

Pythians Sponsor Bike Rodeo

Members of R. A. Driesbach, Sr. Lodge #77, Knights of Pythias - Port St. Joe, Florida sponsored a Bike Rodeo and Bicycle Safety Check for elementary and middle school age children. The rodeo was held on Tuesday, March 13 at the Washington Recreation Center. The goal of the bicycle rodeo was to provide an opportunity for the participants to learn, practice, and demonstrate their bicycle handling skills in a fun, noncompetitive atmosphere.

According to the National Center for Health Statistics, each year, more than 500,000 people in the US are treated in emergency departments, and more than 700 people die as a result of bicycle-related injuries. Children are at particularly high risk for bicycle-related injuries. In 2010, children 15 years and younger accounted for 59% of all bicycle-related injuries seen in US emergency departments.

The Rodeo began with Gulf County Sheriff Officers Chris Buchanan and Larry Dickey conducting short lectures and showing videos on Safety Rules of the Road and Proper Use of Bike Helmets. Inspection stations were set up to make safety checks of tires, air pressure, brakes, cranks, chains and frames. Repairs of bicycles were made by Sir Knights Horace Barr, Bonnie Bell, Eugene Jones, Kenneth Monette, Chancellor Commander Clarence Monette and Officer Jay Smith.

Each child was given an opportunity to navigate a skills course with their bicycle. The skills course consisted of teaching and testing each child's ability to turn corners, ride in a circle, stop quickly; obey stop signs, obey yield signs, use hand signals, be respectful of other bikers and listen to safety pointers from spotters around the skills course. Each participant received a bike helmet and refreshments. Everyone had a great time.

The Fraternal Order of Knights of Pythias and its members are dedicated to the cause of universal peace. Pythians are eager to enhance the communities in which they live and respect and honor the law of the land in which they live. Pythians seek to expand their circle of influence by association with people of like interests and energy.