

WILLIAMSPORT SUN-GAZETTE



PHOTOS PROVIDED

Shown above left, Gail Pawlak, left, and Noreen Craver utilize a surrey. These cruisers bring a vacation vibe to South Williamsport and can hold children and adults. Above right, Crystal Webb moves through the slow roll portion of the bike rodeo course as David Stone, of Williamsport Bicycle Recycle, times her.



PHOTO PROVIDED

Joe Tavani shows a participant how to fix a flat tube for properly inflated tires.

STEP RiverWalk Center Bike Rodeo a success

The first-ever Bike Rodeo held at STEP's RiverWalk Center drew a crowd ranging from scooter-riding toddlers to seniors trying out step-through bikes and multi-person Surrey cruisers — and just about everyone in between. The event also brought planning, safety and sport/recreation advocates together to share information and answer questions.

A "bike rodeo" is a skills clinic designed to teach riders the skills to ride a bicycle safely. Volunteers utilized the paved lot next to the RiverWalk Center to set up various skills sections, and instructed riders on appropriate signals and techniques.

"It was great to kick off the RiverWalk Center's bike offerings with an event that was open to the entire community," said Jane Thompson, STEP Health, Nutrition, and Fitness Centers manager. "I hope that word spreads among those over 60 that we have bicycles, tricycles and Surreys available for sign out at any time the center is open, including for use on the guided rides with Louisa Stone." Guided rides with the Williamsport Bicycle Recycle co-founder start out from the RiverWalk Center every Wednesday at 10:30 p.m. The tricycles and surreys allow those with balance and mobility limitations to join in the wheeled fun; the bicycles feature step-through frames for ease of use.

In and around the RiverWalk Center, Williamsport Bicycle Recycle coordinated bike inspections and loaned out bikes for use on the course. One of the volunteer mechanics, Joe Tavani, coaches the Lycoming County Composite PA Interscholastic Cycling League team. Formed in 2016, the team welcomes students from all Lycoming County schools, grades six through 12. For more information, call 717-926-6750.

The South Williamsport Borough Police assisted with the event, as did the Borough itself. The Lycoming County Department of Community & Economic Planning also attended, highlighting bicycles' mandated inclusion in the planning process and showcasing the county's Early Learning Housing Options Workforce Development Community Collaboration Independent Living efforts to expand and improve the urban trail system that includes the River Walk. Chris Smith conducted helmet fit checks and provided free helmets to those who needed one on behalf of the Community Safety Traffic Project and Safe Kids Lycoming County.

For more information about any of the RiverWalk Center activities mentioned here, please call RiverWalk Center Coordinator Autumn Noll at 570-601-9592.