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## Safety day set for Port

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It's about safety.

That's what Port Colborne/Wainfleet's Community Policing Committee wants to ensure as it gears up to host its annual Safety Awareness Day and Bicycle Rodeo at the fire hall on Killaly Street May 29 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. A tradition in Port Colborne for 17 years, the intent of the event is to teach the community about safety through various activities and information displays as well as allow residents to meet the city's emergency personnel said committee member Michelle Giancola.

"Especially with the kids it helps them develop a relationship with police, firefighters and paramedics," Giancola said. "If kids get to know them it will show that these are the people to talk to about safety. It's about creating relationships."

Giancola said there will be many returning organizations with information displays such as the St. Lawrence Seaway, CN Rail, Niagara Regional Police, Red Cross, Safe Communities Port Colborne as well as the fire department and Niagara EMS. With Port Colborne as a marine-influenced municipality, it's important to talk about water safety, especially with the aid of St. Lawrence Seaway.

Committee member and fire safety officer Mike Bendia said the fire department will have interactive displays for children to learn about the dangers of fire.

"There will be an interactive component where an alarm will sound and kids will have to roll out of bed, feel the door and get to safety," Bendia said.

Sgt. Joe Garvey of Niagara Regional Police said the police will have its mounted unit, ATV unit, canine unit and marine unit on hand to talk about its various community services.

One of the biggest components of the Safety Awareness Day is the Bicycle Rodeo, which teaches youth about the rules and regulations of cycling. Bendia said youth will have their helmets checked for proper security, bicycle seats will be adjusted to proper height and brakes will be checked thoroughly.

Bendia said the Safety Awareness Day actually spawned from the Bicycle Rodeo, which originally was held at Port Colborne High School. "Over the years it just expanded to what it is today," Bendia said.

Garvey said the NRP will be starting its spring cycling campaign in a few weeks. Officers will be out in the community to check if cyclists are cycling safely.

The program gets a boost this year thanks to a government grant, Garvey said. The grant money went towards the purchase



**Safety day set for Port.** Michelle Giancola, Mike Bendia, Sgt. Joe Garvey and Const. Mark Dixon are members of Port Colborne's Community Policing Committee. The group will be hosting a Safety Awareness Day and Bicycle Rodeo at the Port Colborne fire hall on May 29. *EDDIE CHAU/STAFF PHOTO*

of 50 bicycle helmets and 200 rear flashing lights for bicycles.

“Officers will stop youth without helmets, educate them and provide them with a helmet,” Garvey said.

“For those kids with helmets they will be given a positive ticket and a free rear light. Just in time for the summer.”

For those who can't make it out May 29, a second Safety Awareness Day and Bicycle Rodeo will be held at the Wainfleet Arena June 12 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

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