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## SAM'S STORY

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A couple of months ago my son, Sam, and I went to Florida to visit my Mother. On our way back I did not see a sign that showed that the speed limit had dropped from 55 to 45. Two police cars pulled out behind me, blue lights flashing, and pulled me over.

I asked the officer what I needed to do as I have never had a speeding ticket. My son, who is mild to moderately mentally impaired, did not wait for the officer's reply. He simply said, "You just need to take that ticket and tear it up and go away". Sam speaks in a deep voice very slowly so Mama comes out "Mom – Ahh".

I asked Sam to hush and told him that the officer was just doing what he was supposed to do and that I was going too fast. Sam replied, "I don't care. He just needs to go away and quit being mean to you."

About that time the officer spoke up and told me he needed to see my license and proof of insurance. Sam spoke up again with even more urgency in his voice and said, "You have just lost a friend and I could have been a very good friend to you. You just need to take that ticket and go away and leave my Mom-Ahh alone. And I mean it!"

The officer, cool as a cucumber, asked where I had been and where I was going to. I told him we had been to see my Mom in Florida because she has been put in a nursing home, and we wanted to see how she was doing. By that time I guess his partner had checked and found I had no outstanding tickets or anything else so the officer talking to me said if I promised to slow down, he would not give me a ticket. I thanked him, but this did not stop Sam from vocalizing his complaints. He continued telling the officer that it just was not fair that he was being so mean to his Mom-Ahh and that he should leave us alone and to tear the ticket up.

As we drove off, I thought to myself, "Thank goodness!" About that time there was a speed limit sign on the side of the road and Sam said, "Mom-Ahh, the speed limit is five-five. Are you going five-five? Do you have your speed control on?" I assured him I was going under the speed limit and did have the speed control on. Thinking I had taken care of that, I was surprised when he

did the same thing at the next speed limit sign, “Mom-Ahh, the speed limit is three-five. Are you going three-five? Do you have your speed control on?”

He read every single speed limit sign the rest of the way home and asked the same question about cruise control. By the time we got home, I twitched each time a speed sign appeared! But it did not stop there. EVERY time we get into the car, whether we are going to the grocery store or out of town, Sam reads each and every speed limit sign and asks about the cruise control. If only those officers knew what they started!

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