



Fayette County Sheriff's Office

Wayne Hannah, Sheriff **November 11, 2010**

Press Information

Sheriff Wayne Hannah
whannah@fayettecountyga.gov

770-716-4800

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month and Sheriff Wayne Hannah reminds our citizens of Project Lifesaver.

November is National Alzheimer's Disease Awareness Month. According to the Alzheimer's Association, over 5.3 million people have Alzheimer's and that number is expected to dramatically increase over the next few years. According to the **New York Times**, beginning January 1, a baby boomer will turn 65 years of age every eight seconds, greatly increasing their chances of getting Alzheimer's.

Alzheimer's is the most common type of dementia which causes people to have difficulty remembering names. It also causes impaired judgment, disorientation, confusion, behavior changes and even difficulty speaking and walking.

I bring this to your attention in order to remind the citizens of Fayette County that the Fayette County Sheriff's Office offers a program called Project Lifesaver. Project Lifesaver is a reliable rapid-response partnership with law enforcement aiding victims and families suffering from Alzheimer's disease, Epilepsy, autism, Down Syndrome and other related illnesses.

You may have seen the recent story of a north Fayette County resident with Alzheimer's disease who wandered from his house and was located within just a few minutes by a Sheriff's Office bloodhound tracking dog. This may not always be the case, especially if the individual does not participate in Project Lifesaver. This particular case has inclined the family of this person, as well as another person, to begin participating in Project Lifesaver.

People that are enrolled in the Project Lifesaver program receive a radio transmitter device that emits a tracking signal which is attached to their wrist or ankle by way of a plastic or nylon wristband. When caregivers notify the Sheriff's Office that the person is missing, a search and rescue team responds to the wanderer's area and starts searching with the mobile locator tracking system. Search times have been reduced from hours and days to minutes. Recovery times average less than 30 minutes.

The Project Lifesaver bracelet is much more than a passive ID bracelet. It is a one-ounce battery operated radio transmitter emitting an automatic tracking signal every second, 24 hours a day. The signal is tracked on the ground or in the air over several miles. As each bracelet has a unique radio

frequency, the Project Lifesaver search team positively locates and identifies the person who has wandered away from home or a care facility.

The program has proven to be the world's most successful system at locating persons missing due to Alzheimer's disease, autism, and other related illnesses, saving time, manpower, money and most important, saving lives!

A lost person with Alzheimer's or other dementia represents a critical emergency. They are unaware of their situation; they do not call out for help and do not respond to people calling out to them. Nearly half of them will die and many can become injured or fall victim to predators if they are not located within 24 hours. The number of people, families and communities experiencing this risk will grow dramatically in the next few years.

Project Lifesaver, a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, depends upon the support of the community. Project Lifesaver's goal is to provide the benefits of the program to all in need regardless of their ability to pay. All contributions made to Project Lifesaver are tax deductible and are used directly for program operations.

The current cost for each bracelet (including 2 months of maintenance) is \$263.00. There is also a \$25.00 monthly maintenance fee (batteries, etc.) for each month after the second month. All of these fees are used strictly for this program. Indigent Funding is available for those who qualify.

Companies and individuals can do their part in protecting the "Greatest Generation".

If you would be interested in this program for yourself, a friend or a loved one, or if you would simply like to make a contribution to the program, please contact Lt. Belinda McCastle at the Fayette County Sheriff's Office. She may be reached at 770-716-4802 or email at bmccastle@fayettecountyga.gov.