

As Ray prepares to leave Connecticut to begin “BIKE FOR BREAD Across America,” it may be a good time to let people know what has been going on in the background over the past many months.

In the early stages, a budget was created to cover the costs of the trip. Every item, which would be needed, was included in the budget. (For example, money was designated to purchase the actual bicycle, which Ray would be using. With the donation of the bike by Scott’s Cyclery in Willimantic, CT, the money set aside for the purchase will go into the collection column for the charities.) Ray approached the Sponsors listed on the Web site to obtain the funding for the budget. With the receipt of the funding, Ray saved his vacation time from work, obtained approval from his employer to use the time for the trip and began a rigorous daily workout routine which made him a stranger to his friends.

Ray is the power behind BIKE FOR BREAD Across America. Not only will he be doing the actual pedaling of a bicycle from San Francisco, CA to Willimantic, CT, but he also was the person who pulled together the group, which has been working to make the trip a success. But, as Ray would be the first to tell you, BIKE FOR BREAD Across America is NOT about Ray or any of the other people who have given of their time, talents and efforts to make the campaign succeed. Despite low unemployment and economic prosperity, there are many people who are not partaking in the “good times”. Their problems have not disappeared. In fact, in some ways the problems have become larger and more difficult to solve. The purpose of BIKE FOR BREAD Across America is to raise awareness of the needs of our fellow citizens and to raise funds to meet these needs.

We are an all-volunteer operation. There are NO paid employees. People from various walks of life have come together to contribute their time and skills to make the campaign a success. Weekly meetings have been held. Posters, pamphlets and forms have been printed and are being distributed. Donation canisters have been distributed to businesses throughout the community. T-shirts and hats are available for purchase locally, and will soon be available on the web page. (The web page itself is a donation of the web master and his wife. Not only did they do all the work to set up and maintain the page, but they are also paying the monthly fee to the server on which it is located.) Volunteers are working on the July 30, 2000 “Community Ride” and the celebration, which will occur at the end of the ride.

Much has been done and much remains to be done. We invite anyone who would like to assist in the project to contact BIKE FOR BREAD Across America Headquarters (which, incidentally, is located in an office space donated by The Savings Institute) at (860) 450-8000. If you are unable to donate your time or money, please join us in saying a prayer for the safe return of the people involved in the ride and for the success of the effort.

**Respectfully,
Paul Nezuh**