

TRIPS FOR KIDS MARIN™

summer/fall 1999



PHOTO MARILYN PRICE

Mountain bike superstar Juli Furtado joined a Trips for Kids Marin ride in May.

NEWSLETTER

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A Day in the Saddle with Trips for Kids Marin

by Patchen Homitz

The Re-Cyclery warehouse garage door shrieks in its tracks as I lift it over my head. Light cascades into the room to shine on the bikes the kids will ride today. Suddenly I'm directing five or six people who are shaking off their weekend sleep, sizing bikes from a list, and gathering helmets, gloves, and energy bars. After the van is carefully loaded I do my safety speech for the volunteers, and Marilyn hands me a bag of home-baked cookies, wishing us all a good day. We pull into the trailhead parking lot and a group of kids approaches our van as we hop out to meet them, shaking hands and trading names. Within a half-hour the kids are outfitted with bikes and gear and matched with a volunteer buddy for the day. Before the ride we form a circle, and pair-by-pair we introduce our buddies. Some introductions are funny and make us all laugh, something about a Zodiac sign or being from New Jersey. **Everyone is anxious to ride**, but I make sure we discuss trail etiquette, safety, and basic bike skills before we take off.

On the trail we are a single file of brand-new and experienced trail riders, stopping now and then to adjust a saddle or give advice on shifting. As we ride, shaky riders become less shaky, and conversations warm up. A deer skips up the hillside to our right—riders point and we hear plenty of oohs from the kids. Later a hawk glides past my buddy-for-the-day, and he tells me he has never seen a hawk before. Up some of the long hills some of the kids ask, "How long is this hill?" and "When does the downhill start?" We field each question with encouragement and remind the kids that if they stick with the

challenge of the hill they can celebrate their victory all the way downhill. Down the hills the kids don't ask "How far?"—they just smile, hold tightly onto the handlebars, and squeeze both brake levers.

At lunch we share stories and learn more about each other. Meanwhile, a volunteer is explaining the history of the area and which animals live in this wild place. Kids describe their neighborhood and tell us about school subjects they like and which sports they play.

After the ride is over, we form another circle and I get the bag of cookies out. What did you like about today's ride? What didn't you like? What did you learn? We hear honest answers: "I didn't like the hills," and "I liked the deer," and "**I learned that if you fall down on your bike you gotta get back on and ride or you'll never get over your fear.**" Everyone says goodbye as the volunteers and I head back to the warehouse.

Though we are tired, we methodically go over each bike before we put them away. I say my second set of goodbyes, this time to our helpful volunteers as they drift off to go home. I pull the roll-down door, and it shrieks again as the light disappears over the fleet of bikes, snugly fit into their places and waiting for the next ride.

"...a volunteer is explaining the history of the area and which animals live in this wild place."

Trips for Kids founder Marilyn Price

PHOTO: MARTY PECKINS



Trips for Kids goes national!

“It just doesn’t seem fair that outdoor experiences such as mountain biking aren’t available to everyone—especially to kids,”

says Trips for Kids founder Marilyn Price. “Our goal has always been to help set that straight a little bit.” Now the Marin County-based rides program is going national. Its goal is to help start independent Trips for Kids groups across the country by offering its name and expertise.

So far, more than 200 groups and individuals have contacted Trips for Kids to find out about starting their own programs. Certainly, Trips for Kids can serve as a model program, and in fact, it has been named a model program by the International Mountain Bicycling Association. The Trips for Kids name has built a solid reputation in the cycling industry and should be a valuable asset. In order to share the name, groups are

asked to establish themselves as non-profit and to carry sufficient liability insurance. Trips for Kids Marin’s home office will serve as a clearinghouse for information and problem-solving. In addition, the non-profit offers a “How-To Manual” that covers everything from equipment needed to sample grant proposals. The manual is available to any group interested in starting a rides program.

Trips for Kids’ expansion has received generous support from the outdoor and cycling industries. REI helped begin the expansion by donating \$5,000. GT and Giant Bicycles donated a fleet of 15 bikes each, so that Trips for Kids is able to provide start-up bikes. *Bicycling Magazine* donated the space for a series of ads to help get the word out.

