

# Forest Community Center Bike Rodeo

By Melanie Owen

Dan Burrell, CPRP is the Recreation Specialist at the Forest Community Center in Ocklawaha.

He decided to have a Bike Rodeo among all of the different classes and events held at the center.

He invited the Ocala Mountain Bike Association Mountain Bike Patrol to come and teach.

The Bike Patrol members are all volunteers and are certified by the National Mountain Bike Association. The take classes in CPR and First Aid. They assist people on the trails with mechanical, education and information.

Frank Belaska, the Bike Patrol "Lead" and his wife Sharon have been Mountain Biking for about fifteen years.

They did a great job teaching the children bike safety, courtesy and rules of the road.

Then they went outside and rode their bikes through a series of twists and turns, slow races, and quick stops in order to help

them learn better balance and how to be prepared for different sudden events that can happen while riding their bikes.

The Marion County Health Department donated new helmets and each rider received one for free.

Saturday October 4th is "Take a Kid Mountain Biking Day" at the Santos Trailhead, 3080 SE 80th St. Ocala. It gives parents the opportunity to introduce their children to off-road mountain biking. Led by OMBA Bike Patrol members, your child will experience the joy of exploring Florida's outdoors, on beginner trails, followed by a free lunch and gifts for the young ones.

Check out all of the events and fun going on at the Community Center from karate, pool, bingo to dance, music jams, GED help and job search help. Stop by and check out the bulletin board for events.

The Forest Community Center, 777 S. CR 314A, Ocklawaha, FL 32179. (352) 438-2840



## Fun At The Forest Community Center Bike Rodeo

Class members get a group picture along with the members of the Ocala Mountain Bike Association Mountain Bike Patrol and their hosts at the Forest Community Center.

Photos by  
Melanie Owen

**Did you know it is illegal to ride a bicycle in Florida with headphones on?**



## Signing Up For The Bike Rodeo

Christian Williams (8) waits while his grandfather, Mike Taylor, registers him. Mike said "I am amazed at all the things the Forest Community center offers, this is a great idea."



## Getting Fitted For Her New Helmet

(left) Seven year old Alexa Waddell gets fitted for her purple Bratz helmet that she received free at the Bike Rodeo. Derek Copec the newest member of the Mountain Bike Patrol makes sure it fits right.



## Competing In A Slow Race

The idea behind a slow race is to go as slow as you can without your feet touching the ground. This helps teach balance and control of the bike. Last one to cross the finish line wins. It's harder than it sounds. Try It.



## IMBA and OMBA Bicycling Groups

Frank Belaska, the Bike Patrol "Lead" for the Ocala Mountain Bike Association Mountain Bike Patrol, and his wife Sharon Belaska, "Patrol Assistant" hang banners in preparation for a Bike Safety Class at the Forest Community Center.

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