

Honoring Those Who Died In The Line Of Duty

By Captain Timothy Quinn, Morris Township Police

Morris Township is proud and honored to host the 2007 Police Unity Tour sendoff on the morning of May 9, 2007. When asked by the Morris Township Police participants and the Police Unity Tour executive board to host this year's sendoff event, the Township Committee enthusiastically supported the request and passed a resolution last July formalizing the municipality's role in this worthy effort.

The motto of the Police Unity Tour is "We ride for those who died". The mission of the Police Unity Tour is to raise awareness of the police officers killed in the line of duty and the secondary purpose is to raise funds for the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial & Museum.

A ceremony honoring all police officers who made the ultimate sacrifice will begin at 9:00 am. The riders will leave from the Ginty Recreational Complex adjacent to Police Headquarters at 10:00 am. Approximately 400 bicycle riders, all police officers, from across the state and country will begin their 300 mile journey to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial in Washington D.C.

The tour takes four days to complete and at conclusion the officers participate in the annual candlelight vigil ceremony at the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial on the evening of May 13th. At this time the names of the officers killed in the line of duty during the past year are added to the walls of the Memorial. A sad statistic shows that about 150-175 police officers are killed each year in the line of duty.

The Police Unity Tour was begun by Florham Park Police Officer Pat Montuore in 1997. The first tour consisted of 18 bicycle riders and raised \$18,000 for the Memorial. By 2006, more than 700 bicycle riders made the trek to Washington D.C. from starting points in New Jersey and Virginia and a check was presented to the Memorial in the amount of \$1,000,000. To date, the Police Unity Tour has raised over \$3.2 million for the Memorial. The Police Unity

Tour has committed to raise \$5,000,000 over the next five years for the Memorial's Museum building fund. The money will be used to erect a museum across the street from the Memorial in Washington D.C.

Members of the Morris Township Police Department have participated in the Police Unity Tour since 2000. Four to nine officers have participated on an annual basis. Over the years, eleven Morris Township Police Officers have taken part in the Tour. Veteran riders include Mark McGuinness, John Hall, Tim Quinn, Mark DiCarlo, Steve Summerer, Rich Kistner, Brian Markt, Dennis Reilly, Mark Osterhoudt, Rich Ferrone and Gary Webb. Also participating in the 2007 tour are Officers Chris Tongring and David Kosakowski.

This year Morris Township riders will ride in memory of Morris Township Police Sergeant Richard Kistner who participated in the 2003, 2004 and 2005 tours. In January 2006, he was diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma and passed away on March 29, 2006. As a tribute to Sergeant Kistner, his bicycle has been placed on top of the lead vehicle of the 2006 Police Unity Tour to safely lead us from New Jersey to Washington, DC.

Each participant of the Police Unity Tour spends countless hours training in preparation of the ride. Each participant is also required to raise \$1,700.00 as a donation to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial and Museum fund and to cover minimal expenses for the ride. The Police Unity Tour is a non-profit organization under section 501c (3) of the Internal Revenue code, therefore, donations made to the Police Unity Tour are fully tax deductible.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the Police Unity Tour may do so by sending a check made out to the Police Unity Tour c/o Morris Township Police Department, 49 Woodland Avenue, Morristown, NJ 07960. If you would like additional information on the 2007 Police Unity Tour please call 973-326-7482 or visit www.policeunitytour.com.



Some of the participants in the 2006 Police Unity Tour.

Pictured standing from left: Jim Waldron, Police Unity Tour (PUT) President; Harry Phillips PUT Executive Director; and Morris Township Police Department (MTPD) participants Mark DiCarlo, Dennis Reilly, Steve Summerer, Mark Osterhoudt, and Tim Quinn.

Pictured kneeling from left: MTPD participants Rich Ferrone and Mark McGuinness; Beth Sparks PUT Vice-President; MTPD participant John Hall; and Pat Montuore, founder of the Police Unity Tour.

Mounted on the 2007 Tour's lead vehicle will be the bicycle of Morris Township Police Sergeant Richard Kistner who participated in three previous PUT events, but passed away on March 29, 2006. Morris Township Police Unity Tour participants will ride in his memory.