

## ***Sanibel's weekly newspapers publish "Cycling Safety Notes" to promote bike safety***

Sanibel's weekly newspapers, the *Island Sun* and the *Island Reporter/Islander*, have both joined the effort to promote bicycle safety by publishing a regular series of "Cycling Safety Notes" public service ads. The ads deliver a series of messages, seven in all, including cycling basics such as: "Always wear a bicycle helmet"; "Ride on the Right"; "Warn to Pass"; and "Don't wear Earphones While Cycling". Whimsical in tone, they are designed to reach Island residents and vacationers using Sanibel's Shared Use Path who may not have been on a bike in a while and need to be reminded about the rules of safe cycling.

The public service ads were developed by the Sanibel Bicycle Club, whose club activities have long emphasized bike safety advocacy and promotion. In recent years the Sanibel Club has developed and distributed cycling safety messages in other printed forms, including posters, bookmarks, cycling maps and brochures. That led to the idea to ask local newspapers if they'd be willing to run public service ads. The publishers saw the need for more public education on bike safety and agreed to help. Club members wrote the copy and designed and produced the ads. With seven ads in the series, the publications are able to rotate them to keep the message fresh. The ads have been running regularly for the past year.

Said Club President Sharon Hannon, "The Sanibel Bicycle Club has been pushing the safety message for a long time, and it's great to see other organizations and entities in town embracing the message. We think these newspaper public service ads are doing a great job of helping to keeping the idea of safe cycling front and center. It's a challenging job in a resort area like this with so many vacationers who are not familiar with our streets, paths and traffic patterns. And each week there's a new group of visitors arriving, so the education process is non-stop."

Other clubs and organizations who might be interested in doing a similar program in their area are welcome to use the Sanibel Bicycle Club's materials as a starting point (although some of the copy may need to be revised to fit the specific needs of another location). Copies of the public service ads can be accessed on the BikeWalkLee website.