



## MONTANA C.O.P.S.

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Winter 2010/2011

### *Special points of interest:*

- Montana's Fallen Heroes
- Schedule for NPW 2011
- Project Blue Light
- Our new website!

### *Inside This Issue:*

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### Message from the president...

Montana C.O.P.S. was founded in 2010. Our founding team, Clancy King, Tammy Gipe, Maxine Clifford, Steve Lavin, and I worked with National C.O.P.S chapter coordinator, Madeline Newman, to sign all the paperwork and schedule our first meeting in September. I was overwhelmed by the warm response, with members coming from all over the state. We elected officers and developed priorities for carrying out our mission. Our treasurer, Linda Pope's experience with leadership in Ohio C.O.P.S gave us a jump start. Our second meeting was scheduled for December 4<sup>th</sup> and we were all set to start planning to respond to a line of duty death. December 1<sup>st</sup> brought tragedy as we were faced with Trooper David DeLaittre's shooting death. I was again overwhelmed by all the members who stepped up to respond. Several members attended the service and others helped with donations, ribbons, and prayers. At the service Linda and I and our husbands sat behind David's high school classmates and close family friends. He was dearly loved, honored well, and will be remembered fondly. Montana C.O.P.S members support each other as we remember our fallen heroes. What challenges await us in 2011? We can help David's family. We can support our members who wish to attend C.O.P.S. retreats. We can work to bring Traumas of Law Enforcement Seminar to Montana in 2012. We can support training for our members to be more effective with peer support. We can promote Blue Alert legislation to maximize response to a law enforcement trauma. We can use Project Blue Light and other memorial events to honor public safety officers. To accomplish these goals we need to raise funds and reach out to families and affected coworkers. Please let me know how you can help. Thank-you!

### Blue Knights Ride for Montana



The Blue Knights International Law Enforcement Motorcycle Club consists of active and retired Law Enforcement men & women who enjoy riding motorcycles. There is currently one chapter, Montana I, in our Big Sky with close to 40 members statewide. We have almost 20,000 members worldwide located throughout 29 countries. The Blue Knights support many charities and family support organizations, most notably the Concerns of Police Survivors and its sister groups throughout the world, and here in Montana, the Montana Hope Project, a Montana Highway Patrol sponsored program that provides wishes to Montana's critically ill children. Ours is a fraternal organization that is both family and community oriented. Begun in 1974 by eight law enforcement officers in the Bangor, Maine area, we have grown to become the largest law enforcement club in the world. Since its inception 36 years ago the Blue Knights have worked hard to give back to all those we have served or are serving still. As of February 2010, Blue Knights have donated to numerous charities, including time, monetary and gift donations in the amount exceeding **\$13,037,303** (USD). Each year the Blue Knights organize COPSRUN, founded in 1997, a ride where pledges are accepted as we ride to honor those Officers who have fallen in service to their citizens. Our main goal is to raise awareness and funds for the surviving families and loved ones and ensure that **"THEY WILL NEVER STAND ALONE"**. COPSRUN is held during National Police Week each year and the ride participants are there for the survivors and families of our Brothers and Sisters who sacrificed their lives for those they served and protected.

Note: It is our hope that the Blue Knights Montana I and Montana COPS will forge a working relationship and together we can help Montana's surviving law enforcement families.

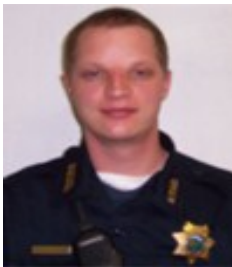
# Meet your new Montana COPS board!



President Becky Sturdevant: My son, MHP Trooper Evan Schneider, died August 28, 2008, 8 days before his 30<sup>th</sup> birthday. I have channeled my pain and anger into activities to make our highways safer through volunteering with Mothers Against Drunk Driving. I work as a nurse practitioner in occupational health; in this job I promote drug free workplace programs. My son, Jim, is an MHP trooper. He and his wife, Lacy, organized "Hike for Heroes" to honor fallen MHP troopers. My husband, Lee, is a retired Air Force pilot. We all live in Kalispell. We have attended Police Week and Parent's Retreat and Montana C.O.P.S is enriching our lives. Thank you to all our C.O.P.S. family!



