

# Bikers bequeath backpacks

## Cordillera Motorcycle Association helps needy kids

By **Beth Potter**  
Mountaineer Staff Writer

Riders from the Cordillera Motorcycle Association are going out to lunch soon — at Avon Elementary School.

Next week they get to go to breakfast at Edwards Elementary School.

The meals are all part of their plans to give back to children and families in need in the Vail Valley, said Greg Allen, an organizer. Members of the group will show up on their motorcycles on Wednesday morning to hand out backpacks to first-graders at June Creek Elementary and Avon Elementary. As a thank you, parents and teachers in Avon will do a potluck lunch for them, said Greg Allen, the organizer.

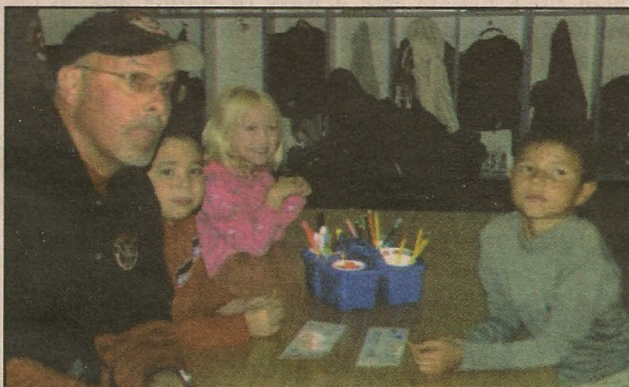
"We said, where can we really help? We decided to help families and kids," Allen said. "That's where we wanted the money to go to."

Last year, the group gave backpacks and school supplies to the schools. This year, in addition to the supplies, when Allen asked what help Edwards Elementary needed, the school requested breakfast meals for kids who need it.

In honor of the group's \$5,000 donation for breakfasts, the school will have the members over to breakfast, said Heidi Hanssen, school principal.

"It's amazing to see an organization of second homeowners that are choosing to support the public schools," Hanssen said. "It sends a great message."

While the group started as a motorcycle club, it quickly expanded into golf and jeeping and travel. Members started the Rider Cup, a two-day golf tournament that



**Cordillera Motorcycle Association member Kevin Jones hangs out with first-graders at Avon Elementary School last year when the club gave school supplies to the students.**

now can raise \$800,000 or more to give to local charities, Allen said. Members have also paid to help build a Habitat for Humanity home and a room at Jack's Place at the Shaw Cancer Center in Edwards.

The group's motto?

"We want to grow old disgracefully," Allen said, laughing. "We don't have any other agendas. We have parties and we give the money away. If we have a lot of fun, we make a lot of money."

In the current poor economic climate, school supplies are being collected for other schools around the Vail Valley, with donation boxes set up at the Vail Mountaineer and KZYR offices in Edwards, the Vail Daily office and Big O Tires in Eagle-Vail and the NRC Broadcasting office located in the Christie Sports building in Avon.

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cycles away.

Parents and teachers wanted to thank the group, so they decided to throw a potluck lunch, said Soledad Davila, a first-grade teacher at Avon Elementary. She has 20 children in her first-grade class; overall the school has 60 kids in first grade this year.

"It's the second year the motorcycle club has done this, so we wanted to show them that we're very thankful," Davila said.

### Potluck picnic at Avon Elementary

Mom Jessica Escudero said she

and her friends all organized informally to bring lunch dishes, and the teachers helped them out by bringing tables and chairs outside the school. Her daughter Valerie, 6, is in first grade.

"It's our appreciation of them giving us supplies for the kids," Escudero said.

Last year, the group gave backpacks and school supplies to area elementary schools. This year, the group donated money for breakfasts at Edwards Elementary School, said Greg Allen, a spokesman. The group plans to support other school programs in the future, he said.

CMA, as it's called, started as a motorcycle club, and quickly expanded into golf and jeeping and travel. Members started the Rider Cup, a two-day golf tournament that now can raise \$800,000 or more to give to local charities, Allen said. Members have also paid to help build a Habitat for Humanity home and a room at Jack's Place at the Shaw Cancer Center in Edwards.

Next week, the members will go to Edwards Elementary School to have breakfast with the kids they're helping, Allen said.