

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**CONTACT:**

DOEA Communications  
communications@elderaffairs.org

## **The Florida Department of Elder Affairs Strengthens Partnership With Scent Evidence K9 to Help Vulnerable Populations Stay Safe**

*Families Living With Alzheimer's Disease and Related Dementias Receive Additional Benefits From Scent Preservation Kits to Locate Missing Persons*

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.,— Supporting the direction of Governor Ron DeSantis to keep Florida's most vulnerable populations safe, the Florida Department of Elder Affairs (DOEA) is strengthening its partnership with Scent Evidence K9 through the distribution of additional Scent Preservation Kits<sup>®</sup> to caregivers of those living with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias (ARD). Older adults with ARD may have an increased tendency to wander and become lost. If that happens, proactive family safety measures, such as the Scent Preservation Kit<sup>®</sup>, are providing effective response systems to locate missing persons and return them to safety.

"Governor DeSantis is ensuring Florida's older adults stay safe, and this partnership furthers that directive, especially for those living with ARD," **said Elder Affairs Secretary Richard Prudom.** "By strengthening our relationship with Scent Evidence K9, we are able to assist more families and help prevent at-risk individuals from becoming missing persons. The Scent Preservation Kits<sup>®</sup> now contain even more resources to allow families and caregivers to be prepared before an at-risk individual goes missing, and the additional information may improve response time if someone does go wandering."

DOEA initially sent 3,000 kits to Memory Disorder Clinics (MDCs) and individuals seeking assistance through other dementia-related programs. Seventeen MDCs are located throughout Florida and may be [found here](#). Since the original order, DOEA has acquired another 2,000 kits and in total will distribute 5,000 Scent Preservation Kits<sup>®</sup>. The kits now include an Individual Preparedness Plan, Response Recommendations, and extensive resources provided in an enclosed USB flash drive.

"We call our kits 'Peace of Mind in a Jar,'" **said Founder and CEO of Scent Evidence K9 Paul Coley.** "As a former FBI Forensic Canine Operations Specialist and canine handler, I was constantly faced with the challenge of finding an effective scent article during active searches. My solution was to develop the scientifically tested and proven Scent Preservation Kit<sup>®</sup>. These kits provide K9 responders with uncontaminated scent articles that significantly reduce the time it takes to locate someone."

4040 Esplanade Way, Tallahassee, FL 32399-7000

Phone: (850) 414-2000 | Fax: (850) 414-2004 | TDD: (850) 414-2001

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*Stella, award winning Scent Evidence K9. Photo by Joe Blanton*

In addition, DOEA is pleased to celebrate the “scentsational” K9 Stella, for being awarded the top honor in the Uniformed Service K-9 category for the 2020 American Kennel Club ACE Awards. Stella and her handler/owner, Paul Coley, are a lifesaving team for seniors with AD/DR in Florida. DOEA extends well-deserved congratulations to the team.

Scent Evidence K9 has created new packaging for the kits which will be distributed by DOEA and include a letter from Secretary Richard Prudom providing further assistance. DOEA is continuing to work with Memory Disorder Clinics, the Alzheimer’s Disease Initiative, and all

Florida Area Agencies on Aging to identify recipients for the kits and ensure those with the highest risk of wandering are protected.

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### ***About the Florida Department of Elder Affairs***

The Florida Department of Elder Affairs, the State Unit on Aging, helps Florida’s elders to remain healthy, safe, and independent. The Department provides most direct services through its Division of Statewide Community-Based Services, which works through the state’s eleven Area Agencies on Aging and local service providers to deliver essential services to a vital segment of the population. For more information, please visit [www.elderaffairs.org](http://www.elderaffairs.org).

### ***About Scent Evidence K9***

Scent Evidence K9 is a Tallahassee-based international provider of effective scent discriminate systems and services that enable responders to find missing persons and bring them home safely. The company has partnered with several organizations including the Department of Elder Affairs, the Alzheimer’s Association, the Dementia Care and Cure Initiative, and law enforcement agencies across the U.S. and internationally to raise awareness and provide proactive public safety solutions for populations at high-risk for wandering.

