



## **PRESS RELEASE**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: 2/14/2016

### **10-Year Old Boy Thanks K9 That Rescued Him**

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – Late in the afternoon of October 20, 2015, the Putnam County Sheriff's Office dispatch received an urgent call from Rosa Perez, mother of 10-year old Raidel Martinez, saying that the boy had gone missing from the backyard where he was playing that afternoon. With dusk quickly approaching, Deputy Matt Scott and his K9 Maggie, along with Deputy Patrick Short, responded immediately.

K9 Deputy Maggie, a highly trained bloodhound, is often used by the Putnam County Sheriff's Office for search and rescue operations because she has a very sensitive nose and the stamina to stay on a scent over long periods of time. In other words, she doesn't give up until she's found what or, in this case, who she is looking for!

Once on the scene, Mrs. Perez and her husband Israel Martinez stated they had found Raidel's shoes near a waterfall in the woods behind their residence on Sulfur Ridge Road. Deputy Scott immediately went into action, getting Maggie out of his vehicle and ready to track while Deputy Short obtained one of Raidel's shirts to take with them as a secondary scent article.

Maggie immediately began tracking north until she came out onto the road. Deputy Short then laid down the shirt and Maggie began tracking southwest down the driveway of a neighboring house to a wood line. Deputy Short yelled Raidel's name and both deputies heard a faint reply from somewhere in the woods. At this point, Maggie started down a steep hillside. As the deputies got about halfway down, they yelled again and this time heard Raidel's voice saying that he could see their flashlights. They asked if he was hurt and he said that his leg was hurting. They advised him to stay where he was and that they were coming to him.

They continued to track down the hillside until they came to a creek. Once at the creek, Maggie turned right and began tracking up the creek bed approximately 30 feet. At that point, the deputies saw Raidel sitting next to a tree. They immediately advised Dispatch that they had made contact with the child and began assessing Raidel for injuries. Raidel's knee was swollen and he said he was thirsty. The deputies gave him a bottle of water and advised Dispatch that the Putnam County Rescue Squad Rope Team would need to assist Raidel in getting to the top of the hill which was approximately 160 feet up and extremely steep.

The Rescue Squad was quickly dispatched and a short time later, Raidel was reunited with his parents and then transported to Cookeville Regional Medical Center where he was evaluated before being sent home with his parents.

"This could have been a much more serious situation," said Sheriff Eddie Farris. "Fortunately, the parents called us right away and we had the resources to immediately deploy so that the scent was still fresh. I am so proud of our K9 team. They have trained hard and continue to perform at the top of their class in every situation we throw at them. I'm just happy that Raidel was OK and we were able to reunite the family so quickly."

***"Earning the Public's Trust Every Day!"***

“I have responded to lots of calls for assistance, including murders and other life threatening situations, but I have to say that rescuing little Ridel has been the highlight of my career,” said Deputy Scott. “When we found him he was sitting on the ground hugging a tree. He told us that his teacher had taught his class that if they ever got lost they were supposed to hug a tree and wait for help. This keeps them from wandering even farther away. In this case, it worked perfectly.”

# # #

**Media contact:**

Beth Nelson, PIO

[sheriffpio@putnamcountyttn.gov](mailto:sheriffpio@putnamcountyttn.gov)

*“Earning the Public’s Trust Every Day!”*