The goal of this expansion is to reach as many kids as possible. Price knows that there’s a long-term benefit from Trips for Kids rides. “Once they make it up a hill, I know they’ve learned something. As one boy said after a ride, **‘I learned that if I stick with it, I can make it to the top.’**”

Awards and Media Attention

San Francisco Chronicle
“Outdoors Section”
covered Trip for Kids Marin
and Re-Cyclery
August 1999

Marin Independent Journal
Lend-a-Hand
Campaign beneficiary
July-September 1999

San Francisco Chronicle
“Marin Teens Toil in Well-
Tooled Bike Program”
January 1999

TV 2 and Marin 31
Covered our
Re-Cyclery Programs
January 1999

Bicycling Magazine
Environmental Award
in Education, 1998

Parents Magazine
As They Grow Award
1998

Waste Reduction Awards Program (WRAP)
Award winner
1995, 1996, 1997, 1998

NBC Nightly News with Tom Brokaw
Special segment on
“Schwarzkopf’s America”
August 1996

International Mountain Bike Hall of Fame
Director Marilyn Price
inducted, 1996

Volunteer Center of Marin
Volunteer of the Year
Award
1996

Sports Illustrated Magazine
“To Reach New Heights”
Full-page article
September 1995

JC Penny
Golden Rule Award, 1995

S.F. Bay Area Girl Scouts
Daisy Award, 1994

International Mountain Bicycling Association
Model Program Award
1994

Acknowledgements

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Re-Cyclery's parts room is filled with great deals.

**bargains!
bargains!
bargains!**

Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop

The Otis Guy, hand-built, Softride suspension mountain bike standing in the rack in front of Re-Cyclery has probably seen a lot of rides—even so, there aren't many chances to buy a handbuilt bike, complete, for \$600. (Otis Guy's meticulously crafted frames usually sell for much more.) Right next to it stands an old English three-speed, perfect for errands to the bank and grocery store. Price? Fifty bucks—and it works like a charm. The bargains don't stop there. Inside the Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop, at 610 Fourth Street in San Rafael, a customer will find brand new equipment and clothing, along with used bike parts and clothing, for sale at excellent prices.

The clothing and parts are donated by the cycling industry and our friends in the community, as a show of support for Trips for Kids Marin and Re-Cyclery's rides program for inner-city kids and earn-a-bike program for low-income kids. Re-Cyclery also has a reputation for stocking hard-to-find items, such as classic Campagnolo parts; 5-, 6-, 7- and 8-speed freewheels; sew-up rims and

wheels; and top-mount thumb shifters. All at desirable prices, of course! We admit that the concept of selling used bikes and parts isn't new—but the availability of good, functioning used bikes is scarce.

All of those at Trips for Kids Marin have been soothed back into a useful life by Michael Bower, Re-Cyclery's mechanic. Approximately 25 used bikes are donated to Trips for Kids Marin each week. Of these, about seven are repaired for the thrift shop. The others are sent to different groups that also recycle bikes and work with kids. The bikes and metal parts that can't be salvaged are sent to a scrap metal recycler in the East Bay. Trips for Kids Marin takes pains to squeeze every drop of usefulness out of these old machines, some of which had been retired to garages or rusting in back yards before they got a second chance—and their owners got a tax-deduction for their donation.

Proceeds from all items in the shop benefit Trips for Kids Marin's rides program for inner-city kids and earn-a-bike program. In fact, the Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop raises two-thirds of the funding for those programs.

Donors who come to Re-Cyclery find a new home for bikes, parts and clothing for which they no longer have use or space. They also find tax deductions for donating these items. Customers who come to Re-Cyclery find hard-to-find items that are no longer manufactured, used items that are less expensive and just as functional as new ones, an occasional classic bike, and, more frequently, great bargains like a hand-built Otis Guy for \$600.

Eighth annual swap a success!

Trips for Kids Marin's eighth annual Bike Swap and Sale raised \$50,000 in 1999, and remains our biggest fundraiser of the year. Vendors and cyclists from across the Bay Area come to sell and trade bikes, parts, clothing and accessories at bargain prices. Our thanks to the manufacturers, bike shops and individuals who donated goods for Trips for Kids Marin to sell at its booth at the annual June event.

