

Jewell Elementary School Students Pedal their way through Bike Safety Program

by Bend Weekly News Sources

Final Fun Ride Day & ceremony was held Thursday, November 9th

The recent rain may have kept activities inside for most people, but for the fifth-graders at Jewell Elementary School, it's been a great time to ride bikes. Over the past two weeks, students participated in an intensive one-hour-per-day bicycle safety education program provided by Commute Options. This Thursday, November 9, the students wrapped up their program with a final fun ride and ceremony. Parents, teachers and community volunteers joined the fun as the students demonstrated their skills.

The free ten-day/ten-hour course was divided into four hours of in-class lessons and six hours of on-the-bicycle practice and instruction. Students learned the parts of the bicycle, helmet fitting, traffic laws and safe bike operation. The final day of the course culminated in a fun "Community Ride" where kids used their new skills on a bicycle tour through the neighborhood with adult volunteers. The ride ended with a "graduation" ceremony where students received a certificate, a flashing light and helmet.

The Bicycle Safety Education Program seeks to reach close to 1,000 students in Central Oregon by the end of this school year, teaching essential skills and responsibility while operating a bicycle. Program goals include increasing bicycling to school as a way to reduce vehicle trips and to improve health through exercise.

Funding for the program has been provided by the Oregon Department of Transportation, the Bicycle Transportation Alliance, REI, St. Charles Medical Center, the Center Foundation, and with local business support provided by Northwest Crossing and Hap Taylor.

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