

CSO and ACEOA Join To Help Stay In the Hunt

by Keith Jordan

Challenged Sportsman's Outfitters (CSO) is an organization that focuses on introducing and re-introducing the outdoors to people with disabilities. It is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide a place where persons with special needs and disabilities, along with a friend or family member, can come and enjoy a complete outdoor experience. Activities may include hunting, fishing, ATV riding or outdoor photography. Whatever the activity, CSO will strive to meet the wishes of each individual and allow them to enjoy a wonderful time in outdoor Alabama.

CSO's staff and volunteers are experienced at assisting persons at whatever ability level that is most comfortable for the participants. We work hard to make sure that each participant leaves with memories that will last a lifetime. All properties used by CSO have been developed with the participants in mind. Each person will have the necessary accommodations to make their stay comfortable and enjoyable.

CSO is a unique organization giving people on one on one attention they may need and deserve. Our staff and volunteers will allow participants to take on as much or as little of the physical activities as they desire. When a push is needed, we will be there to lend a hand. CSO's purpose is to educate, motivate and empower people to "stay in the hunt."

ACEOA is a proud supporter of CSO. They have made numerous contributions to the organization, one of which was to sponsor a first time disabled hunter, Johnny Clark of Daleville, to participate in an all inclusive two day deer hunt at CSO's lodge in Barbour County. Johnny has cerebral palsy and he had never been hunting in his entire life. He always wanted to hunt but had never had the opportunity. Thanks to ACEOA and CSO, he finally got his chance in December of 2006.

Johnny arrived at the camp with his brother-in-law, Andrew Dyson, and he was very excited. He was eager to get out and experience the outdoors. It was not just about harvesting a deer for the first time, it was about having the opportunity to be there and experience something new. Johnny and Andrew saw a lot of deer during their two day hunt and Johnny decided that he would wait on a buck rather than harvesting a doe. Unfortunately, he never saw a buck large enough for harvest but he left with a big smile on his face and looking forward to his next hunting adventure.

CSO would not be able to provide these kinds of opportunities without the support of organizations like ACEOA. CSO works hard to raise enough funds throughout the year so that it costs the participating hunters nothing to come and enjoy an outing. The 2006-2007 hunting season was the organization's second year in operation and 43 hunter hunters participated and 40 of those hunters were able to participate at no charge.

CSO held its first annual Spring Banquet and Auction in Ozark in March of 2007 and more than 250 people came out to support the cause. ACEOA Garrett Maund, a lifelong friend, volunteered his time and talents to help make the event a success. He also had a

surprise for CSO with another ACEOA contribution. He made the presentation at the banquet in front of all of the guests and inspired all with generosity of ACEOA.

There are a lot of other organizations throughout the country helping people to experience the great outdoors but where CSO is different and where we shine is the focus placed on the outing itself to be sure that the experience will produce memories that will last a lifetime. CSO is not a membership organization so anyone is invited to come out and enjoy an adventure with us in the great outdoors. Friends and family are also invited to come along and share the experience.

Would you help a person with paraplegia, quadriplegia, cerebral palsy or any other disabling disease or injury enjoy an outing in the great outdoors? At CSO this is exactly what we do and we are working every day to make sure that we can grant the wishes of those who dream of an exciting outdoor adventure. We are a non-profit organization with 501© 3 status and we accept tax deductible contributions that will be used to defray the costs of outdoor adventures or to assist in purchasing adaptive equipment use in the outings.

The attitude “Stay In the Hunt” is what we are all about. It’s what we are here for, to help people stay in the hunt for life. We feel that each time a person comes and enjoys an outing with CSO there is a lot more taking place than just a good time. Outings like these build confidence, promote independence and take a person’s mind off of the troubles they may be facing in life.

You may choose to sponsor an individual’s outing through our Outdoor Outing Scholarship Program, otherwise the contribution will be used to purchase adaptive equipment or to help with general operating expenses. Either way, you will be helping people with disabilities “Stay In the Hunt.” To make a contribution, please contact:

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Editor’s Note: Shortly before the publication deadline, I received an E-mail from Garrett Maund concerning the burglary at the CSO camp house. Apparently, whatever wasn’t taken by the thieves was destroyed by them. To make a bad situation worse, Keith was informed that his insurance policy would not cover items that were taken or destroyed in the camp house. A list of stolen and damaged items will follow.

I am certain that those who read about Keith Jordan and his wonderful organization will do all in their power to assist such a life altering and

life affirming program. Please take a look at the list that follows and contact Keith with any help you can offer.

Items Stolen or Damaged:

1 13-inch color television
1-DVD/VCR player
1-Horton Yukon crossbow
1-Golden Eagle compound bow
1-Craftsman Riding Lawnmower
1-weedeater
2-Moultrie Digital trail cameras
All utensils (forks, knives and spoons)
All cookware (pots, pans, baking sheets etc.)
All cooking and serving utensils
10 place mats
1- landline telephone
1-coffee maket
8-2-way rechargeable radios and chargers
1-microwave
1-VHS-C Video Cameras
1-5 gallon gas can
1-2 gallon weedeater and chainsaw gas/oil can

Items Damaged That Need Replacing:

20 bed pillows
1-Fry Daddy Cooker
1-crock pot
1-living room chair
1-sleeper sofa
1-love seat
2-sets of twin bed mattresses and box springs
1-cordless telephone
Numerous quilts, blankets and sheet sets for full and twin size beds
2-twin size comforters
3-throws
6-throw pillows
1-cutting board for kitchen
1-indoor garbage can
1-outdoor garbage can
Numerous ice trays
4-Tupperware Kitchen Canisters
Hanging baskets for personal items (bathroom)
Towels and Wash Cloths
Dishtowels/Dishcloths

Camp house colors are khaki, hunter green and tan.