Trips for Kids Marin/ Re-Cyclery Locations/Hours

Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop Trips for Kids Marin Administrative Office

610 Fourth Street
San Rafael, CA
(no mail to this address,
see below for
mailing address)
415.458.2986
tfkbike@pacbell.net
<http://www.webcom.com/tfk>
Thrift Shop hours:
Tues-Fri 2pm- 6pm
Sat-Sun 10am-4pm
Office hours:
Tues-Fri 10:30am-6:30pm

Re-Cyclery Warehouse

135 Alto Street
San Rafael, CA
415.455.8876
Workshop Hours:
Tues-Fri 2pm-6pm
Sat 12pm-4pm
Retail Hours:
Tues-Fri 5pm-6pm
Sat 12pm-4pm

Mailing and Shipping Address

Trips for Kids Marin
c/o Marilyn Price, Director
138 Sunnyside
Mill Valley, CA 94941
415.381.2941

KIDS...

Younger members of Team Unity suited up and ready to ride.



PHOTO MARILYN PRICE

It's great to be a kid at Re-Cyclery

First Job: Doing something you love

Fernando Arriaga wears his hair slicked back. In combination with his shop apron, it makes him look neat, meticulous—an experienced mechanic at 14. He admits he's not really that neat—"There are tools all over my house," he says—but he's been working on bikes for three years now, and he's become so experienced with bikes that Re-Cyclery hired him. "I can do the same things that I like to do and get paid for it," he says about his first job. He came to Re-Cyclery in 1996, at the advice of a friend. "I had a trashy bike, so

my friend told me he knew this place where I could fix it." Fernando took to working on bikes quickly. As he puts it, "I like to work with my hands." He is a teacher's assistant in woodworking, and he's looking forward to beginning drafting, design and metalworking when he gets older. "I'll make my own bike," he says with a chuckle.

For now, though, you can find Fernando working on bikes. He says about his job at Re-Cyclery, "It's a good beginning working environment. They show you how to write up receipts, talk to customers, and work with money at the cash register."

Someday maybe he'll be using those skills to sell a line of bikes he designed and built himself...

Kids in the Re-Cyclery program face a tantalizing array of opportunities. They can learn about bike repair and earn a bike in the process. Or they can learn to type and use computer programs. They can train for their first job by learning bike shop skills and applying to work at Re-Cyclery. Or, if they just want a friendly place to hang out after school, they can come to Re-Cyclery's warehouse and do their homework or participate in art and gardening projects.

There are two separate shops in the Re-Cyclery program. Most kids, ages 10-17, begin at the Re-Cyclery warehouse at 135 Alto in the Canal neighborhood of San Rafael, a primarily Hispanic district. At the warehouse, they can join the earn-a-bike program and participate in our different projects. This is also the home base for our multi-racial BMX team, Team Unity. The BMX team trains twice a month and races once a month at the track in Napa.

The Re-Cyclery warehouse also hosts outreach programs to help in other neighborhoods. Its mobile project has set down roots in Marin City to bring Re-Cyclery's earn-a-bike program to the primarily African-American community there. This workshop takes place three days a week, and the kids who attend it can also participate in Team Unity. In addition, Re-Cyclery provides an outreach program to homeless adults participating in the Ritter House program in San Rafael.

The second Re-Cyclery, Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop at 610 Fourth Street in San Rafael, serves several important roles in the Trips for Kids Marin program. Not only do the kids we hire work here on weekends, but the Thrift Shop raises two-thirds of the operating expenses for our programs. Kids working at the Thrift Shop do shop sales, handle inventory, do mechanical work and help to keep the place clean. So far, Trips for Kids Marin has hired seven kids from its Re-Cyclery program.

Re-Cyclery is always a fun and busy place. We welcome girls and boys to come check out the opportunities that it offers.

"I like to work with my hands."



PHOTO MARILYN PRICE

Girls love bikes!

Nancy Turcios, 13, knows what she wants. Serious and maybe a little shy, she devotes herself to her work at Re-Cyclery every day it's open, from 2:30-6pm. She likes the shop because "Gadi and Robert really make things interesting. They're always joking, and it makes things fun."

