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A project borne from love: Handys do their best to preserve Alex's memory and keep kids safe

By [Danielle Williamson](#)
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MEDWAY -- The young, wide-eyed face of Alex Handy is now permanently etched into his father's skin.

Soon, the boy's image will be bronzed and tacked to a tree on Richard Road, near where he died last spring.

Alex's name is also stenciled into newly painted crosswalks in town. His family hopes the paint serves not only as a permanent reminder of their boy, but also a refresher on safety while crossing the street.

Alex, 13, died June 10 as the result of injuries he suffered when he was struck by a car while crossing Rte. 109 on his bike. He was not wearing a helmet, and the woman who hit him was not charged, police said.

"If I can do anything to remember my son in town -- and at the same time, support youth safety -- I'm going to do it," said Alex's father, Richard.

The Handy family has established the Alex Handy Memorial and Scholarship Foundation to keep their son's memory alive and encourage safety. Recently, the foundation made a donation to "Project Alex," an initiative launched by School Resource Officer Donald Grimes to stress the importance of safety.

Phase I of Project Alex was the painting of all legal crosswalks in town. "Project Alex" is stenciled into the blue crosswalks in white paint. Soon, Grimes' group will solicit donations from local businesses to install a sidewalk on a section of Rte. 109 running from Burger King to Dunkin' Donuts.

"I take responsibility for Alex's death, to some extent," Grimes said. "I need to stress safety more. We just painted the crosswalk near Alex's accident -- the one we wish he would have used."

Grimes said he has hosted four assemblies at the middle school in recent weeks, re-emphasizing crosswalk and helmet safety.

"I'm dedicating my energy to this. I have to be vigilant," said Grimes, who spends much of his time at the middle school, where Alex would have entered eighth grade this year.

After the assemblies, Grimes said every child who rode a bike to school was wearing a helmet. Those students who can't afford helmets will be provided one, Grimes said.

"We want to play a financial role as much as we can," Richard Handy said. "If there's something the school can contribute a certain amount to, we'd like to provide the rest."

The foundation, established by a \$7,000 donation from Handy's employer, Cambridge Health Tech Institute in Needham, will provide two scholarships or gifts to Medway students every year, Handy said.

Starting in the spring, a hard-working senior will receive a \$1,000 scholarship. Alex had ADHD and worked hard for his B grades, his father said.

"It may be a struggling student, not someone who necessarily has a learning disability, but someone who has to fight for everything he's got," Handy said.

There will also be a scholarship or gift given out each year to a member of Alex's class, Handy said.

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The foundation's first major fund-raiser, a golf tournament, will be held next June.

Donations to the foundation, which the Handys say is in the process of achieving nonprofit status, may be made at any Medway Co-Operative Bank branch, including the branch at the high school.

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