

Sheriff seeks drone; looks to public help

(KNZA)--The recent search for two lost Brown County boys was successful, but the County Sheriff is saying future instances may not have such happy endings, making his office's need for a drone all the more urgent.

That message is delivered in a release issued by Brown County Sheriff John Merchant, who says the use of drone surveillance would have allowed for the boys to "have been located in a more timely manner," adding that with the heat and high humidity that blanketed the area while the two boys were lost last week in a cornfield near Fairview, "dehydration could have set in within a short amount of time."

Merchant, in the release, explains how the boys stayed on their cell phone, communicating with a dispatcher until they were found, saying that "if the boys wouldn't have had a cell phone, the outcome could have been catastrophic."

Merchant, in the release, explains that a drone, which he says carries a \$32,000 price tag, would be utilized in such searches, including those for missing persons and dementia walk-aways.

Explaining that his budget does not allow for the purchase of the needed drone, which is "specifically manufactured for law enforcement use," Merchant, in the release, announces that he is seeking public donations which, he says, would afford "the ability to purchase this vital piece of equipment."

Explaining that such donations are tax deductible, Merchant asks those interested in assisting the purchase to contact his office at 785-742-7125, with donations able to be delivered to the Sheriff's Office, located at 709 Utah Street, in Hiawatha.

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