

PRESS RELEASE

Fairfield County Sheriff's Office
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: "THE SPIRIT RIDE IS COMING THROUGH, SEPT. 8, 2017!"

The very professionals who earn a living from highway accidents are now taking to the streets to promote highway safety and help safeguard the lives of fellow first responders. The Spirit Ride will relay a ceremonial casket by car carrier across the nation and back. About 300 towing companies across the U.S. are contributing their services to the Spirit Ride to promote safe driving and the Slow Down, Move Over law.

The Ride will pass through Fairfield County with the Spirit casket being relayed to Midwest Towing. A ceremony will take place at 10:00 AM on Friday, September 8, 2017, at the Pleasant Township Fire Department, 2925 Lancaster Thornville Rd NE, Lancaster OH. Sheriff Phalen will be speaking along with others from the community with a procession of tow trucks and emergency service vehicles to follow.

The Move Over law is often ignored and seemingly unknown to many motorists. The law exists in all states and requires passing vehicles to move over one lane when approaching an incident where tow operators, police, fire fighters and EMS people are working.

The ceremonial casket, named Spirit was custom built by a carpenter who is also a lifelong singer-songwriter (Mike Corbin) who composed the Spirit Ride's anthem. The casket was custom painted by an artist (Cecil Burrowes) who specializes in painting trucks and wreckers.

The colorful ceremonial casket, called Spirit, is at eight feet, a stretch farther than a standard casket. Painted on it are a dozen scenarios depicting first-responders at the scenes of highways incidents

While promoting public awareness of the Move Over laws the Ride at the same time honors first responders who've been killed by passing vehicles. Hundreds of roadside professionals are casualties each year of roadside incidents; about 100 of them are killed. Among police, fire, ems and towing professionals, 60% of those killed are tow operators.

Some 300 tow companies are relaying the ceremonial casket by car carrier from town to town across the nation and back. According to American Towman Magazine President Steve Calitri, the Ride is the greatest project in the history of the towing industry, which celebrated its centennial in 2016.

The Spirit Ride was founded by American Towman Magazine and B/A Products and is a project of American Towman Spirit, Inc., a nonprofit corporation, born to promote highway safety. Tow industry sponsors have pitched in with funds to support the coordination of the Ride and its media outreach campaign. All the towing companies participating by relaying the casket are contributing their services.