

Business Spotlight

Second Life Bikes Prepares for Demand for Bikes

By ED SALVAS

Kerri Martin remembers the day a year ago when she closed the doors of Second Life Bikes as the coronavirus triggered orders for shutdowns and quarantine. But the uncertainty of the moment turned into a huge demand for bikes as soon as she reopened the business at 21 Main St. in Asbury Park.

People were working from home and wanted to ride for exercise. Bnt Martin said the demand was so strong it was hard to keep up. Inventory was down and parts were hard to get. There was also a demand for bike repairs. The bicycle renaissance was flourishing.

"Bikes have been built into a way of life on the Jersey Shore," Martin said, and Second Life Bikes has been serving the need since April of 2012 when the shop opened.

She actually began the business in the basement of Holy Spirit Church as a youth program where young people could earn a bike by learning to repair it and then take it home. The Earn a Bike program is currently on hold to reduce the number of people in the shop.

In 2016, she teamed up with Bret Morgan, Danny Croak and

Gregory Edgerton of Co-Works and bought the building. Second Life Bikes is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization where people can donate bikes and receive a tax credit.

During the shutdown Martin said there was a strong demand for bikes causing a strain on the inventory, parts were hard to get as many are made overseas and costs rose 20 percent. Second Life Bikes often had to re-use parts to make repairs. Martin anticipates the coming spring and summer will bring a repeat of last year's demand.

Because of its highly visible location, press coverage and social media, Second Life Bikes has earned a reputation among "Bicycle Aficionados" as Martin calls them, collectors who visit the shop looking for vintage bikes. There's special interest in English Racers, Italian and BMX Mountain Bikes and also the Schwinn Balloon Tire bikes.

Second Life Bikes is a strong supporter of the Complete Streets Coalition in Asbury Park which has campaigned for better bicycle safety and laws to give bikes equal access on the road with cars. And Martin stresses bicycle theft prevention since bike thefts have spiked in recent years. She



Coaster Photos
At Second Life Bikes in Asbury Park are (from left) Kerri Martin, Travers Martin, Pete Leather and Vicki LaBella.

tries to educate riders about safety and suggests using a cable lock and chain, or a U-Lock for the best security. Visit Second Life Bikes on the Internet at www.SecondLifeBikes.org.

