

## **THE RIDE OF SILENCE WILL NOT BE QUIET** **Chicago Cyclists Take to the Road to Remember Fallen Riders**

On **Wednesday May 20 2009 at 7 PM** Chicago cyclists will take to the road as part of a global event to remember crash victims and call for the need for safer streets for Chicago's more vulnerable traffic participants.

The Chicago **Ride Of Silence** will gather at the Eternal Flame in Daley Plaza, Washington at Dearborn, at 6:45 PM and depart at 7 PM. The 10-mile route is set to pass the sites of 5 crash victims, and end at the location of the January 2006 death of Isai Medina in the 1100 block of N. Western Ave . Many of the sites are marked by Ghost Bikes, which are powerful memorials to fallen cyclists created by painting a bicycle white and placing it at or near the site of the cyclist's death.

Chicago's Ghost Bike tradition began in January 2006 with placement of a bike for 50-year-old Isai Medina, a fixture in the Chicago cycling scene. Isai, who could be spotted anywhere from 47th Street to Evanston on his self-assembled "chopper" style bicycle covered with flashing red lights, was killed by a driver traveling at high speed, shocking Chicago's tight-knit bicycling community. Chicago's Ghost Bikes have been placed with involvement of friends and family of the victim. Typically a handmade sign with a short epitaph serves to inform passersby of the victim's identity. The original Ghost Bike is said to have been placed in St. Louis, but the practice has spread to many cities worldwide.

The first Ride Of Silence was organized in Dallas in 2003 by Chris Phelan after endurance cyclist Larry Schwartz was killed by a passing bus mirror on an empty road. In 2009 there are over 289 locations worldwide hosting a Ride Of Silence.

The Ride Of Silence is a free ride that asks its participants to ride no faster than 12 mph and remain silent during the procession. The ride hopes to raise awareness during bike safety month among motorists, police, and city officials of the need to share the road. Additionally, the ride serves as a chance to mourn those who have already been killed.

Organizers request that participants wear black arm bands to show solidarity with victims and their loved ones, or red arm bands to signify a personal injury from a bike/motor vehicle accident. All participating cyclists are asked to wear a helmet.

### Contacts:

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