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Parker 'walking the walk' for COPS

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Managing Editor

A Jones County woman is preparing to 'walk the walk' for an organization close to her heart.

Brenda Parker will be traveling to Washington, D.C. October 14 and 15 to raise money for Concerns of Police Survivors

(COPS) by walking 25 miles along the Potomac River.

Participants in the walk are asked to raise a minimum of \$1,000, and Parker is seeking sponsors in the community to help her reach and exceed that goal.

Parker's husband, Ron, was killed in 1975 while on a routine traffic call in St. Augustine, Fla.

She has lived in the Middle Georgia area for 20 years and currently resides in Gray.

According to the COPS web site, between 140 and 160 officers are killed in the line of duty each year and their families and co-workers are left to cope with the tragic loss. COPS provides resources to help them rebuild their shattered lives. Parker is

active in the organization and serves as the treasurer of the Georgia Chapter of Concerns of Police Survivors, Inc.

COPS was organized in 1984 with 110 members and is a national organization with 48 chapters in 40 states. Today, membership is over 14,000

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families. Members include spouses, children, parents, siblings, significant others, and affected co-workers of officers killed in the line of duty.

"I have the honor to represent Georgia's 512 fallen law enforcement officers on the 25 mile walk," Parker said. "As a citizen of Gray, I hope the community will be willing to actively sponsor my efforts and show their support for their law enforcement agencies. The recent loss of Officer Joe Whitehead with Bibb County brings us to the realization that the loss of an officer can happen at any time to any agency."

Parker emphasized that 100 percent of the funds raised in the walk is tax deductible and will go directly to COPS.

"The proceeds from the COPS Walk will provide the funds needed to continue our mission to support the survivors with scholarships, counseling, and retreats," she added.

Parker has been training for the walk at her gym, Elite Fitness, since May.

"It is not my aim to win a race but to take the opportunity to participate and represent our state in Washington and add a more positive light on our family of law enforcement," she explained.

Because she is herself a survivor, Parker will be carrying small mementos given to her by the families of fallen officers.

"As a board member of Georgia's Chapter of COPS, it is an honor and a privilege to represent Gray, Middle Georgia, my chapter, and my state in Washington," Parker stated. "We will remember our fallen heroes and honor Georgia's law enforcement. I have a personal memento of my officer and other fallen officers from his department."

Donations for the COPS walk may be sent to Parker at P.O. Box 1237, Gray, GA 31032.