



Seldovia Gazette

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Thursday, June 9, 2005

Just another day in paradise • Vol. 1, N

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Top Stories

Updated: Thursday, June 9, 2005 11:00pm

Local publishers promise weekly paper

Seldovia Gazette marks debut

For Tom and Mary Glover of Seldovia, sprouting new wings isn't as difficult as it may seem. They've started a new business venture in town and although it's an off-shoot of their information-based web portal - seldovia.com - the new venture is an entity all its own.

On Thursday, June 9th, the Glovers announced their plans to publish a weekly newspaper for the Seldovia area. The Seldovia Gazette makes its debut as a web-based weekly.

The Glovers plans for Seldovia's newest paper won't replace seldovia.com. In fact, the paper won't even be limited to the World Wide Web.

"We'd like to produce a printed paper within a few months," said Tom Glover. "Not everyone has Internet and a printed paper is the traditional form of journalistic communication."

The switch to publishing a weekly newspaper is new for the Glovers, but not a far cry from familiar territory. The couple, who own Sequoia Publishing based in Littleton, Colorado, has been publishing reference books for over fifteen years. They published the local best-seller *Seldovia, Alaska: An Historical Portrait of Life in Herring Bay*, by Susan Woodward-Springer, in 2001.

For the past four years, the Glovers created the Seldovia Chamber of Commerce's annual paper, The Seldovia Summer Gazette, on a volunteer basis.

"The two papers are independent and unrelated," Mary Glover said in an interview.

The Seldovia Summer Gazette is an annual paper published by the Seldovia Chamber of Commerce to promote Seldovia and the Chamber members' businesses.

Marketplace

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"With regard to the new Seldovia Gazette, we want to provide an unbiased, newsworthy information source of all local events" she said.

For many, the best small-town papers clarify and amplify the conversations of the community in an accurate and objective way. That's the Glovers' goal. They also want to help Seldovia survive.

"Communication is critical for economic development and stability in small communities today," Tom said.

"We believe our town deserves a strong, unbiased newspaper," Mary added. "We want to keep the public informed and publish an accurate reflection of life in Seldovia."

It's also been years since a printed press hit Seldovia newsstands. In 1930, M. Lester Busey published a 10-cent weekly called the Seldovia Herald. That newspaper ended in 1933 when Busey moved from the area.

The Seldovia Gazette will cover local news, along with feature articles, letters to the editor, a calendar of events, and a classifieds section.

25 turn out to argue against airport move

DOT hears resounding "NO" from public

Twenty-five Seldovians showed up at a public hearing Tuesday, May 31st, to declare their concerns over a proposed airport move.

At issue was whether or not the current location of the airport should be moved in order to accommodate runway lighting. According to Alaska state regulations an airstrip must be at least 3,000 feet long in order to qualify for state funding. The current runway is only 1,845 feet long. That's a difference of 1,155 feet.

Research conducted by the firm Hattenburg, Dilley, and Linnell determined the current runway could not support such a lengthy addition. Mark Mayo, Department of Transportation Project Manager for the Airport Master Plan, proposed moving the airport.

In a letter to the city, Mayo asked if the community would be content with the current airport - with no future hopes of runway lighting - or if citizens would "consider airport relocation to a site where a longer, less obstructed runway could be built."

Tuesday night, there seemed to be group consensus amongst Seldovians. No one wanted the airport moved.

"It's a senseless act," said Mark Massion, a Seldovia Volunteer Fire & EMS responder. "I've never seen a time we haven't been able to get [a patient] out."

The desire for runway lighting first came about in 2001 when some

members of the community discussed the need for better lighting to facilitate medivac flights. In the past, traffic flares were ignited along either side of the runway to guide rescue planes that needed to land in the dark. It's a practice still used today.

"We have portable lights the FAA provided for us," said EMS Chief Lisa O'Leary, "but flares and headlights are still how it's lit."

The Seldovia Volunteer Fire & EMS received the new high-powered lights last summer, but have yet to use them in an emergency.

Two of the alternative runway locations proposed by the DOT - both of which meet the mandatory 3,000 ft. runway clearance - are located off Jakolof Bay Road. One site is near Seldovia Point, the other is near Barabara Point. Those proposed locations raised other issues for Seldovians.

"If we had to medivac four or five miles out of town, that patient could be in trouble," said John Carluccio.

Such out-of-the-way locations might also hinder tourist travel.

"There's no point in moving it," said Jerry Swanson. "People can land here and come right into town."

Carol Myers echoed his remarks. "One of the attractive things [about Seldovia] is being able to walk into this town," she said.

For Chief of Police Andy Anderson, it's a safety issue. He feels that although the current airport could benefit from runway lighting, it doesn't make sense to move the airport to a new location.

"You'd be putting three times the traffic on Jakolof Bay Road," Chief Anderson said. "By doing so, you're creating more of a safety hazard."

Local pilots Don Sellinger, George Nathan, Corky Myers, Tom Hines, and Jere Murray all vocally opposed any airport move. They stated the safe flying conditions at the present airport, and the unstable conditions at the two proposed, alternative locations.

Claire McCann, owner of Smokey Bay Air, reiterated the pilots' safety concerns in a letter to the city. She also mentioned how full-time, night lighting might change the "quality of life in a community most have chosen for its semi-seclusion, quietness, and generally slow-going pace."

No one at the meeting spoke in favor of the proposed airport move.

"All the pilots here," said Mary Glover, "they are in the know. Every single one of them has voiced their opposition. I hope DOT will listen."

