

Local captain rescues fully grounded boat in Semiahmoo

BY JAMI MAKAN

A local captain recently came to the aid of a large sailboat stuck high and dry next to the Semiahmoo Spit, helping to set the boat upright, free its keel from the mud and get it back safely into deeper waters.

On the afternoon of April 12, Randall Parten, owner of The Dream Boat Company in Blaine, heard that a boat was aground on the north side of the Semiahmoo Spit near the Alaska Packers Association (APA) Museum.

From his office next to Blaine Harbor, Parten took his 32-foot, 700-horsepower towing vessel to the area, navigating around and observing the stuck boat. The boat was fully grounded and leaning to one side. It was just 100 yards offshore – “which is dang, dang, dang close to shore,” Parten said.

Parten also noticed that the anchor had not been deployed properly, creating a dangerous risk. “I could tell by what they had done with the anchor, and also the way it works when the tide comes in when you’re grounded like that, that the boat was going to end up on the rocks all the way aground on shore without help,” he said. “If I didn’t get involved, it was going to get worse.”

At about 4 p.m., Parten docked in the Semiahmoo Marina, put some black plastic bags over his shoes and walked out to the stranded boat, where he made contact with the sole occupant of the boat, a young sailor who initially declined Parten’s help. “I said, ‘You need help to get out of this situation,’” Parten responded.

First, Parten helped the sailor “put out some scope.” They put out additional length to enable the anchor to be oriented to the

boat at an angle, enabling the anchor to be effective. It’s not the weight of an anchor that makes it work; it’s the hooking effect, Parten explained.

“We carried [the anchor] further out so it would be at an angle to the boat and hold the boat in place when the water did come,” Parten said.

Parten then went home, changed out of his soiled clothes and ate dinner. At about 7:30 p.m., he returned to the site with local residents Al Kennedy and Lee Finley. Together, operating in about four feet of water (“which is nothing,” Parten said), they tied a line from Parten’s towing vessel to the stranded boat.

For about an hour, they kept steady seaward pressure on the disabled vessel as the tide came in. “You put pressure on it at a 45-degree angle to help right the boat and also to keep a steady

seaward pressure so it doesn’t travel to shore with the tide,” Parten explained.

At about 8:30 p.m., the keel finally came free. (“There was seven feet of keel buried in the sand when he was high and dry,” Parten said.) The team escorted the sailor and his boat to Blaine Harbor. Parten’s deckhands helped the young man get onto the dock, and the three of them

helped moor the rescued boat.

Parten said that the rescued boat was too big of a vessel for a single person to handle, even with experience. He didn’t ask the young man what he’d been doing or how he got stuck. Parten didn’t want to embarrass or aggravate the sailor. “He was just kind of being a young single adventurer guy, who went in a little over his head,” he said.



▲ On April 12, a large boat was stuck high and dry next to the Semiahmoo Spit. Photo courtesy of Randall Parten

Woods sentenced to 27 months

Shaquille Tyrique Woods, the Blaine High School alumnus who pled guilty to third-degree rape and first-degree burglary in January, has been sentenced to 27 months of confinement.

A sentencing hearing was held in Whatcom County Superior Court on April 3. At the hearing, which was attended by Woods’ lawyer Damon Burk and deputy prosecuting attorney Evan Jones, a judge sentenced Woods to 27 months in the custody of the Department of Corrections. Woods will get credit for time served, plus an additional 15 days’ credit due to extra time spent pending sentencing, according to court documents.



▲ Shaquille Woods. File photo

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