

County Sheriff's Marine Patrol Readies for Busy Summer

With summer around the corner the Columbia County Sheriff's Marine Patrol Unit is in full operation preparing for what they believe will be a busy summer on waters within Columbia County.

Over 100 miles of waterways scattered with sandy beaches, flourishing fisheries, and ideal recreational water bodies make up the patrol area for the Marine Patrol Unit, which consists of two full-time Marine Deputies, and a part-time Marine Safety Officer. Four additional volunteer Reserve Deputies, specially trained in Marine operations, assist with patrol and emergency operations. The Marine Patrol is equipped with three boats and two PWC watercrafts, supplied and maintained by the Oregon State Marine Board which also carries much of the cost of the Marine Patrol Program for the Sheriff's Office.

The Marine Patrol Unit's main responsibility is to promote boating safety through education and enforcement. Deputies routinely respond to emergency situations and conduct boat examinations to insure that boaters possess required safety equipment and are licensed to operate vessels on Federal and State waterways. Where shore-based patrols insure the safety



of those on land, the Marine Patrol Unit acts similarly to insure that those using the waterways are also safe.

The waterways in Columbia County are some of the most popular in the Pacific Northwest, bringing in boaters from around the region to fish, wakeboard, waterski, kayak, and just cruise the area. The large number of individuals choosing to recreate these waters often is accompanied by challenges that must be anticipated by deputies on patrol. High-powered boats mixed with non-motorized water craft can be dangerous, if rules are not closely monitored and adhered to. While physical driving tests are used to evaluate and issue licenses to the driving public, only

written tests are currently used in issuing boating licenses. As high powered boats on our waterways are increasing, enforcement of safety rules is a crucial component to creating a safe boating environment for all.

Boaters are encouraged to pay particular attention to the basic safety rules below (a complete listing of all boating regulations can be found at www.boatoregon.com):

1. Wear or have available serviceable life jackets for each person riding in a boat
2. Have a whistle, horn, or US Coast Guard approved sounding device available
3. Have a serviceable fire extinguisher in your boat at all times
4. Always operate your boat responsibly, especially around other boaters and swimmers
5. Be aware of NO WAKE zones where reduced speed is required
6. Do NOT operate any boat or PWC while under the influence of any intoxicants

The Columbia County Sheriff's Office is working diligently to ensure the boating public can enjoy the beauty of our County's waterways in safety this summer

Community Action Team: Helping Seniors *continued from page 3*

services through Medicaid, yet unable to completely take care of all of their own needs, so OPI fills in the gap. Through OPI, Adams received weekly home care visits for the next year and a half. Workers helped by picking up groceries for her since she could no longer drive. They also helped with housekeeping chores, cleaning, laundry and more. Adams' eyesight is deteriorating, so her workers even helped make sure the floors were clear of anything that might cause her to trip and fall. Speaking of the assistance she gets, Adams says she "couldn't live alone without it." Even though she usually sees her neighbors every day, she feels safer knowing her care workers are checking in on a regular basis.

After a couple more health-related incidents, Adams' needs increased to the point that she became eligible for Medicaid home care. CAT staff helped her file the necessary paperwork that gave her the resources to receive additional care. She now has help five days a week.

The increased support came just in time. The apartment at the Victorian Manor she has lived in for 14 years is getting exciting upgrades. To ensure continued availability of affordable housing for seniors and adults with disabilities, CAT purchased the 17-unit

complex in March, along with four more units at nearby Olive Court, with the plans to update all the apartments. Just last week Adams returned home after an 18-day stay in a local motel during the remodeling of her home. Now she has new flooring throughout, windows, doors, sinks, faucets, and even sidewalks that make her comings and goings much safer. Of course packing and unpacking all of her belongings would have been virtually impossible for the 79 year old without assistance from her home care workers.

Just a few miles away in Warren, Sidney McBride has a different kind of relationship with the senior programs at CAT. McBride's 47 year old son Michael Lamont has lived with her and her husband Mike for about eight years. Lamont is disabled due to a brain injury that prevents him from living on his own. At the end of 2013 McBride learned of CAT's senior respite care program and asked for help. Respite care is temporary care provided to caregivers of a child or adult with special needs. In CAT's case, the program supports either a caregiver who is over 60 or someone who is caring for a loved one who is over 60. The program's priority is to serve families of low-income, but is open to all. It is primarily supported by private

donations, so funding is limited.

Most of the time McBride is home on her own with her son; he is not afraid to say in his own sly way that he gets tired of her sometimes. And, while she very much enjoys spending time with him, being on high alert 24/7 takes its toll. That's where respite comes in.

McBride admits she has difficulty saying, "no" when asked to help. She has a long history of providing care and having a respite worker care for her son gives her the ability to recharge her own batteries. She can get out of the house to do something fun or something that helps her take better care of herself. She and her husband might go to dinner and a movie, or she might go into Portland and stroll through a mall.

Those get-aways provide much more than a little entertainment and change of scenery. When McBride returns to her son after a break, she says she, "can better handle everything." She wants other caregivers to know it's normal to start feeling desperate. Removing yourself from the situation for a while can help make the same circumstances look totally different and feel more manageable.

CAT provides yet another service to seniors through preventative health classes. CAT partners with The

Public Health Foundation of Columbia County to teach classes on diabetes prevention, diabetes self-management, and chronic pain self-management. Renee Swartz has participated in two courses in the last few months. Even with a long ride from Clatskanie to St. Helens or Scappoose, Swartz received many benefits from both.

Before the diabetes prevention class, Swartz did not understand how to count carbohydrates or to make substitutions; now she does. In a small group setting she learned more about triggers that contribute to high blood sugar so she can make better choices. Later, in the chronic pain self-management class she learned how to manage her pain better through strength exercises, stretches and even meditation. She says the class was, "a success to me. Now I have the skills to manage the chronic pain so I can enjoy my life." Swartz now paces herself better and looks forward to continuing practicing her new tools.

These are just some of the many resources available to Columbia County residents who are 60 years old or older through Community Action Team. To find out more or to make a donation, please contact the senior programs team at (503) 397-3511, option #1.

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