

## Dakota County Charity Event

Since 2011, law enforcement officers from Dakota County have participated in an annual charity basketball tournament in an effort to raise money for the families of police officers killed in the line of duty in Minnesota. In the past several years, the tournament has raised money for the families of Deputy Christopher Dewey of the Mahnomen County Sheriff's Office (2011), Officer Shawn Schneider of the Lake City Police Department (2012), Officer Tom Decker of the Cold Springs/New Richmond Police Department (2013), and in 2014 they played for Minnesota Concerns of Police Survivors (COPS). In 2015, the event was held for Officer Scott Patrick of the Mendota Heights Police Department and raised nearly \$4,700 for his wife and two daughters. In 2016, they played for Aitkin County Deputy Steven Sandberg and raised approximately \$6,500 for his family. In 2016, fortunately no law enforcement officers in Minnesota were killed in the line of duty. The tournament went on and raised nearly \$4,700 for COPS which is a 501c3 charity. Last year, the tournament raised a record of nearly \$10,000 for the family of Wayzata Officer Bill Mathews who was struck by and killed by car in 2017.

This year, will mark the 9th Annual Ballin' in DC Charity Basketball Tournament and will be held for the families of the two Department of Corrections Officers who were killed in the line of duty during 2018. Officer Joseph Gomm was killed at Minnesota Correction Facility - Stillwater on July 18th and Officer Joseph Parise was killed at Oak Park Heights on September 24th. The tournament will be held on Saturday April 13th at Burnsville High School located at 600 HWY 13, E, Burnsville, MN. This event is open to the public. Games generally begin at 830 am and last for most of the day.

Teams are comprised exclusively of law enforcement personnel. Each year the tournament and interest has become larger. Last year, law enforcement personnel from all over the State of Minnesota traveled to Dakota County to help raise money for our cause. This tournament began humbly with four teams and last year has increased to 12 teams from agencies all over the state of Minnesota. The goal is to have up to 16 teams participating in the event.

To make this event so special, approximately 200 players and volunteers to include referees, concessions, raffle items and small games. Previous tournaments have drawn a variety of spectators and volunteers including family, friends, members of the general public, media outlets, elected officials, and representatives of local businesses. This is a very family friendly event and it is common for whole families, including children to spend the day with us. We have had the honor of the wives of other fallen officers to come out and support our event and the families that have been recently affected. The Minnesota Chapter of COPS will be present along with Backing the Blue Line to share their messages of support for law enforcement families.

Because many agencies are too small to fill out the roster for a basketball team, most teams in our tournament are regional. Officers are encouraged to form a team and come have some fun for a good cause. Online team registrations will be available. There is a per player fee. Participants will receive an event T-shirt.

The charity event is non-profit and ALL proceeds will go to the families of Officer Gomm and Officer Parise at the end of the day.

If you are interested in participating, donating time/money/raffle items and would like more information, please contact: Jeremiah.Simonson@ci.rosemountmn.us or Michael.fendrick@co.dakota.mn.us

Visit them on Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/category/Community/Ballin-in-DC-Annual-Charity-Basketball-Tournament-893216497377501/>