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Be a Piece of the Puzzle: Lessons Learned Too Late - For Others it Doesn't Have to Be

By DeAnna Pearl



Last weekend, 14 year old Ashley Long told her parents she was going to a slumber party. But instead of spending the night watching videos and eating popcorn two blocks away, she piled into a car with a bunch of her friends and rode to a condo in Medford, OR, where police say the big sister of one of her friends was throwing a party with booze and marijuana. After drinking on the drive, and downing more drinks in the condo,



14 year old Ashley Long.

it came time for Ashley to take her turn on a tank of helium that everyone else was inhaling to make their voices sound funny. Instead, she passed out and later died at a hospital, the result of an obstruction in a blood vessel caused by inhaling helium from a pressurized tank.

Police have arrested 27-year-old Katherine McAloon, who lived in the condo, on charges of providing alcohol and marijuana to minors. Four men who were at the party have been questioned by police, but have not been charged, said Medford Police Lt. Mike Budreau. More charges may be filed after police turn over their evidence to the district attorney. She has since been released on \$3,500 bail and due in court in mid-March.

"Teenage girl dies after inhaling helium at party" Excerpt from Associated Press, 22 Feb. 2012

Oregon law prohibits anyone, except a parent or legal guardian, from providing alcohol to a minor or juvenile. A minor is any person under the age of 21 and a juvenile is any person under the age of 18. Parents or guardians may legally provide alcohol to their minor child or ward and only in a private residence when accompanying their minor child. A parent cannot transfer this responsibility to another adult or provide alcohol in a public place. If you allow your property and/or home to be used for a party where minors, other than your minor child(ren), consume alcohol in your presence, you may have to forfeit property and may be issued a criminal citation.

ORS 165.805 Misrepresentation of age by a minor

When minors misrepresent their age, purposely are not truthful about their age to purchase alcohol, enter a lounge or evade detection by law enforcement, they are referred to juvenile court or receive a criminal citation, depending on their age. The minor may be fined. If DMV identification is used in

misrepresentation, the minor's driving privileges may be suspended for up to one year and/or the minor will have to wait for up to one year to apply for a driver's license. (Class C Misdemeanor)

ORS 471.430 Minor in possession of alcohol/minor in prohibited area

When minors are in possession of alcohol, they are either holding the alcohol, have consumed the alcohol, or attempted to purchase the alcohol. They will be referred to juvenile court or receive a criminal citation. The minor will be fined and/or required to perform community service. Minors/juveniles may be sent to alcohol assessment and treatment. Minors may consume sacramental wine as part of a religious service. (Criminal Violation)

ORS 471.610 Confiscation of liquor and property

When any officer arrests a person for violating a liquor law (e.g.; selling alcohol without a license) the officer may take into possession all alcoholic beverages and other property used in violation of the law. Other properties that can be confiscated include: bars, glasses, chairs, tables, music devices, furniture, and equipment. This property is forfeited to the state of Oregon if the person is convicted.

ORS 471.620 Property or places subject to confiscation

Any room, house, building, boat, structure or place of any kind where alcohol beverages are sold or given away in violation of the law is a public nuisance. Anyone who maintains or assists in maintaining such a place, or permits it in a place they own, manage or lease, violates the Liquor Control Act.

ORS 471.410(2) Furnishing alcohol to a minor

No person shall sell, give or make alcohol available to a minor. A parent or legal guardian may provide alcohol to their minor child in a private residence as long as the parent is with the minor child. If you illegally provide alcohol to a minor, or provide alcohol to an adult that you know will make it available to a minor, you will receive a criminal citation. (Class A Misdemeanor) NOTE: if the minor leaves the private

residence, the parent can be then cited for contributing to a minor.

ORS 471.410(3) Controlling an area where minors are permitted to consume alcohol

It is illegal for someone exercising control over private real property to allow any person under 21 to consume alcohol on the property in your presence. It is also illegal to allow any person under age 21 to remain on the property if they have consumed alcohol. Private real property may include a hotel room, camp site, or any rented/leased location. The only exception is for your own minor child(ren). If you control an area where minors consume alcohol, you will receive a criminal citation. (Criminal Violation)

ORS 471.565 Licensee, permittee and social host liability

As a licensee, permittee or social host, if you serve visibly intoxicated persons or guests, you may be held liable for damages caused by the persons or guests away from your home or licensed premises.

ORS 471.567 Liability for serving minors; liability of a minor for misrepresentation of age

As a licensee, permittee or social host, you may be liable for injuries caused by a minor who obtained alcohol from you when you did not properly check for identification. Minors who misrepresent their age and cause a licensee to be fined or have their liquor license suspended or revoked can be held liable for damages sustained by the licensee.

ORS 475.906 Penalties for unlawful delivery of Marijuana to minors

If you are over 17-years-old and deliver any amount of marijuana to a minor who is at least three years younger than you (whether or not you receive something for it), you have committed a Class A felony punishable by a maximum sentence of 20 years and a \$375,000 fine. There also are stronger penalties for the delivery or possession of marijuana

within 1,000 feet of a school.

Currently Columbia County, nor City of Vernonia, has a social hosting ordinance to hold landlords, home owners or proper owners accountable for planned parties like this. Our community is vulnerable and has been used, in the past, as a host of many parties in the woods and RAVES. We do not have any teeth, in our current ordinances to hold people accountable for these potentially deadly gatherings. These ordinances are not to deter regular gatherings, monitored by responsible adults, from occurring. But they are to hold people accountable for gatherings, private or public for knowingly contributing to



minors other than their own. These types of gatherings bank on the fact that if things get out of hand, first responders will take care of it and they are held harmless.

It is hard to believe that an adult would provide a space for a 14 year old and her friends to experiment with drugs and alcohol. What is not hard to understand is the tragic outcome when it does happen. Who is responsible? We all are if we do not learn from this all too common occurrence and hold people accountable. While it is too late for the parents of the 14 year old, it is not too late for others to learn and take action.

More information on OLCC Laws, go to www.oregon.gov/OLCC If you are interested in finding out how you can help with these issues, contact DeAnna Pearl @ (503) 369-7370 or email her at DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov.

Coming Soon!

Summer Meals Program

June 18th—August 17th

USDA and the State of Oregon are equal opportunity Providers and employers

Any questions please contact
DeAnna Pearl
(503) 369 7370

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Are you feeling desperate, alone or hopeless? Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call will be routed to the nearest crisis center to you.

Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline
1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1