

## In Memory of Harry Nickell, Aug. 5, 1957 – Nov. 21, 2010

Sunday morning November 21, 2010 I received the phone call that changed my life. Diane, my stepmom, had called and told me that my dad was in an accident and I need to go to see him in the hospital in Clermont. Diane said not to worry about driving and that Andrew, my boyfriend, was on his way to pick me up and I needed to call her as soon as Andrew was at my house. Andrew pulled into my driveway and handed me the phone. Diane said "Lacey I need you to be strong, but your Dad didn't make it." As Andrew and I drove to Clermont, I was still in shock and disbelief. I went into the ER and frantically yelled to see my Dad. His body was still covered in blood, cycling shoes still on, and he had a John Doe bracelet to identify him. I remember yelling for them to change his bracelet. Saying he wasn't a John Doe, but he was Harry Nickell.



Diane had broken her wrist just a few weeks ago, so she had flown to our North Carolina cabin and Dad was going to drive up with the dogs the next day. He stayed behind to ride in the Horrible Hundred bike ride. Sadly, he never made it. He was struck while riding with his neighbor and thrown off the road. Since a lot of our friends were riding in the HH it was hard to reach people until later that afternoon. Dad was very well known in the cycling and triathlon community. He impacted a large number of people around him.

Around this time last year Diane had mentioned to me that Sara McLarty, who also lost her father to a motorist, was interested in hosting a ride. I got in touch with Sara and she told me her friend had sent her information about the Ride of Silence and wanted her and I to host one in Clermont in honor of our fathers. I was pumped. We only had a few weeks to organize, plan and spread the word about the event. I was coaching about 45 min away from Clermont. It worked out great because Sara was able to cover the Clermont area and I covered the Altamonte Springs area to spread the word. Sara and I busted our butts to get media attention to help us promote. It was during this process I introduced myself to Chris, basically



annoying him with every question I had about specific facts. He was very happy to help us get the information to the press to help promote our ride. Joe Mizereck, from Give 3 feet, was also a big help with getting numbers and resources for the article. Sara and I are definitely very blessed to have such huge support from our family and friends.

The few weeks leading up to the event were crazy, but it was a good type of crazy. Earlier the day of the ride, the weather was not looking promising. We had posted on our ROS page rain or shine we were doing this! We had no idea what to expect for our turnout, and with people having to travel to Clermont with questionable weather, we still were hopeful. I met up with Sara the day of the ride to go over the last details when Diane called me. People had already started showing up at Waterfront park! We rode our bikes down and the amount of people kept increasing by the minutes! About 6:45 Sara and I jumped on the picnic tables to thank everyone and let them know why we are doing this. People were still showing up as we began our ride around the lake! We had 176 people on our signup sheets, but it is safe to say we had closer to 200 people out there riding!



This year I decided I wanted to get my home state involved. Most of my family still lives in Oklahoma so I began to plan 2 more rides: one in Tulsa, and one more in Oklahoma City. I am just giving the cycling shops the information they need to organize an event. I am extremely passionate about this ride, because of how I lost my father. The important part of this ride is the education side of it. The more people know what rights cyclist have, the better. If by doing something as simple as giving information out can save a family from the hell we have gone through, it is worth every moment spent. People see cyclist and do not realize how their ignorance can take a life in just a matter of seconds.



I am excited for our Clermont ROS this year. We have a lot of supporters helping with the organization side of things. Sara received a very generous donation to help cover our cost this year. Definitely hoping for an even better turnout! Diane is having a bench built in honor of my Dad, Harry Nickell. We are having the ROS logo placed on the bench to remind people to share the road. I hate the circumstance of how I found out about this ride, but am proud to do anything I can to get people involved. My Dad would have been all about

supporting this ride, so being able to host it in his honor makes me proud. There will never be a day that our families don't think about our lost ones, but they are able to look down on us and smile because we are bringing something good, from the negative.