



Border to border across Swaziland to help the orphans of AIDS

Young Heroes Announces Swazi Cycle V

Young Heroes Foundation (YHF) today revealed plans for Swazi Cycle V, its fifth annual bicycle trip through the beautiful, peaceful African kingdom of Swaziland. The trip will take place from May 21 – June 2, 2014.

“Due to popular demand, we’re repeating one of our most popular trips – from the very northwestern border through the whole country to the southeastern border with South Africa,” says YHF President Steve Kallaugher. “Our goal is to raise \$100,000 for our nutrition, medical and vocational training programs for orphans.”

Covering some 200 miles in six days, the ride winds through the mountainous Hhohho region of the north, through the midveld including the capital city of Mbabane and the beautiful Ezulwini Valley (“Valley of Heaven”) and on down to Lavumisa in the southern lowveld. The ride includes a combination of tar roads and dirt tracks in the countryside. Cyclists will be accompanied by expert local riders who know the territory, as well as a following van. Each night, they’ll join with the non-riders stay in some of the most beautiful lodges and parks in the country.

Says Kallaugher, “In response to requests, this year we’re also adding a special challenge for elite riders with significant mountain biking experience: a two-day breakaway to bash their way through Malalotja National Park before joining up again with the rest of the group.”

To celebrate the ride’s conclusion, participants will spend a day and night getting up close with wildlife at Mkhaya Game Reserve for endangered species, and then be VIP guests at Bushfire, Southern Africa’s most exciting music and arts festival (<http://www.bush-fire.com>).

Non-Cyclists Also Welcome

“Each year, approximately half of our participants are not cyclists,” says Kallaugher. “This year, we’ve got something special in store for them, too. They’ll be helping us bring the good news that Young Heroes will be supporting them to more orphan families throughout the country.”

Working in teams with local staff and volunteers, non-riders will visit family homesteads to enroll at least 100 more children in Young Heroes’ programs. “This is a unique chance to experience first-hand what rural African life is like, and why Young Heroes’ work is so necessary,” says Kallaugher, “and also to see the joy on the faces of your families when you tell them about the help that’s coming their way.”

The all-inclusive cost for the trip is \$2500 plus airfare. All participants are asked to raise a minimum of \$2,500 in pledge support by creating their own personal webpage at <http://swazicycle.dojiggy.com>.

Spaces are limited, so registration to join the adventure must be completed by January 31, 2014.

Young Heroes

Founded in 2006, Young Heroes is a 501(c)(3) non profit that now supports just over 1,000 children in more than 600 orphan families throughout Swaziland, the nation with the world’s highest rate of HIV/AIDS. Its mission is to keep the children alive, healthy and living together on their family homesteads and in their communities, where they have the greatest sense of safety and security.

To do this, the organization links families with sponsors who provide monthly stipends that are used for the children’s food, clothing and other necessities. Young Heroes also provides a comprehensive medical care program for the children, including doctor visits, free treatment and medication and HIV testing. Children who are HIV+ receive monthly clinic visits and support groups, and participate in biannual camps run in conjunction with Newman’s Own SeriousFun Children’s Camps.

When orphans age out of monthly sponsorship upon turning 19, they become eligible for Young Heroes’ Skills Training Empowerment Program (STEP), which offers vocational and business training in partnership with Manzini Youth Care and Siteki Industrial and Technical College.

For more information about Young Heroes, visit <http://youngheroes.org.sz>. To register for Swazi Cycle V, or for more information, visit <http://swazicycle.dojiggy.com>.

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