

Justice Riders



Riding for Justice is a cause that I feel strongly about and I believe that we can make a difference in the outcome of arraignments of those who have taken the life of a motorcycle rider.

When the family of a victim requests us to be at the court for a hearing or a trial I would like to believe that we can pull together a solid group to honor their requests. They do not have to be ABATE members.

This would have to be done ONLY at the request of the family and would need to be coordinated at each district level. This could fall under the legislative director's duties.

This is not a mandate but rather a suggestion for us to do in order to show our commitment to the victim's families and to let the Judicial system know we are fed up with the hand slap penalties that have been handed out.

Recently the final chapter in the death of Keith Etheridge played out in the Meriwether County GA courts. We first rode to the courthouse months ago at the request of the Etheridge family to show our support for a strong penalty against the driver that caused Keith's death. We found that the driver had not even been arrested and may not have been had it not been for the 25 or so bikes that showed up that day. We were denied access to the court house as was every one else that day that did not have official business.

THEY KNEW WE WERE THERE AND WHY WE WERE THERE!

Just the other day a request came in to provide support at the court house again for the Etheridge family and even with very short notice a few came together just to find out that the arraignment was postponed until, the next day.

In the words of Keith's brother "The court System was a failure to the family" as the Judge imposed a 12 month suspended sentence, one year probation, a \$1000.00 fine but did not revoke driving privileges. Clay felt that the judge did not really even want to be that harsh. Clay believes that had we not been there the first time to show support and unity that even this small sentence may not have even happened.

Riding for Justice can make a difference.

Dan Forrest
ABATE of GA
State Director