Marilyn Price oversees a brood that totaled over 500 kids last year. More than a hundred dedicated troopers participated in the Earn-A-Bike program, where credits are awarded for refurbishing many of the bikes at the Re-Cyclery stores and the parking lot swap. A computer-earning program is also in effect, providing practice for writing and word-processing skills to those who don't have access to today's technology. Spunky as ever, Price could be seen hawking fresh juice and cookies on Sunday, perpetually raising funds for the program that gets kids off the streets onto the mountain. After my jaunt around the block, I returned to the fabulously mustachioed Walt for a few lessons on changing gears. Seems dealing with 21 speeds is a little more complicated that maneuvering my funky old Schwinn. Though enthusiasm can get you far in life, it won't get you up a fire road in the rain. Now if you'll excuse me, I have some trails to shred.

**by Jessica Feinstein**

Reprinted by permission from the Pacific Sun,  
originally published in June 24-30, 1998 issue.

## BMX Team wins trophies

Our Bicycle Motocross (BMX) Racing Team—Team Unity—continues to flourish. Sponsored by GT bicycles, Mongoose bicycles, and the Youth Leadership Institute, the multi-cultural team is comprised of 12 young racers from our Re-Cyclery workshops and 6 from the Manzanita Recreation Center in Marin City. Members share bikes and equipment and race together as a team. They are transported by bus each month to a racetrack in Napa, and attend practice sessions at least once each month. The team has completed 14 practice days and 7 race days in the first six months of this year. To qualify for the team and remain an active member, youth must regularly attend workshops at Re-Cyclery, and consistently demonstrate cooperation, responsibility, and teamwork.



*BMX team and Coach Steven Byrne return from yet another fun-filled trophy-earning race day at the Napa track.*

## Bike Swap moves to new location

This year's 7th Annual Bike Swap and Sale, held June 20 and 21, was at a new location: San Rafael High School (Mission and Union Streets in San Rafael). The new location was a hit with customers and vendors, who gave 20% of their proceeds to Trips for Kids youth biking programs. The two-day fundraiser was very successful thanks to the many hard-working angels disguised as volunteers. This year we raised over \$50,000!



## New Curriculum in place at Re-Cyclery workshops

One of our volunteers, Janet Hansen, spent three weeks developing a new curriculum, completed in January 1998, that is now used to track each student's performance. This new curriculum shifts the focus from earning hours to "buy" donated bikes and parts, to earning credits based on learning. This is an important shift. We have found that children often place more emphasis on what they can buy with their credits

rather than what they are learning in the process. We hope the new curriculum will provide a counter-balance and also give us a better tool to evaluate each student's progress and, ultimately, generate a "report card" to be used for job references. Each student has his/her own binder that contains the enclosed curriculum. The students are quite proud of their binders and love using them to track their progress.



# who we are...

## Rides Program

Since 1988 Trips for Kids has been conducting weekend mountain bike outings for inner-city youth in the scenic State and National Parks of Marin County. Many of the kids that come on our rides have never experienced the natural areas outside of their home cities. Some have never even crossed the Golden Gate Bridge. These rides give the kids a unique opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful natural places in the Bay Area. They learn how to work and play as a team and to master the sport of mountain biking while tackling some very challenging hills and trails. At the end of the day, they are stronger, more self-confident and a little more aware that life in the city and in nature is interconnected. The trips are open to community service agencies and schools that serve inner-city youth in the Bay Area.

## New Youth Leadership program begins in August

We are currently planning an exciting new program called the Youth Leadership Program and Job Training Center in collaboration with Marin Teen Center, Inc. in San Rafael. Youth will learn and participate in all aspects of bike retail shop operations, from sales and management to bike repairs and classes. This exciting new project is a full-service bike shop run by teens for youth customers, housed in the Marin Teen Center, 1115 3rd Street, San Rafael, with other youth leadership and entrepreneurial organizations such as the Youth Leadership Institute, Marin Interfaith Youth Outreach and Youth in Arts. The Center opens on August 1, 1998.

### Board of Directors

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*Private Investor*



*The vista from the top of this hill overlooking Tennessee Valley sure makes the climb worth the effort for our riders (once they cool down, of course).*

## Mission Statement

The Trips for Kids youth biking program is a San Francisco Bay Area non-profit volunteer organization that provides mountain biking outings, environmental education, and bicycle mechanics training for low income youth. Our goal is to combine lessons in personal responsibility, achievement and environmental awareness through development of practical skills and the simple act of having fun.

