

Las Sendas Up Close

Bringing neighbors closer to their community

March 2009

Not One More Foundation raises funds FOR LAS SENDAS DISABLED CYCLIST

TONS OF FUN AND CYCLING SAFETY AWARENESS AT THE FIRST FAMILY BIKE FESTIVAL



By AnnElise Makin

“Life seems so much better after a ride,” cycling aficionado Bruce Hatin said, summarizing his philosophy at the Las Sendas Family Bike Festival. But sometimes a ride that seems so good at the outset may end quite tragically.

Last October, Dee Scott, a 42-year-old Las Sendas mother of two teenage boys, was struck by a car near McDowell and Recker roads while training for the Arizona Ironman Triathlon. The hit-and-run accident left this athlete with broken ribs and serious spine injuries, fully disabling her.

Only one of many serious bicycle accidents on Arizona’s roads? This has got to end, some Good Samaritans and fellow cyclists demanded. Thus, the Not One More Foundation was conceived. At the Las Sendas Family Bike Festival, the foundation organized a benefit on Dee’s behalf with lots of fun road safety exercises.

You should have seen Grandma Joanne Prodoehl, visiting from Wheaton, Ill., for her granddaughter Molly’s first birthday, as she bolted down the tricycle circuit. She was racing her 3-year-old grandson Ryan (he won). Ending with a hearty laugh, “I was doing good downhill,” Joanne beamed, “but coming back uphill was much harder.”

Devin Eldridge, from DNA Cycles, was the stunt guy for the day. On his BMX bike, he demonstrated jumps over traffic cones. “I have been doing stunts since I was 9 years old,” Devin said. He is now 14, and goes to Highland High School. On Wednesdays, he hangs out with the bicycle enthusiasts at Foursquare Church.

“Bicycle sports have become more specialized over the years,” stated Tim Manion. “Some bikes are designed for rides in the neighborhood, or convenient exercise when commuting to work.” Other bikes, such as BMX, road or mountain bikes, each serve a very particular terrain.

Renee Delgado and Bruce Hatin donned full bicycle regalia. They were frequent customers of Don Eldridge, owner of DNA Cycles. There they had also participated in one or the other group ride. Because, like fun, road safety is in numbers.

Not puppy love but bike love had brought the couple together. Both Renee and Bruce own four bikes each, and they go riding four to five days a week, before or after work, for a total of 10 hours a week.

“One vacation, we went riding in Lake Tahoe and Mammoth Mountain in California,” Renee shared. They have also cycled in Brian Head, Utah, and along coastal towns in Mexico, the Rosarito–Ensenada 50-mile race.

“I got into it because of him,” Renee joked. And she has been keeping up with Bruce for seven years. Bruce has been mountain biking since, like he says, “Before this was Las Sendas.” He still likes to traverse the Las Sendas trails for exercise.

Jo and John Ferguson, from Las Sendas Desert Vistas, had brought their Miniature Schnauzer, Fritz, along in a bike trailer. “We don’t go riding as often as we used to,” Jo confessed. “But, still, we have gathered 2,700 miles on these bikes,” John added. Since retirement, the couple rides their bikes once or twice a week, compared with every day when they were working.

As young and old, pros and beginners were having a good time with bicycle activities, Dara Schulenberg ran the raffle and handed out awards. Dara, co-founder of the advocacy group *Not One More*, was on a mission to make bicycling safer through education, legislation and outreach.

Not One More was spawned by an unfortunate accident, leaving Dee severely injured in the dust by the roadside, hit by an uninsured motorist right in her own neighborhood. Luckily, members of the Red Mountain Brumbys riding group, named after the wild horses in the area, stopped by her side, called emergency services, and stabilized the seriously mangled body.

“One of our riders, Dr. Laufner, stayed by Dee’s side



until EMS arrived,” reported Sterling Baer, founder of the Brumbys riding group. His fellowship of bicyclists had chosen to adopt the injured rider. At the time of the accident, Dee was unemployed and, therefore, without insurance coverage.

“Brumbys members have helped coordinate meals, assisted with house cleaning tasks, and contributed to rent payments,” Sterling, dressed in yellow Brumbys tricots, shared. He has been involved for many years in lobbying for

more protective laws for bicyclists in Arizona. Since the 3-foot clearance law was enacted in Arizona, Sterling reported, only 62 citations had been recorded since the year 2000. He feels there should have been more tickets because motorists still don’t pay enough attention to bicyclists and negligently brush bikers off the road.

“We have more vehicle accidents in 45-mile zones than elsewhere,” Sterling counted off. Names of bikers killed on the road were listed on a prominent banner for the Arizona Ride of Honor, a memorial ride, established in 2006 by the activist.

“We are petitioning legislation to protect bicyclists when they do get hit,” Sterling said. “Obviously, there must be remuneration for an injured bicyclist,” he added in view of Dee’s disabling injuries.

“So many people have been hit in the Las Sendas neighborhood,” Sterling observed. “I can recall at least four such accidents in the last four months.” That’s why the Red Mountain Brumbys and other cyclists say, *Not One More*.

The first Las Sendas Bicycle Festival attracted some 150 people from around Las Sendas. Through the raffle and activities, more than \$900 was raised for the Not One More Foundation.

To find out more about the bicycle safety campaign, go to www.notonemorecyclist.com. To see where the Brumbys might be cycling around your neighborhood, go to www.azbrumbys.com. ■



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