



can donate this one." That started the idea of getting used bikes from Germany. And when I got back here I talked to my biking friends and that's when we started the bike foundation, with the thought of giving poor kids a chance to use bikes for commuting and save money, maybe for recreation or joining a bike club or whatever.

**You are helping tribes, and kids. Have you always been going around doing good, or were you doing something else before you started these causes?**

Good question. Let's just say that things sometimes happen for a reason. When I got here, I never thought that I would write a book. Or start a bike foundation. It just happened. Maybe I see the needs and so if I can help in some small thing, why shouldn't I do it?

**We've heard about your bike trip to Mongolia.**

Yes. But first I go to Germany, which is like my normal yearly visit there to see my dad, my brother, my friends. For my return trip, my initial plan was to bike all the way, but it would take too long, four or five months on a bike... which I'd love to do if I had the time. I've always wanted to do the Trans-Siberian Express, which is the train going to Moscow all the way to Beijing or to Vladivostok. So I decided to go from Germany and take the ferry, go to St. Petersburg and then take the train to Moscow, from Moscow going all the way to Irkutsk, which is a big city at the Baikal Lake -- the deepest lake of the world -- and from there it's 200 km away to the Russian-Mongolian border. In Irkutsk, I start biking throughout Mongolia and on the Mongolian-Chinese border I take the train to Beijing. From Beijing I fly back here.

**What challenges do expect from the trip?**

Two things. First is that I would be alone. Normally on long bike trips I'd do it with a friend. It's always good to have somebody you can rely on for whatever. Also in terms of sharing the load of the things you need to bring. The second challenge would be that I don't expect a lot of places to get food or water and things like that. You see, Mongolia is really remote. I think there are four million inhabitants, for a country which is two times as big as the Philippines, and half of its population live in Ulan Bator. The only people living out are nomads which if you are lucky you'd find staying in their tents. I think that will be the biggest challenge, that I have to bring a lot of food and drinks for at least halfway of the trip. When I get to the capital, Ulan Bator, which is in the middle, I can refill my stocks. And then the rough roads also, which I think is a challenge for the bike.

**You're raising funds for Bike4U -- how does one go about it?**

The idea is I'll be cycling 1,200 to 1,400 kilometers, estimated travel time will be three to four weeks. I'm selling the kilometers via the internet (<http://www.bugoybikers.com/en/bikeforacause2008.php>) for 60 pesos or for one Euro. That means whoever wants can buy one kilometer, or they can buy ten, a hundred. And all the money goes to the Bike4U Foundation. On my webpage, there is a list of who has bought kilometers already. Everybody can see that all the money mentioned there is at the end also given to the bike foundation. People have asked me, "Are you using the money for your own expenses?" No! My own expenses, my whole trip is taken care of. The money is really 100 percent for the foundation. Every one who buys a kilometer gets a certificate for it.

**What was your last long distance bike trip?**

In 2006, I biked with a friend from Pakistan to China. We did that for the Bike4U foundation also.

**Are you into some fitness regimen to prepare for this trip?**

No special kind of preparation. Let's just say, I do training all year round, like running, biking, swimming in a normal way and level that you just feel confident



and good. For sure, you should have done a few long bike rides before doing such a trip.

**What will keep you going when the going gets tough?**

We were just laughing about it the other day. I said that after three or four days I might start talking to myself since I may not see anybody on the road for long. Anyway, what will keep me going is definitely my intention to see the country, to cross it and, in the end, experiencing something new. For me, it's not really the destination but the journey that I'm looking forward to. I will be happy when I've made it, but I will also be sad that it's over. Personally it's also important that I have a few days to myself, just to learn more about myself.

**How will you deal with loneliness?**

I will be bringing some books to read, listening to music. I don't actually have a problem with loneliness because even though I enjoy the company of people I think once in a while it's good being by myself, to think about my life, plans. Out there, your mind is open since you don't think about work, your hour house... all your concerns in normal environment. You'd be totally free.

**What motto do you live by that you would apply in your trips?**

You can do whatever you want. If you really want it, you do it. Like there was a time when I wanted to work abroad, and I'm working here now. I wanted to do bike trips... I'm doing it.

**When you're in the Philippines, what do you miss most about Germany?**

Nothing (laughs). Okay, when I'm back in Germany, the first thing I would do is have good German beer with my friends. The beer here is very good, too, but there, with my friends, it's a different atmosphere.

**Do you see a book coming out from this trip?**

I never say never, but I wouldn't think about the book yet. If I think about a book, I'd think about the second edition of the book ("Cycling Philippines") that I have written, because this one mainly covers Visayas and maybe the second edition would cover Mindanao and Luzon. There might be articles in magazines. In Germany, I think also mountain bike magazines would like to hear about a trip like that. But, yes, I will write a diary like I do in all my trips. I would write everything down... it's also for myself and maybe in a few years I'll read through it and get back into all the emotions, all the moments and situations.

**What in Cebu will you be missing when you leave?**

I'll be missing The Outpost (laughs). It's actually two months of travelling. One month in Germany... it's a different thing, you know, hanging out with friends. And then it will be two months on the road. Anyway it's also getting so many impressions, so I will not think a lot about The Outpost. I know that even when I'm not around The Outpost will still be here. But these two months... I will be absorbing all these impressions. The nice thing is meeting people.

*\* Jens would like to thank the sponsors of Bike 4 a cause 2008 - Cycling through Mongolia: Habagat, The North Face, Rudy Project and Blood Red.*