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METRO ATLANTA

His passion was cyclist safety in metro Atlanta. He died after a bike crash.

Decatur attorney Ken Roskopf, 85, was known for his work advocating for injured riders.



Lawyer Ken Roskopf was an avid cyclist and joined group bike rides. He died in a bike crash in Decatur at age 85. (Courtesy)

By Rosana Hughes and Taylor Croft

8 hours ago



Ken Roskopf was an accomplished attorney in metro Atlanta with a myriad of interests, but he had a special passion for bicycling law and safety.

An avid rider, Roskopf represented hundreds of cyclists through the years who were injured on the roads. He was their advocate.

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While returning home Thursday night from a group ride, Rosskopf became a crash victim himself when he was involved in a collision with a truck in Decatur. He died the next day surrounded by his family. He was 85.

Rosskopf was nearly home when the crash happened at the intersection of Clairemont Avenue and Ponce de Leon Place, according to his family and Decatur police. At first, his injuries didn’t seem that bad, his eldest son, Erik, told The Atlanta Journal-Constitution. Rosskopf was alert and speaking with his wife, Linda, who rushed to the scene.

But his condition quickly took a turn. By the time the rest of the family arrived at Grady Memorial Hospital, he could no longer speak.

“Those of us who were there afterwards certainly were talking to him, trying to coach him through this,” said Erik Rosskopf, the pain still weighing heavily in his voice.

Police have not said what caused the crash. Initial details provided by police show Rosskopf was riding north in the curb lane on Clairemont Avenue while a Mazda B2200 truck was in the left travel lane going in the same direction. The collision happened when Rosskopf attempted to turn left and collided with the truck’s passenger side.

The crash remains under investigation. Police have not said if any charges will be filed.

Rosskopf was widely known for his kind and adventurous spirit, his friends and family members shared with the AJC. They say they have found solace in knowing he died doing what he loved.

“Cycling was really his life, his passion,” longtime friend Tom Wechsler said. “He would always tell me why he loved cycling: He said, ‘You know what? It makes me feel young.’”



Credit: Contributed

Besides his love for cycling, Ken Rosskopf was known for his kind and adventurous spirit, his friends and family members said. (Courtesy)

Wechsler and Rosskopf often cycled together. They made two trips to St. George Island in Florida on their bicycles, the last one in 2017.

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Wechsler said.

“Ken ran down to the beach and jumped in the ocean,” instead of taking a rest when they finally arrived, Wechsler’s wife, Frances, recalled. “We were there with five little eighth grade girls, and they were running in behind him. They just thought he was the coolest person they’d ever met.”

Roskopf combined his passion for biking with his law degree from the University of Southern California to represent injured bicyclists and motorcyclists, according to his law firm’s website.



Credit: Contributed

Ken Roskopf, 85, enjoyed riding motorcycles. (Courtesy)



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Roskopf practiced law in California and the U.S. Virgin Islands before opening his practice in Georgia in 1986. He subsequently wrote “Representing Injured Bicyclists” for Georgia Trial Lawyer and contributed to other books on the subject.

Roskopf’s second passion? Sailing. He once quipped with his son about dying doing what he loved, Erik said.

“He always said, ‘Just push me out on a boat, and I’ll go that way,’” Erik recalled. “We didn’t get to push him out in the boat, but he ended up going from his bicycle.”

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Three of Rosskopf's four children were able to say goodbye before he died, including his son, Joey, a former professional cyclist who lives in Spain but was in town visiting, Erik said.

Little did he know that his recent bike ride with his dad would be his last.

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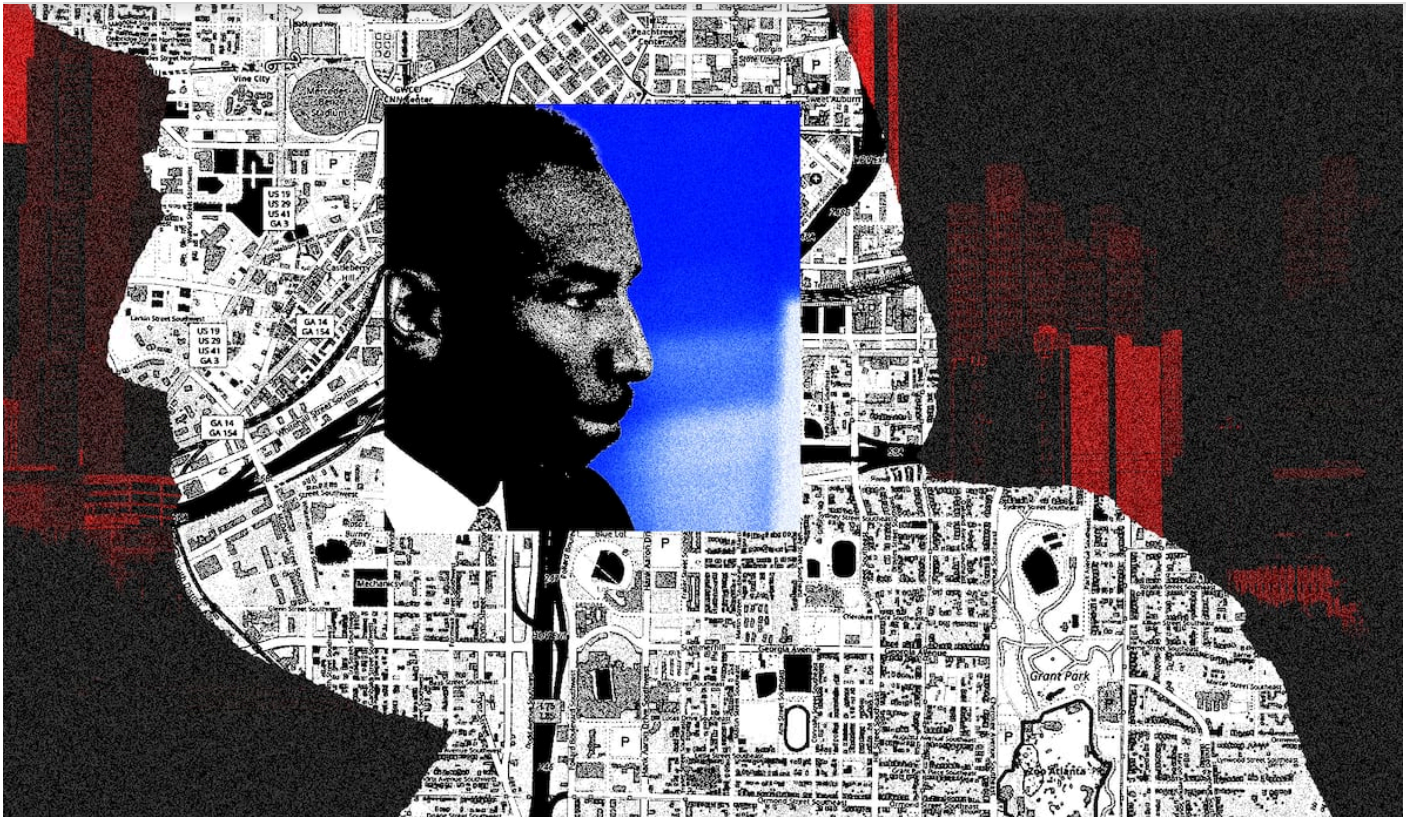


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