



BIG SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN'S CHARITIES

TOP: JON KRUGER – TRICK SHOOTING ON GOLD DAY. INSET: NANCY SMITH (ACC CO-CHAIR), BOB HULL WHO WON THE AUDEMARES PIGUET WRISTWATCH, STEPHEN JOHNSTON (ACC CO-CHAIR), AND ROBERT RONEN OF AUDEMARES.

CONNIE McELROY REPORTS ON THE MID-MARCH ATLANTA SPORTING CLAYS EVENT

One of the oldest ongoing charity sporting clays events celebrated its 15th year this spring. Atlanta Charity Clays began in 1991 with a one-day event at Burge Plantation, created by two guys who were bored by yet another black tie dinner and wishing they were out shooting sporting clays! The event's central theme is to ensure that sporting clays is a fun outdoor experience that appeals to a corporate audience interested in networking while contributing to charity at the same time. Many dove and quail hunters

have been introduced to sporting clays at this long-established event. The two days of shooting are more a social event than a competitive tournament, but the competitive juices do flow. The underlying benefit is to children's charities. Atlanta Charity Clays has raised over \$2,000,000 for local children's charities to date.

This year, the mid-March event began with an evening Gala including a Silent and Live Auction, then a Gold Sponsor's Day of shooting at Arrowhatchee Farm and ending with a huge Tournament Day on the Saturday at Burge Plantation.

The Sports Gala and Auction took place at historic downtown Atlanta's Georgia Freight Railroad Depot. Over 500 sponsors and their guests came out to support charities by bidding on more than

120 items, with the live auction conducted by celebrity auctioneer Jamal Anderson.

FUN AND GAMES

Shooting events began the following day at the Moore family's Arrowhatchee Farm, minutes from Atlanta in Social Circle, GA. Guests of the Gold Sponsors enjoyed a 100-bird sporting clays event and the Holland and Holland (loyal sponsor since 1992) instructor/try gun 4-stand. Guests were then chauffeured around the lake by a fleet of Land Rovers, courtesy of Hennessey Land Rover (sponsor since 1991), to participate in Cowboy Action shooting that was led by noted author and shooting instructor Jerry Meyer. Make-A-Break was also available.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: SPIKE WAHLEN, CATHY WAHLEN, JERRY MEYER AND DIANE FLATT. SPIKE IS ONE OF THE ORIGINAL FOUNDERS OF THE EVENT.

Among the shooters was Georgia's Governor Sonny Perdue, an avid sportsman and generous supporter of charitable events that benefit children. A fabulous lunch featuring LowCountry Barbecue's famous beef tenderloin was enjoyed by all. An audience then gathered for a trick-shooting demonstration by seven time U.S. Open Champion and the first inductee into the Sporting Clays Hall of Fame, Jon Kruger. The day ended with prize shotgun shoot-offs.

Saturday's finale, Tournament Day, was held at Burge Plantation in

nearby Mansfield, GA. The tournament teams shot a 20-station 80-bird sporting clays event, a 4-Man Flush, Burge Blast (4-stand) and a Make-A-Break competition. Scores for all four events were

added together for a competition overall team winner, each different competition team winners and individual divisional shoot-offs for shotguns. A wonderful barbecue lunch and announcement of the raffle winner for a \$25,000 gent's

wristwatch, donated by Audemars Piguet, topped off the day.

Burge Plantation is synonymous with Atlanta Charity Clays tournaments and has been involved with the charity since its inception. It was established in 1809 by the great-great-great grandfather of the present owner, Sandy Morehouse. Burge

Plantation's history includes a noted diary kept by Dolly Lunt Burge from 1848 to 1879 describing life on a rural farm. Sandy and wife, Betsy, presently operate the farm as a private club and entertainment facility. Burge's noted clay shooting facilities include



LEFT: GUESTS NITA PIPKINS AND GUY DAVIS CHECKOUT THE AUCTION ITEMS. ABOVE: MARGARET BOSBYSELL, JANE BROWN, BEVERLY GREGORY, MARY HUNTZ. ALL WOMEN TEAM AT BURGE ON TOURNAMENT DAY. RIGHT: PICTURE OF TEAM WITH THE GOVERNOR OF GEORGIA SHOOTING (L-R) JOHN HUNTZ, GOVERNOR SONNY PERDUE, DR. CHARLES BROWN, COMMISSIONER BART GRAHAM.



skeet, 5-stand and a 15-station sporting clays course in a beautiful wooded setting.

