

# **KATRINA BIKES PARTNERSHIP PROJECT**



[www.seattlebiketours.org](http://www.seattlebiketours.org)

## *SEATTLE*

*Seattle Parks & Recreation, Seattle Public Schools, Bicycle Association of Washington, Urban League of Seattle, Seattle Bike Touring Club, Yellow Transportation*

## *LOUISIANA*

*Baton Rouge Parks & Community Centers, National Wildlife Federation, Baton Rouge Area Mountain Bike Association, Capital Regional Planning Commission, Baton Rouge Bicycle Club*

## *News Release*

### **For Immediate Release**

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### **Seattle cyclists donate 834 bikes to Katrina relief**

SEATTLE, Nov. 8, 2005 – With many opportunities to contribute to the hurricane relief effort, Seattle cyclists found a unique way, over the past two weekends, to help evacuees get their lives rolling again by donating 834 bikes and assorted cycling gear to evacuees in Louisiana and on local college campuses.

The Katrina Bikes Partnership Project, orchestrated by Seattle cyclist Beryl Fernandes, and Louisiana hurricane evacuee, Jerome Ringo, Chairman of the Board of the National Wildlife Federation, along with the help of Seattle Police, Seattle Parks and Recreation, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle Bike Touring Club and public groups in Baton Rouge, collected the bikes over the last weekend of October and first weekend of November with the help of over 200 local volunteers, 33 Seattle area bike mechanics and more than 15 community partners.

“We are thrilled with the generosity of the Seattle community,” said organizer Beryl Fernandes whose group of volunteers not only collected, repaired and washed bikes over the past two weekends, but picked up bikes from elderly donors, helped feed other volunteers and even attached over 400 notes written to bike recipients by Seattle elementary school students. The notes will accompany the bikes to their recipients in Louisiana. “The volunteer support was amazing,” said Fernandes. “The bikes were coming in fast and furious toward the end of the day on Sunday. We couldn’t have done it without their help.”

Among Sunday’s volunteers was 13-year-old Brittany Carroll-Watts of Seattle’s Austin Foundation, a non-profit group that promotes health and fitness values to at-risk youth in the Seattle community. “I came in and thought; wow, that’s a lot of bikes. This is such a great program, it just shocked me to see how many people donated bikes,” said Carroll-Watts, who is an eighth grader at University Prep and following graduation hopes to attend either MIT or Princeton.

“Sometimes you don’t stop to think about how the loss of a bike can effect people,” said Katrina Bikes volunteer and Austin Foundation founder, Willie Austin, 47, of Queen Anne. “In times of a disaster, bikes can be one of the best ways of getting around your city,” added Austin who hopes that his kids can use the experience as a catalyst to a lifetime of volunteerism. “This brings a realization that something like this can happen to them. It helps the kids put themselves in someone else’s shoes and hopefully gives them motivation to continue helping people in their own community.”

The Katrina Bikes project is one of several programs around the country that have already collected, shipped and distributed several thousand bicycles to residents of hurricane-affected communities. In September, with the help of actress Sandra Bullock, cyclists in Austin, Texas donated over 1,000 bikes in less than two days for hurricane relief. A similar program in Boulder, Colorado recently collected over 300 bikes for evacuees in Baton Rouge.

For more information, please visit [www.seattlebiketours.org](http://www.seattlebiketours.org).

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