

With Siclovía, you don't have to look both ways

BY JOHN MACCORMACK : MARCH 30, 2014 : Updated: March 30, 2014 11:18pm

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Photo By Robin Jerstad

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Cyclists line up across St. Mary St. to get free helmets from Bexar County Metropolitan Planning Organization during Siclovía Sunday.



More Information

Siclovía web site

SAN ANTONIO — Bicycles, roller skates, wheelchairs, skateboards, baby carriages, low-riders, scooters and kids' wagons.

You name it. If it had wheels, you could probably find it Sunday morning rolling along South St. Mary's Street in the latest edition of Siclovía.

Not to mention dogs of all description and means of conveyance, from bike baskets to special canine wagons. And not a few got a free nail job en route.

Under clear blue skies, it was a perfect day for kids, pets, families and just plain having fun in streets temporarily free of cars, trucks, noise, exhaust and having to look both ways.

"They are usually not allowed to ride in the street, so this is really cool," said [Alissa Cooper](#), 36, of her daughters Savannah, 6, and Siena, 3, who were pedaling south under elaborate pink and

lavender helmets.

"The only way we can keep track of her is to have her ride on the yellow line," she remarked of her younger child, who boldly claimed the center stripe on her trike.

Curiosities abounded Sunday, such as a white poodle named Sassie, with its tail and ears dyed a peculiar blue-green shade.

"She was going to be yellow and green, but they messed up. Wanted her to have fun and stand out," said owner [Nannette Rangel](#), 48, of the bizarre paint job.

"We need this. We're an overweight city, and this is really great. I've been trying to get healthy, and this is part of my startup," she said.

Stretching 2.5 miles from Southtown to Mission Concepción, Siclovía came to the South Side for the first time Sunday after three years on upper Broadway.

The YMCA of Greater San Antonio presents Siclovía, in partnership with the city, and its main theme is the promotion of fitness.

"The City Council members and the YMCA worked really hard to clean it up and make it look nice. It seems like everyone is eager to show off the South Side," said [Laura Waldrum](#), marketing director for the YMCA.

"There are tons of people, and everyone is having fun," she said shortly after noon.

Although Sunday's turnout was projected to exceed the record 73,000, who reportedly participated in the fall edition, Waldrum acknowledged that a precise count is a bit fuzzy given the free flow of attendees.

"We have counters all day long at certain points on the route. At the end of the day, we pluck those numbers into a formula that spits out a number for us," she said.

Lining the route were numerous booths offering a variety of services and wares, as well as "reclovias," or pit stops, where participants could rest up and grab a bottle of water.

There was musical entertainment — from front-yard jams by local residents and the Kazamba drum and dance crew in the [Ace Mart](#) parking lot to Lynnwood King and the Revival, a funky blues band playing one block north.

The absence of traffic gave everyone a sense of freedom and safety.

Using a portable wheelchair, [Juan Inocencia](#) pushed his mother [Paula Inocencia](#), 88, past [Brackenridge High School](#) at an unhurried pace.

"She'd only heard about it and read about it in the news. So, I thought let's get her out here. My wife is out of town on business, so it's a perfect fit," he said.

His mother was thoroughly enjoying the outing.

"This is my first time. I love to see all the people around. And the day is beautiful," said his mother, wearing a white sun hat and shades.

Just when you thought you'd seen it all, there it was in a front yard, a block from [Bonham Elementary School](#): a kid's lemonade stand offering free drinks to the thirsty.

The lemonade girl, [Lily Stanford](#), 9, a fourth-grader at Bonham, summed up the day as well as anyone. "I really like it. You get to run in the street and have fun."

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