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Summer Bike Challenge - Good for you, good for the air

By Vera Kochan



Summer Bike Challenge

Image provided

Although the Summer Bike Challenge may sound like a new activity, it has been around since 2015, when it first began in Pleasant Hill as a youth bike challenge. Over the years it has evolved into an activity that can include the whole family.

Launched by 511 Contra Costa, this year's challenge still has the same theme in mind, to "get you outside and on the move." According to its website, "511 Contra Costa is a county-wide program that strives to reduce traffic congestion and improve air quality by providing the public with information, resources, and tools that promote mobility options beyond driving alone." The challenge is funded by the Contra Costa Transportation Authority and the Bay Area Air Quality Management District.

The Challenge is free to all who register and also offers prizes such as gift cards and an iPad Grand Prize. Go to: 511contracosta.org/sbc to register, and follow the instructions. Participating cities and towns will list

several Challenge Square Destinations such as Moraga's Saint Mary's College, the Farmers' Market and Campolindo High School, to name a few. Some of Orinda's Destinations include Theatre Square, the Community Center, and the BART Station. On the list for Lafayette are the Lafayette Reservoir, any grocery store, and the Lafayette Library.

Every game has rules, as does the Summer Bike Challenge. Take a selfie of you and your bike at your favorite Challenge Square Destination making sure that the destination is clearly visible in the photo. Email the selfie to: sbc@511cc.org. Include in the email the photo's location, your hometown, the cyclist's name, age and school (optional). If you're playing the challenge as a couple or family you must include information about each person pictured. Participation is not limited to just bikes. Anyone can also play while using a scooter or an e-bike. If for any reason a participant cannot bike to certain squares, a substitute can be submitted. Just follow the same submission rules. Each cyclist can earn one e-gift card for the summer (either \$10 Starbucks, \$10 Jamba Juice, or \$10 Amazon).

The Challenge begins June 1 and runs through Aug. 31. There are three specific dates in Moraga when additional prizes for pedaling cyclists are offered. On June 14, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., bike to the Moraga Commons Park for a free ice cream gift card. On June 28, between 2 and 4 p.m., at the Hacienda de Las Flores, earn a free Starbucks gift card, and on July 12, between 2 and 4 p.m., at the Moraga Library earn another free Starbucks gift card. Just look for the "511CC" table.

Participants are reminded by 511 Contra Costa to practice bicycle safety at all times - not just during the Challenge. Ring your bell or call out before passing, use hand signals when turning, obey signals and signs, ride on the right side of the road, and always wear a helmet.

Reach the reporter at: vera@lamorindaweekly.com

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