

Aloha teen, deceased in ocean rescue attempt, to receive Gold Lifesaving Medal

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

ALOHA, Ore. - The Coast Guard has posthumously awarded a Gold Lifesaving Medal to Ross Barfuss, a 16-year-old teenager from Aloha, Oregon, for his unselfish and heroic actions despite imminent personal danger. Barfuss died while attempting to rescue a child who was caught in heavy ocean surf near Cutler, Oregon, in March of 2008.

Hero, Ross Barfuss, was posthumously awarded a Gold Lifesaving Medal for unselfish and heroic actions despite imminent personal danger. The child, a 12-year old boy identified as River Jenison of Westfir, had been swept to sea when Barfuss put his own life in danger by attempting a rescue. Lincoln City Fire and Rescue recovered the 12-year-old boy and transported him to the Lincoln City Hospital where he was declared dead. Barfuss went missing shortly after his rescue attempt.

Coast Guard crews from Station Depoe Bay, Ore., and Air Station North Bend, Ore. searched for Barfuss without any success.

The ceremony was scheduled for this morning at the Aloha High School auditorium.

The Gold Lifesaving Medal was established by Congress in 1874. Since then, approximately 700 medals have been awarded. In contrast, the Medal of Honor, established approximately 10 years earlier, has been awarded 3,448 times. It is awarded by the Commandant of the Coast Guard to any person who rescues, or endeavors to rescue, any other person from drowning, shipwreck, or other peril of the water. To merit award of the Gold Lifesaving Medal, the rescue must be made at the risk to one's own life and show extreme heroic daring. The Coast Guard is the ultimate award authority for the Lifesaving Medal and issues the decorations to members of all military branches as well as civilians.

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