

# KLAMATH COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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**Timothy M. Evinger, Sheriff**

3300 Vandenberg Road  
Klamath Falls, OR 97603

Captain Scott Bakker  
105 Squadron, Civil Air Patrol  
PO Box 1018  
Brookings, OR 97415

March 31, 2010

RE: Aircraft Mounted Speaker System

Captain Bakker,

I write this letter to let you know what an incredible tool the aircraft mounted speaker system is in aiding search and rescue.

Last summer, I first saw and heard this system in operation during a 7 county training scenario in Josephine County Oregon. I was impressed as to the functionality of the device and could clearly hear the spoken words within the canyons we were working from.

Two weeks ago, I received a call from Curry County Oregon Sheriff John Bishop. A four-year old girl had become lost in the woods outside the City of Brookings. I arrived the morning after she had gone missing to assist Sheriff Bishop with managing a tremendous effort that was underway to find this small girl Zoey Dorsey.

Sheriff Bishop and I made the decision to request the aircraft mounted speaker system through you, the Civil Air Patrol 105 Squadron.

As you and I now know the beautiful ending to this story, we also know that Zoey was on death's doorstep when she was located just before nightfall that second day. I have to believe that the recording you played from the aircraft speaker, which had Zoey's grandmother reassuring Zoey, made a difference. Zoey's body core temperature was a dangerous 83 degrees that evening at the hospital. We also know that Zoey was in a state of shock and likely had been that way since the first cold night she spent in the woods alone.

The speaker on the aircraft that you orbited with overhead was loud and clear and likely kept Zoey hanging on to hope that she was not alone and would be found. I know of the reassurance I felt at the command post just hearing the message myself.

In the past week, I nearly called again for the aircraft with the speaker in Klamath County Oregon. In two separate incidents, one with a lost subject with mental illness and another lost individual who had a criminal record, both were hiding from searchers as they were fearful of arrest as they fought off hypothermia.

The ability to communicate and resolve this type of search by getting the subjects to understand that the volunteer searchers looking for them are not there to hurt them or arrest them can be very beneficial to the lost. This would also enable searchers to get out of harm's way in freezing temperatures and hazardous conditions sooner.

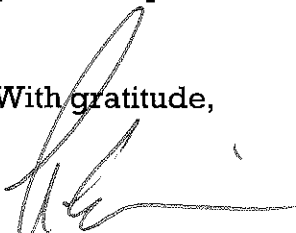
Two years ago, I had a pilot friend go missing in a plane crash at night. He had crashed into a mountain in the wilderness. He was seriously injured but miraculously lived through the accident. The pilot was prepared with gear, and called for assistance on his satellite phone. He had shaky coverage with his phone as his ankles were broken and he could not stand up for better reception. CAP located the wreckage during the first few hours after the crash. I remember my friend telling me that he was frantic to make sure the CAP plane saw him while they searched. The CAP flight stayed overhead and orbited and with limited communication out, my friend believed that they spotted him but I know he would have loved to hear from the loudspeaker that they saw him and help was on the way.

I could go on and on about possible uses for this device, however I think you recognize them already.

Finally, as a pilot myself, a search manager, a sheriff, the chair of The Oregon Governor's Search and Rescue Policy Commission, I thank you for your work and for making this wonderful tool available to the sheriff's of Oregon.

Fly safe and please call on the Oregon Sheriffs anytime. We appreciate the partnership that has been forged with your organization.

With gratitude,



Tim Evinger, Sheriff