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READER LETTERS

He Wasn't Home for Christmas

For the past three years, world-class scientist and Niskayuna resident David Ryan saved enough of his three weeks of precious American corporate vacation time to fly back to England and spend valuable time with his family over the Christmas break. Not this year. Instead, David's body was flown to England in July, one week after his tragic June 29 death in Clifton Park at the motorized hands of 18-year-old speed demon Joshua Paniccia.

I have been receiving solemn communication from David's family more frequently of late, during the darkest season in the Northern Hemisphere. They are devastated and I suspect will remain so for a long time. Meanwhile, Joshua Paniccia remained free on bail during the holiday season, while awaiting the drawn out resolution to his indictment - on September 28 he was formally charged with manslaughter and criminally negligent homicide. The Saratoga County DA's office recently informed me that closure might not come to the case until March. What everyone with a conscience wants to see is the efficient implementation of justice, which I believe is also the DA's goal.

In the meantime, the Ryans have generously donated \$10,000 to the David T. Ryan Scholarship Fund. This fund was established through the explicit support of over 250 cyclists who took part in the Oct. 9 David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness, and from generous donations of other individuals and organizations. At the end of 2004, the resulting \$21,000 scholarship fund was donated to RPI, where it will be used to aid a carefully chosen and highly deserving student.

Late last year, someone stole the two memorials that had been erected at the Riverview Road site of David's tragedy a few days after its occurrence. What kind of person would vandalize a memorial site?

More information about David Ryan, his legacy, and the scholarship fund can be found at www.davidryan.com.

Walter Cicha, Ph.D., Schenectady

Walter was lead organizer of the David T. Ryan Ride for Safety Awareness and David's very close friend.