

## Westport Woman's Club Awards Ruegg Grant to The Westport Police Department

The Westport Woman's Club has awarded its annual \$10,000 Ruegg Grant to The Westport Police Department for "Project Lifesaver", a tracking system used to locate missing persons. This grant will fund implementation costs for Project Lifesaver including purchase of Project Lifesaver equipment and training of police officers in its use. All members of our community, both young and old, will benefit from this valuable program, especially people with Alzheimer's disease or autism.

Project Lifesaver relies on proven radio technology and a specially trained search and rescue team. Clients enrolled in the program are given a personalized wristband that emits a tracking signal. When caregivers notify the Police Department that a person is missing, a search and rescue team responds to the wanderer's area and starts searching with the mobile locator tracking system. Search times have been reduced from hours or days to minutes. Recovery times average less than 30 minutes. In over 1,500 successful searches nationwide, there has been an estimated savings of over 15 million dollars. Also, there have been no reported serious injuries or deaths. The program has become one of the nation's most successful and highly regarded community policing programs ever introduced.

Project Lifesaver is spreading from community to community across the United States and is becoming one of the fastest growing public safety measures today and the most successful missing persons rescue program ever introduced. With the implementation of this system, Westport will be one of the first towns in the State of Connecticut to have such a program. The Westport Police Department is anxious to implement Project Lifesaver in the Town of Westport in order to help its citizens to locate missing persons more effectively, and the Westport Woman's Club is proud to support this important program.

The Ruegg Grant, established in 1995 by an endowment left to the Westport Woman's Club by former member Lea Ruegg, is given each year to a deserving non-profit organization that makes a continuing difference in the local area. Past recipients include The Susan G. Komen for the Cure Connecticut, Hall-Brooke Behavioral Health Services, Nursing and Home Care, Westport Center for Senior Activities, Interfaith Housing Association, Mercy Learning Center, Toquet Hall, Theater Artist Workshop, Westport Rotary Club, Staples High School, Westport Library, and the Connecticut Theater Foundation / Kings Highway School.