



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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May is National Bike Month

New Braunfels, TX – May is National Bike Month and is sponsored by the League of American Bicyclists and celebrated in communities from coast to coast. National Bike Month, established in 1956, is a chance to showcase the many benefits of bicycling — and to encourage more folks to give biking a try. The Alamo Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (AAMPO) is kicking off Bike Month with its 22nd Annual Walk & Roll Rally on Friday, May 4th at 8:00 a.m. at Main Plaza in downtown San Antonio. New Braunfels and Comal County are a part of the AMMPO region.

On May 20th, the NB Cycling group will host a “Sunday Snail” ride. Sunday Snails are structured to encourage new bike riders, as well as seasoned cycling veterans, to ride together as a community at any easy pace with some fun stops along the way. The ride is open to anyone from the public – family, kids, and all ages are encouraged to join. The ride will begin at Zink Ave. and Seguin Ave. (near Naturally Café) and proceed to Gruene Lake Village, following the bike lanes to Gruene. It will pass by a Market Plaza, Haymarket Park, Faust Street Bridge, Church Hill Middle School, Conservation Plaza and then to Gruene Lake Village shopping center for coffee and treats. The group will then return to downtown.

According to the League of American Bicyclists, bike commuting has grown by 62% from 2000 to 2013. With growing cultural awareness around health and wellness, sustainability and economic savings, it gives a simple solution to many complex problems, from reducing obesity rates to increasing mobility options.

New Braunfels has an active bicycling community - from experienced cyclists like the NB Cycling Club to student bike clubs at Morningside and Freiheit Elementary Schools. With the addition of bike lanes, off-street bike routes and side paths, New Braunfels is working to become more bike-friendly. With a growing number of bicyclists on roadways, it is important to encourage all drivers to respectfully share the road with cyclists. As the weather warms up this month, many bicyclists will take to the roadways. Here are a few safety tips for drivers and cyclists from AAA:

Bicyclists should wear a helmet. A helmet is the single most effective way to prevent head injury resulting from a crash.

Drivers and Bicyclists Must Follow the Rules of the Road. Both are considered vehicle operators and must follow traffic laws including obeying traffic signs and signals. Bicyclists must ride in the same direction as vehicular traffic when riding in the street.

Allow three feet of passing space between cars and cyclists. Drivers and bicyclists need to share the road. Look for bicyclists before opening a vehicle door or pulling out from a parking space, and when turning. Tailgating or honking can startle or fluster bicyclists, causing them to swerve further into the driving lane. Likewise, bicyclists shouldn't get too close to vehicles as that can make it even more difficult for the driver to see them.

Pay special attention to blind spots. Due to their size and the location of bike lanes, bikes can often get lost in a car's blind spot, so double check before changing lanes, making turns or before opening your car door on the traffic side when parked. As a cyclist, ride defensively and be aware that even the most attentive driver may not see you.

Be attentive on side streets and neighborhoods. Children are especially at risk in residential areas. Follow the speed limit when driving, avoid driver distraction and always be aware of your surroundings. It is particularly important to be cautious when backing out of a driveway and onto the street. Remind your kids to watch for cars when they ride their bikes.

Use good common sense. For example, in bad weather, give cyclists and cars extra room. Bicyclists should wear brightly colored clothing during the day, and use a front light, reflectors and reflective tape on clothing and equipment at night so drivers can see them. A rear light with a flashing or steady light is also excellent for visibility. Those looking to bike this month but don't know where to start might try County Line Memorial Trail. This is a two-mile off-street bike and walking trail.

For additional information on walks, visit www.facebook.com/NBPARKS or contact Ylda Capriccioso at 830-221-4367.

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