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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SUCCESSFUL SECOND ANNUAL CHARLIE'S RIDE Achieved all three objectives

ELLINGTON, CONN., August 13, 2011 – The second annual CHARLIE'S Ride was a terrific success – thanks to everyone's tremendous support! The day started at TSI Harley-Davidson, where Dunkin' Donuts of Rockville provided coffee and donuts for all participants. Onsite, a team from Saint Francis Hospital provided heart-health screenings to interested parties. Opening ceremonies began around 11:30 AM, where Mark Hensel officially kicked off the event by welcoming riders and announcing Laurye Natale, Ms. Connecticut World International and Master of Ceremonies. Ms. Natale read the proclamation issued by Governor Malloy declaring Aug. 13, 2011 Heart Disease Awareness Day in the State of CT. The founder of the event, Beth Hensel then shared a personal story of how she transformed an idea to honor her father into CHARLIE'S Ride as well as recognition to the volunteers, supporters, and participants. Norm LeBlanc from Trantolo & Trantolo gave a safety briefing to the riders. Ms. Natale asked for a moment of silence for our troops and 9/11 victims before announcing CT Idol Winner, Mr. Henry Smith who sang the National Anthem to conclude the ceremony. Over a hundred motorcycles then ventured out on a 30-mile ride, escorted by CT State Troopers, South Windsor and New Britain Police Officers – through Ellington, into Stafford, around Crystal Lake, then to East Windsor. The ride ended safely at Big Shot Billiards where riders and non-riders enjoyed a fabulous feast featuring heart-health options of bison burgers and bison short ribs, and delicious homemade sides donated and cooked by the Presenting Sponsor Ted's Montana Grill. The after-party also included open billiards, raffles, and an outstanding performance by the southern rock band, Shovelhead.

CHARLIE'S Ride is a charity motorcycle ride established in loving memory of Charlie Lewandoski who lost his 20-year battle with heart disease in July 2009 and for others just like him. Created by Charlie's daughter, Beth Hensel, CHARLIE'S Ride has a three-fold objective: 1) to promote heart disease awareness and prevention strategies; 2) to remember the millions impacted by heart disease, and 3) to raise funds for The Hoffman Heart and Vascular Institute of Connecticut a Saint Francis clinical center of excellence. Due to the overwhelming support of the riders and sponsors, CHARLIE'S Ride achieved all of their goals. Over 130 bikes and 275 participants learned a little about heart disease. Participants filled the Memory Wall with tributes to those lost, alongside Beth's dad, Charlie. Plus, over \$6,600 was raised for Hoffman Heart. That means in just two short years CHARLIE'S Ride has raised over **\$10,000** for heart disease research and awareness! Not to mention, the terrific acknowledgment bestowed upon us by Governor Malloy issuing a proclamation declaring 8/13/2011 as, "Heart Disease Awareness Day in the State of Connecticut, in honor and recognition of CHARLIE'S Ride".

It is with heartfelt gratitude that CHARLIE'S Ride recognizes everyone who made our event so successful! **THANK YOU** to our presenting sponsor – Ted's Montana Grill, John Halpin and his team did an outstanding job! **THANK YOU** to our sponsors, many of whom rode along with us: Norm LeBlanc & our friends at Trantolo & Trantolo, Harry Levesque and the team from TSI, Carol & DJ Houle & the staff at Big Shot Billiards, Melissa Machado from Dunkin' Donuts of Rockville, Mike Gagnier & Charlie's co-workers from All State Fire Equipment, "Porta-potty Pete" of Pippin & Sons, Scott Monterville of Ride One Motorcycles, and Randi Burgess from Riverview Gun Sales. Huge **THANKS** to our other major sponsors: Chili's Bar & Grille of Windsor, Friendly's of East Windsor, and Bradley Bowl of Windsor Locks for the great gifts to our participants. Not to mention, great **THANKS** to the numerous of Silver and Bronze sponsors for the wonderful raffle prize donations as well as the individual contributors for helping us raise funds that could save a life. **THANK YOU** to all of those who ensured the ride was safe: the Ellington Resident Troopers and Police, CT State Police, South Windsor Police, New Britain Police, East Windsor Police, and Ellington HOG Members/Road Captains. **THANK YOU** to "Team CHARLIE'S Angels", the volunteers who worked so hard to ensure everything went off perfectly: Jeanne Bein, Jill Champigny, Whitney Dionne, Alissa Hensel, Bobby Hensel, Robbie Hensel, Mary Higgins, Nilsa Martin, Michael Meyer, Catherine Olson, Wayne Ostrout, Brian Peruta, and Kate Sanders. Last, but certainly not least, **THANK YOU** to all of the riders whose participation helped make the day as successful as it was memorable!

It's not too late to find out more about CHARLIE'S Ride. Visit us online: www.charliesride.org, www.facebook.com/charlie.ride, for pictures from the event, updated Memory Wall, and periodic updates, including next years date. There's also information about the upcoming "Queen of Hearts Biker Ball" to celebrate Women's Heart Health month and raise funds for the Philips Women's Heart Program at Saint Francis Hospital, scheduled for Feb. 25, 2012! You may also consider posting a message on our Memory Wall online. Plus, you still have a chance to purchase official CHARLIE'S Ride merchandise.

Again, heartfelt gratitude to all of the wonderful people who helped to make CHARLIE'S Ride so successful. Hope to see you at the Biker Ball, February 2012 and at the third annual CHARLIE'S Ride in August 2012!
