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## Weekend on wheels in Oxford and West Grove



Kids ride their celebratory bikes down Third Street behind the pace motorcycle on Friday.  
Chris Barber — Digital First Media

By **Chris Barber**, *Daily Local News*

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OXFORD >> It didn't matter to the kids at Oxford's monthly First Friday stroll that the temperatures were hovering near 90. The most important thing to them was getting on their decorated bikes and pedalling down Third Street for the parade.

The same thing in London Grove's Goddard Park the next day on Saturday.

Remnants of the Independence Day spirit were evident as fancy bikes and their riders assembled near the Soap Bucket store on Locust Street in Oxford for the ride on Friday night.



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The children were enthusiastic, and their bicycles reflected the work they had put in to make them appear celebratory with red, white and blue adornments.

Quinn and Jack Hechler arrived early wearing patriotic garb and sitting atop bicycles that they had spent the better part of a day decorating.

“They were up until 11:30 last night,” their father Bob Hechler said. “Her brother fell asleep, and she finished up for him.”

From about 5 p.m. until the 5:30 start of the parade more than 20 bike riders showed up, all of them in red, white and blue.

Near the send off time, a team of judges including local dignitaries — Herr Foods mascot Chipper and Mrs. Pennsylvania America Valerie Ross among them — came to inspect the contestants.

There was also a clown on the unicycle who hovered around the whole affair, including the ride down the street.

Spectators applauded as the riders proceeded along Third Street, led by a heavy duty, three-wheel motorcycle with riders likewise in patriotic garb.

In the end, beside the Coatesville Bank, all of the kids received awards and goodie bags from the bank.

On Saturday morning, the Avon Grove Library followed suit with a bike parade at Goddard Park.

But this was more than a parade; it was an educational event as well.

The kids showed up with bikes surprisingly unadorned, but they knew that in the course of the morning that would change.

They first had a bicycle themed story read to them, and then AAA Mid Atlantic Safety Services Manager Matthew Eskridge taught them a lesson on safety and how to wear a helmet.

They then designed cardboard “license plates” to name their bikes, followed by the decorating of the bikes with crepe paper, pipe cleaners and tape suit the July 4th theme.

And then they were off.

Down the hill and around the pond in single file they rode with ribbons flying in the wind. Returning to the pavilion at the top of the hill.

Overseeing the whole event was Steven Goddard — a major contributor of the park land and for whom the park is named.

He said he is pleased with the way the park has grown, the activities it provides and the public response to it.

The Friday night parade was sponsored by Oxford Mainstreet. The Saturday morning event was sponsored by the Avon Grove Library.



Riders pedal down the path at Goddard Park for the Avon Grove Library Bicycle Parade.

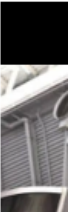
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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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