



Photo by Diana Haecker

SCENIC SHISHMAREF— Boats are anchored in the lagoon between the Seward Peninsula and Sarichef Island, home of the village of Shishmaref. Fall storms and continuous erosion problems plagued the island’s inhabitants to the point that the village has voted to relocate to a safer location on the mainland. U.S. Senator Ted Stevens last week visited the seawall under construction, a federally funded erosion control project.

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Photo by Tyler Rhodes

ROLL CALL— Randy Morton examines a tub of ducks Monday, Sept. 3, as he prepares to load them on the boat for the Labor Day duck race on the Snake River near the airport. See results page 9.

Nome woman indicted on murder charges

By Diana Haecker

A grand jury indicted Darla Longley last Friday on five counts related to a vehicle crash on the Nome-Council Highway that killed Victor Kavi Goldsberry, 31, and injured Longley’s daughters Trina and Sharina Larsen and John Wellert, 40.

The crash occurred on July 28 near the Stampede sign, when Longley’s red Chevy pickup truck went out of control and flipped.

Goldsberry was thrown out of the car and was pronounced dead at the Norton Sound hospital shortly after the accident.

Longley, her daughters and Wellert were medivaced to Anchorage.

Longley, 42, was indicted on one count of murder in the second degree for “knowingly engaging in conduct that resulted in the death of another person under circumstances mani-

festing an extreme indifference to the value of human life.”

Longley also was indicted on a manslaughter charge for recklessly having caused the death of Victor Goldsberry and with three counts of recklessly causing serious injuries to her daughters and Wellert.

A warrant for her arrest was issued. Darla Longley was scheduled for arraignment in court on Tuesday, but the hearing was postponed to Friday, 1:30 p.m. Longley established that she couldn’t afford a lawyer, and the public defender told the court that a conflict of interest existed to defend Longley. Superior court judge Ben Esch referred Longley to the Office of Public Advocacy to take up Longley’s case and gave the defendant until Friday to get in touch with a lawyer.

Bail remains set at \$20,000.

Feds, state inspect Rock Creek mine

By Diana Haecker

A number of agencies came to Nome this summer to perform inspections at Alaska Gold Company’s Rock Creek Mine construction site seven miles out of town in the Snake River Valley.

Just a week before an accident that claimed the lives of two ironworkers at the site, the Mine Safety and Health Administration sent an inspector to the site to check on the MSHA compliance. After the accident, MSHA sent two inspectors out again to investigate the cause of the accident. While a complete accident

report is still pending, MSHA handed nine violation citations to AGC and AMI on violations observed while at Rock Creek.

General mine manager Warren Woods told *The Nome Nugget* that he expects to hear back from MSHA on their findings of the cause of the accident in the not so distant future. “The investigation is not complete yet,” said Woods. “They came, compiled the information and are now making a decision on the cause of the accident. We are expecting to hear from them shortly.”

The MSHA report cites AGC’s

contractor Alaska Mechanical Incorporated for seven violations and AGC for two violations.

Both AMI and AGC were cited for not fixing defects on “equipment, machinery, and tools that affect safety in a timely manner to prevent the creation of a hazard to persons.”

Also, MSHA cited AMI for problems with electrical conductors; not sufficiently ventilated welding operations; records of training weren’t kept at the site; horns and back-up alarms weren’t functional.

Alaska Gold was cited for not ad-

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Washington comes to Shishmaref

By Diana Haecker

Blue skies, balmy temperatures and a warm reception awaited US Senators Ted Stevens, Lisa Murkowski and U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings as they disembarked from two Air Force turbo prop planes at the runway in Shishmaref.

On the eve of the re-authorization of the No Child Left Behind legislation, US Secretary Spellings took up Senators Stevens and Murkowski on their invitation to tour Alaska and see firsthand the challenges and realities of Alaskan schools, especially in

rural parts. Spellings visited Bethel before arriving on Wednesday, August 29, in Shishmaref. After a greeting by community leaders, Kawerak representatives and a few reporters at the airport, Spellings and Murkowski were whisked off to the Shishmaref School, as Stevens opted for a ride to town on a four-wheeler.

A caravan of Hondas and a couple trucks made their way on the sandy road to the school, Stevens waving to villagers standing on the side of the road.

