

A good week

This past week was the sort that started in a rather unmemorable manner; the Alaska legislative hoopla had died down; Congress wasn't doing anything much and many Alaskans were enjoying their summer's leisure or summer's work.

The previous weeks had borne disheartening news. Money for Hepatitis B was not going to be as great as hoped; no money for St. George harbors; growing antagonism between state and traditional councils; uneasiness over fishing rulings on the Cook Inlet, and other disquieting information.

But this week bloomed brightly and we find it necessary to call your attention to the good tidings.

We had been afraid at the beginning of the month that the federal government would renig on a commitment and only appropriate \$500,000 for the vaccination program for Hepatitis B. The Office of Management and Budget had counseled against increasing funding for that program.

But we must thank our Senators Murkowski and Stevens for their efforts to get that appropriation increased to the committed level. Such was not the case in the House of Representatives where the House only appropriated \$500,000 because OMB mandated it.

Good going, guys.

On to the Pribilofs where residents are fighting to establish an economic base to counter the pullout of federal subsidies and programs.

St. Paul had gotten money for a harbor but St. George, which has a very thriving fishing industry, did not. At the very time that a fishing processing facility was opened the Alaska Legislature inexplicably didn't add funds to build a boat harbor.

Then came Gov. Bill Sheffield who transferred money from a mainly recreational harbor project on Latouche Island in Prince William Sound to give it to a working project in the Pribilofs.

More good news.

Then we hear that Sheffield wants to talk about Native Sovereignty rights and issues. We are a little reserved on this one because we fear that the talk may be that the Natives have none but we applaud the fact that a dialog may begin.

And in Venetie, a judge has ruled that a subsistence hunter could possess a caribou out of the state-dictated hunting season.

There are those who fear that the greater issue may not be well served by this decision and we share in those concerns but we also cannot ignore the individual case and express our relief that this case was decided in the defendant's favor.

So, we have no scorching editorial this week.

It was a week to feel good about the state of things while taking a rest from the very heavy matters of the world.

