

Welcome everyone to the 5th Bike & Hike for Mike. I am Robert Brandt, a Trustee with the Village of Woodridge, and on behalf of the Mayor and my colleagues on the Village Board, thank you for participating and volunteering in this fundraising event here today.

As you know, Michael Samel's life was cut short by a fatal car accident in 2001 when he was just 16 years old. His parents, Mark and Pat, have taken what was a devastating tragedy, the loss of a child, something from which many people NEVER recover, and turned it into something so incredibly positive for the community.

Michael may not physically be here with us today, but his spirit is here. Can you feel it? That spirit and his legacy lives on in all of you, and in the lives of all those who benefit from the Spirit of Music fund.

On Monday, we are reminded that this world can be filled with hate. But today, we are assured that the world is filled with love. Love of music. Love of scouting. Love of church ministry. Love of service to the community. Love of two parents for their son.

Last month, the Woodridge Village Board proclaimed today as Michael David Samel Spirit of Music Day and urged all citizens to participate or donate in order to perpetuate the memory of David.

On behalf of the Mayor and my fellow Trustees on the Woodridge Village Board, thank you again for participating and volunteering in this event and for helping to support music programs and scholarships for deserving high school students. Good luck and thank you.