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## NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **SHERIFF'S OFFICE GRADUATES NEW MOTOR DEPUTIES AND MAKES HISTORY**

PUTNAM COUNTY, TN – The Putnam County Sheriff's Office has completed its third motor school and graduated Putnam County's first female Motor Deputy.

Sheriff Farris addressed the importance of remaining an innovative agency when he spoke to the crowd comprised of members of the Sheriff's Office, Cookeville Police Department, Cookeville Fire Department, local businesses and friends and family at Friday's graduation ceremony.

"I am pleased to announce the graduation of Lieutenant Eric Hall and Deputy Margaret Motevalli from our motor unit training school," Sheriff Farris. "If we are to become a world-class Sheriff's Office, it is important for us to have a Motor Unit with the most dedicated and talented riders in the county. Lieutenant Al Reyes does a superb job of selecting and training the unit. I am confident they will both be a credit to the Sheriff's Office."

Major Greg Whittaker takes great pride in his Division's success as well.

"Deputy Motevalli and Lieutenant Hall have worked very hard. We are exceptionally proud of the determination and tenacity that they have shown so far."

While law enforcement has a long history of utilizing motorcycles for traffic enforcement, only 2 % of law enforcement agencies have their own motor unit. (The number of agencies with female motor officers is even smaller.) This may be due to the rigorous standards motor units must comply to. The Motor Unit is considered a specialized division of law enforcement. Motors is responsible for regular road patrol, special events (Hog Rally, TSSAA), escorting officials and working in conjunction with Tennessee Highway Patrol and Cookeville Police Department at DUI and traffic enforcement check points. Sheriff Farris put measures in place to ensure that PCSO Motors respond to all traffic accidents and incidents during daylight hours in order to guarantee that all other Deputies can respond to other serious calls throughout the county.

***"Earning the Public's Trust Every Day!"***

Motor Deputies can be deployed in a number of situations where a regular patrol car may not be advantageous. Some units even learn how to drive on sand or off-road. They train in all weather conditions with snow and sleet being the only exceptions. During inclement weather, motors drive patrol cars.

Lieutenant Al Reyes, who has over 25 years of motor unit experience, oversees all training and runs motor school for PCSO.

“PCSO motor unit graduates, like all motor units, are held to a higher standard. Their training is extensive and grueling. They have to really want it to graduate. We want to make sure that someone graduates motor school with a great sense of accomplishment and respect for the motorcycle, and we work hard to make that happen.”

What does Putnam County’s history making Deputy have to say about the whole process?

“This has been one of the most difficult training experiences I have ever encountered. With that being said, it was also one of the most gratifying moments of my career when I received my certificate from Sheriff Farris,” said Deputy Motevalli. “I am so thankful for the opportunity to be a part of this elite group and I will continue to work hard for the residents of Putnam County.”

Motor Units have another unique gift. They increase the visibility and engagement of the Office throughout the county, which gives greater opportunities to engage with the public. There is a photo on the Sheriff’s Office Instagram account of Deputy Gary Davis with a little girl who presented him with a picture she drew of the Deputy on his motorcycle.

Lieutenant Eric Hall has been interacting with the public on behalf of the Sheriff’s Office for years. He is often the face people see at county events giving away stickers and safety information at the PCSO booth.

“Motors is a vital part of the Sheriff’s Office, especially in reaching the public. It’s a whole other level of patrolling. They are much more physically accessible. People tend to flag them down more and talk to them. It makes us better at our jobs.”

Sergeant Tim Davis can attest to how the Motors Unit makes a Deputy better at his job. Sergeant Davis was the first PCSO Motors graduate in 2014.

“I have better situational awareness after years with the Motor Unit. Road conditions, weather, animals and even other drivers can easily cause a dangerous situation,” said Sergeant Davis.

Deputy Motevalli and Lieutenant Hall will both be working security at Cooking on the Square in Cookeville. Please drop by and say hi.

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