

SOCIETY

Relatives remember loved ones killed in road accidents

Ceremony urges motorists to take care while driving

By DAN-LE DOOLEY
SPECIAL TO THE TELEGRAM

Two women told stories of how they lost a family member through car crashes during a ceremony at St. John's City Hall Wednesday evening.

The event marked National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims.

Many people brought and placed photos of their relatives and friends killed in vehicle crashes and placed them on a table nearby. About a dozen luminaries surrounded the photo collage.

Kellie Feltham of Sandy Point in central Newfoundland spoke of how her family's life changed July 3, 2009 when her son, Konrad Feltham, was killed in a motor vehicle collision.

Konrad was 17 years old when he died.

He'd graduated from Lewisport Collegiate high school a week before the collision occurred on the highway between Norris Arm and Bishop's Falls.

He was four kilometres from his home when the collision occurred on the highway between Norris Arm and Bishop's Falls.

"There isn't a single day that we don't think about Konrad. The question why this had to happen will forever be unanswered," Feltham said.

With her husband, Alec Feltham, the couple's 23-year-old daughter, Kristina Feltham, and numerous other relatives close by for support, Feltham talked about some good things that have come from her family's tragedy.

"There is an annual memorial bike ride with proceeds raised going to a scholarship fund in Konrad's memory, she said. A portion of the money raised is also donated to various charities.

"Being involved in this has been a vital part of our healing process... never forgetting Konrad and honoring his short but wonderful life," Feltham said.

Drawing attention
Service NL Minister Paul Davis said the memorial service draws attention not only to those killed and injured on the province's roads, but also to the importance of driving safely and according to weather conditions.

"Six people die on Canada's roads every day... That's six too many," Davis said.

Police officers and emergency responders also spoke at the event. Jeannette Holman-Price and Karen Coullas organized the ceremony.

Holman-Price's 22-year-old daughter, Jessica Holman-Price, was killed in December 2005. Coullas's six-year-old son, Zachery Strong, was killed in September 2007.

Pam Parly Ghent remembered her brother-in-law, Brian Ghent, who died in a vehicle collision in St. John's Oct. 10, 2002.

His full name was Brian Frank Ghent, she said, but most people called him B.

He was 23 years old when he died.

Parly Ghent met Brian Ghent when she started dating his older brother, Blain Ghent. Brian was in kindergarten at the time.

"B and I spent many hours together... He was this adorable little boy who steals your heart," Parly Ghent said.

Parly Ghent eventually married Blain Ghent and the couple moved from Newfoundland to Ontario.

Her brother-in-law was 11 years old at the time she left the province, she said.

Parly Ghent said she and her husband didn't get back to Newfoundland often over the next few years.

They were still living in Ontario when the crash occurred.

During her talk, she described how her brother-in-law was making a left hand turn from Major's Path in St. John's before there was an arrow on the lights. He couldn't quite see around the vehicle opposite him, she said.

"He must have figured, like many of us have over our driving lifetime, there's nothing coming so he went for it. Well, there was something coming, a dump-truck. It was killed instantly."



out, with the support of her husband's family to encourage people to think about what they are doing when they're driving.

"You might remember my story and think, taking that chance is just

not worth it... I'll wait, I'll slow down. Because for me, today, there is lots of time."

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(Far left) Service NL Minister Paul Davis and event organizers Jeanette Holman-Price and Karen Coullas.

(Left) Kellie Feltham speaks at the National Day of Remembrance for Road Crash Victims. Also in the photo is Feltham's daughter, Kristina Feltham, and close relative Mackenzie LeDrew, 5.

— Photos by Dan-LE DOOLEY/Special to The Telegram



Pam Parly Ghent holds a photo of her brother-in-law, Brian Ghent. Brian was 11 years old when the photo was taken while he was dancing with his mother Shirley at Parly Ghent's wedding.

— Photo by Dan-LE DOOLEY/Special to The Telegram

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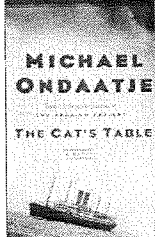
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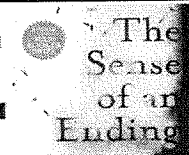
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