



THE *Heart* OF THE TRIANGLE

Sharing the vision and supporting the mission of the Triangle area non-profit community.

GIVE A GIFT *that makes a* DIFFERENCE

by Judy Liu, MPH

Bridge II Sports: Challenging Perceptions

Learning to ride a bike is a rite of passage for many youths. However, individuals who are blind, have low vision or cannot ride independently due to other disabilities are often denied the joys of biking. In just the past four months Bridge II Sports has introduced more than a dozen athletes with visual impairments to tandem cycling. At the request of the athletes, an additional five 'Cycling Saturdays' were added to this season's originally scheduled eight events.

The true success of the program lies in the impact made one ride at a time. As one BIIS athlete put it, "Tandem cycling is different. I can feel the air in my face, and hear the birds and the people as we ride by. There is an energy to being outside — it makes me feel alive." It's a desire to share that feeling that motivates a very dedicated crew of tandem volunteers to share their passion, expertise and Saturday mornings on the Durham Greenway.

Bridge II Sports creates opportunities for both youths and adults with physical disabilities to 'Find the Player Within' through the power of adapted sports. Bridge II Sports uses their sports programs to empower and change lives, and challenges many perceptions of disability. Their year-round adapted sports programming and special events, including Valor Games Southeast, August Madness and Paddle!Lake Crabtree, bring together athletes and others in the community.

Bridge II Sports has many opportunities for you to get involved. Whether it is assisting with weekly sport practices, making the events shine or sharing your unique talents 'behind the scenes' to help promote the mission—there is something for everyone. If you would like to learn about the tandem cycling program or volunteer with any of the Bridge II Sports programs, please contact Wes Hall, Director of Programs, at wesh@bridge2sports.org.

To donate or learn more about volunteer opportunities, visit www.bridge2sports.org

Meals on Wheels: Delivering More than a Meal

As many celebrate this upcoming Thanksgiving holiday, let us remember there are many in our community who do not have the resources required to assure adequate nutrition. Meals on Wheels of Wake County services are open to Wake County residents who are homebound and disabled senior adults age 60 or older. Those under age 60 who are disabled and qualify to participate receive home-delivered or frozen meal programs. For more than 44 years, Meals on Wheels of Wake County has been an agency at the forefront of local senior care.

Recently, a volunteer for Meals on Wheels delivered a meal to a home. An elderly man opened the door, and when the meal package was handed to him, he burst into tears. The volunteer gently asked why he was so upset and he replied that there were two meals in the package, however, his wife had passed away the previous week there is no longer a need the second meal. The volunteer decided to stay for a short time and comfort this man.

Meal recipients come from all walks of life, including veterans of WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, teachers, police officers, homemakers, nurses, musicians, business owners, farmers, church and community volunteers. They have been active members of our community. Now, due to frail health and limited resources, they need our help. Meals on Wheels programs rank high among the best agencies in social services. Meals on Wheels provides food security and social connections for homebound seniors. There are many opportunities to serve and volunteer with Meals on Wheels.

For information on how to volunteer or donate to Meals on Wheels, please visit www.wakemow.org

Natural Awakenings supports Triangle area non-profits by offering a free full-page feature article each month. It is a very visible platform from which an organization can tell its story and detail the services it offers. Please let us know if you would like for your non-profit organization to be considered for inclusion in an upcoming issue. Call 919-342-2831 or email TrianglePublisher@NaturalAwakeningsMag.com.