

CLEMONS LETTER PIVOTAL IN RAISING

\$25,000 REWARD IN CYCLIST'S DEATH

We are very proud that our founding shareholder, Terry Clemons, sparked the chain of events that resulted not only in raising a \$25,000 reward but also in raising public awareness of the need for increased civility and respect among motorists and bicyclists on our roadways.

Here is the letter that started it all:

On May 28th, cyclist John Chapman was struck and killed by a hit and run driver on Route 413 just north of Ridgeview Road in Plumstead Township. It is a sad irony that this occurred just 10 days after Doylestown Borough and the Central Bucks Bicycle Club sponsored a "Ride of Silence" to draw attention to the number of cyclists who are killed by motorists each year. It was also just after Doylestown Borough's excellent news letter devoted significant coverage to the Borough's efforts to make the conflicts between cyclists and motorists less dangerous and to developing walking and bicycling paths within the Borough and Doylestown Township.

I am a cyclist. Because I must, I use Route 413 to get to more rural roads in upper Bucks County. More frequently than I would like, motorists appear to try to see how close they can drive past me, honk their horns, shake their fists and display other acts of hostility. I have even been struck by objects thrown from vehicles.

There is too much anger, too much inattention and too little courtesy on our roads. This results in horrific consequences to other motorists as well as to cyclists. Cyclists are particularly vulnerable. It often seems that motorists consider them anonymous objects impeding their efforts to get from Point A to Point B as quickly as possible. However, cyclists are your neighbor, your niece or nephew, a fellow employee, someone in your church. We should keep that in mind as we encounter them on public roadways. Yes, it is also true that some cyclists are rude, insensitive and do not make an effort to minimize the inherent conflicts in sharing the road with motorists. I try to do my part to encourage those I ride with to be aware of how to minimize conflicts with motorists; to avoid riding in a bunch that impairs motorists from passing safely and to conduct themselves in other ways that show they are aware of how they are riding may affect motorists.

We all need to be more civil to one another in our public discourse, in our treatment of one another on roadways and in a lot of other areas of our society. John Chapman's death was the result of a senseless act. Perhaps it can serve to heighten our awareness as motorists to the dangers we pose to cyclists and to drive with a little more care and a little less anger.

Terry W. Clemons
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