

Bike Riders Roll Through Town

Tuesday, 18 September 2012 10:40



PHOTO BY JIM KNOWLES

Bicycle riders of all ages turned out for the San Leandro Bike Party on Sunday as the bike parade rolled from park to park around town.

By Jim Knowles

San Leandro Times

People on two-wheelers, three-wheelers, Schwinn and Peugeot rolled through town on Sunday as the San Leandro Bike Party hit the streets.

Everybody who likes to pedal around, seniors to tiny tots, joined the party that rode from Memorial Park to Toyon Park to Halcyon Park. Around 200 bicyclists turned out on a sunny afternoon.

“We didn’t know how many would turn out, but this is perfect,” said Carolyn Knudtson, the city’s recreation director.

People stood in their yards and waved as the 2-block long procession of bicyclists rode by, accompanied by the sounds of a boom box on a custom-made trailer, pulled by a Schwinn.

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A group from a bicycle club called Cal Vintage Cycles provided the music. They're into fixing up old-fashioned bicycles and going to all the bike get-togethers.

"We go on the San Jose bike rides, the East Bay Bike Party and we go on our own rides on Sundays," said Raul Davila of San Leandro, who rides a 1961 Schwinn Cruiser.

City Council members Michael Gregory, Diana Souza and Jim Prola were in attendance as the crowd gathered at Memorial Park. The Bike Mobile, a mobile bicycle shop, came with mechanics to fix the bike of anybody who came by – repairing flat tires, adjusting brakes, you name it.

"We've fixed upwards of 35 bikes so far today," said mechanic Patrick Smith.

The East Bay Bike Party did one of their rides through San Leandro one night, which sparked the idea, said Recreation and Parks Commissioner Ed Shapiro.

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“So we told (City Councilman) Michael Gregory that San Leandro should sponsor a bike ride and he thought it was a great idea,” he said.

People at Toyon Park turned their heads as they saw the 200 bikers roll into the park. Water and snacks waited at the picnic tables and streamers and decorations were available for the kids to customize their bikes.

“I think it’s great for the community to get out like this,” said Phil Gaitan, a machinist. “You get the families out, it’s positive, and it’s a community builder for sure.”