

Army National Guard Soldier Rescues Young Girl from the Deschutes River

by Bend Weekly News Sources

On July 10, only one day after the most recent drowning of Young-Sook Kuga on the Deschutes River in Bend, an Oregon Army National Guard Soldier rescued a young girl from the same fate.

Four Oregon Army National Guard soldiers were participating in recruiting activities on Newport Avenue near the river about 5 pm when they saw three children on inner-tubes, with no life jackets, floating downstream dangerously near a spillway.

Newport Ave. Bridge -- Photo by W&H Pacific
At least one of the children appeared to be in distress and the soldiers directed them to come to shore. The two older boys were able to make it, but a young girl estimated to be 6 or 7 years old, was too far out and appeared to be frightened and crying.

Specialist Tom Hoy, a Prineville resident and also a Reserve Police Officer with the Prineville Police Department, told the girl to grab onto some weeds growing near the side of the river. He instructed another soldier to stay on the near side of the river in case the child let go and made it near the riverbank.

Hoy ran upstream, crossed a bridge, ran back down the opposite bank, jumped several fences, and finally reached the girl. Without any concern for his personal safety, he entered the waist-deep fast-moving water and had the child climb onto his back where he carried her to safety.

According to a news release from the Joint Force Headquarters Of Oregon Public Affairs Office, Hoy, the other soldiers and an unidentified civilian returned the girl to her thankful parents.

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