

FALL 2006

INGEAR

THE NEWSLETTER OF PEDALS FOR PROGRESS



P4P Collects—and Follows—the 100,000th Bicycle!

By Reykha Bonilla



This has been a remarkable year for Pedals for Progress. We reached two important milestones, our 15th anniversary and our 100,000th bicycle. While we're proud of our longevity, the second accomplishment symbolizes

so many things for Pedals for Progress. It's the culmination of 15 years of hard work and dedication from Dave Schweidenback, the P4P staff and countless volunteers. It means 100,000 bicycles have been saved from landfills here in the United States, and at least 100,000 Americans have been connected to the larger global community through our work. And most important, 100,000 of the world's working-poor families now have a better chance to earn a decent living.

Our 100,000th bicycle showed up at a collection sponsored by the Somerset Hills Kiwanis on June 24th at the Sunset Inn in Clinton, N.J. On hand to commemorate the occasion and read a proclamation was New Jersey State Senator Leonard Lance, who personally thanked the surprised donor, Bob Uhlendorf of High Bridge, for his noteworthy red 10-speed Rampar. Once the collection was over and photographs taken, Bob's old 10-speed was packed into a container with more than 500 other bikes destined for Guatemala and our partner nonprofit organization, FIDESMA (Integrated Foundation for Sustainable Development and the Environment). When the container shipped, I sent FIDESMA a letter identifying the bicycle and explaining why we were tracking it. Then in August I received word that the container, after an eight-week journey, finally arrived. And I flew there to meet it.



Guatemala is a breathtaking country with tall green mountains and lush valleys. From the airport we followed the Pan-

American Highway, two lanes that wound up and down the mountains. We passed robust and plentiful fields of corn, beans and strawberries. And every few minutes a brightly painted old school bus would honk loudly, pass and leave behind the acrid smell of diesel exhaust. As it cleared, the sweet, ever-present scent of wood smoke returned.



Two hours from Guatemala City, we left the Pan-Am highway, and in doing, left pavement for paving stones. This was the road from the city of Chimaltenango to San Andres de Izapa, a rural town of 13,000 at an elevation of 5,400 feet and the home of FIDESMA. A few miles later we were in San Andres, where dogs and chickens ran freely in the streets. Ours was one of the rare cars in town. More people were on bicycles and the ubiquitous red motorcycle taxis from India called Tuk-Tuks. In the distance one of Guatemala's many active volcanoes peaks over San Andres.



There is a vibrant indigenous culture throughout much of Guatemala. Men and women in San Andres still wear colorfully embroidered traditional garb and leather sandals and speak their indigenous languages as well as Spanish. Many of the younger people also wear "American"-style clothes, including jeans. At FIDESMA, three simple block buildings painted bright green, things were bustling. Through FIDESMA, residents in San Andres benefit from the bicycle sales, donations of corn (provided by the U.S. government), micro-loans for farmers and small businesses a free dental clinic and an affordable housing project. *Continued on page 3*

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AND MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS:

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Weaving from Mujeres Maya -see page 6.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Dear Supporter,

It has taken Pedals for Progress 15 years to collect and ship 100,000 bicycles. Can we ship another 100,000 bike in even less time?

In 15 years, we've honed our collection and distribution procedures into a working model other organizations now use for their operations. We've gained international recognition and won prestigious awards. We've attracted a dedicated staff and developed strong relationships with our overseas partners. And, as always, bikes are plentiful and the need for them among the working poor is insatiable. So, can we collect and ship more bikes faster? I believe we can. And I believe we have to.

The only obstacle standing in our way is funding. It's our single-most difficult challenge. Each bicycle collected produces \$20, yet it takes \$28 to complete the process and ship the bike overseas. That last \$8 per bike is also the hardest money to get.

The funds we raise need to cover much more than shipping costs, however. There are day-to-day operating costs—rent, payroll, utilities—there are travel expenses, and there's also our future. With that in mind, in 2001, we established our Capital Campaign to raise funds for a permanent Pedals for Progress facility. One that will make us more efficient, boost production, lower expenses and help us ship more bikes. Currently, we have \$70,000 in the Capital Campaign, which is \$430,000 shy of our goal. Having reached the limitations of our current facility, completing this fund is critical to our growth and operation.

Why do we need to grow? To give you a better idea of what all the bikes we've collected and shipped overseas means, instead of 100,000 bikes, picture 100,000 families. That's how many families our bikes lifted from poverty in the past 15 years. This is why we need to raise more money each year and why we need to send more bikes overseas.

