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News

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****Boy with "low vision" that
transplant can't help will
ride in behalf of those who
need corneas

DALLAS--An operation won't help 10-year-old Ronny Haynes with the optic nerve damage that has caused him to be classified as legally blind. But Ronny will ride in the March 27 Cycle for Sight anyway.

"I want to help others," says the fourth grader at Toler Elementary School in Garland.

Ronny, whose favorite hobby is riding the small blue and yellow bicycle he got for Christmas, will bike beside a volunteer from the Shriners. At home he rides on the sidewalk in front of his house, sometimes alone and sometimes with neighborhood friends.

The Cycle for Sight will be held from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at White Rock Lake to benefit the UT Lions Eye Bank, a part of the bankable organ transplant program at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Dallas. Everson Walls, outstanding Cowboy rookie, is honorary chairperson. Ronny learned about the fund-raising event from his mother Marilyn who works in the office of Dr. Charles Baxter, UTHSCD professor of Surgery and director of the transplant program.

Besides giving Ronny a "fun day" of bike riding, the Cycle for Sight, he says will help people who have vision problems that can be helped through surgery. The bankable organ transplant program provides both corneas and sclera (whites of the eyes) for transplantation. In 1981 the Dallas eye bank supplied corneas/sclera for 253 procedures in Dallas County and 78 for other areas. In addition, 100 eyes were donated for research. Some of the cornea recipients will also participate in Cycle for Sight.

Ronny got his first bike when he was seven. But with "low vision," he took almost two years to learn to ride. "He never gave up, though," says his father Ron Haynes. "He just kept trying. His friends actually taught him how to ride."

Ronny is definitely a kid who doesn't give up. Not only does he ride his bike almost daily, but he loves to play the piano. He plays by ear, often entertaining his younger brothers by playing popular Sunday School songs and "Gospel Chopsticks," a number he describes as "just like 'Chopsticks,' but with words."

(over)

2--cycle for sight: Ronny

This plucky kid doesn't give up in school either. Ronny can read special materials with very large letters and uses a magnifier to help with some of his work. He attends regular classes, but the school district has a visiting teacher who visits his school several times a week to work with the visually impaired. And when his grades slip--as they occasionally do--it's not because of his vision problem, says his father.

His punishment?

No bike riding until his grades come up.

For rider information call 688-2609.

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