Vice President Jerril Ren became a survivor on April 8, 1978 when Patrolman Michael Ren was shot and killed after being called to assist a deputy from the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office in serving two felony warrants on a recently released mental patient. The suspect was wanted for violating terms of his release from a State mental health facility. Patrolman Ren spotted the suspect driving a pickup truck and a high-speed chase ensued. During the chase, the suspect retrieved a .308 rifle from inside the cab of his pickup and opened fire on both officers. Five rounds struck Patrolman Ren's patrol car before the suspect crashed in the town of Eureka. As Patrolman Ren pulled up, the suspect jumped from his truck and shot Ren.



Secretary Joyce Kramer became a survivor on October 22, 2006 when Officer Patrick Kramer was killed in an automobile accident on Highway 20 while responding to the scene of a traffic accident. He was attempting to pass two vehicles when his department SUV struck a sheet of ice and went out of control. The vehicle flipped over and landed on its roof.



Treasurer Linda Pope became a survivor on December 5, 1997 when Officer Daniel Pope and Officer Ronald Jeter were shot and killed while attempting to serve a domestic violence warrant. Both officers were in plainclothes and were wearing their vests when they went to the apartment to serve the warrant. During the arrest the suspect became violent and a struggle ensued in which both officers were shot. The suspect committed suicide after killing both officers.

# Montana's Fallen Heroes

Officer Bob Heinle succumbed to complications from a gunshot wound suffered 11 years earlier.

On October 21, 1998, he had responded to a local



## Police Officer Robert (Bob) Heinle

**Missoula Police Department  
Montana**

End of Watch: Friday, February 12, 2010

### Biographical Info

**Age:** 47

**Tour of Duty:** 7 years

### Incident Details

**Cause of Death:** Gunfire

**Date of Incident:** Wednesday, October 21, 1998

**Weapon Used:** Gun; Unknown type

**Suspect Info:** Sentenced to life

bank after receiving reports of a man attempting to cash a forged check. When he arrived at the location he located the man outside and chased him on foot when the man fled. A short distance away the man opened fire, striking Officer Heinle once in the neck.

The wound caused Officer Heinle to become paralyzed from the neck down. He continued to suffer complications from the wound and passed away as a result of those complications on February 12, 2010.

The man who shot Officer Heinle was convicted of several charges after the initial shooting, including attempted murder, and was sentenced to life in prison.

At the time of the shooting, Officer Heinle had served with the Missoula Police Department for seven years. He is survived by his wife, brother and sister.

Trooper David DeLaittre was shot and killed while conducting a traffic stop on Montana Highway 2 near the Three Forks Airport in Gallatin County at about 4:30 pm.



## Trooper David J. DeLaittre

**Montana Highway Patrol  
Montana**

End of Watch: Wednesday, December 1, 2010

### Biographical Info

**Age:** 23

**Tour of Duty:** 2 years, 1 month

**Badge Number:** 269

### Incident Details

**Cause of Death:** Gunfire

**Date of Incident:** Wednesday, December 1, 2010

**Weapon Used:** Gun; Unknown type

**Suspect Info:** Deceased

During the vehicle stop, the suspect opened fire and killed the trooper in the ensuing gun-battle. The suspect fled the scene and was later found dead in his vehicle in Broadwater County.

Trooper DeLaittre had served with the Montana Highway Patrol for two years. He is survived by his parents, Nancy and Dennis, sisters Rebecca and Hannah, step-sister Jennifer, his love Brianna and numerous others who loved him dearly.

## Thank you's!!

- The Kramer Family
- Flathead County Officers Association
- Clancy King
- Michael Pence
- Flathead County Sheriff's Employee Association (Sworn & Unsworn)
- J.M. Williams
- Henry & Wanda Broesder
- Fisher Video Conferencing Services
- Sacajawea Hotel~You guys are awesome!
- Wheat Montana Bakery~wonderful food!
- Sue Veldkamp for our Website
- Karen Gaboury for our Logo
- Pete Wingert & Clancy King for their hard work on Kalispell Blue Light Ceremony
- Chaplain Sam Kinzer, Yellowstone Co.
- Billings Police Chief Rich St. John
- Bill Kennedy, Yellowstone Commissioner for assisting in Blue Light Ceremony
- Steve Lavin, Blue Alert legislation
- Robinson Trees for Kalispell Blue Light
- Sandi Waverek, donating tree lights and planning program for Kalispell Blue Light
- Pastor Drew Buckner - grief presentation
- Kalispell Copy Center—Discount printing
- Genny Graham, her girl scout troop, Maren, Christine and Teresa for making blue ribbons
- Tammy, Christine and Teresa for hot beverages at Blue Light Event
- Flathead Co. Commissioners
- Kalispell Mayor Tammi Fischer
- Please accept our apologies if we have left anyone off. If you make us aware, we will add you to our next newsletter. We never want to forget anyone for helping make this chapter a possibility.

