

# Wheeling and dealing make Seattle Kids' Bike Swap a success

By MIRRAY WHITE  
Seattle Times staff reporter

Emma Epstein, 10, mounted the glossy black bicycle — the one with the pink handlebars — and teetered back and forth, her toes barely reaching the ground.

"See, Dad? It's just a *little* bit too big," she said as she toppled onto the cool grass of Seattle's Genesee Park. But Mark Epstein wasn't buying it — neither the bike nor his daughter's pitch. No matter because at the first annual Seattle Kids' Bike Swap, there were plenty of wheels to go around.

Yesterday, along the west side of Lake Washington, volunteers surrendered one of the summer's first

sunny Saturdays to boost a new organization that will help children repair, maintain and buy their own bikes.

The swap was a launcheon pad for the Free Ride Zone, a nonprofit bike shop set to open this month in the Columbia City neighborhood.

The shop will sell accessories and parts, said program director Suzanne Carlson. But most important, it will offer education — for free.

For kids aged 8 to 18, Free Ride Zone will offer twice-a-week training sessions on fixing and maintaining bikes. As they work on donated, abandoned or unwanted bikes, they earn credit to eventually buy the bikes they've nursed back to health.

Free Ride Zone depends on donations of both cash and bicycles. Carlson said, and will try to make bikes available to youths who can't afford them. But one of the most important donations they receive is the time of volunteers.

That was true yesterday as volunteers came to Genesee Park as early as 8 a.m. to collect bicycles turned in by riders moving up a size.

By 10 a.m., genetic trading had begun, as bikes, already safety-checked by "The Bicycle Doctor" — Seattle's Kenny Hamm — went from kids who had outgrown them to those who would eventually grow into them. Afterward, bikes that were not

sold were swapped.

Ven Knox, who brought both of her children to the exchange, said they each go through a bike a year. The prices of the bikes — ranging from \$10 to \$90 — make the event attractive to parents, but knowing it's for a good cause helps, too.

Joel Horn, who helped organize the bike swap, said this year was a trial run for what he hopes will be an annual event. In the first three hours of trading, 55 bikes changed hands.

Those that aren't sold will go to Free Ride Zone. Tom and Heather Deway came from Kirkland for the event. They bought 3-year-old daughter Kristin

her first bike for \$10 — a pink and purple beauty with white tires — and brought 10-week-old son Braden along to catch a glimpse of what's in store.

"I don't think he'll (Bradén) want the pink bike," said Tom, "so when he starts riding, we'll be back." The Free Ride Zone can be reached at 206-726-9350.

## Defense starts terrorism trial by referring jury to Bible

By JOHN K. WHELY  
Associated Press

SPokane — In a domestic terrorism case where political and religious philosophies are key issues, a federal jury got a brief Bible lesson as the defense began its case.

Frank Conklin, a former Jesuit priest and former Gonzaga Law School dean, asked the jury to try to understand his client's literal translations of the Bible.

Those beliefs do not allow Verne Jay Merrell to have a Social Security number or any licenses issued by the state, Conklin said.

jury counts. If convicted on those counts, the defendants could be sentenced to life in prison.

Defense lawyers said their case will take about a week. Their strategy is similar to that used in the first trial: attack the credibility of government witnesses and bolster alibi.

Ted Pulver, a Post Falls, Idaho, polygraph operator and private detective, was the first witness called Friday. He testified that government witness Christopher Davidson once tried to sell him a machine gun.

Pulver, a former Kootenai County sheriff's deputy, admitted he had not reported the alleged conversation.

Davidson, a former Post Falls military-surplus dealer who has entered the federal witness-protection program, implicated Merrell, Barbee and Berry in earlier testimony.

Although Merrell was the only defendant that eyewitnesses have placed at or near the crime scenes, the defense is trying to bolster his alibi that he was nowhere near Spokane during the crimes.

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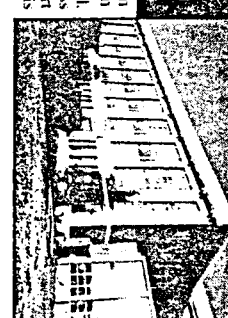
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