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Hat Island Community
C/O Charles Motson - Island Manager
PMB 335
1616 Colby Avenue
Everett, WA 98201- 4773

Dear Sirs,

I am writing this letter to send a note of thanks to the first aid respondents from the Hat Island volunteer fire department. They helped me and my two other shipmates in our time of need.

While boating off the south end of Hat Island, our 17 foot center console fishing boat was "pooped." We had two massive rogue waves come over our stern, swamping us almost instantly. The weather had just taken a turn for the worse on an already bad weather day. But a somewhat normal day for some boating diehards.

Fortunately, we were just off the south end shore of Hat Island and close enough to wade safely onto the island beach. Our small craft followed on to the beach several minutes later. Our boat was pushed into the shore and then it was forced into some beach pilings and then lodged upon a submerged log. It was pinned there by the onslaught of the powerful waves. The three of us somehow managed to turn the small boat around so the bow was facing into the surf, but there was no way the three of us could possibly right the craft and free it from the surf, the submerged log and the piers. After struggling in the pounding surf for thirty to forty five minutes, we gave up, exhausted. Not only were we exhausted, we were wet from our head to toes and we were very cold. All of our fishing gear, our "waterproof" safety gear, our electronics, and almost everything on board our vessel was lost. All of our personal items, times three, was missing, wet and our cellular phones were malfunctioning. All was lost and destroyed but one single item. It was my cellular phone. It was my water resistant Casio G'z One Bolder cellular phone from Verizon.

Since we were strangers to the Island and unsure what to do, we tried looking to the local cabins for people but there were none present on that end of the island at that time. We then tried calling the Everett, Washington information for help and searched for some contact phone

numbers. We were then given the number for the Coast Guard. They had no local Everett phone number and we were transferred us to the Seattle Coast Guard Dispatcher.

We let them know that we had made it to the south end of Hat Island and that we were in no imminent danger, but we were wet and very cold. They informed us that there was an offshore rescue going on at the same time we ran aground. And that the other ship needed rescue and that there were four people onboard their sinking vessel and that they were in serious danger. (I heard later that this rescue was done in part by the Hat Island ferry crew.)

Anyway, after a brief wait, there came the Calvary to our rescue.

The Coast Guard had notified the Everett Police Department and they, in turn, had then notified the Hat island Fire Department of our beach location. And then Vessel Assist was notified that we were aground. Several members of the Hat Island volunteer Fire Department #27 came trotting down the beach after us and after a mile long hike from the closest Island road. Among the local hero's who came to our aid were Fire Department #27 Captain Mike, Rick, Kerwin, Jake and Mike.

Please excuse me if I missed anyone, I wasn't thinking too clear at the time and my memory has lost some of its luster.

Next, out came the dry, warm blankets, along with some dry clothing, assorted windbreakers, some instant heat packs and knowledge that all would be fine. And above all that materialistic equipment available to us, was a whole bunch of true professionalism. It was shown to us by each of these men from the local Hat Island fire department.

Once they were sure that we all were stabilized and able to move our cold limbs again, we all began the hike back to the awaiting rescue vehicles, which had their engines running and their vehicle heaters on high.

I told you they were very well prepared.

After arriving at the Hat Island Fire Department #27 station house, we were escorted upstairs. There we were able to disrobe from all of our wet clothing, wet boots and all. Then we were allowed to take turns taking long, hot showers. After the showers, we were then wrapped in blankets while some of the rescue crew wives and daughters, took our clothing personally into their homes where they washed and dried and folded each set of our clothing. And while we were waiting for our clothes, we were being served hot coffee and warm soup while enjoying plenty of good conversation and many laughs about our recent situation.

After an hour or so more, our clothes were returned to us, clean, warm, and folded.

Then after we finished dressing, we were given a ride back to our boat, which was then beached, high and dry and left stranded by the outgoing tide. Since it would have been almost midnight and completely dark before the next high tide, we opted to secure our boat and wait until noon the next morning to retrieve our boat. This decision was made by us listening to the great advice and logic from the men from the Hat Island Fire Department.

We next were given a ride and were able to catch the afternoon Hat Island ferry over to the Everett Yacht Club marina. We then continued on

our journey to our homes and to be reunited with our families, thanks to the local hero who were there for us at our time of need.

The boat owner, Jerry, returned as planned and picked up our boat at noon the next afternoon without any major problems. He did bring some fresh, new fuel, since our gas tank was filled with water, and he also brought another battery, since our original battery was damaged by the salt water and the pounding surf.

But besides those minor inconveniences, the return trip to retrieve the boat went very well.

Our sincere thanks seem to fall short of our true appreciation for what these men did for us and our families.

These are special men with very special training and I thank them deeply for sharing their expertise and their special talents with us personally.

On Hat Island, the fire department is all volunteer work and volunteer time.

And this is how I know that they do not do this for the money!

I pray that all y'all appreciate these special men and the special community you have there on Hat Island – I certainly do.

Thank you,

Timothy Sullivan

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This is a picture of our boat in the surf as we were leaving for the Hat Island volunteer Fire Department # 27 station house with the rescue personnel.



This picture was taken after we returned to our boat after we were warmed, showered and we had changed into our dry clothing.

The tide was still going out and our boat was right where we had left it – High and Dry against a beached log and tied to the beach piling.



Here is another view from the beach and you can see where the boat was temporarily tied to the piling while we were at the fire station. We had managed to turn our boat around while in the surf, but we could not right it with water inside the craft. After bailing out the water and since the tide was out, we were able to secure the boat safely for the second high tide coming the following afternoon.

Our small craft was saved – along with the three of us.

Thanks to the Hat Island #27 Volunteer Fire Department and Rescue