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Anchorage, Alaska

Anchorage's New Years baby born to Micheal and Julia Williamson

Anchorage's New Years baby was born on New Year's Day to Michael and Julia Williamson. The boy, named Victor Clair Williamson, was born at 7:30 a.m. in the Alaska Native Medical Center.

Victor weighed 4 pounds and 11 ounces at birth. He was born two months premature, according to his mother.

Julia was in Barrow when her labor began last Wednesday. "My labor pains started on Wednesday," Julia said. "On the same day I was flown to Anchorage so I could have my

baby at the ANS hospital. The hospital here has better facilities for babies born prematurely."

The young Williamson was un-named for a day. It was her husband's turn to name their child. Tacked on the incubator in which baby Williamson lay was "Happy New Year Williamson Baby Boy!" By Friday afternoon, Michael, the baby's father, decided to name him Victor Clair Williamson. Victor's Inupiat name is Momeganna, from Julia's Father's Uncle's name.

Julia was given a gift certifi-

cate from KHVN FM radio in Anchorage to shop at the Kids Stuff store in the Boniface Mall here in Anchorage. Julia was anxious to go shopping over the weekend provided she could get a pass from the hospital. Her husband Michael, who works as a bus driver for the North Slope Borough Transit was expected in Anchorage to see his new son Friday.

Julia and Michael Williamson now have three children.

Victor will be sent home with his mother as soon as he reaches five pounds.



MRS. JULIA WILLIAMSON holds her new Year's baby - Victor Clair, born at 7:30 a.m., New Year's Day.

Gillnetter Walter Johnson Yakutat fisherman charges discrimination

An Alsek River surf fisherman gillnetter has charged that Alaska Department of Fish and Game regulations eliminating surf fishing is a form of discrimination, and has filed a complaint with the Human Rights Commission. Surf fishermen, he says, are predominantly Native while upriver fishermen in the Alsek, who were not affected by the regulations, are predominantly Caucasian.

Walter Johnson of Yakutat explained that the emergency regulation went into effect last year from June 2 to June 22, even though the surf fishermen had offered an alternate proposal which would have cut their own gear by almost half. That proposal was rejected. Regulations remained the same, or even more lenient, for those fishing upriver.

Present regulations allow 75 fathoms of gear to be fished in sections of any length, as long as the total is not more than that amount. Surf fishermen proposed to cut their own gear allowance back to two 20-fathom strings of gear. It was not accepted.

Johnson said that fishing in the breakers at the mouth of the river is more chancy than upriver, more at the mercy of the elements. "We have more bad weather, and more times that we can't fish. It doesn't seem reasonable to cut back the fishing that is most subject to natural closures."

The Department of Fish and Game denies the allegations, asserting that their closure of surf fishing was a logical and reasonable form of management to preserve salmon stocks in the Alsek River. They did not respond to the racial discrimination allegations.

Native fishermen tried to bring the matter into court, reported Johnson, by fishing in defiance of the regulation, but that effort failed. The emergency order closing surf fishing was written ambiguously. It said the closure was one-half mile from the mouth of the river, but did not specify outside or inside the river mouth.

"To bring it out in the open," surf fishermen fished anyway, but Fish and Game would not arrest them. The idea was to prove the regulation was unconstitutional or discriminatory in court, but without an arrest they were stymied.

So they went to the Human Rights Commission which filed the complaint on behalf of the Native surf fishermen at the mouth of the Alsek. The Human Rights Commission considered the matter and found "probable cause" for a discrimination complaint.

The Department of Fish and Game had until some time this week to respond.

Johnson said it was not the first time they had disagreed with Fish and Game management decisions.

Upriver fishermen had piled rocks in such a way as to form eddies or reinforce existing ones which were favorite schooling places for salmon, and in which they fished. Fish and Game at first moved the markers down to close off the eddies, but "last year they moved the markers back up to where they could use the rock eddies again."

"Fish and Game says it is too hard to control the surf fishermen, that they can't get into the dangerous waters we fish to check our gear. That is like saying you can't drive because State Troopers don't have cars fast enough to catch you if you speed."

"They also say it's a new fishery, but we have fished the breakers as far back as the old-timers can remember."

Johnson pointed out that cutting off surf fishing can cause a lot of definition problems. "They will then have to define what is a breaker. Is it a wave hitting the beach? How big a ruffle constitutes a breaker? It could affect the whole coast of Alaska."

He said, "The way I see it, we have two gods now? one upstairs, and the Fish and Game. It's time they got knocked off their pedestal."

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