Since she was 10, Nancy knew she wanted to learn about bikes. So she asked her mom to let her go to Re-Cyclery to earn a BMX bike. Her mom was afraid she'd get hurt and said no. Undaunted, Nancy asked until her mom gave in. She's been at Re-Cyclery for a year now—and no one's gotten hurt. But Nancy has decided she wants to accomplish something else. Now she wants a job at Re-Cyclery, which she will be eligible for when she turns 14.

She says she wants the job, "because I could really help people." Besides doing mechanical work, she's essential in translating and helping with any language barriers between Spanish and English around the shop.

All the time spent at Re-Cyclery—along with school—keeps Nancy busy. If she had more spare time, she says she'd like to learn to play the saxophone. "But I don't know if I will ever hook up with one," she points out. She already plays steel drums at her school. In the spare time that she does have, she likes to read books, especially adventure stories.

The bike that Nancy earned at Re-Cyclery—a green and black, aluminum BMX bike—has come in handy, as she uses it to ride around the neighborhood and to school. **She's proud of her bike, and wants to encourage other girls to come to Re-Cyclery and earn bikes of their own.** She tells other girls "that it will be fun, and you can learn new things." She adds that girls shouldn't be intimidated by the boys there. "Ignore the guys," she says, adding that "sometimes the guys think that it's (working on bikes) going to be harder for us—and it's not." She has a green BMX bike to prove it.

Ski Program

Trips for Kids Marin has adopted a ski program for youth who otherwise might not have the opportunity to experience this popular winter activity. In fact most of the kids the program serves have never even seen snow. Ski trips take place from November through April and include 15 kids, plus adult volunteers. The trips are a fun, adventurous way to learn about the environment and experience a new, life-enhancing sport.

Because this program is new, it still needs funding, equipment and volunteers. This is a new direction for Trips for Kids Marin, and we're excited about the possibilities it brings to kids throughout the Bay Area.

Since she was 10, Nancy knew she wanted to learn about bikes.

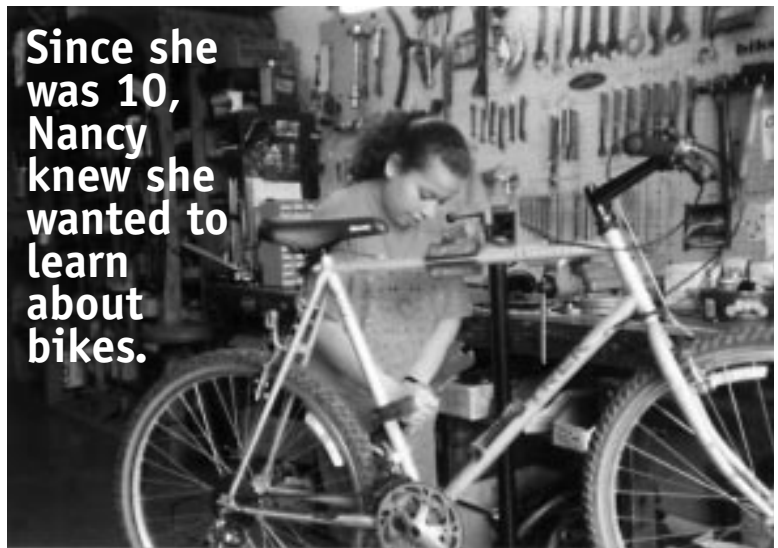


PHOTO: MARILYN PRICE

Who we served

Last year we conducted 74 trips for 507 youth, and since 1990, we have taken 4,187 kids on rides. Since we were established we have served more than 116 agencies, and the majority of these agencies have signed up for more than one trip each year. Our Rides Program is so popular that it is booked two-to-three months in advance.

We enrolled 97 kids in our Re-Cyclery Earn-a-Bike program and had an average daily attendance of 14.5 youth.

We received \$358,000 worth of new and used items from individuals and manufacturers in 1998. We sold 550 refurbished bikes at Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop and gave away 22 truckloads of bikes and parts to San Quentin prison and other charities that repair and recycle bikes. We gave 65 bikes to the Ritter House homeless adult services program. We also sent four truckloads of unusable parts to an East Bay metal recycling business. All of these bikes and parts would have gone into landfill, but instead were reused or recycled through Re-Cyclery.

