

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Zacherl Family Honors Legacy with Ice Rescue Kit Donation to Sheriff's Office

Fond du Lac, Wis. (November 27, 2019): On January 21, 2019, Jenny Zacherl sat in an emergency department's waiting room with tear-filled eyes and an anxious heart. She knew a tragic accident had occurred on frozen Lake Winnebago involving her family, but had yet to learn of details.

She soon learned of news that would change her life forever – Peter (Pete) Zacherl, her husband of 30 years, did not survive. Also traveling with Pete was his son, Dan Zacherl, age 23 at the time of the accident, who survived.

As the 5th generation owners of Zacherl Funeral Home, helping others cope with tragedy and loss are common parts of life for the Zacherl family. While the basis of their job is to prepare services, direct funerals, and assist families with paperwork, there is something far more important they are responsible for – offering support during the worst, most painful time of a family's or individual's lives.

Despite their professional experience, the Zacherl family was not prepared to deal with their own personal loss.

After taking time to process Pete's passing, the Zacherl's met with Sheriff Ryan Waldschmidt of Fond du Lac County. He shared that as ice rescue calls become more frequent in Fond du Lac County, the department needed to take measures to ensure safer rescue practices for the sheriff's deputies and the individuals involved in rescue calls.

Sheriff Waldschmidt identified the benefits of installing ice rescue kits in each of the department's squad cars. Each kit contains a carrying case, ice picks, traction cleats, throwable rescue rope, and a rescue flotation device. Waldschmidt stated "the kits are an important investment which will benefit rescue efforts for many years to come."

Jenny, Dan, and Claire Zacherl felt inspired to support Sheriff Waldschmidt's mission to purchase ice rescue kits in memory of husband and father, Pete Zacherl. Through a memorial fund established at the Fond du Lac Area Foundation, the Zacherl's committed \$5,000 toward funding the initiative.

"This donation is what Pete would have wanted us to do. He loved everything about Lake Winnebago during winter, and this donation is the best way for our family to honor his memory while protecting the lives of others," said Jenny Zacherl.

As a result of the Zacherl family's donation, twenty-five kits are now in every Fond du Lac County Sheriff Department squad, including administrator, supervisor, patrol, school resource, detective, civil process, and the department pickup truck. No matter what sheriff's deputy is closest to an ice rescue call in the future, they will have a kit available to them.

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