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WAYNE CUDDINGTON, THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

**World Naked Bike Ride Day took place in cities around the world yesterday including Ottawa, as about a dozen cyclists took to the streets in various stages of undress to protest the world's heavy consumption of oil.**

# Protesters grin and bare it despite chilly conditions

## Naked cyclists protest our dependence on oil

**BY SUSAN MOHAMMAD**

You may have seen the moon out during the day yesterday, or perhaps several of them.

A group of naked cyclists, some of whom wore only body paint with messages like "oil sucks," rode through downtown Ottawa yesterday as part of the third international World Naked Bike Ride to protest pollution caused by vehicles and our dependence on oil.

Starting at Confederation Park in the afternoon, most of the 12 protesters stripped right down to the goosebumps despite the less than tropical weather as confused onlookers stood gawking.

Kris Coward of Toronto has chronic bronchitis but feels it's important to take part in the protests.

He has participated in three similar rides before.

"I was here for the ride last year. I don't like a lot of cars making smog and climate change," said the cyclist, who chose "climate sucks" as the message painted on his back.

He joked that he blamed climate

change for the cold weather and hopped up and down before the group left to keep warm.

Mr. Coward was pleased that more protesters came out for this year's event than last year.

For some, the ride was more about personal freedom or just something "fun" to do.

"It's hilarious, I've been laughing since I got up this morning," said 21-year-old Gwen Noel, who joined the group for her first ride.

"It's weird ... unusual," said Edwin Lee, who stared confused at the protesters as they rode around a fountain giggling and ringing their bike bells.

"Maybe that will attract people's attention. I think it's a better way to protest like this," he said.

It was so cold, some of the protesters wore mitts or underwear and one participant cheekily did up his tie before heading on to Laurier Avenue. The group looped around Bank Street and ventured back towards the park while police wished them luck as long as they adhered to the rules of the road and didn't misbehave.

And although some participants bared more than others, all the cyclists wore matching smiles as drivers honked and waved when the group pedaled by.