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Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc. COPS

Press Release

New Leadership for 2006-2007 for Concerns of Police Survivors

Houston Surviving Mother Jean Hill Elected National President

Camdenton, MO, May 30, 2006 - On May 16, 2006, Jean Hill of Houston, Texas, became the



12th National President of Concerns of Police Survivors. President Hill is the second surviving parent to hold the top position of this national non-profit organization. Prior to assuming the national presidency, Jean served on the COPS National Board for two years as the Mountain Region Trustee and was president of the Greater Houston COPS Chapter.

Jean, and her husband Ed, became survivors when their son, Harris County (TX) Deputy Barry Hill, was shot 7 times and killed in the line of duty on December 4, 2000, while attempting to handcuff a carjacking suspect. The Hill's have attended COPS' annual Parents' Retreat each year since their son was killed and have worked diligently throughout the Mountain Region states of Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, and Texas, introducing COPS to countless survivors, law enforcement organizations, and business leaders.

"After Barry was killed, I didn't care if my life continued or not," President Hill told survivors attending the 2006 National Police Survivors' Conference. "Finding Concerns of Police Survivors made my life bearable. Participating in COPS' wonderful programs gave me healing, love, and life renewed. I look forward to the coming year with joy and optimism in my heart because of COPS, and I am honored and humbled to serve as the National President of such a wonderful organization."

Shirley Gibson of Washington, DC, the first surviving parent to serve as National President, completed two one-year terms and moved into the Immediate Past President position, replacing

• **For Immediate Release**

Linda Hintergardt-Soubirous of Riverside, CA. Linda is now an Ex Officio member of the Board, along with all other Past Presidents.

Stepping into the Mountain Region Trustee position vacated by President Hill is Jan Blaser-Upchurch of Tucson, Arizona. Arizona DPS Sgt. John Blaser, Jan's husband, was killed by a drunk driver on 8/31/90. Jan volunteered with MADD for many years, working and speaking nationally and internationally on DUI and victim rights issues, and served on MADD's National Board. Jan is married to David Upchurch.

Because of term limitations, the Gulf Region Trustee position was vacated by Teresa Miyares. Charles Shinholser, of Jacksonville, Florida, takes on that role. Charles, and his wife Virginia, became survivors following the line-of-duty death of their son, Ray, in December 1988. Charles has been the Director of the Northeast Florida Chapter since its inception in 1998. Seven family members are in law enforcement and two serve in the military. The Gulf Region encompasses Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Arkansas, Puerto Rico, and the Caribbean Territories.

Ginni Wolf chose not to seek re-election as the Northern Seaboard Region Trustee. That position was filled by Stacy Cullinane Smith of Germantown, Maryland. Stacy became a survivor on August 26, 1992, when her husband, Patrolman Mickey Cullinane, Sea Isle City, NJ, Police Department, died attempting to save another. A co-founder of Garden State Survivors, NJ COPS, in 2000 Stacy married Floyd Smith, also an officer, and moved to Montgomery County, MD. Stacy is active with MD COPS. The Northern Seaboard Region consists of Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia.

The Northeast Region, consisting of Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, will continue to be served by Trustee Debra Noyes of Silver Lake, NH. Debra became a survivor when her husband, Sgt. James S. Noyes of the NH State Police, was shot and killed on October 3, 1994, during a SWAT call.

Jennifer Thacker of Louisville, KY, is serving another term as Southern Seaboard Region Trustee. Jennifer became a survivor when her husband, Kentucky ABC Agent Brandon Thacker, was killed on April 16, 1998. Jennifer was one of KY COPS' founding members, and is Past President of that Chapter. The Southern Seaboard Region consists of North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Georgia, and Tennessee.

Serving another year as Great Lakes Region Trustee is Harold Weinke of Reedsburg, WI. Harold, a Deputy with the Sauk County (WI) Sheriff's Office, and his wife Carol became survivors on April 5, 1998, when their son, Deputy Richard Weinke, was killed in an accident responding to back-up another officer. Harold is Past President of WI COPS. Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Illinois, and Indiana comprise the Great Lakes Region.

Carol Botts of Lawton, OK, is serving another year as Plains Region Trustee, covering Minnesota, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Kansas, Missouri, Iowa, Wyoming, and Colorado. Carol's brother, Michael Miller, was killed on August 28, 1995. Carol is also Vice President of OK COPS.

The position of Pacific Region Trustee will again be filled by Nicole Garrett of Sacramento, CA. Nicole is the surviving daughter of Redwood City (CA) Detective Sergeant George Garrett, killed in May 1981. Nicole also serves as a mentor at COPS' Outward Bound® program and assists with "C.O.P.S. Teens" during National Police Week. The Pacific Region consists of California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Alaska, Hawaii, Montana, Idaho, and the Pacific Territories.

Debbie Geary, Cooper City, FL, was re-appointed as National Chapter Coordinator, a position she has held since May 2001. Suzie Sawyer of Camdenton, MO, was re-appointed Executive Director, a position she has held since COPS was organized in 1984.

For more information about Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc., or to help support COPS' programs, contact COPS at (573) 346-4911, or e-mail cops@nationalcops.org. Visit the COPS website at www.nationalcops.org.

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