

# **WELCOME TO THE HABITAT 500!**

## **Can I Raise \$850? Yes! You can raise even more!**

### **WHAT'S REQUIRED OF ME?**

Each HABITAT 500 cyclist must raise a minimum of \$850 to participate in the ride, however, we encourage each cyclist to raise as much money as time and resources allow. On average, our riders are able to raise about \$2,800 each! Your extra efforts will insure even more net dollars for building simple, decent homes with families in need.

Before the start of the ride, each cyclist must turn in \$850 in funds raised to Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota (HFH-MN). By ride day, contributions or a personal commitment totaling \$850 must be turned in. The cyclist's personal commitment in lieu of unpaid pledges is a check. This money will be refunded to the cyclist upon receipt of the paid pledges. All money must be received by July 31, 2008.

No matter which Habitat affiliate you are riding for, send your funds raised to HFH-MN with checks made out to HABITAT 500.

After the ride, we will write to the affiliate(s) you represented and send them a check totaling the funds you raised for them.

### **WHAT IF I DON'T RAISE THE MINIMUM?**

It simply isn't fair to other riders if we allow an individual to pedal the HABITAT 500 if he/she has not raised the minimum. No exceptions will be made.

### **I FEEL FUNNY ABOUT ASKING FOR MONEY.**

Most people who have been involved with fundraising have probably felt this anxiety before. Keep in mind that you are not really asking for money, rather, you are providing people with an opportunity to support an organization that is making decent and affordable housing a reality every day. For more ideas on soliciting donations, also check out "Habitat 500 Top Ten Fundraising Strategies," which can be found on the HABITAT 500 website. This has tips from previous year's top ten fundraisers and is sure to get you motivated about raising money!

Getting started is usually the biggest challenge, but once you get started, you will soon develop your own strategy for fundraising. If you are truly excited about riding the Habitat 500 and the mission of Habitat for Humanity, your enthusiasm will translate into cheerful donors and sizable donations!

## **REMEMBER THESE TIPS AND FACTS:**

- 1) Almost everyone you ask will support you.
- 2) Most people give simply because they've been asked.
- 3) If someone says "no" to your request for a donation, it isn't a reflection on you. Simply ask someone else.
- 4) There are lots of people in your home town you can ask for a gift. There are a lot more in your greater community and country who will happily support your ride!
- 5) Become familiar with Habitat for Humanity and the particular Habitat affiliate for which you are riding. Remember, you are a volunteer representing a very well respected organization which needs the money to meet critical housing needs.
- 6) An average gift for HABITAT 500 from is \$80. That means you'll need to ask about 11 people for a gift.
- 7) Usually it takes an average of 8 - 10 hours to get your minimum funds secured. Considering the adventure in which you are taking part, that is not much time.
- 8) When someone says they will support your ride with a donation, ask them if you can collect it on the spot. This saves you and the donor time because you don't have to go back to them again after the ride is over.
- 9) Once you get into it, you'll probably find fundraising a very rewarding experience.
- 10) All pledges unpaid by ride time must be collected and turned in by August 31. It is obviously easier to collect the gift at the time it is made rather than returning to the donor after the event. We want to get monies distributed to Habitat affiliates represented as soon as possible in early September— so these funds need to be turned in by the end of August.

## **OKAY, I'M STOKED! WHOM DO I ASK?**

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|-------------------------|--|
| 1) everyone you see     | 15) vendors                                  |
| 2) parents              | 16) business associates                      |
| 3) grandparents         | 17) small businesses you frequent            |
| 4) brothers and sisters | 18) door-to-door in your neighborhood        |
| 5) aunts and uncles     | 19) door-to-door out of your neighborhood    |
| 6) best friends         | 20) your doctor                              |
| 7) friends              | 21) your dentist                             |
| 8) neighbors            | 22) members of your church                   |
| 9) acquaintances        | 23) service clubs in your community          |
| 10) present co-workers  | 24) trade unions                             |
| 11) past co-workers     | 25) major corporations and businesses — this |
| 12) fellow students     | is usually successful when you know a key    |
| 13) alumni              | person at the company or if you work         |
| 14) clients             | there yourself.                              |

*Ask ANYONE who supports your ride if their employer has a matching gift program — and you can double their contribution!*

## **HOW MUCH DO I ASK FOR?**

This is a tricky one. Sometimes we size people up and assign a potential amount for them and we usually miss the mark. Let them decide how much they want to give. After all, the donor knows best how much they want or can afford to give.

## **HOW DO I ASK?**

Experiment until you find an approach that is comfortable for you. Experience has shown some methods are a little more productive than others.

### **1. Here is a proven approach to consider when talking on the phone or face-to-face with someone:**

- Ask everyone you see and meet. After all, you have the right to brag about what you're doing (riding *and* fundraising).
- Introduce yourself to your prospective sponsors.
- Tell them you are participating in a great ride and that you are raising money to help low income families escape poverty through home ownership.
- Tell them they can help in one of two ways:
  - they can ride HABITAT 500 with you OR
  - they can make a gift to support your ride. Amazingly, most people choose option #2!
- Then tell them even though the average gift is around \$80, they can give more or less, depending on their interest and resources.

