

September 30, 2010

Steve Leiby, Chairman
DALMAC Fund
P.O. Box 22146
Lansing MI 48909

RE: DALMAC Fund grant report via email to include links to photo images

Dear Steve,

Please accept our sincere thanks for the \$5000 grant we received from the DALMAC Fund in June to help underwrite the Don Cunkle Bike Recycle and Give-away program. I apologize that our report is tardy but hope the success we experienced this summer and into fall, which the DALMAC Fund made possible, will please your membership.

Don Cunkle, a member of TART Trails and the Cherry Capital Cycling Club began modestly four years ago working in his garage repairing bicycles for donation to the homeless and the economically disadvantaged in our community. It did not take long for local social service agencies to recognize the value of Don's work and demand began to climb.

In the first three years Don recovered, repaired and delivered 320 bicycles to those in need. This summer and fall, Don has repaired and delivered 127 bikes through Goodwill, Child and Family Services, Women's Resource Center and Michigan Works.

Don organized a work bee in May called Recycle a Bicycle, a day when the community had an opportunity to donate bicycles. 30 volunteers worked with Don and his wife Yvonne to help collect, sort, clean and repair donated bikes. The goal was to repair as many bikes as possible in six hours. Over one hundred bicycles were gathered that day producing over fifty immediately usable bikes. Good parts were collected for inventory from unusable bikes and the leftover steel was delivered to a local recycling facility. Through a network of friends and new supporters of his work, Don continued to collect usable bikes, make repairs and deliver them well into September.

DALMAC Fund monies were spent on necessary parts to make the bikes safe and useable again. The majority of replacement parts were tires, brake pads and shoes, brake and shifter cables plus housings. Other major costs were new wheels, derailleur, grease and lubricants.

In addition Don was able to purchase bike stands, a truing stand and tool sets that have in turn helped him engage students from the Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District Career-Tech Center. Students learned basic bicycle mechanic skills and the value of helping other people in need. Often students accompanied Don when deliveries of repaired bikes were made so they might gain a more full understanding of the impact of their work.

Seven kids' bikes were donated to Suttons Bay middle school students who lived near the trail and didn't own one. The PE teacher who facilitated the kid's receiving the bikes said he will always remember the vision of the one recipient riding through her neighborhood waving to neighbors and announcing she got a bike. The experience of having a bike to ride for pleasure and transportation will make a significant difference in her life.

Don will continue to work until the end of the calendar year repairing and delivering bikes. Beginning in March of 2011 a second Recycle a Bicycle day will be scheduled and promoted. We anticipate even greater numbers of both demand for bikes and bikes delivered. Perhaps the greatest challenge we face today is adequate storage for bikes currently in the queue. Don is in the process of searching for better storage and work facilities and we hope to have identified opportunities by the time we begin work again in the spring.

The work Don Cunkle is quietly carrying out in our community is making a difference. Helping people regain or retain their independence, the ability to use a bike to get to job interviews, getting to and from work, school, or appointments serves to make our community a better place for all residents. Helping children who might otherwise never experience the simple joy of riding a bike, gaining confidence and independence is truly a reward we value. We appreciate your support of this valuable program. The DALMAC Fund has had a hand in making it happen.

Below I have attached a number of photos from the Recycle a Bicycle event.

The DALMAC has been an important and highly valued supporter of TART Trails programs and projects over the years and we are proud of our association. As always, we are at your service.

Sincerely,
TART Trails

Pamela Z. Darling
Director of Marketing and Outreach

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/tarttrails/4750079950/in/set-72157624399416612/>

Don Cunkle

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