

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Local Business Owner Supports Research for ALS**

**For the months of March and April, Shade Tree Garage will donate money from every oil change to The Robert Packard Center for ALS Research**

**Morristown, New Jersey, March 2, 2009** At the heart of most every business owner, there's usually a cause that drives them to give to charitable causes. With some it may be cancer research, heart disease, physical abuse or additions. For John O'Connor, owner of Shade Tree Garage in Morristown, it's the support of research for ALS (commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease). That's why, for the months of March and April, O'Connor has committed to donating \$3 for every oil change performed at Shade Tree Garage to the Robert Packard Center for ALS Research at Johns Hopkins.

At the age of 52, O'Connor's brother, Gary, was diagnosed with ALS. This came just two weeks after Gary had a very respectable finish in the Walt Disney World Half-Marathon. A very active and vibrant man, this diagnosis was a shock not only to him but to his family. Since then, the entire family has rallied around Gary and has been working hard to help raise funds for the Robert Packard Center; the only one of its kind dedicated solely to finding new therapies to slow or cure ALS.

Because ALS is so rare (only 10,000 diagnosed yearly) and so deadly (2-5 years after diagnosis), there is very little fundraising that goes on and this disease is overlooked by the pharmaceutical companies because it is not a "money maker." Unfortunately, the outlook for someone diagnosed with ALS is the same today as it was in 1938, when Lou Gehrig was diagnosed.

Not only is O'Connor donating a portion of the sale of each oil change performed at his automotive repair shop during March and April, he and every able-bodied family member will be participating in the Fiesta 5K held every year in Baltimore to raise money for the Packard Center. Last year, Team Low & Slow (so named after Maryland Terps and a Navy helicopter reference) was 53 strong and raised a substantial amount for the Packard Center.

This year, just like last, O'Connor's family will be descending on Baltimore from California, DC, Indiana, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia for the Fiesta 5K. Information on the O'Connor's team will be forthcoming for anyone who would like to make a personal contribution to help fund the work done for ALS research at the Packard Center.

*Shade Tree Garage is an independent automotive repair shop located in Morristown, New Jersey. They work hard to accomplish their mission: "To give you peace of mind about the safety and reliability of your car." To schedule an appointment for an oil change during March or April, call Shade Tree Garage at 973-540-9880.*

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