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NEWS RELEASE

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THIEVES STEAL FREEDOM FLIGHT EQUIPMENT

(ST. CLOUD, MN) Nov. 22, 2017 -- Thieves broke into and stole valuable equipment from Freedom Flight's trailers over the weekend while they were parked at a local car dealership. The equipment is essential to flying the Freedom Flight POW/MIA hot air balloons to raise awareness about U.S. military Prisoners Of War (POW) and Missing In Action (MIA).

The patriotic design trailers, parked at McKay's Family Dodge in Waite Park, MN, were broken into sometime November 18-19, 2017. Thieves used bolt cutters to access three trailers stealing high power balloon inflation fans, propane burners and other ballooning equipment worth more than \$10,000.

"All we do is honor our U.S. military veterans and raise awareness about those who are still prisoners of war or missing in action," said **Freedom Flight president, Luke Cesnik** (SEHZ-nik) of St. Cloud. "Why would anyone do such a thing? This is a serious setback to our volunteer efforts."

Cesnik said the Waite Park Police Department is investigating the break-ins, and the public is asked to keep their eyes open for any of the stolen items, including: Two (2) honda fan/engine units (10 h.p. and 13 h.p.) on custom stands with wheels (used for pre-inflating the hot air balloons); and one Aerostar Zone V hot air balloon propane burner unit (serial # HP3D-3133).

"We need the public's help to report any suspicious activity anyone might have noticed in and around the McKay's Family Dodge property in Waite Park over this past weekend," said Cesnik. "If you have any information, please contact the Waite Park Police at (320) 251-3281."

St. Cloud area Tri-County Crime Stoppers (www.TriCountyCrimeStoppers.org) has also announced it is offering a reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of anyone involved in the Freedom Flight trailer break-ins. Anyone with information can anonymously leave a message on the Tri-County Crime Stoppers Tip Line at 1-800-255-1301 to be eligible for the reward.

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Freedom Flight, Inc. is a non-profit, educational corporation established in 1988, that seeks to honor and increase the awareness of P.O.W. /M.I.A. issues. Our organization is made up of dedicated volunteers who give their time, talent and money to fly three POW/MIA hot air balloons at various events across America and the world.

www.FreedomFlight.org.