

Ventura County Star (CA)

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Women motorcyclists plan Saturday charity ride

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Tracey Warriner had been thinking about organizing a motorcycle ride for women for a couple of years. In 2004, when 20 breast cancer survivors wheeled into Ventura on a ride from San Diego to San Francisco to build awareness of the disease and how it affects young women, she took notice. Last year, when the rides were expanded to another location in the United States as well as ones in the United Kingdom and Australia, she knew it was time to set the local gears in motion. "I had been thinking about it for a couple of years, but they really inspired me" to get an all-women's ride going, Warriner said. The effort will rev up Saturday with the Heels & Wheels Ride sponsored by Ventura Harley-Davidson, which has locations in Camarillo and Simi Valley. Warriner owns the shops, along with Tom Elsaesser, Paul Pecoraro and Jason Barresi. The event will benefit Amazon Heart, an organization giving breast cancer survivors the opportunity to challenge themselves as well as to be an inspiration to thousands of other women diagnosed with the disease each year. The organization is based on the belief that young women diagnosed with breast cancer face unique and sometimes more urgent challenges than their older counterparts. Warriner was hoping for 40 women to take part in this first local ride, but 58 already have signed up for the event that will begin at the Camarillo shop, 1326 Del Norte Road, and continue for about 60 miles. The effort is open to female riders of all skill levels and to all makes and models of motorcycles, not just Harleys, Warriner stressed. The official Amazon Heart rides in 2004 and 2005 were called Changing Gears, and women were riding bikes provided by Harley-Davidson. This year the name of the international rides has been changed to Amazon Heart Thunder, reflecting the motorcycle nature of the challenge. In addition to the bike project, Amazon Heart offers Amazon Heart Odyssey, which focuses on challenging oneself while working for the betterment of others, and Amazon Heart Expedition, which takes women on a journey to other lands where they physically challenge their bodies and raise money for breast cancer awareness. Of the \$20 registration fee for the Heels & Wheels Ride, \$5 will be donated to Amazon Heart, Warriner said. The fee also includes a T-shirt, the ride and a luncheon at Arroyo Verde Park in Ventura, with food provided by Outback restaurant. Special guest speaker during the lunch will be Tia Bruno, who rode with Changing Gears in 2004 and 2005. The 34-year-old North Hollywood woman was diagnosed with cancer at 30, Warriner said. Check-in time Saturday is 9 a.m., and the riders will roll at 10 a.m. Women signed up for the ride are coming from all over, including Pismo Beach, Arroyo Grande, San Pedro and Redondo Beach and from throughout Ventura County. For more information on Heels & Wheels, call Tracey Warriner at 981-9904 or visit <http://www.VenturaHarley.com>, under events.

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