

The Bandera PROPHET

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Commissioners Court Briefings

Bike tour to bring 1,800 cyclists; court proclaims Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month

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Soon after the motorcycles rumble out of town as their annual rally wraps up, a platoon of quieter two-wheeled cycles is set to pedal through. On Sunday, April 10, a projected 1,800 riders with the Fiesta L'Etape San Antonio by Tour de France Bicycle event will come into Bandera County - one of the legs of their four-county bike ride.

Expected to arrive between 9 a.m. and noon, the tour will enter the county on Hwy. 46 from Boerne, head down Hwy. 16 toward Bandera, cross Main Street to Wharton's Dock Road, to Rodeo Drive, FM 1283 and FM 471 back to Bexar County. With the exception of one proposed stop at Bandera City Park, coordinator Aaron Nelson told commissioners yesterday the intention is to pass through with as minimal obstruction to traffic flow as possible for a Sunday morning. The cyclists will be divided in groups of 100 to 150.

Concerned about narrow roads with no shoulders, Sheriff Dan Butts said it was imperative that the bicyclists follow all traffic laws, and he receive a comprehensive plan with a map and timing.

"It's going to be Palm Sunday, we have a lot of people going to church," Butts said, adding Hwy. 46, should be clear by 10 a.m. "But Bottle Springs Road, 1283 and 471 will be a problem."

Nelson said the tour has hired about 60 certified officers with flashers to help direct traffic for the ride. He also said EMS stations would be set up with contracted staff who will respond to any medical emergencies.

“Passing is dangerous. When you throw bicycles out there, God bless ‘em,” Pct. 2 Commissioner Bobby Harris said.

The bicyclists have a right to use the road, County Judge Richard Evans said, reiterating his concern was primarily about narrow roads and blind spots.

“Public safety is our duty and we just want to make sure no one gets hurt,” Evans said. “We need to actually have a traffic plan. We just want our people and the people on the tour to be safe. The sheriff needs to know what you’re going to provide, so he can have a plan B. The same thing with EMS.”

*In other business, commissioners heard from Randy Evans, who complained about nuisance dog barking.

“I don’t blame the dogs, I blame the owners,” he said. “Some people need to be convinced by a fine or a penalty before they show respect for other people.”

Harris said the matter has been addressed with County Attorney Janna Lindig, who is working on the penalty phase of the statute.

*Cindy Beckham, with the Bandera Business Association, asked for and was granted permission to use the courthouse lawn for Bandera Market Days on June 4, July 2 and Aug. 6. She said last week’s event had only four participants because of how uncomfortable it is to set up on the asphalt on hot afternoons.

Market Days funds the Cowboys on Main and gunfighters, who appear and perform on Main Street every Saturday.

*Judge Evans recognized Emergency Operations Coordinator Carey Reed, who has served on the Bandera County Child Welfare Board for 10 years.

“We appreciate what she’s done,” Judge Evans said. “There’s a lot of work that goes in to get kids help. A lot of work, a lot of time. Not only as county employee, but also as a volunteer.”

On April 1, at 4 p.m., volunteers will place 32 pinwheels on the courthouse lawn, at the onset of Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Month, in honor of the children in the county who have been removed from abusive homes.

“We have to realize that child abuse and neglect is a real problem. Almost every child in juvenile court is in there because of parental neglect,” Judge Evans said. “It’s the only court that we punish the victim, instead of punishing the perpetrator.”

*In his annual racial profiling report, which is required by the state, Butts said 294 stops were made in 2021. He said 290 times the driver’s race was unknown; 245 were white; 46 were hispanic; three were black; 79 were female; 215 were male. Of 85 searches conducted, contraband was discovered 50 times. No physical force was used in any arrest for the year.

In his monthly report for February, Butts said the Sheriff’s Office received 487 calls for service. The average response to priority calls was 12.15 minutes. Deputies traveled 52,013 miles, and made 16 arrests - 8 felony, 8 misdemeanors. The county was the primary responder to five calls within the city limits. The average inmate population was 57, two of whom were contracted from other counties; 39 people were booked into the county jail; 11 inmates were transported out of county.

A total of 95 calls were animal related, making up 20 percent of 911 calls; 21 dogs and two cats were picked up.

EMS Director Shannon Griffin said in January, EMTs responded to 283 calls, covering 14,692 miles. The average tone to en route time was 1.18 minutes; the average tone to on scene time was 10.46 minutes.

In February, EMTs responded to 226 calls, covering 12,375 miles. The average tone to en route time was 1.38 minutes; the average tone to on scene time was 10.36 minutes.

“I’ve been on this court for 16 years,” Harris said, noting the call to on scene time had decreased by eight minutes from 10 years ago. “We’ve got a great EMS system in this county.”