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Widow sues bicycle club, Posey, driver

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A Newburgh woman has filed a lawsuit in the death of her husband during an organized bicycle ride.

Samuel W. Wolf II died Oct. 1, 2006, after being hit by a car while

riding his bicycle in the Great Pumpkin Metric.

His wife of 24 years, Linda, has filed suit against the driver whose car struck and killed her husband, the company the vehicle was registered to, Posey County and the Evansville Bicycle Club.

According to the lawsuit filed in Vanderburgh County Superior

Court, Wolf was on the ride, which is organized by the Evansville Bicycle Club, along St. Phillips Road when the accident occurred.

The complaint alleges as Wolf rode into the intersection of Upper Mount Vernon Road, David J. Knapp of Evansville turned left from the

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ROGER MCBAIN / Courier & Press

The memorial for Samuel Wolf, who was killed last year in the Great Pumpkin Metric, is located where Wolf was hit by a motorist, the intersection of Upper Mount Vernon Road and St. Phillips Road in Posey County.

Attorneys have not yet entered appearances on behalf of the defendants.

Reese said he plans to ask Vanderburgh Superior Court Judge Scott R. Bowers for the earliest possible trial

date that can be scheduled.

Witnesses have said the weather that morning was clear and sunny, and that Wolf was wearing a bright yellow shirt and riding with many others in the annual event.

Knapp was issued a ticket for failure to yield right of way.

Pioneer Plastics Inc. is also held liable in the suit because Knapp reportedly was working for them at the time of the accident and the Jeep is owned by the company.

In the lawsuit, the Evansville Bicycle Club is accused of failing to designate a safe route and to alert the public and other drivers about the presence of bicyclists at the intersection.

"The county could have done more and the bike club should have done more," Reese said. "There should have been a cone or something. There was

nothing there to let people know bicyclists were in the area."

Posey County is accused of negligently designing, maintaining and controlling the intersection where the crash occurred.

"That intersection is awkward in that it begs the motorist going in the direction (Knapp) was to make that left hand turn quickly," Reese said. "It is not rounded, there is no signage or flashing yellow light."

In memory of Wolf, a group of supporters has been installing signs that say "Share the Road" on routes often used by bicyclists.

The first was installed this spring at the intersection where Wolf was struck by the vehicle. Another 50 signs have been purchased, including 26 that will be installed around Vanderburgh County in the coming weeks.