A young boy and girl are riding a hand-powered bicycle together outdoors. The boy is sitting on the seat, wearing a white jacket and red shorts, and is smiling. The girl is sitting behind him, wearing a blue and white striped shirt and blue pants, and is also smiling. She has a large white bow in her hair. The bicycle is blue and white, with the words "Rock N' Roll" written on the frame. The background is a grassy area with some trees.

"Please help
my friend
Tyler.
This is his
big chance."

Brandi, age 11

Tyler Bogan (shown here with pal Brandi Cooley) can keep up with the rest of the kids in the neighborhood on his special gift from First—a custom-designed, hand-powered bicycle.

Bless the child

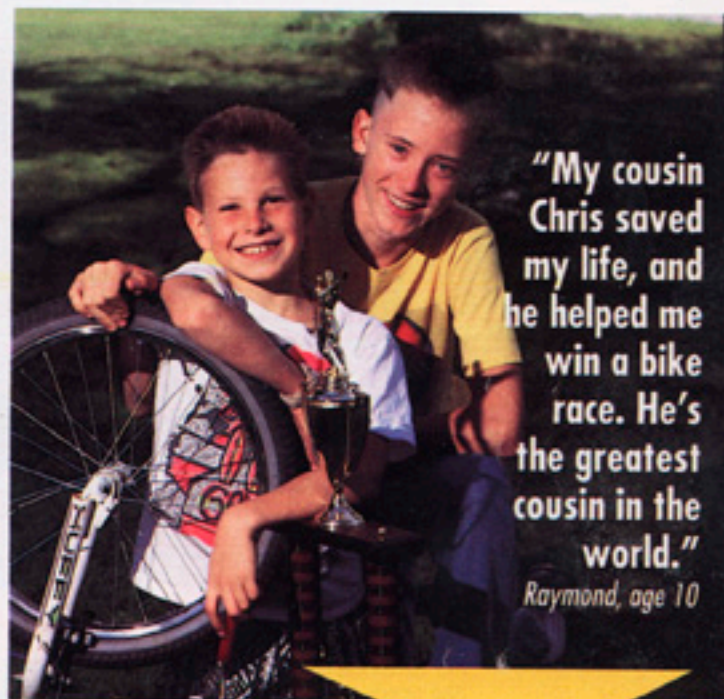
Children are our hope for the future. And what a remarkable future it will be . . . if only the world responds to their caring spirit.

When 125 grade-schoolers wrote us with Christmas wishes for those they love, we were overwhelmed by the depth of their compassion and concern for others.

The children's voices sounded so clear.

They demonstrated tremendous care for the struggles and needs of those around them.

To show these kids that dreams can come true, we created *First, We Care* and teamed up with many generous companies across the country to grant some of their wishes. We hope that in the future you'll join us.



"My cousin Chris saved my life, and he helped me win a bike race. He's the greatest cousin in the world."

Raymond, age 10

If I could wish a wish...

Dear First,
I wish a little boy named Tyler could walk. He has spina bifida. I wish you could get him some kind of operation to make him walk. I know lots of children who can't walk. Tyler could be one more child walking. He crawls on the ground sort of like a snake. He has been through a lot. Please help him. This is his big chance.

Brandi Cooley
Cooley Springs-Fingerville
Elementary School

grader from Chesnee, South Carolina. "I've really grown to love him a lot. He is just so sweet."

Six-year-old Tyler Bogan, a neighbor of Brandi's, has spina bifida—he was born with a hole in his spine. Paralyzed from the waist down, he can walk slowly with the help of braces, but they're awkward and take an awful lot of energy. Mostly, he spends his time in a wheelchair.

"I hoped he could get an operation and be able to walk," Brandi says. Unfortunately, there's no operation that can put Tyler back on his feet. So, working with

Tyler's mom, Dee, and recommendations from his doctors and physical therapists, *First* purchased a tailor-made, arm-powered bicycle made specially for disabled kids. Donations of crutches from a home-town store plus games and puzzles rounded out his Christmas presents.

"Tyler's eyes got huge when he saw the bike," says his mom. "He said, 'Put me on it and let me ride!' It was really wonderful just watching him."

"A little girl down the street says she's going to come over so she and Tyler can ride their bicycles together," Dee reports.

"My cousin Chris saved my life when I slipped off the top of the quarry and fell in," wrote Raymond Gill. "I love my cousin Chris."

A few years back, Raymond was playing at the edge of an abandoned quarry near his home in Sullivan, Maine. He lost his footing and suddenly found himself in water over his head, but his cousin Christopher Carter, now 14, kept a cool head and pulled Ray out. Ray, who's a fifth-grader at the Mountain View Elementary School in Franklin, and Chris have been buddies ever since.

"He also helped me win a dirt-bike race by fixing my bike," Raymond wrote. "I want him to have \$100."

Thanks to Raymond, Chris now has a \$100 savings bond and a three-foot-tall trophy proclaiming him "Cousin of the Year."