

8 East Valley Firefighters Charity Ride AZ Rider



The 15th Annual East Valley Firefighter Charity Ride took place on Friday April 13, 2018. Sign-in was hosted at Superstition Harley-Davidson, located at 2910 West Apache Trail in Apache Junction, AZ. This event has become an East Valley tradition, held the Friday of Bike Week.

It was about 60° to start off the day. Wind chill was enough to be invigorating without being unpleasant. The sky was clear. While it was still breezy, it was less so than the day before.

Reception was busy as volunteers manned the pre-registration and onsite registration tables. Local celebrity Charity Spears ~ Mrs. Gilbert AZ 2018 was there in support of the firefighters and to greet participants. There were a lot of independent riders out to support. Plus, organizations represented included American Legion Riders, Dead to Sin M/M, HOG, IAFF 10th District Riders, and Riders USA.

Your entry fee included breakfast served up by EV firefighter volunteers. Darryl was head cook, with a crew of about a dozen people. He shared that they served about 500 breakfasts... 800 eggs, 90# of sausage, 60# of pancake batter, & 4 gallons of syrup. It's impressive to see the efficiency with which these folks can coordinate feeding so many people in a short amount of time. The coffee station was sponsored by Starbucks of Apache Junction; with ladies from Starbucks serving up tasty hot coffee and warm morning greetings to all. "We are always happy to help our community."

Raffle tables were filled with prizes. This fundraiser was set up as a 'brown bag' type raffle.

You purchase tickets & put them into containers next to the prize you'd like to win. Tickets could be purchased in the morning and also at the last stop. There was an array of items including numerous adult beverages, gift certificates & gift cards, a 32" LED TV, tools, and a propane campfire which was quite popular. For the raffle you had to be at the last stop to win. On the other hand, the 50/50 winner did not have to be present to win.

The Superstition FD Pipes & Drums Honor Guard was there to perform and was well received.

Departure for the ride was staggered. The self-paced route was about 150 miles. Stops included the Drift Inn Saloon in Globe, Queen Creek's Olive Mill, and Gilbert Fire Dept Station #1 on Williams Field Road. Last card in was at 4:30pm at the final stop, Gila River Lone Butte Casino on Kyrene Road in Chandler. Fellow riders we spoke to commented on the windy ride as well! We definitely felt ourselves being pushed around on the road.

Announcements & drawings included Low hand winner Joe Minor with a 9-high assortment. Turns out he's a retired firefighter from Michigan. He won \$250 & donated back \$200 to the event. High hand winner was Jesse M. with four 8s. The prize was \$500. The 50/50 prize was \$408. Mike C. wasn't there to claim it so he was called with the news. Congratulations to each of you!

Brina from Superstition H-D shared, "Superstition Harley-Davidson is honored to be this event's starting location for the last 10+ years and we look forward to next year ☺"

Thanks go out to all the sponsors, Public Safety Financial/Galloway, United Phoenix Fire Fighters Charities (UPFFC), Verve Wellness Center, and Law Tigers. EVFC Executive Director Steve Heyer also extended thanks to Lone Butte Casino for their hospitality.

East Valley Firefighter Charities supports area communities & families, including burn and abuse victims. From their website <http://firefightercharities.com>, "Our charity has been created by the dedicated firefighters from the Cities of Mesa, Gilbert, Superstition, Gila River, Salt River, Ft. McDowell and Florence, Arizona, who truly believe that we can make a difference in our communities. As we respond into the homes of citizens we can observe up close the personal situations where people truly need a hand to live and succeed." While covering this event years back it was explained that, "The job of these firefighters is to make the best of everyone else's worst day. They see so much tragedy in their work, and spend so much time dealing with the rough segments of life. Their volunteer efforts allow them to take all that negative energy and re-direct it toward a positive outcome."

All I can say is, firefighters are a special kind of strong and good-hearted people. *Thank a Firefighter.* They're the folks running TOWARD the shit that's hitting the fan!

This group is a blessing in our community.

Betsy & Bruce

