

SUMMER

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younger must wear a life vest.

Failing to wear a life vest can get you a fine. English said marine deputies have required some people to turn around and go back to shore when they don't follow the rules.

"It's been a constant education process. Particularly on non-motorized stuff," said English.

Another concern English pointed out was boaters "consuming alcohol on the river." According to the state marine board, intoxicated boaters could face fines of up to \$6,250 and up to a year in jail, as well as suspension of their boating privileges.

The river is not the only dangerous waterway in Hood River County.

The USDA Forest Service of the Columbia River Gorge

and the Sheriff's Office put out a notice two weeks ago urging safety at the lakes, creeks and swimming holes throughout Hood River County. Especially dangerous is Punchbowl Falls on Eagle Creek, where people illegally jump off the 80-foot waterfall every year — and often suffer neck and back injuries.

The Sheriff's Office responds to an average of 10 search and rescue calls to the area every year. In 2013, the total was 17 calls.

"Jumping from Punchbowl Falls is prohibited for good reason," English said. "Yet we continue to see tragic, avoidable accidents that location every year."

The Sheriff's department will be increasing weekend patrols through July and August.

Local fire departments are also encouraging safety precautions in the face of a blistering summer. The fire danger level had been raised to

"high" in most of Hood River County, and a burn ban comes into effect on July 1. Starting then, campfires and controlled burns will only be allowed in protected areas, and even then only with a burn permit.

West Side Fire Marshal Jim Trammell said a lack of rain or moisture has raised concerns.

"The biggest fear is dry lightning. Generally, on human caused fires they're somewhere you can drive to. But Mother Nature — she'll put it somewhere it's hard to get to," said Trammell.

The fire department draws from the local domestic water supply, with about 170 hydrants in the West Side district — a 25-square-mile patch with 3,000 residences. That water comes from underground springs, so this year's drought, and lack of snowpack and river water levels, haven't endangered the fire department yet.

Local fire officials reported a lack of any major fires thus far.

"So far it's been fairly quiet," said Trammell last week.

The Hood River Fire Department responded Saturday night to a brush fire along Interstate 84 westbound, nine miles west of Hood River. The blaze prompted Oregon Department of Transportation officials to close off the right lane at 9:21 p.m. Though it burned roughly 500 feet of ground and foliage along the Columbia River, no structures were harmed.

ODOT reopened that lane at about 11 p.m.

The lane closure wouldn't have been a traffic concern if it weren't for a deadly crash on the other side of the Columbia that night. A pickup and a minivan collided on Washington State Route 14 in Stevenson around 8 p.m., killing four and injuring two. While emergency crews cleared the wreckage, traffic was diverted to I-84 and syphoned through one lane for an hour and a half span.



COOL WATER flows for Jeff McCaw of Print It/SignMedia, right, and Shortt Supply's Brian Shortt. Any one may come into the store and fill their cup or bottle during business hours.

'Hydration Station' opens downtown

By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

Water pours freely at the new "hydration station" at Shortt Supply at Second and Oak streets.

It's the second new source of public water to open in downtown Hood River in recent weeks, along with the drinking fountain at the new public restroom/bicycle hub facility at Third and State streets.

Owners Brian and Karen Shortt opened hydration station Friday, and hope that not only will people come in and use the service, but that other businesses might follow suit.

Hydration Station is a sensor-activated water dispenser built into the wall at the front of the store. Any one may come in during

store hours and fill up their cup or water bottle at no charge. Bottles are available for sale, including powder-coated versions that carry the Shortt Supply logo, etched by engineering department students at Hood River Valley High School. The Shortts contracted with the department to etch the bottles using a laser-etcher at the school; a portion of each sale goes to the program, and the students who did the labor will also get a cut.

Hydration fits the store's mission of promoting fitness, according to Brian Shortt. Asked why they devote valuable store space to a free service, Shortt said:

"There isn't a physician or personal trainer out there who will say Americans drink enough water. Here's a way to promote that with

easy access to water. It helps promote digestion, keeps the body fluids going. This whole area (of the store) is about flexibility and balance, and flexibility is based on hydration, and without it you are basically a set of tires on brakes."

He said the amenity has an environmental component, reducing the number disposable bottles, and an economic component.

"We sell more water bottles, so it's good for the store, but we have the relationship with the high school and it helps the students. We look at this as good for the economy, and about health and awareness."

The water dispenser is flanked by two chalkboard surfaces, installed by Print It/Sign Media of Hood River.



Photo by Kirby Neumann-Rea.

NOT SO SAFE, kids jump from the Mt. Hood Railroad trestle into the Hood River. The spot is private property and is off limits.

EVENTS

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the race Saturday afternoon. Also featured this year will be a beer garden all weekend. The parade will be Saturday morning at 11 a.m. down WaNaPa, and the 5k and 10k walk/run will be at 9 a.m. Saturday morning and Church in the park at 10:30 a.m. Sunday.

The Lions club will be giving away free Sternwheeler ride tickets every two hours during the Sternwheeler Days Festival; you don't need to be present to win, sign up at the Lions information booth near the pavilion.