# Re-Cyclery

A classroom disguised as a bike shop, Re-Cyclery provides the low-income youth of Marin County an alternative to the streets—a place to spend their free time on weekends and after school. At the heart of Re-Cyclery is our Earn-a-Bike job training program, housed in our bike thrift shop in downtown San Rafael and our bike repair workshop and warehouse in the Canal district of San Rafael. This program combines basic bike mechanics training, environmental education and community service. By completing the curriculum, the kids earn a bike helmet and a bike. The curriculum includes courses covering bicycle maintenance, repair and safety, and is a hands-on approach to learning. Our bike thrift shop serves as a training ground for kids by giving them hands-on experience in all aspects of a retail operation, including sales, customer service, inventory, pricing, and computer applications.



*Instructor David Tacey shows bike mechanics techniques to Re-Cyclery students.*

## the kids...

### Who We Served

This past year we provided 101 mountain-bike trips for 728 youth from around the Bay Area. Rides were held on most Saturdays and Sundays throughout the year. This summer we started giving weekday trips once a week for Bay Area schools and community service agencies. Our Rides program is so popular we continue to be booked 3-4 months in advance. Re-Cyclery staff and volunteers teach kids the merits of recycling through our own Reduce, Reuse, Recycle program and through our regular emphasis on conservation. And we continue to give bikes and parts to San Quentin prisoners to refurbish for distribution to other charities. We gave away 15 truckloads of bikes and parts, 3 truckloads to other earn-a-bike programs, and sent 8 truckloads of parts to an East Bay metal recycling business for scrap. We also gave away 43 bikes to the Ritter House homeless shelter and provided bike repair services for their clients once a week. All of these bikes and parts would have gone into landfill but instead were Reused or Recycled.

### Awards and Recognition

**Parents Magazine**  
"As They Grow Award"  
May 1998

**Mountain Biker Magazine**  
names Director Marilyn Price one of the "Unsung Heroes of Mountain Biking"  
June 1998

**Bicycle Dealer Showcase**  
full page article  
April 1998

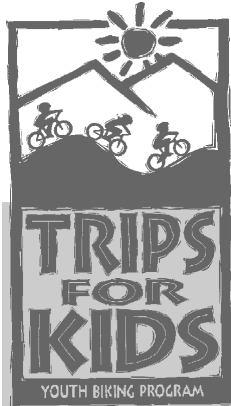
**KPIX Channel 5**  
interview on This Morning show  
June 1998

**KTVU Channel 2**  
interview on Bay Area People show  
June 1998

**Marin TV 31**  
coverage of Re-Cyclery Children's Rodeo  
September 1997

**San Quentin Prison**  
"Outstanding Volunteer Service Award"  
in recognition of our San Quentin bicycle donation program. We donated 9 truckloads of bikes and parts last year to the prisoners to refurbish and give to other charities.  
November 1997

# thanks...



The work of Trips for Kids is only possible with your continued support. The following friends of Trips for Kids have generously donated to make the program a success. Many thanks!

## Non-Bike Related Sponsors

Acme Bread  
Adjacency Brand New Media, San Francisco  
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A.Sabella's Resturant, San Francisco  
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Boise Cascade  
Cactus Cafe, Mill Valley  
California Bicycle Safety Network  
Calistoga  
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Bicycle Trails Council of Marin  
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# bike industry sponsors

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Timbuk2 Designs  
Titec  
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Trek Bicycle Corp.  
Vredestein Tires  
Weinmann Inc.  
White Lightning  
Wilderness Trail Bikes  
Wilson Bicycle Sales  
Winner International  
Yakima  
Zoic

## Wish List

Trips for Kids is in need of the following items (please call our office at **415.458.2986** if you can donate any of these items and receive our perpetual gratitude and a tax write-off):

**Shipping Containers**  
(6x8 or 6x20 or smaller metal units with doors)

**Small containers**  
for displaying parts on store shelves

## Bay Area Bike Shop Donors

American Cyclery, San Francisco  
Bicycle Connection, Moraga  
Bicycle Factory, Petaluma  
Bicycle Outfitter, Los Altos  
The Bike Doctor, Corte Madera  
Bike Pedaler, Santa Rosa  
Calmar Cyclery, Santa Clara  
Chain Reaction, Redwood City  
Marina Cyclery, San Francisco  
Medina Cyclery, Berkeley  
Mike's Bikes, San Rafael  
Mill Valley Cycleworks, Mill Valley  
Missing Link, Berkeley  
Ocean Cyclery, San Francisco  
Off Ramp, Santa Clara  
Olympic Bike Shop, Lake Tahoe  
Palo Alto Bicycles, Palo Alto  
Planeaway, Tiburon  
Santa Rosa Cyclery, Santa Rosa  
Sausalito Cyclery, Sausalito  
Stanford Cycling Team, Palo Alto  
Start to Finish, San Francisco Bay Area  
Sunshine Bicycle Center, Fairfax

