



Press Release

December 1, 2008

Sheriff's Departments of Pierce and St. Croix Counties

The Sheriff's Departments of Pierce and St. Croix Counties have formed a new partnership within our community. As a result of the efforts of volunteers and generous contributions from the community, the Sheriff's Departments are now able to make a very valuable program available to vulnerable citizens. As members of **Project Lifesaver International** they will provide a program dedicated to safeguarding and locating individuals who may wander and become lost due to Alzheimer's Disease, Dementia, Autism, Down Syndrome and related conditions. **Project Lifesaver** is designed to provide security and comfort for the family while safe guarding the memory impaired and those who are least able to help themselves.

- State-of-the-art personalized radio transmitters are assigned to people who are at risk of wandering away from their homes and becoming lost. This radio transmitter is the size of a wristwatch and provides a constant radio signal. It is light weight, water proof, and the batteries are changed with the assistance of trained PLS personnel on a monthly basis. The radio wrist transmitter emits an automatic tracking signal every second, 24 hours a day. Each transmitter has a unique radio frequency.
- In the event a client wanders and becomes lost, the caregiver will **immediately** call 911 and the trained personnel will be dispatched to the last known location. Having been trained in the unique equipment and search techniques, they will search for the lost person. The average time it takes for a person to be found using this technology is 30 minutes.
- The two departments can provide mutual aid to one another should a search be necessary.

Project Lifesaver International provided training for four counties in Adams County, Wisconsin earlier this fall. Two officers from Pierce County and two from St. Croix County completed training September 29 – October 1, 2008. These four officers are now Search Specialists and Certified Trainers, and will be able to train additional personnel in their departments. The program will be coordinated by the Pierce & St. Croix Sheriff's Departments, with input from a panel of community representatives designated by the departments. The following describes enrollment procedures:

- Caregivers can complete a Program Application, including verification from the individual's physician that s/he is considered at-risk for wandering.
- Trained personnel will meet with individuals and their caregivers. If it is determined that Project Lifesaver is the appropriate program for the individual, a Client Profile will be completed, and caregivers must agree to follow program guidelines.
- There is an initial fee of \$300 for the equipment and a small monthly fee of \$10 for maintaining it. Funding options will be explored with clients/caregivers who may be in need of assistance. Once enrolled, the client is provided with a personalized wristband that emits a unique tracking signal every second.
- Monthly follow-up by trained personnel will ensure information is current and equipment is working. This will assist police in the search effort should the client become lost.
- All information will be confidential and used only for emergency situations. Access will be restricted to trained personnel designated by the Sheriff's Departments of Pierce and St. Croix Counties.

Applications for enrollment will be available beginning in December 2008. The Departments will begin accepting applications in January 2009. The departments have set a goal of February 2009 for implementing the program and enrolling clients. For information regarding enrolling a loved one, volunteering, or making a contribution, please contact the following individual in your county Sheriff's Department:

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Investigator Shawn Demulling
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More information is also available on the program's website at: www.ProjectLifesaverPierceStCroix.org