Just within our present footprint—the roughly 200-mile radius from our home office—there are tens of thousands of bikes to be collected each year. But we can only get to as many as our budget will allow. The more money we raise, the more bikes we ship, and the more families live better lives. It's that simple.

We want to see more—many more—than 100,000 families gain a bike and we want it to happen faster than 15 years. We can do it too. Like the bikes we collect, the money is out there and we need help getting it. As always, we're looking to you—because from day one, we've only been able to do this with your support.

Please help us raise the money to ship the next 100,000 bicycles faster than the first 100,000. We're thankful for any amount you can donate.

Sincerely,
Dave Schweidenback



cont'd from page 1

It seemed nearly everyone in San Andres knew FIDESMA's director, Margarita Catu, proof of the important role she and FIDESMA play in the community.

During my first day there, with FIDESMA's help I caught up to our 100,000th bike and met its new owner, Mateo Patzan—or "el Chino," as he's known around the region. Energetic and full of optimism, Mateo is a small man at 5 feet tall and has the slim body of a champion cyclist, which, I soon learned, he is. After inviting me to his humble two-room home constructed from adobe bricks and plastic sheets and with a corrugated zinc panel for a front door, he introduced me to his family and his many cycling trophies. His face



Mateo racing in San Andres.

lit up when I asked him about his cycling experiences over the past ten years and how he has managed to do so well with so few resources. The proud father of five children, for the past seven years Mateo has also been the champion of Chilmaltenango. Mateo is from a small village outside of San Andres de Iztapa called Los Corrales. With his worn out bike, he not only wins races and competes with the best cyclists in Guatemala, he's also an inspiration to the people of his town.

Cycling is a very popular sport in Guatemala. Mateo began cycling ten years ago at the age of 21. After becoming frustrated playing soccer, he thought it would be fun to try a more individual sport. During his first race, Mateo placed second. He wasn't pleased with this result—he wanted to win. Determined to do so, he began working with his cyclist friends to learn how to train properly in order to win his next race. He's since won many. FIDESMA supports Mateo by providing Gatorade, spare parts and cheers. With this modest sponsorship, he often beats professional racers with much bigger sponsors like Coca-Cola. Mateo explained that jumping to that next level of his sport and securing a big-time sponsor means competing for weeks at a time with no guarantee of a paycheck. While his dream is to get paid for cycling so he can

support his family by doing what he loves, as the sole provider, it's not a risk he's willing to take. Instead, he depends on his job as a security guard. After competing in races as long as 80 Kilometers and sometimes longer, he then returns to his farm to tend the crops with his son, often without having enough food and water.

During my visit to Chilmaltenango, Mateo participated in a grueling citywide race in honor of Guatemalan Independence Day. In the final miles he was sitting comfortably in the lead group. But because his 10-year-old Bianchi racing bike no longer performs as well as it once did, a mechanical problem caused him to finish fifth against a field he was sure he could beat. One of the reasons FIDESMA thought the red Rampar would be perfect for Mateo is so he could use it for getting to and from work and for training, sparing his much-used Bianchi from additional wear and tear.

While cycling is Mateo's primary means of transportation, it's his passion for his sport that's such a fitting complement to the story of our 100,000th bike. Bob Uhlendorf's old red Rampar now belongs to someone for whom cycling is a way of life in a much richer sense than we ever expected.

Thank you to FIDESMA and all the people I met on my travels and for the warm welcome I received in Guatemala. This was an experience I will always carry with me.



Mateo with wife Viviana and children.



Mateo and his cycling trophies.

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(Pedals for Progress)
86 East Main Street
High Bridge, NJ 08829

Doug Bastian, Secretary
(Red Cross Executive)
187 Columbia Hill Road
Danville, PA 17821

André Sucharew, Treasurer
(CFO AT&T, Budget Analyst)
PO Box 310
Lebanon, NJ 08809

Sarah Jane Jelin
(Attorney)
330 Central Avenue
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20 Orchard Street
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Dave Wilson
(Communications and Creative Director)
26 Woodland Avenue
Morristown, NJ 07960

Andrew Aprill, Ph.D.
(Founder & CEO BioVid)
92 Aqueduct Road
Washington Crossing, PA 18977

Reykha Bonilla, Vice-President
(Pedals for Progress)
10 Thomas Street,
Cranford, NJ 07016

Where are they now?

Past and current Pedals for Progress board members, staff and collection coordinators who do all the work with none of the glory, recently shared with us why their work with P4P is so important to them.



