

2008 MICHIGAN RIDE OF SILENCE

Michigan Rides of Silence were held in conjunction with Rides of Silence worldwide in 299 confirmed locations, in 18 counties on Wed. May 21st at 7 PM (and Sat. May 24th at 10 AM in the southern hemisphere). *We rode with cyclists in all 50 states and with cyclists in Antarctica, Argentina, Australia (8 locations), Bolivia, Brazil (2 locations), British Virgin Isles, Canada (8 locations), Caribbean (Aruba), China (2 locations), Costa Rica, Cyprus, Jamaica, Japan, Mexico (4 locations), New Zealand, Republic of Panama and Spain (8 locations).*

Where did we ride in Michigan and who rode? Adrian-10 riders, Ann Arbor-50 riders, Battle Creek-55 riders, Bay City-no report, Boyne City-35 riders, Detroit Belle Isle-135 riders, Detroit East Side-32 riders, E. Lansing-34 riders, Grand Rapids-150 riders, Grand Rapids, YMCA, (Spin for Silence) 15 riders, Grand Rapids E. Hills Ath. Club, (Spin for Silence) 15 riders, Grand Rapids, Michigan Ath. Club, (Spin for Silence) no report, Grayling-no report, Harbor Springs-25 riders, Haslett (Lansing area)-no report, Holland-25 riders, Houghton-75 riders, Jackson-4 riders, Kalamazoo-65 riders, Lennon (Flint area)-4 riders, Menominee-10 riders, Midland-no report, Saginaw-no report, Sault St Marie-4 riders, Spring Lake-68 riders, Traverse City-17 riders, Westland (Dearborn-Livonia area)-50 riders, Ypsilanti-20 riders.

Why did we ride globally? Cyclists across the globe face many of the same issues we face here in Michigan. We rode too remember fellow cyclists; both family and friends who've been injured or killed by motorists while enjoying a sport they love. We rode in hopes of educating and making motorists and the public aware that cyclists have the same rights out on the road, must follow the same rules, to please **Share the Road** with us, please be **CAREFUL**, that we are out there!

Why did we ride locally? From some of the MI organizers; **Boyne City**; "This year we remembered Dr. William Crowley, a member of the North Country Bicycle Club here in Boyne City and frequent rider in the area while vacationing here with his family. Dr. Bill was struck from behind by a SUV while riding on a bicycle tour in Southern Ohio on May 11th this year. Many of us had the opportunity to ride with him here in Northern MI each summer. Our thoughts and prayers are with his lovely wife Mary and his two young daughters." **Detroit-East Side** "We have a large cycling contingent in the Detroit area, and unfortunately we have had way too many of our own to remember for the 'ride of silence'." **E. Lansing**; "We were honored to have Ann Larabee, sister of Dave Larabee, killed Sept. 2005 by a drunk driver, ride with us again this year. Several others on the ride have been hit and injured by motorists; a few stories were shared at the end of the ride at the Capitol." **Grand Rapids**; "Back at the park a woman came up to me and thanked me, saying she had closure. Before I could inquire, she was gone. Later that evening she emailed me, thanking me again. I replied was she the woman who mentioned closure? She replied yes. Barb was a very dear friend of Patricia Fetting-Vora, whom we honored in our 1st Ride of Silence in 2005, who was killed just a few short weeks before the Ride that year. Barb told me it was almost a year before she could get back on her bike." **Harbor Springs**; "Three (3) cyclists injured by automobiles, including the organizer." **Kalamazoo**; "We rode this year not only to remember all that have been killed or injured but with a special memorial for Jun Kojima who was [killed in Mendon](#) not far from Kalamazoo April 24th by an 18 year old motorist on a cell phone." **Traverse City**; "The importance of the purpose of our RofS was really brought home as Eli Wooley and his parents came to encourage, support and thank us for the memorial ride. Eli suffered severe brain trauma as a result of being hit while riding his bike last July." **Ypsilanti**; "I was seriously injured by a hit and run driver in November 2006"

What kind of weather did we ride in? All kinds, from good to mostly lousy. (Michigan, go figure!) Organizers comments: **Adrian**; "This year has been the driest of the three Rides." **Ann Arbor**; "It was a beautiful MI evening." **Battle Creek**; "We had beautiful (albeit a bit chilly) weather." **Boyne City**; "Mother Nature was not cooperating again this year with temps going into the 30's, rain and wind."

Detroit-Belle Isle; “The weather threatened as it has every year....” **Grand Rapids;** “Under a cloudy, chilled - windy eve & showers began as we returned to the park.” **Harbor Springs;** “Temps. at the start of the ride were dipping below 40F with stiff wind gusts and intermittent mist & rain.” **Holland;** “On a clear and very cool evening.” **Houghton;** “In spite of cold temps.” **Kalamazoo;** “Under cloudy skies, gusty winds, and cool temps.” **Lennon;** “At Lennon (Flint) it was chilly and wet.” **Menominee;** “Braving the cold, windy, rainy weather.” **Sault St Marie;** “The temps were in the 30’s and it was almost snowing along with high winds.” **Traverse City;** “Despite the 43° windy and rainy weather,” **Westland;** “Just once I’d like to have decent weather for the most important ride of the year!”

