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Benefit ride set for cyclist

Funds slated to go to scholarship honoring scientist David Ryan

By **DENNIS YUSKO**, Staff writer

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CLIFTON PARK -- About 200 bicyclists are expected to remember the late David Ryan by riding a 29-mile loop that the physicist was traveling when he was killed by an allegedly speeding driver.

The first David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness will depart at 10 a.m. Saturday from the General Electric Global Research Co. where Ryan worked. The route crosses the Mohawk River into Rexford and then goes on to Colonie before returning to the starting point.

Organizers are billing the event as a memorial to the highly competitive cyclist from England.

They want to increase consciousness about road safety and raise money for the newly formed David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund.

The 29-mile journey takes riders on roads and bike paths and past the spot where Ryan died on Riverview Road in Clifton Park on June 29. Participants seeking a shorter ride can sign up for an 11-mile route.

Riders are asked to donate \$10 in advance or \$12 on Saturday. Proceeds, including a gift from GE, will create a scholarship to be awarded to a Capital Region high school senior who excels in science and athletics, said Walter Cicha, Ryan's friend and an organizer of the ride. About 125 riders have signed up for the tribute, with at least 75 more expected, he said.

"David was an exceptional scientist and cyclist, and his loss has been felt keenly in both of the worlds in which he played such a huge part," said Cicha, also a GE employee.

The company is sponsoring the ride. It has provided food, water, security, tables and tents, Cicha said. Commemorative long-sleeved T-shirts will be given to the day's first 200 registrants.

The Mohawk-Hudson Cycling Club is host for the rides. Riders of all ages with all kinds of bikes are invited. "We want this to be a casual ride for people," Cicha said.

Ryan died from a collision with an 18-year-old driver from Niskayuna who struck him while going too fast on winding Riverview Road, police have said. The driver, Joshua Paniccia, has been ticketed for speeding and drag racing, according to prosecutors. He faces charges of second-degree manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. He has pleaded not guilty. His defense has until mid-November to file pretrial motions.

Ryan would have turned 33 on Friday.

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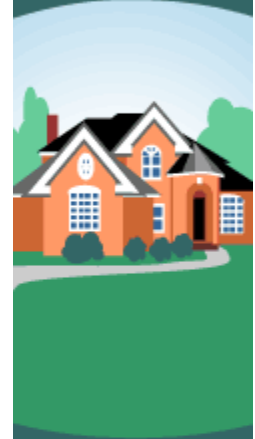


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What: The first David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness

When: 10 a.m. Saturday; riders should arrive at 8 a.m.

Where: Begins at the General Electric Global Research Co., lower gate, River Road, Niskayuna

Why: To increase road safety awareness and raise money for the David T. Ryan Scholarship

FundDonation: \$12

Info: <http://www.DavidTRyan.com>

Source: GE and Mohawk-Hudson Cycling Club

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