Mil rate remains unchanged

Council passes Resolution 05-15 unanimously

Wednesday's City Council meeting brought good news for Seldovia property owners: the Mil Rate will remain static at 7.25 for the new fiscal year beginning July 1st, 2005.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough requires a municipality's Mil Rate to be established before June 15th of each year. At the council meeting, the Mil Rate Resolution received little discussion.

"We're not raising it." said City Manager Kurt Reynertson. "I don't know what else to say."

The mil rate has not been increased in the City of Seldovia for a number of years. The rate affects all real property and personal property located within city limits.

In other city news:

The council introduced Ordinance 05-06, which will appropriate approximately \$30,000 to be used from the harbor fund to pay for repairs to the harbor building. The ordinance was brought forth when the city determined the harbor building was in immediate need of repairs, yet funds were unavailable in the FY05 Budget to pay for such repairs. According to the ordinance, any money remaining after repairs have been completed will revert back to the harbor fund balance.

City Manager Reynertson also relayed results of the Small Boat Harbor Improvement Project Survey. The survey asked Seldovia residents and harbor patrons to prioritize repairs needed in order to restore the harbor to good working order. \$2.6 million is allocated for the project. [Click here for the results of the survey in Adobe pdf format \(you need Adobe Acrobat Reader in order to view these results\): Survey Results](#)

At the top of the survey results was the desire for the harbor pilings to be replaced. The improvement project would replace seventy-seven of the current timber piles with forty-seven steel piles. MLFA Engineers estimated the cost of piling restoration to be \$237,000.

Reynertson noted that although item H from the survey – the repair of Grid No. 2 – “did not make the top 10” results, he would make it a “forced priority” to repair the grid.

One person completing the survey commented that repair of Grid No. 2 was “essential for maintenance of Seldovia's bigger vessels, which employ 15-20 locals.”

A total of fifty residents returned the surveys.

Council members decided to forgo setting workshop dates to decide which repairs will, indeed, be made to the harbor. Councilman Keith Gain cited that since renovation could not begin until after summer, it was unnecessary to rush into finalizing workshop dates. The other council members agreed.

City Managers Corner

Updated: Thursday, June 9, 2005 11:00pm

For my first column for the City Manager's Corner, I thought it appropriate to introduce myself to those who do not know me all that well yet. I say "yet" because it is my desire to get to know everyone living in and around Seldovia. This is certainly not an impossible task as it would be if we lived elsewhere (which is one of the reasons why my wife and I choose to make and call Seldovia "home").

I graduated from high school in California back in 1971 and soon thereafter made my first trip to Alaska, albeit for only a short time. I went to various colleges including the University of Colorado, California State College at Long Beach, University of Albuquerque, and finally Texas Tech University, where I graduated in 1979 with a BS in Industrial Engineering. I was in the US Air Force when I graduated from Texas Tech (I joined the Air Force in 1976). After graduation I was sent by the Air Force to Officers Candidate School - up until that time I was an Air Force helicopter mechanic - and there I became a Second Lieutenant in an Air Force Civil Engineering Squadron.

I got out of active duty service in late 1984 and went to work for a maintenance consulting firm. After three years, I decided to go back to college to get an advanced degree in Industrial Engineering from the University of Oklahoma (while in the Air Force I also received a Masters in Management from Troy State University). I graduated with a Masters Degree in Industrial Engineering in 1989, at which time I was also working for an organization called Southwest Research Institute located in San Antonio, Texas.

During all this time, I was still an active member of the Air Force Reserve, and in 1991 was called to serve in Operation Desert Storm. During the process of mobilizing, the conflict came to a quick end and my unit was ordered to "stand down." It was not long after that I was afforded an opportunity to go to Saudi Arabia as an employee for the Saudi Arabian Oil Company (Saudi Aramco). I worked in Saudi Arabia until 1997 at which time I left the company and returned to work for Southwest Research Institute, again in San Antonio.

In late 2001 I returned to Saudi Arabia to work for Saudi Aramco and stayed there until December of 2004. Some of you may know that my wife left Saudi Arabia long before I did and moved here to Seldovia, setting up for our "working retirement." In December of 2004 I was able to join her on a permanent basis here in Seldovia. From that time until I was hired by the city to be the City Manager, I was working for a small consulting firm and my assignment was to work with the Naval Shipyard in Honolulu (Pearl Harbor) to help them improve work processes on submarine retrofits and maintenance.

I started with the city on May 16, 2005. A few of the tasks or projects I have been working on include the Harbor Master Building, the Harbor Master decking around the building, the community roofing project, completing the work concerning the grant for the cannery dock, and starting the renovation of the small boat harbor. These are topics for my

next column.

Kurt Reynertson, Seldovia City Manager

Police Report

Updated: Thursday, June 9, 2005 11:00pm

Harbor cart missing

The harbor cart was reported missing from the small boat harbor on June 2, 2005. The cart is aluminum, approximately 3 feet wide by 4 feet long, and has a handle for pushing. It was built and donated by students at Susan B. English School and has an estimated value of \$500.

Any one with information regarding the disappearance of the harbor cart should contact the police station at 234-7640.

Black bears return

A number of black bears have been seen around town recently. One bear was spotted at Outside Beach near a campsite where a handful of whole salmon were left in the woods to rot. Such dumping of fish is an illegal - and potentially dangerous - activity.

Chief Anderson asks all residents and visitors to take precautions in disposing of garbage. By keeping garbage bins inside and making frequent trips to the dump, bear problems can be kept to a minimum.

Any bears spotted within the city should be immediately reported to the police.