

SEARCH and RESCUE HOLDS ANNUAL TRAINING

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On May 16 and 17, the Columbia County Sheriff's Search and Rescue team held its annual re-certification overnighter at Camp Wilkerson. Thirty team members received their state certification by showing knowledge and proficiency in land navigation/GPS, tracking, search techniques, wilderness first aid, shelter and fire building, as well as helicopter safety.

Members had to carry a 130 lb role player in a stoke through an obstacle course and their fires had to be built without the use of matches or lighters. Shelters were built with only items that the members carried in their backpacks and had to be constructed so that it was visible to searchers and could keep the 4 person team dry and warm. There was also a mock incident command post in place with an incident action plan for guidance. Team members had to complete 30 hours of additional training and had to take a state exam before receiving their certificates.

The Columbia County Search and Rescue is a 501C3 non-profit group consisting of volunteer residents from Columbia County. All members must be at least 18 years old and be able to pass a background check prior to the start of the training. The team is dispatched through the Sheriff's Office and is under the guidance of Undersheriff Andy Moyer. Team members will be receiving additional training throughout the calendar year and will begin the re-certification process next January.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Columbia County Search and Rescue you can come by the Sheriff's Office and pick up an application or contact Ron Hermo or Terri Etter at 503-366-4611.

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