Some unique things to each Ride: **Adrian;** “Even though we posted it at our High School (which has a community service/involvement hours requirement for grad.) we were unable to pick up any youth riders.” **Ann Arbor;** “A few other cyclists, including Ann Arbor Mayor John Hieftje, joined the ride en route.” **Battle Creek;** “The Club [Battle Creek Bicycle Club] took the opportunity to remind local cyclists that sharing the road goes both ways, and cyclists are responsible for obeying the same laws that we expect motorists to follow.” **Detroit-E. Side;** “I make an announcement at the beginning of the 6:30pm ride of my intentions. I stop the group at 7pm, make the announcement that we will be riding in silence, in memory of fellow riders, and I mention the names of local riders that are especially near and dear to us that we have lost.” **Detroit-Belle Isle;** “I especially appreciated the one guy who removed a pedal from his single speed and pedaled the entire ten miles with one leg.” **E. Lansing;** “One cyclist rode his 1888 highwheeler in the event and back to MSU from downtown at an amazing clip.” **Grand Rapids;** “Our 110 bright gold Share the Road/Ride of Silence T-Shirts made a strong statement as to why we were riding, ...to members of the Grand Rapids & District Pipe Band for solemnly supporting us with “Amazing Grace” as we circled John Ball Park.” **Holland;** “...along Holland’s famous Tulip Lanes which were in bloom.” **Jackson;** “With my expertise in repairing bikes over the past several months, I invited to give a discount to my customers if they were to ride in this years ROS and to my surprise I had 3 takers.” **Kalamazoo;** “I was able to have a large poster made of Jun on a bicycle ride and requested all riders to sign this poster prior to our ride and my intentions are to send this poster to his family in Japan.” **Menominee;** “..and we did ride through both Menominee MI and Marinette, WI, so we were in both states.” [The 1st RofS ever to travel in 2 states!]

Additional organizer comments: **Adrian;** “Many new faces and we hope they’ll join us on our weekly rides as well.” **Ann Arbor;** Thank you to our local riders, volunteers, police and newspaper. And a big thank you to Mark Hagar for his consistent (and persistent) encouragement to all MI RofS organizers.” **Battle Creek;** “It was a successful event and we’re hoping for an even bigger crowd next year.” **Boyer City;** “As we begin a new cycling season we remind everyone to proceed with caution, follow the rules of the road and have a great summer.” **Detroit-Belle Isle;** “Read the Letter from the Governor, made mention of riders in MI that were killed on bicycles this year, a silent prayer and the rules of the road.” **Grand Rapids;** “Thanks again to Jim DeGracia of Jade Cycles who returned this year, mounting a regulation FDOT Share the Road sign to his bike, and being one of the last riders in our procession.” **Grand Rapids WMCA;** “The room grew quiet as we slowed our pace to pay respects to those that had lost their lives while cycling outside. With every new slide, the room became more reverent, and when the Power Point presentation was over, and participants were getting ready to go, there was a somber and quiet atmosphere. **Grand Rapids E. Hills Ath. Club;** “Participants were very respectful and supportive of the event. Thank you so much for your effort. I really appreciate being a part of this great event.” **Harbor Springs;** “I want to say Thank you to Chris Phelan and all RofS organizers for your inspiration and determination. We hope to greatly increase our numbers in 2009 and to increase awareness of motorists and safety of cyclists locally and globally.” **Kalamazoo;** “Jun rode in last years Kalamazoo’s RofS and tragically and unnecessarily he is no longer with us.” **Lennon;** “We had a small number, but a meaningful ride.” **Menominee;** “I’m not giving up tho, I will try my best to get better participation next year,” **Sault St. Marie;** “Hopefully the 2009 RofS will bring sunshine.” **Spring Lake;** “They rode two by two for 8 miles through the Spring Lake area in complete silence

using only hand signals to communicate.” **Traverse City**; “I stress to all cyclists to make themselves as visible as possible, especially during darkness and waning daylight. That was an example of a concerned motorist who supports safe cycling.”

Not unique to the Rides, many MI locations had direct support from local law enforcement agencies, most understanding what cyclists face each day out on the road, and wanting to make the evening’s Ride safe for all cyclists. Many had media coverage, helping to raise the awareness of the public.

To fellow Michigan cyclists, if there wasn’t a Ride of Silence in your area and you’d like to see one, or are interested in organizing one for next year and would like information, please feel free to email me. As one of the National Ride’s Mentors, I will help support any individual/club/group/location in starting a Ride.

Personally, *I’d like to again thank all the MI organizers and volunteers* who donated so much of their time to help organize a Ride in their city or town and helped make this year’s MI Ride of Silence a great success. Again in 2008 we showed the world what cyclists can do by banding together! (I wish we had space to include everyone’s full report)

Thanks to all the MI cyclists who came out to ride in this year. Thanks to Rich Moeller and John Lindenmayer of the LMB, for the support and promotion they’ve given the Ride.

Thanks to Chris Phelan in Dallas, the Ride’s founder and spiritual leader, and the rest of the Ride of Silence board who made this year’s Ride such a global success.

A special thanks goes to our East Lansing organizer. When the national webmaster unexpectedly stepped down, Tim Potter stepped in, maintaining the web site at a crucial time, and implementing numerous improvements.

Please join us for next year’s Ride of Silence, **on May 20th 2009, at 7:00 PM**, in locations all over MI and the world.

Mark Hagar

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