### Racks

Large metal multi-bike racks for displaying bikes at thrift shop

### Computers

MAC or IBM 486  
(or better, of course)

### Laptop Laser Printer

### Professional Postal Scale

### VCR

**Folding Tables**  
6 or 8 foot

**Extension Ladder**  
6 foot

### Ladder

### Hand truck

### Push Brooms

### Door Mats

## you can help...

Help spread the word by including something about Trips for Kids in your company newsletter. Volunteers can encourage their employers to contribute to Trips for Kids. Cash donations, new or used bikes, parts and accessories are always needed and are tax deductible. Also, anyone making a donation to the United Way can request that their matching funds be donated to Trips for Kids.

call Trips for Kids at  
**415.458.2986**

## Youth Employee Spotlight: Vinnie Sooknanan

On weekends, anyone visiting the Trips for Kids Re-Cyclery thrift shop will see a young man working hard repairing bicycles, straightening the clothing room, sweeping and re-stocking. His name is Vinnie, and he's



*Vinnie Sooknanan works on his BMX bike at Re-Cyclery*

been employed at Re-Cyclery ever since he finished our Basic Bicycle Mechanics program. An avid rider since he was five years old, Vinnie moved here from Colorado in April 1997, and saw our storefront signs while walking by with his family. Since his Mom couldn't afford to buy bicycles right after the move, Vinnie decided to earn one at Re-Cyclery. Vinnie and his brother Jay worked together to earn enough

credits to purchase a bike for Vinnie, and then they repeated their efforts to earn a bike for Jay.

This same kind of camaraderie and willingness to help others is evident in Vinnie's work and personal life, too. "If everything in life was free, I could spend my whole life helping people." Vinnie spends a great deal of time helping other people, working for free at the Marin Teen Center and helping his friends and family keep their bicycles in working order. Somehow he also manages to find time to work with the Youth Leadership Institute, take Aikido classes, and race with the Trips for Kids Team Unity BMX racing team, and perform with Future Shock dance troupe—"we do shows at schools, youth centers, fairs..." Oh, and by the way, he is also taking ten units of summer school, since some of his credits from Colorado didn't transfer to the San Rafael school district.

Vinnie has lots of dreams and goals for his future. After graduating from high school next year, he wants to go to college, and maybe study computers or physics, play football, and be an actor. He is learning a lot at Re-Cyclery. "I learned how to fix mountain bikes. I learned how to run the shop...business skills, like working with cash, teaching other kids. I like fixing bikes, especially the greasy parts, it's like the funnest thing. When I do it, I know I'm doing it right...and it's fun!"

When asked if he had any advice for kids, Vinnie related to the challenge of BMX racing: "Don't get discouraged if you don't win the first try. If you get a chance, try it, cause it's really fun."

## how you can help...

### Re-Cyclery

#### Thrift shop

#### Earn-a-Bike program

610 4th Street  
San Rafael, CA 94901

415.458.2986  
Tues-Thur 2PM-6PM  
Sat-Sun 10AM-4PM  
tfk@pacbell.net  
<http://www.webcom.com/tfk>

#### Earn-a-Bike program

#### Rides program

135 Alto Street  
San Rafael, CA 94901

415.455.8876  
Tues-Thur NOON-6PM  
Sat 12PM-4PM

#### Director

Marilyn Price  
415.381.2941  
marilyn\_price@marinfo.org

### Volunteers needed

Trips for Kids is always looking for volunteers to lead rides. Rides are conducted every Saturday and Sunday, and selected weekdays, in Marin County State and National Parks. Volunteers are also needed to help at Re-Cyclery to help with bike mechanics, art projects, homework tutoring and retail sales at the thrift shop on afternoons and weekends.



*Volunteers Max DeLeuse and Kristen Nute admire a beautiful diamond donated by a Trips for Kids fan.*

## to volunteer call

# 415.458.2480

TRIPS  
FOR  
KIDS  
YOUTH BIKING PROGRAM