## Montana COPS Reaches Across State Lines



On November 29, 2009, my sister, Officer Tina DeLong Griswold along with three other officers were shot and killed execution style at the hands of a man with an extensive violent criminal

past, at the Forza coffee shop in Lakewood, Washington. After a 2 day manhunt, the man responsible was fatally shot by a Seattle Police Officer when trying to evade capture. The murderer received help from family and

friends, and seven people were arrested.

On January 29th, 2011 at Ft. Steilacoom Park in Lakewood, Washington, an event named in Tina's honor will take place. Tina was an avid runner and this event will celebrate her life, her passion for fitness, and her dedication to serving her community. The "Run for Tina" will start at 9:00 am. For more information, visit "Run for Tina" on Facebook or register on-line at Active.Com, under "Run for Tina, Lakewood".

Also the Tina DeLong Griswold Memorial Scholarship is awarded by the National Association of Women in Criminal Justice to students pursuing careers in Law Enforcement. The newly formed Tina DeLong Griswold Foundation, formed by Tina's fami-

ly members, will be present at this event. The main thrust of the foundation is to provide support to the victims of crime and their family with the financial assistance needed for travel, lodging, and meals to attend court hearings, trials, and impact witness statements to bring these criminals to justice. The foundation will also provide it's own scholarship to students, men or women, who are pursuing a career in criminal justice, law enforcement or a closely aligned field. Please watch for more information later. We hope, as a family, you will join in our excitement and honor to continue Tina's legacy.

Note: Tammy Gipe, the sister of Officer Griswold is one of the founding members of Montana COPS.

## Montana COPS Website is Up and Running!

For \$100, Montana COPS was able to secure the site [www.montanacops.org](http://www.montanacops.org) for our organization. This site has been built and the day to day running of it has been donated by Sue

Veldkamp, out of southwestern Ohio. Sue was instrumental in building the Ohio COPS website, and when asked if she would assist with Montana's, she jumped at the chance with-

out hesitating! Please send Linda Pope any information that you would like added to the site or any updates, at [poker1@linctel.net](mailto:poker1@linctel.net). If anyone is interested in running the blog, it to is available.

# Two Blue Light Events Held in 2010



## From Kalispell:

More than 75 people attended a tree-lighting ceremony to memorialize fallen law enforcement officers Wednesday December 15, 2010 in front of the Flathead County Courthouse.

Project Blue Light, the first event hosted by the newly-formed Montana Concerns of Police Survivors, culminated in the lighting of a Christmas tree adorned with blue lights and dotted with ornaments placed by families and friends of fallen officers.

Kalispell Mayor Tammi Fisher read a proclamation acknowledging the day as an event of citywide importance.

Chaplain Drew Buckner, who serves the Kalispell Police Department and other emergency responders, read selected Bible passages, among them Psalms 29:11 that states "The Lord gives strength to his people; the Lord blesses his people with peace."

Montana Highway Patrol Capt. Clancy King said it was an opportunity for family and friends of fallen officers to "sit back and appreciate what we do have."

King is among the organizers of the Montana chapter of Concerns of Police Survivors.

It's a local affiliate of national organization that works with family members and co-workers of those killed in the line of duty.

"We hope with the Montana chapter, we can do some local things for local people," King said.

Family and friends of nine law enforcement officers who died in the line of duty were represented at the Kalispell event.

## From Billings:



Joyce Kramer of Billings is on a mission to honor her son and help the families who suffered the same pain she did four years ago.

Patrick Kramer, 28, a West Yellowstone police officer, died in the line of duty while responding to an accident on Oct. 22, 2006. He left behind a daughter, Lexi, then 3.

The Kramer family was devastated, but leaned on the support of the law-enforcement family to get them through.

Now, four years later, Joyce Kramer is part of the new Montana chapter of

Concerns of Police Survivors, or COPS.

"It was really a group of parents, siblings and in-laws that came together," Kramer said.

The Montana chapter started in September.

"No one elects to join this organization, and it's amazing the support that is available out there," Kramer said.

"The real mission is to rebuild shattered lives."

