

Pro-Police Rally coming to Bethalto Oct. 21

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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BETHALTO - An administrator of a popular Facebook page is hoping to have a pro-police rally on the Illinois side of the river.

Chris Rhodes, who manages the Madison County Scanner Page - a page chronicling the emergency calls across the county with as many as 23,000 followers - said the event would celebrate the police officers in the area who work toward the overall safety of their communities. The event will be held at the intersection of Route 140 and Highway 111 in the grassy area by the Bethalto Schnucks and U.S. Bank branch, located at 1 Airport Plaza. It is set to take place on Saturday, Oct. 21.

Inspired by similar rallies in Missouri, Rhodes said he has several friends who are police officers. He said they are becoming emotionally worn from the anti-police sentiment as well as the constant barrage of conflicts from the news as of late. Rhodes said he wanted an opportunity for people on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River to show their support.

"A lot of people have reached out in support of this," Rhodes said. "I've gotten a lot of positive feedback. There is a local truck club that is going to be there with flags on the back of their trucks that drive around. Bethalto Star Towing Service also reached out and said they would have a truck there to show support. They said a lot of other towing businesses in the area may be there as well."

Other than tow trucks and truck clubs, Rhodes said several followers of his Facebook page would also be in attendance, waving flags and holding signs in support of the local police department from 2-5 p.m.

In fact, most of the rally was designed based on followers of that Facebook page, Rhodes said. A poll was conducted to see which day of the week would work best (they chose Saturday) and, when Rhodes found a good day in Oct. 21, the most enthusiastic supporters of the rally agreed.

Originally, Rhodes had hoped to hold the rally somewhere in Alton, but the Bethalto location offered great visibility and ample parking. He said most of those most excited for the rally call Bethalto, Cottage Hills and Rosewood Heights home.

Rhodes said he would reach out to local police departments today and see how they felt.

Local departments declined to comment regarding the rally when asked by Riverbender.com.