

Water theme for Earth Day

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At the upcoming Earth Day event on April 18, HUB is going to have lots of bikes to give away.

We saved some bikes from the recycling depot, and we've also had quite a few donations from individuals this year, especially of kids' bikes.

So thank you to Ridge Meadows Recycling Society and all those who donated bikes.

They've all been cleaned already, and one of our committee members is presently hard at work doing some needed repairs.

So if you're looking for a free bike, please drop by HUB's fourth annual Cycle Recycle.

All the bikes have to have a new owner by the end of the day.

You can find us on the concrete steps between the bandstand and the ACT.

If you like, you can try out a bike or two between 10 a.m. and 12:45 p.m., and enter into the draw, which will start at 1 p.m.

The theme for this year's Earth Day is "Water, water, everywhere".

As we were pondering our options as to how bicycles could somehow fit in with the theme of water, our thoughts floated to emergency preparedness.

Whether in case of floods or earthquakes or other big disasters, bicycles can prove quite useful in relief efforts.

Roads can become unpassable when a disaster occurs, and it can become extremely difficult or impossible to use cars or trucks to reach certain locations that have become isolated.

In many cases, it will still be possible to use bicycles for transportation.

Thus the idea was born.

The last few months we have been working on a plan with Patrick Cullen, of Maple Ridge's emergency services.

And I'm happy to announce that, at the Earth Day event, we'll be launching the Meadow Ridge Bike Emergency Response Team, MRBERT for short.

Actually, a tiny seed for this idea was planted in our minds last year, when one of our committee members participated in the "Amazing Disaster Rally," a training and demonstration exercise that was held in New Westminster.

MRBERT is planning to hold a similar exercise at the end of September.

MRBERT team members, of course, will need a certain amount of training to learn how to best assist emergency personnel in dealing with the consequences of a disaster.

Throughout the year, training courses and opportunities will be offered, such as bike maintenance, first aid, emergency management, radio, urban searches, personal preparedness, etc.

You can't have a team without team members, though.

At the Earth Day event, you can find the emergency services booth beside our HUB setup and get information about what they do, as well as about the new MRBERT initiative.

If you think this might be the kind of volunteer opportunity that fits you, you can sign up at the booth to become a member.

If you're not able to come to the Earth Day event but you would like more information, contact Patrick at pcullen@mapleridge.ca.

If you would like to show your appreciation for what our HUB committee does in the community, it will be possible to make small cash donations at the Earth Day event.

It will help us continue our cycling advocacy efforts and participation in events.

Thank you for your support.

Jackie Chow is a member of the Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows chapter of HUB.