

HAINES *Alaska* NEWS

FREE—TAKE ONE *All the news the other paper forgot to print* FREE—TAKE ONE

Volume II Issue 9

www.hainesnews.net

June 24, 2010

Read more on the web at hainesnews.net

- Daily updates on current events and issues
- Read opinions and voice yours online
- Access important information

Latest Articles

Online:

- Guest Opinion: Oil Spill Compensation Act
- Haines Resident, Mike Saunders Deceased at Home
- Chilkat River Claims Haines Man
- Lodge, Restaurant Burn in Elfin Cove
- Newspaper Editor Does Not Support Free Speech
- Haines Responders Assist with Oil Recovery

Alaska Alliance for Commerce
P.O. Box 784
Haines, AK 99827

Editor:
Roger Maynard
Email:
editor@hainesnews.net

Newspaper Editor Does Not Support Free Speech

CVN criticizes borough employees for expressing their opinions

By Roger Maynard

Chilkat Valley News owner/editor Tom Morphet is not above using his newspaper as a way to divide the community and beat up those who don't agree with him. This week's front page headline, "Tour staff lobbied against hall money," is nothing more than sour grapes from CVN owner/editor Tom Morphet and his friends who supported state funding of improvements to Harriet Hall.

Renovation of Harriet Hall as a convention center (\$277,000) was one of three projects submitted by Representative Bill Thomas and approved by the legislature for funding from the state's regional impact fund ("head tax" money). The other two were \$2.9 million for improvements to the Port Chilkoot Dock and \$2 million for Klukwan's purchase of the Chilkat Cruises dock.

Ten Haines residents wrote letters to the Governor's office regarding these projects — two of whom were borough employees. In the end, the Port Chilkoot Dock improvements survived; the

other two projects were vetoed.

Rather than researching, analyzing and reporting the reasons that the Harriet Hall project was vetoed by the governor, Morphet wrote a personal attack against folks who opposed that project. After requesting copies of all correspondence concerning the above projects from the Governor's office, he pub-



licly releasing the above projects from the Governor's office, he pub-

(Continued on page 4)

Chilkat River Claims Haines Man

Set net fisherman missing and presumed drowned

By Roger Maynard

Troopers are investigating the disappearance of Jason Allgood, age 36 of Haines, after he failed to answer his home phone or show up for work Friday. He was last seen in Haines by a friend about noon Thursday, and told several people that he was going fishing in the Chilkat River.

Allgood, a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Officer assigned to the Haines border crossing station, was alone while his wife and three children were out of town visiting friends

and relatives. Thursday evening Allgood did not answer the phone when his wife called; on Friday morning he did not show up for work — uncharacteristic for him.

Trooper Josh Bentz said he was notified im-



(Continued on page 4)

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP) blamed for death

Mike Saunders found deceased at home

John Michael Saunders, age 57 of Haines was found deceased at his residence on Mud Bay Road about 5:15 this morning. Only two days previous, Saunders had been medevaced to Juneau where he was diagnosed with Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning ("PSP") at Bartlett Regional Hospital. Saunders had been released and returned to Haines.

Saunders told friends that on Sunday he had been eating crab, cracking the shell with his teeth, and noticed after-

ward that his lips were tingling. He had difficulty with balance, and accidentally went in the water as he was docking his boat. He drove home, but then required an ambulance to take him to the hospital, and was medevaced shortly thereafter. After his return to Haines, he told friends that he still didn't feel well.

PSP is diagnosed by the symptoms presented and the diagnosis of the doctors is not being questioned; however the medical examiner will be conducting

a routine autopsy to determine if his death may have been from another cause. There is no evidence of foul play, and drugs or alcohol were not a factor.

Saunders' death comes on the heels of another PSP death — Dottie Lindoff, age 57 of Juneau. Five cases of PSP poisoning have been reported to the state in the past two weeks. Lindoff ate shellfish collected in the vicinity of Auke Bay; Saunders ate crab harvested in Chilkat Inlet.

Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Facts

from the Alaska Division of Public Health

What is paralytic shellfish poisoning? Paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) is a serious illness caused by eating shellfish contaminated with algae that contains a toxin harmful to humans. When this algae increases to high numbers in marine waters, the condition is sometimes (and somewhat erroneously) referred to as a "red tide". PSP can occur without a "red tide".

What causes unsafe levels of PSP? The amount of toxin increases when water conditions are favorable. However, the exact combination of conditions that cause blooms of poison-producing plankton is not known. We do not yet understand the interaction of the water conditions. Unlike bacterial contaminants like vibrio, warm water does not necessarily increase the level.

Which seafood can transmit PSP to humans? All molluscan shellfish including clams, mussels, oysters, geoduck and scallops can have paralytic shellfish poison. Moon snails and other gastropods also can become toxic. Other marine species, such as sea cucumbers, might also be affected. Crabmeat is not known to contain the PSP toxin, but the guts can contain unsafe levels. To be safe, clean crab thoroughly and discard the guts.