Overlooking the activities is Paula's Porch and Lodge, great for relaxing or dining. There are also hunting fields, scenic trails, ponds for fishing, rustic cottages with authentic period furnishings, eclectic libraries and a Victorian attic museum on this 1000-acre farm.

There were almost 200 dedicated volunteers and hundreds of volunteer hours involved in handling this year's event. Committee members, headed by Co-Chairs Nancy Smith and Stephen F. Johnston, Sr. put on a great show and helped raise over \$260,000. The charities benefiting from ACC are primarily smaller, lesser-funded local children's charities, many of which do not have their own major fund-raising activities and/or staff to raise much needed funds. The Atlanta Charity Clays is affiliated with the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta. How does one get involved in this popular event? Sponsorship levels are described on the charity website: www.atlantacharityclays.org.

THE WINNERS WERE

Gold Day Individual Lewis class division shootoff winners were: Donnie Chapman, Mid Thorne and Larry Neustadt, taking away 686 Beretta Covey Quail Unlimited O/U shotguns. The Champion Team for Gold Day was the Sea Island Company/Cabin Bluff made up of Bart Chandler, Jon Kent, William Stewart and John Varner. The Sharpshooter Team winners were SunTrust Robinson-Humphrey, members included Ken Millar, Gerry O'Meara, Joe Thompson and Bobby Schwartz. Marksman Team winners were Watkins Associated Industries with team members Allen Carter, Earle Dodd, John Fisher and Keith Mericka.

Tournament Day individual division shotgun winners were: Top Gun winner Jon Kruger who beat Larry Farrow and John Chandler in a shoot-off, all having shot a perfect score of 80; Expert winner – Buddy Hendrick; Marksman – Steve Barker; Sharpshooter – Fred Zeh.

Team winners were: Champion Team – Sea Island Company/Cabin Bluff team members: Bart Chandler, Barry Moore, William Stewart and John Varner; Tournament Runner-up – Moore Stephens Tiller, LLC team members: Stephen Bosshardt, Donnie Chapman, Larry Farrow and Bill Lankford; Tournament Expert Team – Dow, Lohnes & Albertson team members: Guy Cherp, Peter Coffman, Turner Kurzweg and Ben Shurling; Tournament Marksman Team – Openheimer team members: Charlie Abry, Kwanza Hall, Will Lobb and Bert Pena; Tournament Sharpshooter Team – Smith Barney team members: Cal Collier, Dave Collier, David Kirkpatrick and Todd Smith.

TOURNAMENT DAY EVENT CHAMPION TEAMS

DELOITTE'S SPORTING CLAYS

- CASEY ATKINSON
- PAT BEARD
- JIM BELL
- ZACK PATE

**CRAVEY, GREEN & WAHLEN, INC.
4-MAN FLUSH**

- HENNESSY MAZDA PONTIAC GMC TRUCK
- FRED BURKE
- STEVE HENNESSY
- BERT RAYLE
- JOHNNY SCHUMACHER

OPPENHEIMER'S BURGE BLAST

- ALTEC INDUSTRIES, INC.
- DON WILLIAMS
- TOM HAMBY
- JOSH WILLIAMS
- SCOTT WILSON

**MOORE STEPHENS TILLER,
LLC MAKE-A-BREAK**

- SUNTRUST ROBINSON HUMPHREY
- CURTIS WHITAKER
- TALLY BIDELELL
- WILL FRASIER
- BILL YOUNGSTROM