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News Release

Another Project Lifesaver Success

Sheriff Gary Schaffer announced today another success story for the Cape May County Sheriff's Project Lifesaver Unit. An eighty-one year old Alzheimer Dementia patient was successfully found within 25 minutes of receiving a call to the Sheriff's Office for assistance.

According to Sheriff Schaffer, the Sheriff's Office received a phone call from Lower Township Police Dispatch that an 81 year old Alzheimer / Dementia patient, currently one of our Project Lifesaver Clients, walk off in Villas. The Sheriff's Office received a call at approximately 1:00pm that the subject was last seen 45 to 60 minutes prior by his home in the Villas. Sheriff Officer Randy Mystic headed to Villas with the Project Lifesaver tracking devise. As Officer Mystic was responding, he picked up a strong signal from the Project Lifesaver equipment near Menz Restaurant while in route to the clients home.

The signal intensified as he headed to Villas. Officer Mystic spotted the subject, made contact with him and delivered him home unharmed. The man was 4.5 miles from his home and thought he was going to walk to Philadelphia. The 81 year old man was transported safely to his home and Officer Mystic then changed the battery in his Project Lifesaver bracelet upon return to his home.

The Cape May County Project Lifesaver Unit is headed up by Officer Paul Shelton who is assisted by Officer Mystic. "As it turns out, this eighty-one year old was the client assigned to Officer Mystic. This was an outstanding job done by Officer Mystic," said Sheriff Schaffer

According to Sheriff Gary Schaffer, "This once again shows the value of Project Lifesaver and our Sheriff's Office commitment to this program. Presently the Cape May County Sheriff's Office has 23 clients participating in Project Lifesaver. This is almost a 50% increase from a few years ago. Eight are children who are either Autistic or have Down's Syndrome. Fifteen are adults with Dementia, or Alzheimer's I strongly encourage people with loved ones in special need to contact our office and explore the possibility of becoming a participant."

Project Lifesaver is an International Organization whose organization is set up as Guardians of Alzheimer's, Autism and Special Needs Wanderers. The clients are registered with sheriff's office and are required to wear a device that is similar and the size of a watch on their wrist. This sends out a signal that can be monitored with equipment by specially trained officers. Every sheriff's office in the State of New Jersey participates in this program.

Over 5,000,000 people in the USA have Alzheimer's. That number will triple by 2050. Well over 50% of these people wander and become lost. 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, 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 several years.

“Our Project Lifesaver Program is sponsored and run solely by donations. It cost \$300.00 to outfit each client with a tracking bracelet and a supply of batteries for a year. I want to thank the members of the public and civic groups who in that past have supported this program and encourage others to join in their support. I need to personally thank many of our Sheriff’s Officers who take their personal time to visit our clients, check on the devices and change batteries every month when needed. It is the officer’s dedication and public support that makes this a great success as well as keeping expenses and cost down,” said Sheriff Schaffer.

Project Lifesaver is set up with private donations from individuals and community groups. It is a non-profit tax exempt organization. If you or your group would like more information Project Lifesaver, a presentation, enrolling a loved one or would just like to make a contribution to this program please call the Cape May County Sheriff Officer Paul Shelton at 465-6831 or our web site at www.cmcsheriff.net .