Who is most at risk? Anyone who eats PSP contaminated shellfish is at risk for illness or death.

What are the symptoms of PSP? Early symptoms include tingling of the lips and tongue, which may begin within minutes of eating poisonous shellfish or may take an hour or two to develop. Depending upon the

amount of toxin a person has ingested, symptoms may progress to tingling of fingers and toes and then loss of control of arms and legs, followed by difficulty in breathing. Some people have experienced a sense of floating or nausea. If a person consumes enough poison, muscles of the chest and abdomen become paralyzed. Death can result in as little as two hours, as muscles used for breathing become paralyzed.

If the water looks dirty or red, does that mean that shellfish are contaminated? Not necessarily. Paralytic shellfish poison is rarely associated with a red tinge to the water. Reddish coloration of the water is more commonly associated with other, non-toxic organisms.

If the water is not red, does that mean that shellfish are not contaminated? Not necessarily. PSP can be present in large amounts even if the water looks clear. Also, the toxin can remain in shellfish long after the algae bloom is over.

Can I tell if it's safe to gather shellfish by how they look? No! Only laboratories can reliably test shellfish for PSP. Toxin can be present with no visible signs.

How can I protect my family from paralytic shellfish poisoning? The only way to protect your family or yourself from PSP is by not eating shellfish collected from recreational beaches in Alaska. Commercial shellfish in Alaska are routinely tested and are considered safe for consumption.

Is the shellfish safe to eat if I cook it? No, cooking shellfish doesn't make it safe to eat. Commercially harvested shellfish is routinely tested and is considered safe to eat.

If someone else eats shellfish harvested from a certain beach and doesn't get sick — does that mean the beach is safe? No, never assume a beach is safe even if someone has eaten shellfish without getting sick. Toxins can be present in varying amounts in shellfish on the same beach.

What should I do if I think that I, or someone in my family, have paralytic shellfish poisoning? PSP is a medical emergency. Induce vomiting and call 911 or have someone take you to the emergency room if you suspect PSP. Medical care in a hospital may be needed to support an ill person until the toxin has worn off.

What is the treatment? There is no medication available. The only treatment for severe cases is the use of a mechanical respirator and oxygen. Induced vomiting may help purge some of the toxin from the stomach. Seek medical care as soon as possible.

Are there any other illnesses associated with shellfish? Yes, a person may have an allergic reaction to shellfish or become ill due to bacteria or viruses in shellfish.

What else can be done to prevent these diseases? It is important to notify public health departments about even one person with marine toxin poisoning. Public health departments can then investigate to determine the source of the problem. This prevents other illnesses. Any suspected cases of PSP should be reported to the State of Alaska Section of Epidemiology at 907-269-8000 or after hours at 1-800-478-0084.

*Alaska Section of Epidemiology Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Fact Sheet
3601 C Street, Suite 540
Anchorage, AK 99503*

Haines Responders Assist with Oil Recovery

146,300 gallons removed from Princess Kathleen shipwreck

Four SEAPRO responders from Haines participated in the recovery of oil from the SS Princess Kathleen, a Canadian passenger ship that sank at Lena point near Juneau in 1952. Bill McRoberts, Dave Disbrow, Ed May and Roger Maynard served in various capacities from wildlife hazing to deckhand and boat captain for SEAPRO during the oil recovery effort.

Over the years, it has been common knowledge among Juneau boaters that small patches of oil sheen could occasionally be seen in the vicinity of Lena Point. The fact was, the Princess Kathleen was nearly full of fuel when it sank. The wreck presented a potential disaster should a fuel tank fail or other catastrophe cause it to lose its load of bunker fuel.

The U.S. Coast Guard and the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation worked to-

gether to oversee the recovery efforts that began in March with divers surveying the Princess Kathleen, testing tank thickness and drilling the tanks to test for the presence of oil. By late April, removal of oil from the wreck began. Under the supervision of the Coast Guard and ADEC, marine salvage divers installed valves and hoses on the first of 14 fuel tanks.

SEAPRO (South East Alaska Petroleum Resource Organization,) a Ketchikan based company specializing in oil spill containment and recovery, was tasked with maintaining protective oil booms around the area and recovery of any oil that escaped to the surface. The company responded with the OSRV Neka Bay, a 52-foot oil recovery vessel (oil skimmer) kept in Juneau, and it's sister ship, the OSRV Rudyerd Bay, normally kept in Ketchikan. The 55-foot ORV 9 oil

recovery barge from Juneau was kept on-scene and ready, and oil boom materials, absorbents, skimmers and other equipment was staged in Auke Bay. Additionally, oil boom and containment equipment was staged on the beach in environmentally sensitive areas nearby, ready for deployment should any significant quantity of oil be accidentally released.

Overall, the mission was a clear success. Over 146,300 gallons of sticky, black "bunker C" was removed from the Princess Kathleen and there were no significant releases of oil during the recovery effort. The fuel will be transported by barge for processing and future use.