Overnight camping spots overlooking the Columbia River are available through the Port of Cascade Locks. Call 541-374-8619 for more information.

Cruises on the Sternwheeler "Columbia Gorge" will be available all weekend. Call 541-374-8427, 800-643-1354 or visit www.sternwheeler.com for more information.

If you would like to sponsor the event, sign-up for a vendor booth, get more information, or volunteer at the Sternwheeler event please contact Samantha Verschuren at 971-258-7348

"Beach Bash," the annual celebration of the Gorge wind and water lifestyle, covers four days next week with events including a concert, barbecue, swap meet, and, of course, racing.

Columbia Gorge Windsurfing Association (CGWA) presents its new and improved four-day festival Thursday through Sunday,

Event Basics

Garden Tour — June 27 — upper valley beauty, see page A12 for ticket information.
Beach Bash — June 25-28 — water sports for all levels, music and more, Event Site Sternwheeler — June 26-28 — parade, music, history, Marine Park, Cascade Locks

June 25-28.

The popular windsurf event will include a live concert, a community barbecue, an all-sports gear swap, the "Never Ever Windsurfed Before Race" and fun relays, plus two days of watersports gear demos.

CGWA offers two different watersports hands-on gear demo days for windsurfers, StandUp Paddle boarders (SUP) and spectators. Throughout the weekend, CGWA hopes the events will

appeal to everyone, from those who have never surfed or SUP'ed to those with plenty of experience.

"Beach Bash is all about having a good time in the Gorge, on and off the water," said CGWA Executive Director Greg Stiegel. "This year's event builds on the legacy we have built with Windfest and is designed to include more of the community, so everyone can have a good time. We've rebranded and reinvigorated the lineup this year."

More Beach Bash events include:

■ June 26 — New this year from 6-10 p.m., is a live outdoor concert at the Hood River Waterfront Park's newly built amphitheater, featuring Tim Snider out of Portland, with Smoke on the Water opening. Presented by 10 Barrel and supported by Naked Winery. Free entrance and open to all ages.

■ June 27 — The Beach Party, hosted by Big Winds. This is an action packed day of fun in the sun for the whole community. Activities include windsurf and SUP gear demo (the latest and greatest gear) at the Hood River Event Site for \$5-10 all day.

For up to date information on Beach Bash visit GorgeWindsurfing.org/events/beachbash.

NESTLÉ

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ble, Cascade Locks and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife filed a cross water rights transfer with the Oregon Water Resources Department in mid-April. If approved and finalized by the department, the city would transfer 0.5 cubic feet per second (cfs) — 225 gallons per minute — of its municipal ground water right in exchange for 0.5 cfs of ODFW's water right to Oxbow Spring, located near Oxbow Hatchery on the east side of Cascade Locks.

The city would then sell the spring water to Nestlé for bottling in its bottling facility.

For the town hall discussion, Barbara Briggs will be the facilitator. Briggs, a longtime Hood River business consultant and former Hood River County commissioner, will lead the public comment portion of the evening.

"This is a listening session for the (City) Council and

Port Commission to hear what the concerns are," said Gordon Zimmerman, Cascade Locks City Administrator. "There will be other town halls as we try to answer those concerns."

The cross water rights transfer and proposed plant have drawn concerns from environmental groups across Oregon. Members of local environmental groups, including the "No Nestlé in Cascades Locks" coalition and the Local Water Alliance, are planning to attend the Thursday meeting, according to their public Facebook pages.

The groups have argued that state water resources should not be sold into corporate ownership, and that the plant could increase truck traffic and pollution from discarded plastic bottles in Cascade Locks.

The first item of discussion Thursday will be the city's current Water System Improvement Project. Zimmerman said the project involves building a new water storage reservoir on Moody Street and installing a main 12-inch water passage

throughout downtown and down a portion of Forest Lane.

"We will also put in a 12-inch main into the industrial park for future growth there," said Zimmerman.

The industrial park is where Nestlé hopes to set up shop.

After reviewing the water project, Zimmerman will give a presentation about the City's status regarding the Nestlé project, and lay out "what we know at this point."

Briggs will then open the floor for questions. Attendees will be encouraged to write down their questions and post them on a series of posters about the different topics.

For years, City and Port leaders in Cascade Locks have attempted bring the Nestlé plant to town in order to boost the local economy with a fresh source of jobs and tax income. Nestlé has said that the deal would create up to 50 jobs, and boost the city's total tax revenue by 67 percent. The city's unemployment rate is nearly 19 percent.

Create to Heal Workshop

Wednesday, June 29, 10:30 am
with lunch at 12 noon

Please join us for a creativity class that uses art, music, creative writing and meditation to explore your journey with cancer.

Family members are welcome!

(Facilitator: Patricia Varga)

Classes are FREE and sponsored by Providence Hood River Cancer Services

For more info or to RSVP please contact Patricia Varga (626) 403-7575 or pv@womenwings.org

Providence Hood River
810 12th St.
Please check in at front desk for Conference Room 9
Lunch will be served, family members are welcome

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