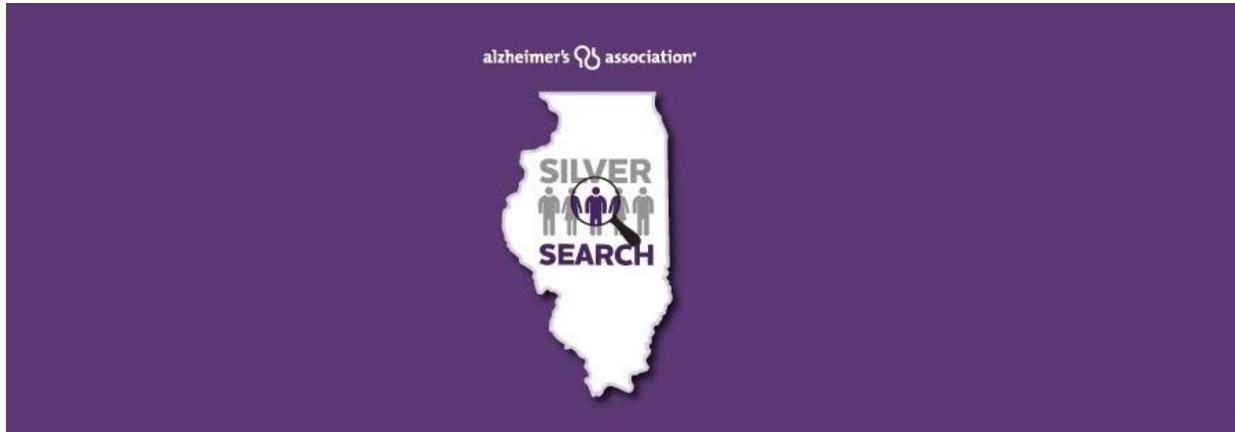


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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ILLINOIS SILVER SEARCH HELPING TO BRING PEOPLE HOME

CHICAGO - During 2018 there were 44 Silver Search advisories which led to 43 recoveries. One advisory is still active. By comparison, during 2017 there were only 26 advisories. Silver Search is a coordinated effort to bring awareness, education, and resources to help find and safely return people with Alzheimer's disease or dementia that go missing. The Silver Search program brings to light the increasing incidences of people with Alzheimer's or dementia that get lost and ways in which the public can help law enforcement return them home safely.

By training law enforcement agencies across Illinois on the program, Silver Search has become a vital tool for law enforcement agencies to use when a loved one with dementia goes missing. According to the Alzheimer's Association, more than 220,000 Illinois residents are currently living with Alzheimer's. Sixty percent of those with Alzheimer's will wander at some point during their diagnosis.

The rise in advisories can be closely related to the increased training in 2018. The Illinois State Police Department has trained more than 200 law enforcement personnel on warning signs to look for, communications skills and the criteria for a Silver Search, as well as procedures for activating a search.

"We are happy with the increase of the law enforcement community utilizing the resources Silver Search provides. In 2019, we look forward to expanding the reach of the program by continuing to train more first responders than ever before on this life-changing tool." Craig Burge, Missing Person Coordinator for the Illinois State Police said.

Once an alert is issued, Illinois State Police activate the Endangered Missing Person Advisory. This advisory will alert the public through notifications to media, Illinois Department of Transportation (IDOT) digital highway signs, Illinois Lottery terminals, in addition to the Silver Search website and social media channels.

"In partnership with the Silver Search Task Force, the Alzheimer's Association is very proud to have helped reach Illinois residents all across the state with the Silver Search Alerts. The Silver Search Facebook page has reached hundreds of thousands of users and has been a fantastic tool in helping bring people home safely," Patrick Reedy, Alzheimer's Association Illinois Chapter Executive Director, said. "Many positive stories have been shared, including one family whose father was found thanks to a Facebook post. "

This increased awareness has been the mission of the Silver Search Task Force, which brings agencies and organizations together with the common goal of educating people on Silver Search. The Task Force continues to meet on a regular basis to formulate goals for the coming years. The public service announcements will continue to air on TV and radio promoting the program, the lottery terminals and highway digital message boards also continue to be used when a person is missing in a vehicle.

Participating members of the Silver Search task force are: Alzheimer's Association, Illinois State Police, Illinois Tollway Authority, Illinois Broadcasters Association, Illinois Association of Chiefs of Police, Illinois Department of Aging, Illinois Department of Transportation, AARP, Illinois Law Enforcement Training and Standards Board, Illinois Secretary of State, Illinois Lottery.

For more: www.silversearchillinois.org

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