Mission Statement

Trips for Kids Marin is a San Francisco Bay Area non-profit that provides mountain bike outings and environmental education for kids that would not otherwise be exposed to these types of activities. 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. The Trips for Kids Marin Re-Cyclery program focuses on recycling used bikes and bike parts through its thrift shop and provides skills and job-training programs for youth. These recycled bikes provide safe, environmentally friendly and affordable transportation for both children and adults.



Help a Kid by Sharing the Joy of Mountain Biking

Start a TRIPS FOR KIDS Program!

Many children have never left their own neighborhoods to see the wilderness areas just beyond their reach. By forming a TRIPS FOR KIDS program, you can get kids out on the trails. We'll help get you started by providing:

- Bikes donated by GT and Giant for the first qualifying groups
- A complete "How To" manual
- Start-up support from our staff

To learn more, contact:
Marilyn Price
c/o TRIPS FOR KIDS MARIN
415-381-2941
tfkbike@pacbell.net
www.webcom.com/tfk

TRIPS FOR KIDS is a national non-profit organization that provides mountain bike outings and environmental education for disadvantaged youth.

Sponsored by:



Photo: John Burgess

you can help...

We are an official United Way Community Campaign member, so anyone making a donation to the United Way can specify Trips for Kids Marin as the recipient. Our United Way donor code number is 3900. If your employer has a matching funds program, you can double your contribution to Trips for Kids Marin by donating through such a program. You can help even further by spreading the word about Trips for Kids Marin to your co-workers and encouraging your company's contributions manager to add Trips for Kids Marin to your company's recipient list.

Volunteers keep Trips for Kids rolling

by Patchen Homitz

The bicycle frame is a thing of beauty, crafted to hold 40 to 50 times its weight. It is the most obvious part of a bike. But any bike aficionado worth his or her weight in titanium knows that the bicycle's drivetrain, the easily overlooked greasy gears and related hardware, constitutes the guts of a bike. Without a well-maintained drivetrain, a bicycle squeaks, rattles and grinds to a halt.

Volunteers are the drivetrain of Trips for Kids Marin and Re-Cyclery, and without them the pedals of the organization simply wouldn't turn.

The majority of our volunteers work on the rides, where they spend a weekend or midweek day with inner-city kids in the outdoors. The day starts by loading bikes into a van, driving to a trailhead and outfitting the kids with bikes and gear. The rest of the day is devoted to riding on trails with the kids—helping them shift the gears, encouraging them to climb challenging hills, and making new friends. The day ends by helping to clean and pack away the gear at the end of the ride.

In the three Re-Cyclery shops and in our administrative office, hardworking volunteers paint stairs, sort greasy bike parts, stuff envelopes, distribute flyers, sell bikes, and make the program work. Volunteers turn bolts and true wheels on donated bikes, teaching kids mechanic skills as they go along. Quietly the gears turn, kids smile, and the work gets done.

For the annual Bike Swap and Sale, volunteers spread the word through flyers and staff the entire operation, driving loads of gear to and from the Swap, taking tickets, emceeing the raffle, selling gear and refreshments, and cleaning up the residue of Trips for Kids Marin's biggest fundraiser.

When it comes to discussing volunteers, we have to mention founder and director Marilyn Price, our super volunteer, and the main cog in Trips for Kids Marin's drivetrain. For the organization's first 10 years, she volunteered 70-80 hours each week.

Trips for Kids Marin has a dedicated paid staff, it's true, but much of the program's success comes from the work of our growing core of loyal volunteers—hardworking gears that drive Trips for Kids Marin and the Re-Cyclery programs down a smooth path. **Our thanks to them all!**

If you'd like to volunteer at Trips for Kids Marin, contact our volunteer coordinator at 415.458.2986.

volunteer spotlight...

Paul Sanford donates time, energy and expertise

Paul Sanford is a frequent visitor at Trips for Kids Marin's Re-Cyclery, and a valued one. Everyone on the staff is always asking him his opinion. In fact, the staff relies on him for advice on everything from pricing inventory to business and legal matters. Having been a very successful businessman, Paul delivers sound advice.

