

Wednesday, June 7, 2006 Last modified: Thursday, June 1, 2006 11:12 PM PDT

Motorcycle mania

By: Andrew DiLuccia, Gold Country Motoring Editor

This weekend the Gold Country Fairgrounds will rattle and shake as thousands of motorcycle enthusiasts converge on Auburn for a big-time get together.

However, this isn't the same ol' biker gathering.

Touted as the first of its kind in the United States, the 2006 Women's Motorcycle Expo will touch down this Saturday and Sunday, featuring bikes, clinics, artists, music, food and much more. Promoters are expecting as many as 15,000 participants during the two-day event that is drawing folks from as far away as Boston, Mass.

"This is the first women's motorcycle expo in the U.S., there's never been anything like this," said Loretta Kinnicut, co-promoter of the event with Heather Tanfani. "There is a women's motorcycle conference in Georgia ... and that's exactly what it is, a conference."

The Women's Motorcycle Expo will feature more than 186 vendors and there will be several clinics throughout the weekend that will cover topics from lane splitting to how to pick your bike to motorcycle crash-scene management.

Along with the clinics and vendors there will be special guests, including artist Lory Lockwood, who will be displaying her motorcycle photorealism art. Lockwood was winner of the "2000 Award of Distinction" from the Naples Fine Arts Festival. Terri Lynn Link of Siren Custom Cycles, who was the "National Bike Build Off" winner, will also be on hand as will AFT Customs, holder of the 2005-06 Official World Champion Metric Bike Building Award. Lake Tahoe Chopper Company's Karen Egelston, female designer of the Wicked Witch Chopper, will also be on hand.

With the bike exhibits, there will be plenty of entertainment, including motorcycle games, food, drink and even a children's area. There will also be a section for more adult entertainment as well. Live music will be heard throughout the day from bands such as The Jeff Jones Band, The Hucklebucks, Tom Foolery, Gina Livingston, Beer Dawgs, Lydia Pense and Cold Blood and AC/Dshe.

The expo has a multitude of sponsors, some locally such as Auburn Harley-Davidson, and the expo is getting help from groups such as the Auburn 49er Lions and the Auburn Knights of Columbus. Also, raffle-prize proceeds will go to Women Escaping a Violent Environment (WEAVE).

"We're so excited. I think the thing we're most excited about is all the support we have from everybody," Tanfani said.

The expo is open to all motorcycles, from cruisers to racers to dirt bikes.

"I want to make sure that people know that this is all bikes, all women, all men - everybody is welcome," Tanfani said. "A lot of the bike events are geared



Michael Kirby/Auburn Journal Terri Lynn Clark of Siren Custom Cycles, who is the "National Bike Build Off" winner, will be one of the many guests on hand at this weekend's Women's Motorcycle Expo at the Gold Country Fairgrounds.

toward men, we don't want this to be that way. Women are buying a lot more bikes."

And Tanfani and Kinnicutt have the numbers to back up their claim. According to a survey by J.D. Power and Associates, one in four new motorcycles are purchased by a woman, and more than 635,000 women surveyed in 2003 said they own a motorcycle.

"When I came up with the idea a little over a year ago I put together some facts and figures and then I came to Heather," said Kinnicutt, who's been riding for 35 years. "She looked at me and yeah, it was instant, everything was just perfect for this."

It took the two event planners over a year to get this together, and they plan to make this an annual festivity here in the foothills. They said they will be looking to host another expo on the East Coast in the near future.

"We normally plan events for our clients, this is the first time we've planned an event for ourselves," Tanfani said. "It's very exciting, we're anticipating a fantastic event."