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May Day Prom Ride cruises Main May 1 from Government Center to Promenade 5-8pm

In honor of the group bike rides that have long played a part in celebrating bicycle culture all over the world, the after-work and early-evening prelude to the Bike Prom on the Promenade is the Prom Ride from the Ventura County Government Center to the Prom scheduled from 5-8pm on Friday May 1, 2009.

The route of this "portable" prom follows Telegraph, Main, and Ventura Avenue stopping near high schools and Ventura College to pick up participants as well as selected First Friday galleries.

At 5pm, riders will meet at the corner of Victoria and Telegraph dressed in Prom-appropriate apparel. Scheduled stops include Telegraph and Wakerforest near Buena High at 5:15pm, Telegraph and Day near Ventura College at 5:30pm, Main and Catalina at 6pm (near Ventura High School), Prospect and Ventura Avenue near Bell Arts at 6:45pm, and the San Buenaventura Artists Union at 7:45pm. Community members without bikes are welcome to don prom attire and join the Prom Ride at 8pm on the Ventura beach promenade for the Bike Prom.

The purpose of the Prom Ride is to develop, create and support a vibrant, active bike culture in Ventura, to encourage cycling to the First Friday galleries, to call attention to the needs of bicyclists in Ventura, and to have a good time. Many members of the Prom Ride are also active with VCCool and the Ventura Bicyclists' Union.

"The First Friday ArtRides are important because they work to build community and draw attention to riding as a political act in a FUN way, creating fun in the process for everyone from cyclists to gallery visitors to people walking down Main Street on a Friday night. I have a 5 year old so we're really conscious about making it a family ride, too. Activities and events like this makes Ventura feel like a fun place to be and like a safe place where you'd want to be on your bike!" participant Gwendolyn Alley said.

"We want to support galleries and artists, to call attention to them, but at the same time, we want to get people out of the habit of driving their cars from place to place," said Alley. "We're hoping that at future ArtWalks and gallery crawls people will do more walking and riding and less driving."

First Friday ArtRides are scheduled the First Friday of every month. In June, the theme is Summer Solstice Santacon, July is the Independence from Fossil Fuels Ride, and August is the Animal Fair Ride. These rides meet at 5:30pm at the Artists Union Gallery at the end of California Street near the Promenade.

Other Friday Fun Rides meet the second, third, and fourth Fridays at Ventura High School at 6pm. A Critical Mass ride meets the last Friday of the month at 5:30pm at Plaza Park. Rides are free and open to the public. Children must wear helmets and be accompanied by an adult. For more information, please go to <http://artpredator.wordpress.com>.