Steve Caporelli — NJ Collections Coordinator 2000-2004

Pedals For Progress gave me an opportunity to help working people in developing countries find a more efficient means of transportation and thereby increase the movement of goods and services from remote villages and towns to larger cities. I have been involved in a number of projects throughout my life from starting a recycling program at my university to volunteering to build affordable housing in Harlem. Plus, I love to mountain bike and I do my own bicycle repairs. Pedals for Progress was just a good fit for me because we not only give bicycles another life, we also directly help to improve the lives of others.



Chad Bardone — Chairman of the Board of Trustees 1994-2003

Chad Bardone was active with P4P from 1993 to 2003, and oversaw phenomenal growth during that time. Volunteer work still remains a big part of Chad's life. State-side, he and his wife Cecilia work with an emergency outreach group providing food, clothing, and furniture to people in need. And closer to home, Chad works two nights a month with his local Town Watch patrolling the streets of his town. Internationally, he works with the American Leprosy Missions (ALM) and a Bolivian NGO called Centro Nacional de Tecnologia Para el Desarrollo Nacional (CENETEC). He is his area's chapter president for ALM sponsoring a leprosy rehabilitation project in the Philippines. In Bolivia, he works with indigenous communities in the Potosi

region on agriculture, health and education projects. A goal here is to provide locals with an alternative to working in the mines. Chad is grateful for the opportunity to have been involved with P4P and is very pleased with our continuing success.

Contact P4P

Pedals for Progress
PO Box 312
High Bridge, NJ 08829-0312

P: (908) 638-4811
F: (908) 638-4860
www.p4p.org



Alex Goggin-Callahan
Warehouseman, 2003-2006

"What I'll remember about Pedals for Progress is getting up at 4:00 a.m. to beat the heat in the trailers. Despite the early hours, darkness and heavy lifting, the work I've done at Pedals has been a truly fulfilling experience for me. Dave Schweidenback's work has been an inspiration to me, reminding me that one person can have a tremendous influence on the world." Alex will be attending St. John's in Annapolis this fall majoring in classical studies.



Drew Decker
Warehouseman, 2000-2003

"While working for Pedals for Progress, which I began doing in high school, I learned the importance of punctuality, reliability, accountability, responsibility, and professionalism. These basic principals have helped me to stand out among peers and to obtain rank in the Marine Corps."

Branch of Service: United States

Marine Corps Rank: Lance Corporal (LCpl) **Unit:** MALS – 11 (Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron) **Base:** MCAS Miramar (Marine Corps Air Station) about 60 miles south of Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton. Located in San Diego, CA. **Job Title:** MOS 6227 (Military Occupational Specialty). F/A – 18 Intermediate Level Mechanic.



Jeff Sucharew
Warehouse Manager, 1995-1999

"When first began working for Pedals for Progress, I was a feckless 19-year-old kid drifting directionless through life. During my tenure at P4P, I found myself part of a project aimed at improving the state of the world. Through work that was both physically challenging and emotionally rewarding, I also discovered a more fulfilling path is one working to aid others."

Mission Statement

Pedals for Progress envisions a day when:

1. North America recycles over half of the 5 million used bicycles discarded each year, as well as unused parts and accessories for reuse overseas.
2. Poor people in developing countries have bicycles to get to work, obtain services, and meet other needs.
3. The bicycle is an effective tool for self-help in all developing countries.
4. Trade regulations enhance international commerce in bicycles and parts.
5. Policy makers in developing countries respect and support non-motorized transportation.

Our objectives are:

1. To enhance the productivity of low-income workers overseas where reliable, environmentally sound transportation is scarce, by supplying reconditioned bikes at low cost.
2. To promote in recipient communities the establishment of self-sustaining bicycle repair facilities employing local people.
3. To provide leadership and innovation throughout North America for the recycling of bicycles, parts, and accessories.
4. To reduce dramatically the volume of bicycles, parts, and accessories flowing to landfills.
5. To foster environmentally sound transportation policies that encourage widespread use of bicycles worldwide.
6. To foster in the North American public an understanding of and a channel for responding to the transportation needs of the poor in developing countries.

Approved 12/08/96.

GUATEMALA

SANTOS BAR BALAN - Mountain Bike Owner

Everyday Santos uses his bicycle to travel the one-and-a-half kilometers from his house to his job at the local brick factory on the outskirts of San Antonio, Chimaltenango, Guatemala. Before he owned his bicycle, Santos had to walk to work as well as to his other activities. Now he moves easily from place to place without wasting time. He leaves work in the evening and still has enough time to get to his small farm and back home before dinner with his family. He even has more time on the weekends for socializing in the community and tending to his crops. Santos has also benefited from the bicycle mechanic course at FIDESMA. Over six months he learned everything he needed in order to maintain and repair his new bicycle. The standard of living for him and his family has already improved because of the bicycle he bought from FIDESMA.



