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Date: 9/13/2016 2:07:41 PM

Subject: News Release Missing Vulnerable Adult located by Project Lifesaver

For Immediate Release:

(Johns Island, SC) On September 12, 2016, shortly after 2:00 p.m., Charleston County Sheriff's Office deputies were dispatched to an address on Betsy Kerrison Parkway to investigate a report of a missing vulnerable adult. The vulnerable adult was reported missing by his spouse. Once our deputies arrived on scene, it was reported that the vulnerable adult was signed up with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office as a client with PROJECT LIFESAVER. While our deputies were checking the nearby areas, woods, and roadways, the Charleston County Sheriff's Office Community Affairs Unit, which is the unit that manages the Project Lifesaver Program for the Sheriff's Office, K9, and our Aviation Unit responded with Project Lifesaver tracking equipment to assist with the search efforts. During the search, our deputies on the ground and the Sheriff's Office Aviation Unit was able to obtain a tracking signal and locate the exact location of the vulnerable adult. He was found unharmed inside of a residence about a quarter of a mile from his home. He was returned safely back to his residence.

Currently, over 1,500 member agencies in 50 states participate in the Project Lifesaver Program—police, sheriff, fire, public safety departments and other emergency responders. The method relies on proven radio technology and specially trained search and rescue teams. Citizens enrolled in Project Lifesaver wear a small transmitter on the wrist or ankle that emits an individualized tracking signal. If an enrolled client goes missing, the caregiver notifies their local Project Lifesaver agency, and a trained emergency team responds to the wanderer's area. 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.

Citizens, municipalities and local Alzheimer's groups have tried to speed the rescue operation by creating registries and Silver Alert programs that provide first responders with identification information, physical descriptions and photographs of registrants. While this is a step in the right direction, the identification bracelets worn by the registrants in these programs can only facilitate the rapid return of the individual once they are found. This does not consider whether the person was found alive.

Project Lifesaver International (PLI) was founded by public safety officers themselves to bring about a solution that facilitates not just the speedy return of wanderers to their families upon being found but the actual rapid location of the wanderers themselves — a strategy that greatly increases the chance that the wanderer will be found alive.

Training for a new agency includes two days of on-site instruction for up to seven people in your agency, provided by a State Coordinator (a law enforcement professional certified by PLI to train others) or by PLI's own staff. PLI also provides one-day training for up to seven officers to be trained as instructors and re-certify staff every two years. Each new agency will also receive training on Alzheimer's and Autism, as well as other disorders, to help when responding to a missing client.

"The quick recovery of this missing vulnerable adult, is a true testament that Project Lifesaver works and is a valuable tool for the citizens of Charleston County and the Charleston County Sheriff's Office. Without it being available in this particular incident, it would have taken our deputies much longer to locate this person, which would have added additional stress to his family."

Anyone interested in signing up with Project Lifesaver can call the Charleston County Sheriff's Office Community Affairs Unit at 843.554.6220.

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