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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – **Three New School Resource Officers Added in 2014**

One of the Sheriff's Farris' primary goals when he took office was to ensure the safety of the children in our community. "Nothing is more important than the safety of our students and educators," said Sheriff Farris. "We are going to do all we can to keep them safe because as we have seen school shootings and other horrific events don't just happen in big cities. They happen in small towns too."

With that in mind, he has hired three new School Resource Officers (SROs) this year with plans to add more in the future. The new SROs this year are: David Cantrell at Cookeville High School, John Pettit at Upperman High School, and Randy Brown who serves at both Prescott Middle School and Avery Trace. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, we should have 12 School Resource Officers based on the student population of Putnam County. With the recent addition of these three SROs, we now have a total of six SROs in the county.

"I am proud of the work that all of our SROs do every day," said Sheriff Farris. "And I am glad that we were able to add such competent deputies to our School Resource Officer program this year. They are doing a great job of working with the kids, parents and school administrators to ensure our kids' safety every day."

An SRO has a diverse role in the school community and has many duties and responsibilities. SROs are sworn officers assigned to a school on a long-term basis who work in collaboration with the school and the community as a resource for safety and security issues.

An SRO provides a highly visible presence to deter or identify trespassers on campus. Each of our SROs assists the school administration in maintaining a safe and secure environment. School administrators benefit from the SROs training, knowledge and experience in handling situations involving possible weapons violations or in the identification of controlled substances.

SROs frequently assist in resolving problems that are not necessarily law violations, such as bullying or disorderly behavior, but which are nonetheless safety issues. They also can serve as a resource for classroom presentations that complement the educational curriculum by emphasizing the fundamental principles and skills needed for responsible citizenship, such as:

- Alcohol and drug awareness
- Distracted Driving Awareness
- Gang and stranger awareness and resistance
- Conflict resolution
- Babysitting safety
- Bicycling, pedestrian, and motor vehicle safety
- Special crimes in which students are especially likely to be offenders or victims, such as vandalism, shoplifting, and sexual assault by acquaintances.

"Earning the Public Trust Every Day!"