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## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 8/24/2015

### **PCSO and Pilot Club Partner on Project Lifesaver**

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – The Putnam County Sheriff's Office has partnered with the Pilot Club of Cookeville on Project Lifesaver, a program that helps track and rescue individuals with cognitive disorders such as Alzheimer's, Autism and Down's Syndrome. The Pilot Club raises funds to purchase the transmitters that are worn by participants in the program as well as the receivers that are used to locate them when they wander. They also provide training to Sheriff's Office deputies so that they have the information necessary to conduct search and rescue operations with accuracy and sensitivity.

"We are indebted to the Pilot Club of Cookeville for helping us protect these 'At Risk' individuals in our community," said Sheriff Eddie Farris. "Through the use of the transmitter bracelets and receivers, we are able to conduct search and rescue operations throughout Putnam County and quickly locate them when they are missing."

The Sheriff's Office uses receivers located in Dispatch and certain patrol cars as well as hand-held receivers to conduct search and rescue operations when members of the program are reported missing by family or caregivers. As soon as a call is received, a special form is filled out by the dispatcher gathering as much identifying information as possible (what the subject is wearing, what they are afraid of, where they were last seen, how to handle the individual when found, etc.). This information is then passed on to Deputy Chris Brown who heads up the program at the Sheriff's Office. He then keys in the frequency of the transmitter for the missing person and begins tracking the individual.

"We are so pleased to partner with the Putnam County Sheriff's Office on Project Lifesaver. Pilot International adopted the program several years ago in keeping with our Mission to 'Provide Service and Education, and Uplift Families'," said Susan Moores, a member of Pilot Club of Cookeville. "Each transmitter costs approximately \$300 and includes a waterproof transmitter, battery, strap and tester. Currently, we have three children with Autism participating in the program and have had several seniors participate in the past as well."

According to Susan Lomax, a Cookeville resident, whose 17-year old son Caleb has autism, many children with Autism have a propensity for running away. "In order to protect our son Caleb, we had to lock ourselves in at all times. One of us had to be in the same room, keeping an eye on him or else he would deliberately run away. Our home became a prison. Caleb didn't understand the concept of danger and we were constantly worried that he would be hit by a car or fall down a steep embankment or cliff. Once I heard about Project Lifesaver and got the transmitter, it was like we were freed from prison. It has truly been a lifesaver!"

#### **About Pilot Club of Cookeville:**

Pilot Club of Cookeville is one of 15 Pilot Clubs in the Tennessee District of Pilot International, a worldwide service organization founded in Macon, Georgia in 1921. Originally designed as a volunteer service organization

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for business and professional women, Pilot International ([www.pilotinternational.org](http://www.pilotinternational.org)) has since expanded to include men and women from around the globe and in all walks of life. The historic inspiration for the name was the riverboat pilot who would steer a true course through calm or troubled waters and today's Pilot Club members find their "true course" through our charge to do more, care more and be more everyday.

The 350 members of the Tennessee District volunteer to serve by furthering Pilot International's humanitarian efforts through charitable, educational and research programs throughout the world. They spend countless hours volunteering in their community to promote "brain awareness" with projects such as Project Lifesaver, Lifeline, Pilot Power Walk and the "BrainMinders" program. (For more: <http://www.pilotndistrict.com/cookeville.html>.)

**About Project Lifesaver:**

Project Lifesaver is a 501(C)(3) community based, public safety, non-profit organization that provides law enforcement, fire/rescue, other first responders and caregivers with equipment and training to quickly locate and rescue individuals with cognitive disorders who are prone to the life threatening behavior of wandering, including those with Alzheimer's disease, Autism and Down Syndrome. To date, Project Lifesaver agencies have conducted nearly 4,000 successful rescues. Most who wander are found within a few miles from home, and search times have been reduced from hours and days to minutes. Recovery times for Project Lifesaver clients average 30 minutes – 95% less time than standard operations. Nationwide there are over 1,400 Project Lifesaver agencies throughout 48 states and six provinces in Canada.

Project Lifesaver is the most widely used and effective program in the nation that is specifically designed to protect the "At Risk" populations in our community. Project Lifesaver has trained thousands of public safety agencies, not only in search, rescue and the use of our electronic locating equipment, but also in the methods necessary to communicate with a person who has Alzheimer's disease, Autism or a related cognitive disorder.

Project Lifesaver is also a subject matter expert and adviser on the wandering issue for:

- Leaders Engaged on Alzheimer's disease (LEAD)
- National Center for Missing & Exploited Children,
- International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP)
- Alzheimer's Foundation
- National Alzheimer's Project Act (NAPA)
- National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners
- International Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners

For more information or to learn more about Project Lifesaver visit [www.projectlifesaver.org](http://www.projectlifesaver.org).

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