

Fun in the sun

BY STEPHANIE JADRNICKEK
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SENECA — For the 12th year, Golden Corner Lakes Sail and Power Squadron invited Tribble Center clients and staff to enjoy a picnic at High Falls County Park and a day on Lake Keowee.

With pleasant temps and plenty of sunshine, more than 60 people from the Tribble Center attended the event on June 3, along with 33 volunteers from the Power Squadron.

"I remember the first year there were only 20 clients invited, and they had the time of their lives, but so did the folks of the Power Squadron," Tribble Center executive director Jerry Mize said. "Each year thereafter, more were invited, and last year more than 60 clients attended."

Once the Tribble Center clients and staff arrived at High Falls Park, they were led down to the dock, where they boarded the boats. Golden Corner Lakes Sail and Power Squadron commander Brian Hackley said the purpose of the event is to provide a community service to the Tribble

Center clients — several special hours of enjoyment at the park and on the lake.

"This event provides Tribble clients the opportunity to take a safe 35-minute boat ride on Lake Keowee," he said. "Some folks prefer to go slow and steady, while others like to go on the 'fast' boats. And some prefer to stay on land instead of taking a boat ride, and that's OK, too."

Each boat was safety checked before departure and carried a Power Squadron co-captain and Tribble Center staff member to ensure the safety and comfort of everyone on the boat ride. The Power Squadron also provided the opportunity for mobility-impaired clients to come on board for a boat ride.

"For the past four years, the Power Squadron made it possible for those confined to a wheelchair to ride, and that first year made some of us nervous," Mize said. "But seeing the expression of joy on those faces put us at ease."

After a pleasant ride on the lake, everyone enjoyed a lunch cookout at the pavilion with a spread of hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings,

as well as dessert. Hackley said an anonymous donor provides funds for gift cards for all the Tribble Center clients, which they receive before leaving — one of the most appreciated perks of the day.

Hackley said the event gives the Tribble Center clients an experience to remember.

"It's just to give them a break from their routine, and to bring some joy into their lives," he said. "So many times we've taken them out and one of them will say that they've never been in a boat before."

Mize said the Tribble Center staff is extremely appreciative to their friends of the Power Squadron for giving their time, talents and energy to allow the clients to experience a day on the water.

"For the most part, our clients are not afforded the opportunity to ride in a boat. They look forward to this every year, and start inquiring about it in the early spring," Mize said. "Our clients love the people with Power Squadron, and the feeling is mutual. This takes a lot of organization on their part. Everyone at the Tribble Center truly

appreciates this group."

Golden Corner Lakes Sail and Power Squadron is a non-profit boating organization dedicated to making boating safer and more enjoyable by teaching classes in safety, seamanship, piloting, sailing, weather, engine maintenance, the global positioning system and celestial navigation.

It's one of 450 squadrons that make up the United States Power Squadrons — the world's largest private non-profit organization.

Hackley said some of the Tribble Center clients and staff who attended the event on June 3 have participated every year for more than 10 years, but he also saw new some faces.

"The Power Squadron volunteers strive to ensure the safety of everyone on the boats and at the picnic shelter, make sure everyone is comfortable, respect and appreciate each participants' dignity and personality and ensure a positive experience for all."

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