*REMEMBER - Enthusiasm will generate interest in your request — and guarantee excellent results!*

**2. Use your GIFT and PLEDGE Record sheet well by placing the more generous donations at the top of each sheet. This shows others how much people are giving. Use another sheet for smaller donations.**

### **3. Conduct a mail campaign.**

- Make a list of everyone you want to support you.
- Write a creative letter asking them to “help get you out of town for a few days,” etc. Don't forget to ask them to make a commitment to you as soon as possible. We've included with this information sample letters actually used by other cyclists in past years — use these to get your creative juices flowing as you create your own unique letter!
- Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope for their use.
- Follow with a call — be sure they got your letter.
- This multiple contact approach is usually enough to raise the minimum amount.

#### 4. Sell Days

- Consider selling each day of the ride for \$100, \$150, or \$200.
- Offer the sponsor a postcard and a souvenir from the day.
- Several people can pitch in to buy one day.



#### 5. Throw a party for folks who give \$100+.

- Throw a party for your larger contributors a month or two after the ride. This is a great way to thank people and raise your average gift a few dollars.
- This is a very good incentive for people and will generate a lot of interest.
- Share your photos and stories from the ride — tell them about specific Habitat experiences from the ride.

### **WHAT DO I DO WITH THE MONEY AND HOW DO I USE THE PLEDGE SHEETS?**

In your rider packet are two sheets on which to track gifts and pledges for your ride. Make as many copies of them as you need!

A “pledge” is a *promise* to give you a gift to support your ride; usually a pledge is paid after an event is over, when you’ve successfully completed the ride as you said you would. Please follow the instructions carefully and feel free to call us if you have any questions.

1. Use the *white* sheet titled PLEDGE RECORDS to keep track of your own cumulative record of the gifts and pledges you receive — which are paid, which are not paid, and which you’ve sent in.
2. Use the *yellow* sheet titled DONATIONS PAID to record gifts you are sending to Habitat for Humanity of Minnesota. NOTE: There is a place for you to total the amount of funds recorded on the sheet AND a place to record the cumulative total of everything you’ve sent to HFH-MN.
  - Please use a new sheet every time you send in funds. This form should include the name and address of each person whose donation you are sending in.
  - If you collect cash and write your own check to cover it — please, please tell us how much cash is from what donors!
  - Send in funds at least 2 times a month between now and ride day.
  - It is important to keep an accurate record of gifts you receive, and donations you turn in.

*Please be sure to send a written thank you to all those who have sponsored your HABITAT 500 Bike Ride. For contributions of \$99 or less, please use the enclosed receipt forms. We will provide names and address of donors who have given over \$100 to the affiliates you have designated so that they will be formally acknowledged. Donors should be told that their donation is a tax-deductible gift.*

# FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES

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## Suggestions from Rider Evaluations

- Give presentations at your church and bicycling club.
- Friends, family - email solicitations!
- I rely on local habitat members to assist in fundraising.
- Informational brochure at my job (school) and at spouse's office.
- Personal request and a batch mailing to family, friends and acquaintances.
- I asked co-workers, family and friends for any amount they could comfortably give and raised over \$2,000.
- Set up sponsorship amounts: \$13 (to play off of all the 13s); \$100: \$500 (for 500 miles); \$750 (to sponsor whole trip).**
- Newspaper articles (2) and direct solicitations of friends, church members, businesses.
- Got cash from employer.
- After 5 years, I only send requests to people that have given money in the past.
- Told people who donated last year that we were doubling our goal - and several doubled their pledges.**
- Letter of appeal, rummage sale of donated goods, quilt raffle of donated quilt.
- Mail out a lot of letters
- Look for matches by employers or other companies.**
- Start early, make as many contacts as possible, never quit.**
- Ask members of your church
- Ask business owners.
- Letters with stamped return envelope.
- Register early and set a goal and communicate it.**
- In my letter, I mention the fact that 100% goes to the cause.**
- Think big - go to businesses and churches.
- Host fundraising events: dinners, music, etc.
- Mention % of donation used to construct homes & tax deduction.
- Asking directly is what works (rather than the generalized appeal).**
- Use established connections - church, job, etc.
- Know the partner families - tell human life stories.
- Have Habitat printed materials to show legitimacy to business you frequent.
- Promote HFH family; ride for a specific HFH build. Promote the mission not the missionary.
- I never pressure my donors, but I do explain the joy that Habitat brings people.
- Start early; offer incentives (hats, pins, bumper stickers, shirt, etc.) for different pledge amounts.
- Set sponsorship amounts based on number of miles: \$500 = \$1 per mile; \$250 = \$0.50 per mile; \$100 = \$0.20 per mile; \$50 = \$0.10 per mile; \$25 = \$0.05 per mile; \$10 = \$0.02 per mile; and \$5 = \$0.01 per mile.
- Write a letter from your heart – not your head. Be simply and tell a story to help illustrate the need.

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## **REMEMBER...**

- You are doing something very special that helps other people!
- People are depending on your fundraising efforts.
- People won't give unless you ask, and enthusiasm is your key.
- Your fundraising efforts will be rewarded with a great bike ride — and more Habitat construction.
- Ask at least one person a day — start today!

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