He started helping Trips for Kids Marin back in 1988, when he would work on the Rides Program's bikes in founder Marilyn Price's garage. Now he puts in 40 hours a month at the non-profit. **"I don't know what motivates me, I just like helping people,"** he says about the extensive amount of time and energy he donates to Trips for Kids. In addition to donating good advice and his mechanical skills, he performs a wide variety of tasks for Trips for Kids Marin, including almost daily inventory pricing and stocking; picking up all donations from bike shops and manufacturers; taking home used clothing to wash it for resale; handling the donation of parts that Re-Cyclery cannot use and that go to San Quentin prison for the bike repair program there (inmates donate the finished bikes to charities); facilitating the sale of any vehicles that have been donated; and maintaining both of the non-profit's vans.

The list of his contributions doesn't end there, however. He is a member of the Trips for Kids Marin Board of Directors and a member of the committee that puts together the annual Swap. **Paul is key to the Swap's success,** as his direction sets the tone, his ideas have helped it to grow, and he has been its chief problem-solver for years. But Paul's generosity extends even further than fundraisers and organizational problem-solving. In addition, over the past rainy season, he made special evening visits to the Trips for Kids Marin office to jump the car batteries of staff members who had left their lights on in the morning after driving to work. Paul helps strangers as well as friends, and will stop to help anyone who is stranded by the side of the road or the side of a trail.

His volunteering is not limited to Trips for Kids Marin. He regularly donates blood; in the past, he has worked with AIDS patients; and he currently does trail work on multi-use trails. Paul "cut loose," in his own words, at age 33, when he sold a chain of full-service automatic car washes that he owned. "I got tired of the rat race," he says. In 1986 he discovered mountain biking, and shortly thereafter, Trips for Kids Marin. **"I love mountain bikes, and I love taking people on rides,"** he says. He'll be the first to admit that he's been enjoying himself ever since his early retirement, but the staff at Trips for Kids Marin would like to point out that he's been doing a lot of good, too.



Thanks, Paul!

you can help...

New or used bikes, parts, clothing, and accessories are always needed at Trips for Kids Marin for our Thrift Store. Through such donations, or simply by shopping at Re-Cyclery, you can make a valuable contribution to our program. All donated items are tax-deductible. Donations can be made at the Re-Cyclery Thrift Shop or Warehouse during shop hours. At the Thrift Shop, just park in our driveway and find a staff person. We will give you a receipt listing the fair market value of your donation.

Drop off:
610 Fourth Street
San Rafael
Tue-Fri 2-6 pm
Sat-Sun 10 am-4 pm

Drop off:
135 Alto Street
San Rafael
Tue-Fri 5-6 pm
Sat 12-4 pm

Wish List

Trips for Kids Marin needs the following items. If you can donate any of them, please call our office at 415.458.2986. You'll receive a tax write-off and, even better, a warm fuzzy feeling.

Office:

Answering Machine (voicemail-type)

Plain Paper Fax Machine

Desktop Copier

Computers:
Mac 040 (Quadra, Centris, any PowerMac system or better), or IBM 486/80 (or better, of course), or Laptops

LapLink with cables for IBM PCs

Laser Printers

Fast Modems

External IBM-Type CD-Rom Drive

Cash Register

Dictionary

Thesaurus

General:

Professional Postal Scale

Small Containers
For displaying parts on store shelves (milk-crate size)

Racks
Large, metal, schoolyard type, multi-bike racks for displaying bikes

Folding Tables
6- or 8-feet long

Ladders
Extension ladder
3-foot step ladder
6-foot ladder

Push Brooms

- Jacquie Phelan
- Charles Kelly
- Joe Breeze
- Mark Slate
- Scot Nicol
- David Koski
- Marilyn Price
- Don Koski
- Gary Fisher



PHOTO: MARILYN PRICE

A few legends of Marin mountain biking got together to be celebrity bartenders at a Trips for Kids Marin brewfest fundraiser, sponsored by the Broken Drum in San Rafael.

Our thanks to them all!

Marilyn Price
 Trips for Kids Marin
 138 Sunnyside
 Mill Valley, CA 94941

