



Daily News file photo

Participants in the first Elliot Kamnitz Father's Day Ride in 2013 bicycle along Ocean Avenue in Newport. This year's ride will take place on Sunday, June 21.

Organizers of bike ride aiming for larger turnout

Daily News staff

NEWPORT — In an effort to encourage as many people as possible to participate in the third annual Elliot Kamnitz Father's Day Ride, organizers for the first time are providing a waiver for the registration fee for those who can't afford it, and the opportunity for participants to "sponsor" other riders.

The ride will take place on Sunday, June 21, starting at 8 a.m. at Fort Adams State Park, and will feature 6-, 10- and 25-mile bike routes, a protected children's "Tour de Fort," and a 2-mile Bay Walk. Riders are encouraged to choose the distance that best suits their abilities.

The event honors the memory of Elliot L. Kamnitz of Middletown, a popular dentist and avid bicyclist, who died when his bicycle was struck by a vehicle on Memorial Boulevard on June 19, 2012. There now is a dedicated bike lane on Memorial Boulevard in the vicinity of Easton's Beach, where Kamnitz was struck.

"We know that the bike lane, too late for our father, is the promise of a safer cycling experience for future riders. We want to see more progress here in Newport and across

Aquidneck Island," members of Kamnitz's family say on the Father's Day Ride website. "Our hope above all is that the annual Elliot Kamnitz Father's Day Ride will honor our father, raise awareness of bike safety initiatives, and raise funds needed to make these improvements happen."

Proceeds from the ride support Bike Newport's bicycle safety programs. Registration fees range from \$10 per child and \$35 per adult to \$75 per family.

In each of its first two years, the event drew about 300 participants, according to Bari Freeman, executive director of Bike Newport.

This year, organizers are hoping for 500 people, she said.

That goal prompted the decision to waive part or all of the fee for those who otherwise might not participate because of financial reasons, she said.

"Everyone who wants to participate should ride," reads the online registration form. "If the ticket price is preventing you from riding, you can register with free tickets here. Please consider making a donation that you can afford below."

The form also provides opportunities for those who would like to make donations

to sponsor a rider, to be "there in spirit" or simply to benefit Bike Newport.

All three ride options start and finish inside Fort Adams State Park and circle the Ocean Drive, or part of it. The 6-mile loop will be marked with cones and police-escorted. The 10- and 25-mile loops will be marked with yellow signs and road marks. Riders must be comfortable riding with traffic and follow all road signs and signals.

Very young riders will be able to ride around the large parade ground inside the fort; three times around the parade field equals about 1 mile, organizers said.

Pedicabs also are available, but must be reserved by Thursday, June 18.

Following the ride, food and beverages will be available for participants. There also will be water and comfort stations, sponsored by The Daily News.

All riders will be required to wear helmets and to sign a liability waiver. In addition to online at fathersdayride.org, registration can be done in person the day before the ride, on Saturday, June 20, between 3 and 6 p.m. at Bike Newport's office at 437 Broadway, or the day of the ride at 7:15 a.m. inside the fort.