

Glen Ellyn, IL

Boy Scout collecting bicycles for PADS clients

By Laura Knapp
GateHouse News Service
Thu Jul 05, 2007, 02:29 PM CDT

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Most people think of bicycles as toys or exercise tools, but Glenbard West High School senior James Volin sees them as a means of opportunity and hope for those in need.

Volin, 17, of Glen Ellyn is collecting used bicycles, parts and helmets to donate to DuPage Public Action to Deliver Shelter as part of his Eagle Scout project.

PADS, headquartered in Wheaton, is a nonprofit organization that provides temporary shelter as well as transitional and permanent housing for the homeless in DuPage County, according to the group's Web site.

"Most homeless people don't have cars, so it's difficult for them to get and hold jobs," Volin said. "The bikes could help them to get to work and between shelters."

Volin and fellow members of Boy Scout Troop 45 held their first collection at St. Petronille Roman Catholic Church in Glen Ellyn on Father's Day, June 17. They collected 10 bikes, which is about half of his goal, Volin said. The troop will hold another collection in the parking lot of St. Petronille from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday, and they will continue to accept bikes until Saturday, July 14.

Volin and his troop members also are accepting parts to fix the bikes that need it. After they collect the bikes, they clean each one of them and make repairs when necessary, Volin said.

Volin got the idea of collecting bicycles for the homeless after doing some work with PADS through St. Petronille.

"I contacted PADS and organized it from there," Volin said.

He also is accepting monetary donations to help with repairs and he will donate any leftover money to PADS, Volin said.

Currently a Life Scout with the Boy Scouts, Volin hopes to become an Eagle Scout this summer.