

OSGWA Supports Efforts of MO Warden's and C.O.P.S.



On July 20, 2007 the Missouri Conservation Agents Association (MCAA) hosted a golf tournament to benefit Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS) Surviving Spouses Program. COPS were organized in 1984. They provide resources to assist in the rebuilding of the lives of surviving families of law enforcement officers killed in the line-of duty. COPS also provide training to law enforcement agencies on survivor victimization issues and educate the public of the need to support the law enforcement profession and its survivors.

For nine years, Missouri Conservation Agents have assisted COPS to coordinate outdoor recreation activities at the "COPS CAMP" for surviving spouses, children and siblings. Recreation activities involve pistol and shotgun shooting, archery, canoeing and self-defense instruction.

During the 2006 COPS Surviving Spouses' Camp, MCAA Vice-President Darin Pettit was told by COPS Executive Director Suzie Sawyer, that the COPS Surviving Spouses' CAMP was financially 'strapped'. Darin, having participated in COPS programs for four years recognized the importance of these camps to the spouses of officers killed in the line of duty. He decided that MCAA could organize a benefit golf tournament to directly benefit the

COPS Surviving Spouses' CAMP.

A four-person scramble tournament was held at the Bent Creek Golf Course in Jackson, Missouri. Entry fees per team were \$300, which included green fees, cart rental, range balls, dinner, T-shirt, and drinks. Twenty-three teams from across the Midwest competed for numerous prizes. 'Hole-in-one' prizes included a Harley Davidson Motorcycle, a set of Galloway irons and, a Bose stereo system. Prizes were awarded for 'closest-to-pin' and 'longest drive', with cash prizes awarded for the top three places in two flights. Numerous prizes were awarded on both raffle and silent auctions. One lucky person even won a .45 caliber Kimber Custom-2 pistol on a raffle!

Sponsors were secured of which the OSGWA was one and paid a minimum of \$300 to 'sponsor a hole' at the tournament. The majority of support for hole-sponsorships came directly from various wildlife conservation officer associations across the country. The OSGWA as well as other warden associations were extremely supportive of the event by donating hats, shirts, cookbooks and coffee mugs. All were included as raffle and door prizes throughout the event. Several associations exceeded the \$300/hole

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Banners displayed of the various sponsors and contributing groups at the Bent Creek Golf and Country Club in Jackson, MO. OSGWA was there 'sponsoring a hole' at the fundraiser event organized by MO wardens that raised nearly \$12,000 to support C.O.P.S. and an outdoor camp especially set up for family survivors of police killed in- the-line of duty (including wardens).



Leaders of the COPS organization are Jean Hill, COPS National President (l), and Suzie Sawyer, COPS Executive Director (r). The two ladies accepted a proceeds-check from MO Game Warden Darin Pettit on behalf of all wardens.

MO Warden's and C.O.P.S. - continued

sponsorship with generous donations to COPS and included: Alabama Conservation Enforcement Officers Association at \$2000, Missouri Conservation Agents Association at \$1000 and the Kentucky Wildlife Officers Association at \$500. Associations sponsoring holes at the tournament were: Illinois Conservation Police Command Association, Washington Game Warden Association, Connecticut Conservation Officers Association, Arkansas

Wildlife Officers Association, Illinois Conservation Police Lodge, Indiana Conservation Officers Organization, Missouri Department of Conservation Central Region Conservation Agents, Michigan Conservation Officers Association, Fraternal Order of Alaska State Troopers, Idaho Conservation Officers Association, **Oklahoma State Game Wardens Association** and, the Missouri State

Troopers Association.

At the 2007 COPS Surviving Spouses' CAMP, Conservation Agent Darin Pettit presented a check to COPS Executive Director Suzie Sawyer for \$11,821.75 to benefit COPS. The MCAA would like to thank all of the associations who made this event possible by "purchasing hole sponsorships" and donating prizes.

OK wardens did not have any representatives golfing at the event but hope to 'field' a team at this excellent fundraiser in the future. Of course everyone hopes that law enforcement families will never have to experience losing a family member in the line of duty. But, if tragedy were to strike, we are fortunate that we have COPS to assist in rebuilding the lives of officer's families who are affected.