



Photo by Shari Murphy

CLEARING — The DOT airport crew worked diligently clearing the runway at Nome's International Airport after the big blizzard last week.

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Photo by Peggy Fagerstrom

AFTER THE STORM — The additional snow suited the children of Nome just fine as they busted out their sleds, sliding down the hill by the graveyard. Alexis Clemens had a great time in 0°F, working up rosy cheeks and a healthy appetite.

Jane Doe 3 evidentiary hearing; trial date set

By Diana Haecker

A civil lawsuit involving a third woman claiming sexual abuse by KNOM founder and former Nome priest Jim Poole is scheduled to go through an evidentiary hearing April 24 and 25, 2007 at Nome's superior court.

Similar to a hearing in the case of Jane Doe 2, Doe 3 now has to establish that the statute of limitations — meaning the time when she realized she had been hurt and that she may have reason for a lawsuit — has not run out in her case.

Jane Doe 3 alleges that Poole had first sexually assaulted her in 1968 when she was in eighth grade and raped her in a dark hallway at the rectory in 1969 when she was 15 years old.

Court documents say that Jane Doe 3 was raised in Nome. Poole was born in 1924, was ordained as a priest in 1952 and was given the

authority to serve as a Roman Catholic priest in 1957. Court documents say that during his 40-year career with the CBNA and the Jesuits, he was assigned to work in Holy Cross, Pilot Station, Marshall, Mountain Village, St. Mary's, Barrow and Nome.

Court papers claim that as early as 1961, Bishop Francis Gleeson was aware of Poole's suspicious behavior towards young girls. Poole then was Mission Superior at the St. Mary's Mission. "Bishop Gleeson was specifically told that Father Poole frequently took young girls, aged 12 or 13, into a secluded, private section of his office, and spent hours at a time alone with these children and that something improper was suspected to be going on between these children and Father Poole," say court documents.

As a result of complaints by Ursuline nuns and the failure to stop

spending time with young girls, Poole was removed from his position as headmaster of St. Mary's boarding school in 1965 and was sent to work in an all-boys high school in Portland.

Poole was allowed to return to Alaska in 1966, first to Barrow, which was characterized as 'least dangerous' by church officials. In 1967, Poole was re-assigned to Nome to work as the parish priest and to establish the radio station KNOM.

Alaska attorney Ken Roosa and California lawyer John Manly represent Doe 3; they filed the lawsuit in July 2005.

The defendants are 82-year-old Jim Poole, who resides in a Jesuit retirement home in Spokane, Washington and his employers the Catholic Bishop of Northern Alaska

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Huge storm whips Nome

By Diana Haecker

Almost a week after a blizzard whipped through the region, Nomeites are still digging out of the record snowfall of over 20 inches accumulated on January 9 and 10. The blizzard lasted for 30 hours, building up momentum on Tuesday and reaching its full force the following day. While Monday saw temperatures of close to -30°F, the mercury shot way up to 32°F by Tuesday, reported the National Weather Service.

The blizzard descended on the area with a vengeance, causing Nome to completely shut down on Wednesday, January 10.

At 3 p.m. City Manager Randy Romenesko urged citizens to not drive the streets, to stay home and notified the public that the Public Works department ceased opera-

tions at 5 p.m. due to unsafe working and traveling conditions. "Please stay home," was the urgent message sent to all.

Nome Public Schools had earlier announced that both Nome-Beltz high school and the elementary school were closed. The airport shut down. Hanson's Safeway store and AC closed early to send their employees home safely, most shops and organizations did the same, even the bars shut their doors as people hunkered down to wait out the storm. Only a few residents had to endure power outages and for the most part, the phone lines held up to the raging winds.

Not so lucky were 16 Alaska Mechanical workers who were stranded in whiteout conditions at Alaska Gold Company's Rock

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Lawsuit against Corps remanded

By Diana Haecker

District Court Judge Ralph Beistline last Thursday issued a final judgement in the civil lawsuit filed by Sue Steinacher, Jana Varrati, Austin Ahmasuk and the group Bering Strait Citizens for Responsible Resource Development against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers over issuing a permit for Alaska Gold Company's Rock Creek mine.

An order to remand the case

came out during the last business days of last year, meaning that the issue is in the hands of the Corps. The Corps voluntarily took back the permit in December, saying that it will review the permit, documents and come out with a new decision, reissuing, modifying or revoking the permit. Judge Beistline added that the Corps has to give the plaintiffs notice 10 days before the Corps' decision becomes effective.



Photo by Diana Haecker

SHOVELING— Doug Sydomann battles the elements on Wednesday, January 10, trying to keep the sidewalk on Front Street free of snow.