

L.A. Naked Bike Ride Promotes Alternative Fuel Use, Bike Safety

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By Gary Mussell, President [Southern California Naturist Association](#)

Nude protests are a time-honored tradition going back long before Lady Godiva took her mythical ride through Coventry. During the past decade, protests against high gasoline prices and demonstrations for alternative energy resources have begun to use nudity in their protest rallies also. One of the more successful of these organizes bicycle riders on the same day to promote their pro-environment message. The World Nude Bike Ride (WNBR) web site loosely coordinates these rides in over 200 cities worldwide. It is a coordinated attempt to draw the people's attention to our dependency on fossil fuels for our cars and showing there is a different way – as long as drivers agree to share the road with those who are riding bicycles instead of driving cars.

The WNBR has been successfully done in over 70 cities in 20 countries around the world, plus many large American cities such as San Francisco, Seattle, Chicago, and New York. Until 2010, there had never been a successful attempt through Los Angeles because the city and county have anti-nudity ordinances, strictly enforced, controlling their parks and beaches. But technically there are no laws on the books against nudity in the central city, which is why we are doing the bike ride there, and not along the coast.

In 2010, L.A. organizers decided to take a new approach. Instead of promoting the event as a nude bike ride, they billed it to draw attention to the need for alternative energy resources and for better motorist awareness of bike safety – during which some of the riders might decide to draw attention to the cause with a little top freedom and/or nudity. This is what organizers in other cities are doing, so the ride falls under the First Amendment protection of Freedom of Speech and Assembly,

We know from experience that some motorists simply do not recognize cyclists as having a right to the road. This has nothing to do with the naturist movement. Riding naked is a statement of human vulnerability and symbolizes the bike riders have the courage to share the road even if motorists might put them in danger.” We want to make sure the bike riders carried that message, either with signs or body paint, using the nudity to capture the onlooker's attention to the important message.

In 2011, the results of the first ride were amazing! Over 250 bike riders showed up on the

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appointed day and place, and decorated themselves with paint to carry the twin messages about oil dependency and bike safety. The police showed up to make sure all riders knew to obey all traffic laws, stay on the designated course, and commit no lewd acts. Then they offered to place officers on bicycles at both the start and end of the group and escort them through the 13-mile course through the central city, past City Hall and Dodger Stadium, through Chinatown and Echo Park for the 2+ hours it took to complete the ride. Last year, about half the women and most of the men were top-free, and perhaps 50 of the riders were totally nude.

For 2012, three local nudist clubs are joining forces to run the event: The Southern California Naturist Association (SCNA), American Nudist Families Association (ANFA) and Young Naturists America (YNA). They are pooling their financial resources to obtain the proper police permits, promote the event at the local colleges and on Facebook, and to oversee such logistics as paint, signs, and porta-potties. Word-of-mouth has started to spread already through email and Twitter and another 250 people are expected for this year's ride. We also have received word that the ride will be covered by several newspapers and local television crews.

The plan is that at noon on June 16, the riders will meet at the assembly point and co-mingle with assigned body painters to put slogans on their backs and fronts so passersby can easily understand the reason for the event. Since the ride occurs mid-afternoon on a Saturday, the streets should only have light traffic. Last year, it was easy to ride 3 or 4 bikes abreast and essentially take over several lanes of the road at a time. The drivers didn't seem to mind. Car horns honked in support of all the naked bodies in front of them. In the residential areas, people coming out on apartment balconies to wave and to take pictures. Even families walking along the street in the residential areas didn't seem to have a problem with their kids seeing naked people ride by. One pedestrian even dropped his pants in support. We hope for the same response this year.

If you are interested in participating, please sign up on the event's Facebook page (use the Facebook search feature for: "Naked Bike Ride Los Angeles 2012"). Bring your own bicycle, as none will be provided. There will be a couple of pickup trucks following in case you break down (or get too tired) along the way.

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FYI Other information at:

<http://allevents.in/Los%20Angeles/353542894705980>

<http://www.worldnakedbikeride.org/>

http://wiki.worldnakedbikeride.org/index.php?title=List_of_rides

Read more <http://www.aanr.com/blog/l-a-naked-bike-ride-to-promote-alternative-fuel-use-and-bike-safety/>