

Two memorials promote youth hunting

Two rather unexpected donations in March came through the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation (MCHF) to memorialize individuals who had recently passed away.

Shawn Eldredge was a well-liked hunting guide and Shawn Reesor, an avid hunter and outdoor enthusiast, was killed in a car accident.

Shawn's father, Michael Reesor, approached Chris Adams at Marais Temps Clair and (at the time) Wildlife Regional Supervisor Joel Porath on the possibility of making a donation in Shawn's name. Reesor was unsure of how much and exactly how he wanted to memorialize Shawn—either by supporting a program or possibly funding a duck blind.

Conservation Department employees contacted Rick Thom, who called Reesor. Over several conversations they discussed ideas about how a donation might be used. Reesor also studied the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation website to see examples of projects and ideas for funding, and he continued to talk with local and regional staff about Conservation Department needs. Months later Reesor was ready to make a donation. He personally delivered a check to Jefferson City. Rick, Tom Draper, Aaron Jeffries and Kevin Borisenko accepted the generous donation of \$25,000 from Shawn's parents, Michael and Sandra.

The donation also was provided by other family members and friends. Each year they host a Shawn Reesor Memorial softball tournament and a skeet shoot. Shawn's father asked that the memorial donation be used specifically for youth hunting events. The Shawn Reesor Memorial Youth Hunting Account will be supervised by Wildlife Division; requests for funds should be made through Jennifer Battson, who will forward them through Rick Thom for final approval.

In February, Thom talked with Jonathan Miller, who is a board member



Matt Uhrig and his daughter Cleo hunt ducks at Eagle Bluffs Conservation Area near Columbia. The Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation has proudly accepted donations in honor of two men deeply involved in waterfowl hunting. Funds will be used to promote hunts for youngsters.

of a community foundation in Mound City and a duck hunter. A well-liked hunting guide, Shawn Eldredge, passed away and Miller is working with local conservation agents Anthony Maupin and Jade Wright to do an event to memorialize Eldredge. The event will be a youth duck hunt—Big Muddy Duck Hunt.

Jonathan Miller wanted to know if donors could write their checks to the Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation for this purpose. Rick Thom explained that we would be glad to accept the checks, but not until we are requested to do so from Protection Division, since we always confirm that the Conservation Department wants to be a partner and approves of the event.

After approval from Larry Yamnitz, MCHF began accepting donations. We have raised about \$7,000 for the Big Muddy Duck Hunt, which will take place next fall and memorialize Shawn Eldredge.

We are proud to be able to accept donations and help family and friends honor and memorialize folks such as these. These donations are helping to share the legacy of hunting with young people. What better way to acknowledge and honor the lives of Shawn Reesor and Shawn Eldredge with something they really believed in.

Correction

The March/April 2013 *Conservation Currents* included the misspelling of Design Technician Mike Tuter's name.