

***Sample Fundraising Letters***

**Following are a few sample letters that riders have used to spread the word about their fundraising. Don't plagiarize, but use these as inspiration for a helpful way to solicit funds from your friends and family.**

Dear *donor*,

From May 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>, I will be riding my bicycle 350 miles across the state of Indiana to participate in the Habitat for Humanity Cover Indiana Bike Tour. I am looking forward to this experience not only to enjoy the scenery of our state and meet many interesting people, but also to raise money for a very worthy cause.

As you may already know, Habitat for Humanity is an organization dedicated to providing simple, decent, and affordable housing to people in need. The homes are not given away; the families put in 300-500 "sweat equity" hours and pay for the house via a zero-interest mortgage. The houses are so affordable because the labor is done almost entirely by volunteers.

Indiana Habitat for Humanity has designed the Cover Indiana Bike Tour as an annual state-wide event to raise awareness and funds. Our campus chapter is taking part in this event and our goal is to raise \$2,000/rider and \$20,000 as a group. Combined with another major fundraiser this is enough to build a home in the Lafayette area! Every cent I raise will be donated directly to a student built home. We need the help of donors like you to reach our challenging goal.

I hope you will be excited to sponsor a portion of my ride. You could consider donating a certain amount per mile (\$1/mile x 350 miles = \$350), or perhaps an amount per day (\$5/day x 7 days = \$35). Any and all donations are greatly appreciated. If you cannot make a monetary donation, please keep my fellow riders and me in your thoughts and prayers as we brave the elements, hit the trails, and spend a week covering Indiana on our bikes for Habitat for Humanity. If you would like to pledge a donation in support of me in this ride, please indicate below, and return it to me along with your pledge by April 30<sup>th</sup>.

For more information, please visit the Habitat website at <[www.habitatindiana.org](http://www.habitatindiana.org)> or the tour site at <[www.habitatindiana.org/biketour](http://www.habitatindiana.org/biketour)>.

Thanks,

I would like to financially support you in the Cover Indiana Bicycle Tour with a donation of:

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ or

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ /day x 7 days = \$ \_\_\_\_\_ or

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ /mile x 350 miles = \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\* Please make checks payable to "Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette" and include my name and Cover Indiana in the memo.

## *Sample Fundraising Letters*

Dear Friends and Family,

As some of you know, this May I am going to ride my bike for 350 miles in the Habitat for Humanity Cover Indiana Bike Ride Fundraiser in Indiana. Please consider sponsoring me to help raise money and awareness for Habitat for Humanity.

The mission of Habitat for Humanity is to provide safe, affordable, decent housing for as many people as possible. Families buy the homes from Habitat after completing at least 250 hours of “sweat equity” on their house or other Habitat homes.

Last year, 100 cyclists raised over \$95,000 – this year we hope to raise over \$100,000! Part of what is truly amazing is that volunteers operate this event so 100 percent of your donation will go directly to the construction of these much needed homes. Riders pay their way by paying a registration fee.

My goal is to raise \$4,000, which is enough to purchase a Habitat home roof and provide shelter for a family. Please help me reach that goal with your pledge. Your donation is tax deductible. I'll do my best to ride well and promise to bring you plenty of tales from the road.

Why ride 350 miles over 7 days on a bicycle? There are many reasons why a person may choose to do just that. For me, it is the belief that every person deserves safe, decent, affordable housing. Participating in the ride not only raises money to build homes, but also raises awareness of the need for families to have safe, decent, affordable homes. Habitat for Humanity helps to bring hope to individuals and to build families, live, and communities.

Thanks so much for your help. The ride starts May 11 and ends July 17 – please keep all of us in your thoughts.

Love and thanks,

(sign your name)

P.S. If you want to write a check, it should be made to “Cover Indiana” and mailed to me at (address). Please mail your checks to me by May 1<sup>st</sup> so I have plenty of time to turn them in before the ride departs.

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Dear Friends and Family,

As some of you know (not that I ever talk about biking) this summer I am going to ride my trusty bike for 350 miles in one week. I know - you are thinking - "Why in heaven's name would anyone ride 350 miles?" Well, I am doing it to raise money and awareness for affordable housing.

Most of you know about Habitat for Humanity. The goal is to provide safe, affordable, decent housing for as many people as possible. People buy the homes from Habitat after working more than 250 hours of "sweat equity" on their house or other Habitat homes. Having worked in schools where children do poorly because they are continually moving and haven't got a stable, decent home, I feel committed to Habitat's goals and efforts.

So, anyhow, this ride is to raise awareness of, and, you guessed it, funds for Habitat. Last year, Habitat Indiana was able to keep ride costs of the ride to a minimal. In other words, 100% of your donate goes back into construction of these much needed homes. Riders pay their way by paying an entry fee.

If you are at all inclined to sponsor me on this ride, I would be much obliged. I'll do my best to ride well and stay on my bike. I'll bring you plenty of tales from the road. Thanks so much for your help. The ride starts May 11 and ends May 17. Please keep all of us in your thoughts.