With her personal experience to draw from, Kramer said the most important thing for her was knowing she's not alone.

The newly formed chapter was able to step in and offer support to the DeLaitre family. Montana Highway Patrol Trooper David DeLaitre, 23, was shot and killed Dec. 1 during a traffic stop near Three Forks.

Montana COPS also supported the Blue Light Recognition tree outside City Hall that was dedicated Dec. 20. The tree, decorated in blue lights and blue ornaments, honors Montana's fallen officers. Bulbs on the tree bear the names of officers.

"Blue is the symbol of peace," Kramer said. "We need to recognize they are the peacekeepers."

She hopes the blue-light tree can become an annual event.

## National Events for 2011 ~ Mark Your Calendars!

- Adult Children's Retreat-June 24-27
- Board Chapter Training-July 13-17
- C.O.P.S. Kids Camp/Outward Bound-July 24-31
- Siblings Retreat-September 9-12
- Spouses Retreat-September 23-26
- C.O.P.S. Walk October 7-10
- In-Laws Retreat-October 14-17
- Parents Retreat-October 28-October 31
- Co-Workers Retreat-November 4-7
- And don't forget to FLY THE BLUE in the month of May! A length of blue ribbon tied to your cars antenna during Police Week is an appropriate way to show your support to the men and women who, night and day, stand guard in our communities. Many folks chose to the "fly the blue" all year long.



### *Visions of Courage: The Bobby Smith Story*

Many officers in the Flathead Valley were enlightened by Bobby Smith on December 7, 2010. Bobby Smith had been a law enforcement officer in Louisiana for nine years, when on the night of March 14, 1986, at point blank range, he was shot in the face & blinded by an armed, violent drug offender. He recalls lying face down on the center lane of the highway, soaked in blood, and thinking, "Will this be the day that I die?" But Bobby chose to not give up; he chose not to die that day; he chose to live.

His story is one of tragedy, despair, hope and a choice to live. If you have been affected by tragedy, Bobby has a website that you can go to for inspiration. The web address is: [www.visionsofcourage.com](http://www.visionsofcourage.com) He has also written a couple books and you can purchase them online from his website.

#### *National Police Week 2011 Schedule of Events*

*Thursday, May 12*  
*Early Arrival Day*

*Friday, May 13*  
*Official Arrival Day*  
*23rd Annual Candlelight Vigil at the*  
*National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial*

*Saturday, May 14*  
*First Day - National Police Survivors' Conference*  
*Alexandria, VA*

*Sunday, May 15*  
*National Peace Officers' Memorial Service*  
*United States Capitol*

*Monday, May 16*  
*Second Day - National Police Survivors' Conference*

*Tuesday, May 17*  
*Official Departure Day*

Registration packets will be sent out from National Concerns of Police Survivors in January and February. Montana COPS will be contacting survivors who have an officer being honored in 2011 to offer assistance in completing all necessary paperwork and letting them know they will not be alone during Police Week.

**MONTANA CONCERNS OF  
POLICE SURVIVORS (COPS)**

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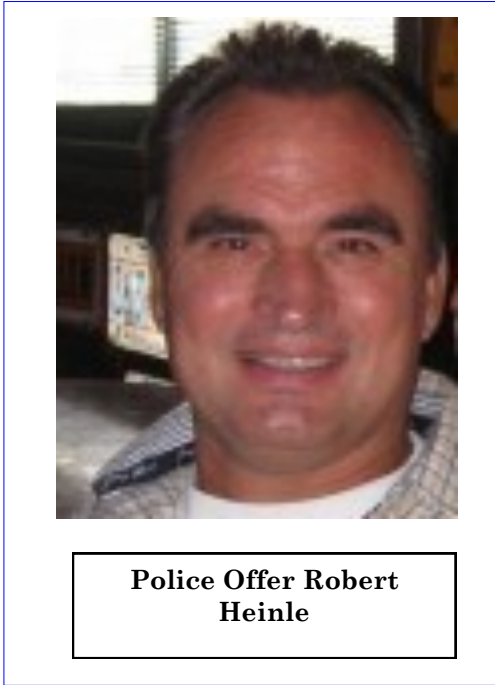
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**DEPARTMENTS ~**  
**PLEASE POST!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

**REMEMBERING OUR FALLEN HEROES**



**Police Offer Robert  
Heinle**



**Trooper David DeLaitre**  
**EOW: December 1, 2010**