SEAPRO keeps oil recovery equipment and trained responders in Haines, ready for response to northern Lynn Canal.

Read more at www.seapro.org.

Lodge, Restaurant Burn in Elfin Cove

The Cove Lodge, Coho's Bar and Grill heavily damaged



Elfin Cove, Alaska

Investigation revealed that on 6/19/10, at approximately 0200 hours, the owners of the Cove Lodge, awoke to heavy smoke in the kitchen and laundry room area of their lodge. Members from the Elfin Cove Fire Department and local residents attempted to extinguish the fire, but were unsuccessful. At 0500 hours, members from the Gustavus Fire Department, Pelican Fire Department, and USFS from Hoonah responded to Elfin Cove to assist in extinguishing the fire. The Cove Lodge and the Coho's Bar and Grill, which is adjacent to the Cove Lodge, were both heavily damaged by the fire, estimated loss is \$1,500,000.00. No injuries were reported. The cause of the fire is being investigated by the State Fire Marshal.

About 2:50 this morning (*June 19th*) the Alaska State Troopers received a report of a fire in Elfin Cove. In-

NO FREE SPEECH*(Continued from page 1)*

lished portions of ones opposing the Harriet Hall project with his critique – an action designed to have a chilling effect on anyone who has the audacity to voice an opinion opposite his.

Somehow, he forgot that the same first amendment rights that allow him to run his newspaper also apply to those of us who want to write to our public officials for any reason. And Haines borough employees do not give up that right by virtue of their employment status.

Limitations on Funding:

The real story, and what Morphet never bothered to explain to his readers, is that Federal law clearly places limitations on uses of money collected from ships engaged in interstate commerce, including Alaska's head tax. 33 USC Chapter 1, subchapter I, section 5 says:

No taxes, tolls, operating charges, fees, or any other impositions whatever shall be levied upon or collected from any vessel or other water craft, or from its passengers or crew, by any non-Federal interest, if the vessel or water craft is operating on any navigable waters subject to the authority of the United States, or under the right to freedom of navigation on those waters, except for—

(1) fees charged under section 2236 of this title;

(2) reasonable fees charged on a fair and equitable basis that—

(A) are used solely to pay the cost of a service to the vessel or water craft;

(B) enhance the safety and efficiency of interstate and foreign commerce; and

(C) do not impose more than a small burden on interstate or foreign commerce;

Communities that try to bend these rules too far have been threatened with civil action. The Harriet Hall project was just such an attempt to stretch the rules too far, and the governor's veto was justified.

Members of the public, including tourism employees, who recommended against funding the Harriet Hall project with head tax income may have saved the state and the borough some money and embarrassment by encouraging compliance with existing federal laws.

So the real question is this:

Who does more harm to the community? – A couple of informed borough employees who use their rights as citizens to express their personal opinions to our state officials; or the editor of the only local newspaper of record who abuses the public trust by bullying certain citizens in an attempt to quench their exercise of free speech?

HAINES MAN MISSING*(Continued from page 1)*

mediately after co-workers checked with Mrs. Allgood at about 10:00 Friday morning. "We figured there were three places he could have been fishing," said Bentz, "Responding border patrol agents and I found Allgood's van about noon."

A single set of footprints led from the van about a half mile out onto a river bar where the officers found a fishing net and Allgood's backpack. There were no footprints leading away from the site.

Chilkat River Adventures Captains Amy Dunbar and Sean McNamara responded to the area in a company jet boat and assisted troopers with the initial area search. "We searched down as far as 17-Mile," reported Dunbar, "The net was anchored with sticks and it was obvious the water had risen since his camera and pack were put there – they were wet. He had to cross a little stream to get to the area, and there were no footprints leading away from there." The River Adventures crew assisted with the search until Haines Volunteer Fire De-

partment Search and Rescue team members arrived.

Searchers including Haines volunteers and a U.S. Coast Guard helicopter visually searched the area, probed, and dragged the river bottom in the vicinity of the net site, but have found no additional clues so far. The search was suspended on Saturday, but the area will be checked again as the river level drops. Troopers do not suspect foul play.

To benefit the Allgood family in their time of need

the Kroschel Wildlife Center presents a special animal program.

**Saturday, June 26th ~ 12 - 2 p.m.
at the Kroschel Wildlife Center located**

at 1.8 Mosquito Lake Road.

\$35 suggested donation with 100% of the proceeds going to Jenifer and her three children. Rain or shine all are welcome!

Please come and show your community love and support for this family.

(907) 767-5464 Kory or Stephen

Journalism with Integrity

We're on the Web

www.hainesnews.net

The Haines Alaska News is a grassroots community newspaper project sponsored by the Alaska Alliance for Commerce, Inc.

If you would like to comment or contribute, please contact the Haines Alaska News editor by email:
editor@hainesnews.net