

Hopes indicted on charges of child abuse

by Soren Wuerth

for the Tundra Times

Andrew John Hope Jr., a 16-year veteran of Sealaska Corp.'s board of directors, was indicted Aug. 24 by a Juneau grand jury on charges of first-degree sexual abuse of a 12-year-old girl. His wife also was indicted for child abuse.

Hope, 66, and his wife Hazel Hope, 48, have pleaded innocent, according to Juneau Police Capt. Mel Personett.

"The case has been ongoing for quite some time," Personett said. "It was brought to our attention in February."

Hope was charged on three counts of first-degree sexual abuse and on one count of second-degree sexual abuse of a minor — all felonies. Hazel Hope was charged with third-degree assault felonies and misdemeanor assault, the *Juneau Empire* reported.

The couple have been released on their own recognizance. Andrew Hope will go to jury trial Oct. 8. Nov. 11 is the trial date for his wife, the paper reported.

"He's asked for a speedy trial," said the Hope's son Andrew Hope III. "He's going to come out of it real good."

The Hope's attorney, Paul Dillon, declined to comment on the case.

Hope was an applicant for Alaska's regional director of the federal Bureau of Indian Affairs before being indicted, according to acting director Loren Farmer. But Hope apparently "voluntarily withdrew" and Niles Cesar was named to the position, Farmer said. Farmer said he did not know if Hope's withdrawal was related to the charges of sexual abuse, as the appointment is a federal decision.

He has also been on the board of directors of Sealaska since 1974.

Andrew Hope Jr. was well liked in Juneau and other areas around the state, said his son Andrew.

"I challenge you to find anybody to say anything bad about him," he said.