Inside the Shishmaref School, school staff and students as well as

representatives from the Bering Strait School District greeted Spellings.

Simultaneously, Stevens took the short two-hour visit to take a look at the new seawall extending from the teacher housing – threatened by fall storm erosion in the past – almost all the way to the middle of town. Stevens climbed up on the riprap barged in from Cape Nome for the project and received a complete update from Kawerak’s transportation director Sean McKnight on the \$6 million Army Corps of Engineers

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Photo by Diana Haecker

LET’S READ— U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings sat down with Courtney Merchant in Keith Conger’s second grade class to read and encourage her to keep up the good work. Spellings visited rural Alaska, including Nome and Shishmaref, last week.

• Rock Creek

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hering to the law that prohibits smoking or use of an open flame where flammable or combustible liquids, including greases, or flammable gases are stored and handled.

Warren Woods told *The Nome Nugget*, "All these problems were abated while the MSHA inspector was still here in July."

A month earlier, an Environmental Protection Agency inspector showed up at the mine construction site for a check on the mine's implementation of their Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. The visit resulted in a proposed penalty of \$7,600 against AGC for Clean Water Act violations. The EPA proposed a so-called expedited settlement offer to AGC "We have not yet settled. Before we can settle, we need to give the public an opportunity to comment on our proposed action. The comment period ends on September 10," explained Eva Chun, EPA compliance and enforcement officer at the EPA's Seattle office.

The EPA oversees the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System general construction permit for storm water discharges from construction activities. The permit is issued under section 402 of the Clean Water Act. Chun told *The Nome Nugget* that a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan is needed for every construction site that disturbs one acre and more. A plan must be in place in order to get the permit, but Chun said that the EPA just doesn't have the man power to go over every SWPPP submitted to their office. During last month's inspection, the EPA compliance inspector went over Rock Creek's SWPPP and found deficiencies, including that the SWPPP didn't identify all potential sources of pollution. "The inspector noted that cement and explosives were at the site but not identified in the SWPPP as possible pollutants," said Chun.

The inspector also found that the best management practices outlined in the SWPPP for Rock Creek were insufficient. "Control measures were not properly selected, installed and maintained," says the EPA report. Chun, however noted that the inspector saw silt fences along Glacier Creek as a means to control storm water run off. "We look for evidence of erosion, slumps or rills forming

and if we see sedimentation in certain areas," Chun explained. "We don't tell the company what they need to do in order to prevent storm water run off; we only look for evidence of erosion. When we find it, it's telling me that the prevention measures are inadequate," said Chun. Discharges on surface waters, turbidity and sediments are also signs of inadequate storm run off control. Storm water is defined as precipitation event, including storm water runoff, snowmelt runoff, surface runoff and drainage.

The inspector also noted paper work not in order, as the SWPPP didn't describe a schedule for soil stabilization actions, when major grading would take place, that no inspections were performed during the winter months and that the inspection reports weren't properly signed or certified.

To view the expedited offer and invitation for public comment go to <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/ENFORCE.NSF/Current+Public+Notices/AK-Gold-PN/>

Warren Woods commented that the EPA complaints were mostly paperwork related. "Now we've an environmental manager on board and another environmental consultant we contract with," Woods said. Woods added that the Department of Natural Resources last week also sent inspectors from Fairbanks to inspect the site. "They were very pleased with what they saw," said Woods. A Department of Environmental Conservation engineer visit noted storm water run off deficiencies in April. Although Tim Pilon, the environmental engineer with DEC reported excessive turbidity in mine runoff at Rock Creek and Glacier Creek, the EPA could not act on it. "We require water samples from both above the disturbance and below," explained Eva Chun. Since the Rock Creek mine is located at the headwaters of Rock Creek, taking a sample of the water before its disturbance is impossible.

DEC has not acted yet on the report issued by Pilon. Explained William Ashton at the DEC, "This is still an ongoing investigation." Ashton declined any comment on what is being investigated. "We are still investigating and that's why I can't get into detailed information," he said.



Photo by Diana Haecker

THE PIT — The mine pit and the tailings storage facility are worked on.



Photo by Diana Haecker

INSPECTED — Alaska Gold Company's Rock Creek mine was inspected by federal and state agencies recently with varying results.

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