Love and thanks,  
(sign your name)

P.S. If you want to write a check, it should be made to "Cover Indiana" and mailed to me in the enclosed return envelope. Please mail your checks to me by May 1st so that I have plenty of time to turn them in before the ride departs.

## *Sample Fundraising Letters*

Dear Friends and Family,

How, or better yet, why, does one decide to ride the Cover Indiana fundraising bike ride? I think the reasons are as varied as the riders themselves. For me it was a personal challenge; I was told that I would never survive riding that distance. Perhaps there were some grounds for doubting my abilities . . . At that time, the farthest I had ever ridden in my 40 years was eight miles and, to top it off, I didn't even own a bike! Suffering some temporary loss of sanity, I registered for the ride anyway.

After receiving the Cover Indiana info and reading through it, reality and a bit of panic set in... how would I be able to raise the pledges I needed? I had no idea how people would respond to my asking them to support an organization I knew nothing about. My anxiety proved unnecessary. The first few people I asked were very familiar with the Habitat for Humanity organization and were more than happy to sponsor me. The more people I talked to about the ride and Habitat in general, the more I learned and the more I raised!

Raising pledge money was easier than finding a bike to ride and time to ride it! But where there's a will, there's a way, and following the training tips offered in the ride information, I was ready (or so I thought) to ride in my first Cover Indiana Bike Tour. From a first-time rider's point of view, I found the ride well organized and the support staff extremely helpful. I also found a lot of interest and support from the towns we pedaled through and from people along the route – not only for the cyclists but also for the whole Habitat organization. I was duly impressed with the extent of services Habitat for Humanity provides.

This year will be my fifth year riding the Cover Indiana. Experience in riding has taught me a few successful ways to alleviate some of the physical discomfort associated with the sport, but the real success of any ride lies in the people who put countless volunteer hours into organizing and attending to every last detail. They are the real heroes! My hat goes off to them for making each ride unique, fun and safe.

Cover Indiana Cyclist

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### **350 Miles on a Bicycle! Why?**

Speaking for Habitat for Humanity, I invite you to join me in making quality, affordable home ownership possible for low-income families in our local communities.

To help build these homes I'm going on a 350-mile fund raising bicycle ride this May called Cover Indiana. You can help in this effort. I'll even give you a choice; either come along on the ride or pledge your support for our efforts. If you are available and would like to go on the ride, please call me and I'll help you get started.

I do understand it's a busy time of the year so you may choose to offer a pledge. How do you do that? You can pledge for each individual mile. Perhaps you would pledge for one particular day of my pain. You can always pledge for the entire excruciating, agonizing, tormenting, unbearable, and joyful ride.

How much? This is up to you! All contributions are tax deductible. The average pledge is \$50. For each individual contributing \$\_\_\_\_\_ or more, I will bring back a nice souvenir and take them out to lunch.

Please sign the pledge sheet today so you don't forget. I will be taking the cash, checks, and money orders from now until the start of the ride on May 11, 2008. Habitat for Humanity has already built more than 250,000 homes around the world and over 2,000 in the state of Indiana. These homes are then sold to qualified low-income families with no-interest loans. I feel strongly about this non-profit organization and ask that you pledge what you can. Please make your checks payable to Cover Indiana.

I thank you for your participation in this great event.

*This is what worked for me when it came to ask for money from my fellow workers. I started with a simple little poster in the lunchroom to get everybody's attention. A few days later I posted a copy of the pledge sheet next to the poster. It was kind of fun to see the competition of certain individuals out bid each other.*

*The company that I work for will match donations to charities dollar for dollar. After I got the list of people who were going to donate, I sent out a notification of what they owed. I included the form needed for the matching dollars. The form was completed for each donation so that all they had to do was sign and send the check. Several people said they had forgotten that the company would match donations. This worked very nicely.*

*After the ride, I followed up with a Thank You card to all who donated and reminded them that their gift was tax deductible. Again, I got a few nods of appreciation.*

## **Don't Forget to Write "Thank You" Cards!**

- Write postcards from the road.
- Tell about the towns you visit.
- Send note cards when you get back and tell about highlights and challenges of the ride.
- Send letters around tax season so that your donors know their gift is tax deductible.
- Be creative and make it fun for both you and your donors

## **Sample Thank You Card**

Thank you so much for your support for my Cover Indiana bike ride. It was quite an adventure and truly a challenge riding 350 miles in one week.

I met some great people from all over the country who enjoy biking and have a strong passion for affordable housing for all people.

Although you were not physically with me, I could feel your support as I pedaled up those hills and on the long days when I wasn't sure my legs could pedal any more.

Thanks again for your pledge. Together we have helped build affordable homes for moms, dads, and children in need of a decent place to live.

*(signature)*

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*Donations to the Cover Indiana Bike Tour are tax deductible. Habitat for Humanity of Indiana remains exempt under 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.*

If you do have a fundraiser whereby your donors received some good or service for their donation, please use the following tax receipt statement:

*Donations to the Cover Indiana are tax deductible. In compliance with the IRS regulations, contributions are only tax deductible beyond the fair market value of the goods or services provided or purchased. Habitat for Humanity of Indiana remains exempt under 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.*