

# Tillamook County Deputy Honored With Life Saving Award

The Oregon State Marine Board honored Tillamook County Marine Deputy Charles Reeder with the agency's *Life Saving Award*. The award was announced at a recent meeting in Bend.



On the afternoon of June 26<sup>th</sup>, Deputy Reeder completed his shift and met up with his wife and children at a popular swimming hole near the Mill's Bridge area of the Wilson River. While Deputy Reeder was swimming, there was a woman holding a small child and two other children that were playing on a float tube nearby. Then they lost the float tube. The woman was able to save her small child, but was unable to get to the other children. Deputy Reeder heard the woman's frantic screams and saw her pointing at a spot in the water. Recognizing the urgency, frustration and horror she was conveying, Deputy Reeder sprung into action and swam to the area where the woman was pointing. Deputy Reeder saw a small hand come up from the water, only to quickly disappear under the surface. After diving underwater, Deputy Reeder found the child in a deep hole in the river. As he grasped the child Deputy Reeder saw another shocking sight. Seven to ten feet below was another boy with his hands outstretched, slowly descending with air bubbles coming from his mouth. Deputy Reeder was able to grasp the second child and started swimming to the surface when both children began struggling, clawing, kicking and attempting to climb the Deputy to the surface. Deputy Reeder began to struggle himself, fearing that he would be taken down in the struggle. He knew that he should do whatever it took to get free from the children, but in an act of total unselfishness, Deputy Reeder bravely fought his way to the surface with both children in tow. He handed off one child to a woman at the waters edge and Deputy Reeder reached a safe rock with the other. As a result of his heroism, two boys, ages 10 and 11 survived this near drowning.

During the awards ceremony, when Deputy Reeder approached the podium to accept his life saving award, the audience gave him a standing ovation.

SOURCE: <http://www.boatoregon.com/News/2006/PostSeasonLE/ChuckReeder.html>