FIDESMA PROVIDES MICRO-LOANS TO WOMEN FROM THE PROCEEDS OF THE BICYCLE SALES

Meet the Mujeres Maya (Mayan Women) Kaq'iq'ol of Santa Caterina de Barahona, Guatemala. Five years ago they formed a cooperative of 10 women with the idea to sell their traditional weavings in the tourist markets. They received a micro-loan from our partner FIDESMA to start their business. Today they now have a stall in the major tourist town of Antigua where they sell their goods daily. What makes their weaving so special is that it is done using the traditional Guatemalan hand loom. This type of weaving has been passed down by Guatemalan women for hundreds of years. Elva Perez (far left) is the main vendor for the group. She goes to the market everyday and speaks with tourists from all over the world. With careful detail she explains what all the symbols on the weavings mean. The micro-loan from FIDESMA allowed them to start this small business and provide for their families while holding onto their traditions. For more information about the Mujeres Maya products, please visit: www.p4p.org/mujeresmaya.html.



THE ICE CREAM MAN OF SAN ANDRES DE IZTAPA

Jorge Luis wakes up every morning at 4:30 to begin his day selling ice cream. Since he does not have a freezer at home he must ride his bicycle 5 Kilometers to the nearest city to buy his supplies. Once he returns to San Andres de Iz-tapa, Jorge rides with his cooler and cones to the smaller villages in the mountains beyond San Andres to sell his ice cream. He returns home at 5:00 p.m. everyday with a profit of about \$10. Jorge is known around his neighborhood as the "ice cream man." He says he is proud to be the owner of his own business and to be his own boss. He is also very proud that he is able to provide for his wife and seven children. Jorge recently purchased a second bicycle from FIDESMA and is fitting it for his cooler and basket. His new bicycle is a much lighter mountain bike that will help him tackle the hills everyday.



P4P CURRENT PROGRAMS		
Centro Salvadoreño deTecnología Apropiable (CESTA), San Salvador, EL SALVADOR	19,946	(1995-2006)
EcoBici, Rivas, NICARAGUA	10,916	(1992-2006)
Ecotecnología (Ecotec), Jinotepe, NICARAGUA	10,832	(1997-2006)
Fundacion Integral de Desarrollo Sostenible y Medio Ambiente (FIDESMA), Chimaltenango, GUATEMALA	4,138	(1999-2006)
Biirkira Heath Center, Koytera, UGANDA	1,854	(2004-2006)
Rural 21, Stefan Voda, MOLDOVA	1,336	(2002-2005)
Homes of Hope Project, San Pablo, ECUADOR	50	(2006)
15 years, 30 countries: Grand Total: 101,118		
NEW PROJECTS IN THE PLANNING STAGES		
Ewarton Community Action Committee	JAMAICA	
Centro Nacional de Tecnología Para el Desarrollo Integral, (CENETEC), Potosí	BOLIVIA	
Ministry of Youth and Sports, Hawler, Kurdistan	IRAQ	

A YEAR-LONG SEWING COURSE LEADS TO A CAREER

Lourdes Santiso Salizar took a sewing course at FIDESMA seven years ago. She took the year-long course due to lack of other employment opportunities. After she finished the course at FIDESMA, her parents helped her buy an industrial sewing machine and gave her a workshop space in their home. Today Lourdes runs a successful clothing business in San Andres de Izapa, where she custom tailors anything from shirts to wedding gowns. Lourdes now has so much work that she doesn't even need to advertise her services.



EL SALVADOR

ANGEL ESCOBAR: FROM STUDENT TO TEACHER TO BUSINESS OWNER. We recently received a letter from Angel describing his experience with our El Salvadoran partner CESTA.

Dear Pedals for Progress,



Angel selecting bicycles for his shop.

My name is Angel Isaias Escobar and I am the owner of the Speed Bike shop in Chalchuapa, El Salvador. In 1998 when I was 16 years old and going through a difficult economic situation I decided to enroll in the CESTA bicycle mechanic training program.

During my second month in the training program I was sent to the production floor of CESTA where the bicycles from Pedals for Progress are refurbished to be sold later in the bicycle shop. CESTA was able to pay for my food and transportation from the sale of the bicycles. After I graduated from the mechanic training program I was hired to teach bicycle mechanics to people with disabilities. My students upon graduation would go on to own their own bicycle repair business when they finish the training program. I was now a teacher at CESTA instead of a student.

In 2003 I decided it was time for me to open my own bicycle business. I made an initial investment of \$600 in tools, bicycle parts and rent for a store front. Today I am able to make about \$3,800 per year. I travel to CESTA once a month to purchase bicycles and fix them in my shop then the bicycles are sold in my town. From my training and experience as a teacher at CESTA I am now able to support my family through my small business.

