

## ### PRESS RELEASE ###

### For Immediate Release

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### On Anniversary of Husband's Death, Widow Publicly Forgives Husband's Killer

On November 1, 2016, Jeff Knopp (USMC (ret.), loving husband and father) was cycling on Foothill Boulevard when he was hit from behind and killed while riding a particularly dangerous stretch of road that had no bike lane. Jeff was pronounced dead at the location of the crash shortly before his wife, Jennifer Knopp, stumbled upon the horrific scene.



On Saturday, November 18th, [Streets Are For Everyone \(SAFE\)](#) hosted a [Finish The Ride®](#) Memorial Ride at Sunland Foursquare Church around the one-year anniversary of the death of Jeff Knopp and coinciding with United Nations "World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims."

The event opened with speeches on the importance of safer streets from LA City Councilmember Monica Rodriguez and Captain Aaron Ponce from the LAPD Foothill Division.

Then Jeff's widow, Jennifer Knopp, took the stage. While this memorial ride was touted as a celebration, there was not a dry eye in the crowd of hundreds when Jennifer Knopp brought Joshua (the driver who killed Jeff) onto the stage, publicly forgave him and hugged him. Joshua then went on to tell all in attendance how his life was also crushed the day he hit Jeff and now stands with Jennifer in efforts to make streets safer for all road users.



Joshua closed his speech by saying, **"I thank God for Jennifer's forgiveness, for the opportunity to be here to face all of you and to tell you that, in whatever way I can, I will fight for safer streets so none of you become another Jeff Knopp."**



Jennifer then kicked off the ride, where cyclists (escorted by LAPD) traced and finished the exact ride Jeff was doing that day. Pedestrians were invited to take part by walking nearly a mile to Jeff's Ghost Bike Memorial, where they were joined by cyclists for moment of silence and prayer lead by a local pastor.



Prayer lead by Pastor Low at location of Jeff's Ghost Bike



Jennifer comforting Joshua and family at Prayer

While too late for Jeff, his death prompted concerned locals to demand and successfully install a protected bike lane along the very stretch Jeff was riding that day. This safety improvement was installed with funding for street safety improvements as part of LA's Vision Zero Program -- an ambitious effort to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2025. A core fundamental of this program is the realization that fatal and severe traffic collisions are not accidents but are preventable.

Ironically, since the protected bike lane installation, a few in the community have been vocally protesting its placement for reasons of "safety and speed."

The event was organized by the Sunland-Tujunga chapter of Streets Are For Everyone (SAFE), a non-profit organization whose mission is aiming to improve the quality of life for pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers alike by working to reduce traffic caused fatalities to zero.

This memorial ride was one of three events held across the Southland as part of World Day of Remembrance for Traffic Victims. The first event was held Friday, the 17th of November outside City Hall East in Downtown Los Angeles. Called #inourshoes, the event was a collaboration of Southern California Families for Safe Streets and the L.A. Vision Zero Alliance, both led by [Los Angeles Walks](#). [SoCal Families for Safe Streets](#) is a group of individuals who have lost loved ones in traffic crashes or have suffered their own traffic-related injuries. The [L.A. Vision Zero Alliance](#) is a coalition of community-based organizations, non-profit special interest groups, and concerned citizens that supports and influences the City of Los Angeles' Vision Zero initiative. Members include: [AARP of Southern California](#), [Advancement Project CA](#), [Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition](#), [Youth Policy Institute](#), [Streets Are For Everyone](#) and many more organizations.

Together, they hosted an interactive memorial that honored the more than 500 people killed on L.A. city streets since August 2015, when the city launched Vision Zero. SoCal Families for Safe Streets, Alliance partners, and event participants spray painted 503 footprints to represent those killed in preventable traffic crashes. They also added shoes and personal mementos to the memorial and were asked to consider what life is like for families shattered by preventable traffic deaths. They encouraged passersby to sign a safe streets pledge that urged Mayor Garcetti and Los Angeles City Council members to use all of the tools available to create safer streets.

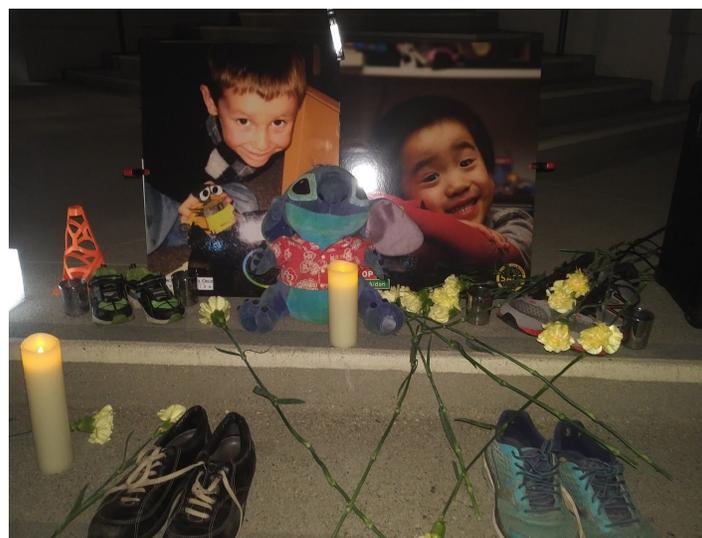


503 footprints being painted representing everyone killed in traffic violence since Vision Zero was announced



Vigil on steps of Pasadena City Hall with families who have lost loved ones due to traffic violence.

The three days of events wrapped up on Sunday, November 19th with a vigil on the steps of Pasadena City Hall lead by [Pasadena Complete Streets Coalition](#) and [Day One](#). Members of SoCal Families for Safe Streets shared stories about the loved ones they've lost forever; encouraged people to be responsible, respectful drivers; and urged policymakers to take action to create a safer street system that no longer results in death and severe injury.



Memorial to some of the young lives lost from traffic violence.

Information about traffic fatalities in Los Angeles and the Los Angeles Vision Zero initiative can be found at <http://visionzero.lacity.org/>. For more information on the L.A. Vision Zero Alliance, go to <http://www.visionzeroalliance.org/>.

Information about Streets Are For Everyone and its many campaigns to make streets safer can be found at <http://www.streetsareforeveryone.org/>. For upcoming Finish The Ride events, go to <http://www.finishtheride.org/>

Information about the non-profits featured in this release can be found on their respective websites. Additional interviews are available upon request. Please contact Damian Kevitt at: [DamianKevitt@StreetsAreForEveryone.org](mailto:DamianKevitt@StreetsAreForEveryone.org).

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**Additional Photos:**



Memorial Walk to Jeff's Ghost Bike for a moment of silence and prayer



Jeff's Ghost Bike