

## Man in wheelchair takes ride on semi's grille

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### Listen to the 911 calls about the wheelchair attached to the semi truck

**PAW PAW** -- A young man has quite the story to tell after his wheelchair got lodged in the grille of a semi truck, which pushed the chair and the man inside for five miles down a road.

Muscular dystrophy forced Ben Carpenter, 22, of Alamo into a wheelchair eight years ago. He was on one of his twice-weekly outings, this time in Paw Paw around 4 p.m. Wednesday.

As he crossed Red Arrow Highway in front of a semi truck, he didn't make the traffic light. The truck driver apparently didn't see Carpenter and a collision occurred, causing the wheelchair's handles to become lodged in the truck's grille.

Carpenter remembers the sound. "Kind of like train cars coming together, something like that," he told 24 Hour News 8.

Unable to hear Carpenter's cries for help over the hum of the diesel engine, the truck driver continued down Red Arrow Highway at speeds of approximately 50 mph.

"It was fast, I know that. Faster than this chair was made to go," Carpenter said.

"I was thinking, the cars keep going by and nobody bothered to stop."

But they were calling 911.

The Michigan State Police Paw Paw Post and Van Buren County Central Dispatch began receiving strange reports of the situation. Police initially thought the report might have been a prank until they started receiving more calls.

Time was running out on Carpenter as the dark streaks on the road were marks left by the smoking tires on his wheelchair.

"I was probably thinking that this is going to keep going and not stop anywhere, 50 or 60 miles somewhere. What if I end up in South Haven? I mean, I would have been dead way before that."

Luckily for him, the truck driver stopped five miles down the road at Ralph Moyle Trucking Company, which owned the truck.

"If I had gone any more miles, the tires would have been gone all the way," Carpenter said.

When troopers arrived at the scene they discovered Carpenter unharmed and unfazed by the incident.



Pictures are courtesy State Police Trooper Mark Kassuba



"I was happy. Thank God it was over," Carpenter said. "I thought it was kind of like a fair ride. I don't remember feeling any bumps though. I must have, but the road must have been pretty smooth."

Police approached the driver and advised him of what happened. The driver did not believe them until he stepped out of the truck and saw Carpenter still sitting in the chair.

One trooper on the scene said, "You could work another 90 years in law enforcement and never see something like this."

Everybody said they are just glad no one was injured.

Authorities say no charges will be filed.