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## News

Friday, January 25, 2008

### Memorial organization gives bikes to children

By TIM LINN, Times Staff Writer  
Published: Tuesday, January 22, 2008 8:41 AM CST  
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After Missouri native Mark Reynolds died in January 2004 while mountain biking in California, his mother Dona Reynolds decided to carry on her son's legacy.

But Reynolds would not be putting on a helmet anytime soon. Instead, it was her son's philanthropic legacy she chose to preserve.

"We just had to carry on," she said.

Reynolds is the president of the Mark Reynolds Children First Bicycle Fund, a memorial not-for-profit organization that uses community donations to purchase bicycles for children in need.

The fund recently held a giveaway in Leavenworth in conjunction with the Santa Fe Trails Bike Shop and the Youth Achievement Center.

"There's nothing a child needs more than a bike, in my opinion," Reynolds said.

She said Mark began his work after graduating from the University of Missouri in 1991. Mark had just begun his first job, Reynolds said, and wanted to find a way to give back to children in his community.

Drawing on his love for biking, he started asking for donations from fellow riders in order to purchase bikes.

From there, the organization grew, and soon Mark was working with area churches and receiving private donations to help purchase more bikes.

Reynolds said the organization had worked with Santa Fe Trails before.

"We have worked with them for years," she said. "They're really always willing to help us out."

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		1	2	3	4	5
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Joe Buis, executive director at the Leavenworth Youth Achievement Center, said he was contacted by the fund about hosting a bike giveaway event.

Buis said he would like to host another similar event at the YAC in the future.

"(The fund) said they want to do another event, which we'd love to help with," he said.

The YAC picked children from its after-school programs to receive the bikes, Buis said.

The administrative assistant and former executive director, Deborah Gregor, said the YAC has hosted bike giveaways before.

"We were involved with the Lansing Correctional Facility before," Gregor said, referring to the LCF bike giveaway program. "But then that program got to be in such high demand, we had to find another source. Thankfully the Mark Reynolds Fund contacted us."

Reynolds said the fund organizes many events like YAC bike giveaway. She added the fund also helps organize fundraisers such as the annual "Take a Kid Biking Day."

"It's a joint venture between communities, usually," she said. "We get money from a variety of private and corporate donors."

Reynolds said donations to the fund are completely tax-deductible, and that because there are no administrative salaries to pay, most of the money donated goes into purchasing more bicycles. She said the fund tries to give back to the communities that support it with bikes.

She said the Leavenworth community has always been supportive of the work the organization does.

"We started giving there two years ago," she said. "We gave there last year. We will always give there."

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