Sincerely, Angel

Westchester Collection A Well-planned Collection Turns Out Even Better Than Planned

By David McKay Wilson

When the Westchester Cycle Club began planning a used bicycle drive for Pedals for Progress, we hoped to collect 150 bikes. That was enough



to fill the truck we rented to deliver them to High Bridge, New Jersey, where Pedals for Progress is based. But then we partnered with several houses of worship, a few community groups, and we knew we'd need to rent a second truck. In fact, we needed every

inch of three trucks, including Pedals for Progress' own box truck, to fit the 543 bikes and 10 sewing machines we collected on April 1.

None of us could've guessed when we first started planning that we'd hold the second largest collection in Pedals for Progress' 15-year history. It's a credit to the generous residents in the northern suburbs of New York City, who came in droves with their used bikes and checkbooks. Word of mouth, flyers, and Kenneth Edding's article of the upcoming event in *The Journal News* generated lots of publicity. Of course, without all the cheerful volunteers who all came together in the sprawling parking lot behind Memorial United Methodist Church, we'd never have been so successful. They gathered at 8 a.m. that morning brimming with energy even though the weather report called for a 50 percent chance of rain. But Reverend Joe Agne assured us that he'd ordered up an ideal day. Soon, we saw patches of blue in morning sky, and as the sun peaked through, some happy cardinals sang their sweet songs.

We didn't have to wait long to get cranking. Our biggest donor, the Andrus Children's Center in Yonkers, had delivered 65 bikes ahead of time. An official from the Children's Center saw the article about the bike collection and called saying she already had bikes. Initially, she didn't have a way to get them all to our lot in White Plains, nor did she have \$650 to cover the \$10-per-bike shipping charge. Sure enough, though, she found a local moving company willing to donate a truck to move them. And even though the Westchester Cycle Club already committed \$750 to the event, a plea for additional contributions on the Club's online message board raised \$650 more to cover these bikes.

So when we arrived Saturday morning, 65 bikes were waiting to be addressed. That's when Pedals for Progress CEO Dave Schweidenback, in his bright orange T-shirt and white bandanna, gave us all a quick lesson in how to process bikes for shipment: remove the pedals and Zip-tie them to the frame, loosen the stem bolts and turn the handlebars parallel



to the frame, lube the chain. Once we got started, our first truck arrived with 25 bikes from Camp Olmstead in Cornwall-on-Hudson. This truck also held another 30 that a Westchester Cycle Club member had in her garage. These were donated by members of her synagogue and local school PTA. And we had to make a second trip to her house to retrieve 40 more bikes, including 20 donated by a local police department, which had cleaned out a storage room crammed with abandoned bikes. The PBA also kicked in \$200 to help cover shipping costs.

Finally, Dave Schweidenback provided a valuable lesson in packing a truck to the gills with bikes. Bikes were put in side-by-side alternating front wheel forward then rear wheel forward. With the handlebars turned parallel to the frames, the bikes were flat enough to fit about 15 in the width of the truck. Once a row was complete a sheet of plywood was laid on top of the bikes and another row was stacked on top of the first. When all was done and loaded, the trucks were packed so tight there was barely enough space left to fit the buckets of tools.

As we worked on filling the last truck, Reverend Agne's weather guarantee dissolved in a deluge that soaked the volunteers in a surprisingly warm spring rain. No matter. We filled the truck, and by 1:45 p.m., our second team of drivers was on their way to New Jersey. That's how we collected, processed, packed and delivered 543 bikes. There had been a job for everyone—a seven-year-old wheeled processed bikes for loading, teens earning community-service credits for high school packed the trucks, and senior citizens loosened pedals and bolts that hadn't seen a wrench in decades. Finally, at a little after 6:00 p.m., our second truck returned from Jersey concluding a long but satisfying day.

In retrospect, it seems like we only touched the surface as we mined our region's garages and basements for used bikes. We had 245 individuals bring 433 bikes. Three organizations brought an additional 110. Yet thousands of households are within a 20-mile radius of our collection site, and nearly every household has at least one unwanted bike collecting dust in a garage or basement. We just know there are more bikes for Pedals for Progress out there. There has to be. We'll get those next year.

(Note: David McKay Wilson is no relation to Pedals for Progress board member, David Wilson.)



For more information visit: www.p4p.org

www.p4p.org
Tel: (908) 638-4811 Fax: (908) 638-4860
High Bridge, NJ 08829-0312
PO Box 312
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