

Cascade Locks invests in sailing

By SUE RYAN
News staff writer

Cascade Locks handed over a load of cash in recent weeks to support the growth of sailing.

Between the city and port, the Columbia Gorge Racing Association netted \$15,800 for support of its programs. The city gave \$10,800 to buy six sailboats for youth sailing programs while the port commission voted to give the association up to \$5,000 toward a chase boat.

Dollars spent by the commission will be in the form of a lease. While the boat, its insurance, operation and maintenance are the CGRA's responsibility; the agreement requires the boat be kept at the Cascade Locks marina.

"The port has a need for very sporadic uses; if there is an oil spill in the marina we have to be able to respond and we have to be able to do maintenance on our

docks and other projects such as milfoil removal," Daughtry said.

CGRA sailing instructor Andy Mack unfurled a sail on the marina beach at Cascade Locks Monday morning. He snapped rigging in place to show City Administrator Bernard Seeger how easy it is to set up the brand-new Bic sailboat.

"The general purpose is to expand small-boat sailing in Cascade Locks and support the school," said Seeger.

The city's money paid for: Two Optimist dinghies, one Byte, one Laser and two Bics. All are intended for the association's Learn to Sail program intended for children ages 5 to 14.

Could sailing have the impact on Cascade Locks that windsurfing did on Hood River? Seeger thinks so, but only if the town invests in growing local interest in
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the sport by teaching more people, especially youth, how to sail.

Seeger said the idea was to invest "seed" money into sailing in hopes that it would create or reach a critical mass in future years, generating interest in the sport.

Since CGRA committed a few years ago to make Cascade Locks its permanent sailing venue, the number of professional contests has increased each summer.

This year there will be seven races, including two new events: North American Championships for the Laser Masters and National Championships for the International Moth division. (For a complete listing visit www.cgra.org.)

The city's contribution came from Transient Room Tax monies, which are allocated by the Tourism Committee. New sailors float boats next week with the start of six weeks of sailing classes in both Cascade Locks and Hood River.

CGRA also received \$2,500 from the Oregon State Marine Board to purchase three used Optimists to expand Learning To Sail programs in Hood River.

Community Education handles the registration for the series and information is available on its Web site at www.hr.communityed.org or by calling 386-2055.



Photo by Sue Ryan

BERNARD SEEGER, city administrator for Cascade Locks, left, holds onto the sail of a new Bic boat Monday. Columbia Gorge Racing Association instructor Andy Mack just finished setting up the boat. The city gave CGRA a \$10,800 check Monday to pay for the boats, one of seven bought for the Learn to Sail program.