



For Immediate Release:

After Two Rescues F/V MISS SARAH becomes Kodiak Boatyard's 100th Lift



"It was a dark and stormy night" is a phrase immortalized by Charles Schultz's Snoopy to poke fun at melodramatic novels, but when far out at sea during an emergency it's just plain dramatic. So it was as Captain Kelly Chirrick stood at the wheel of the F/V MISS SARAH on FRIDAY THE 13TH when the comforting hum of the engine suddenly quit and all was silent except for the wind whistling past the bridge.

"Things like this always happen at the worst possible moment," he recalled. "It was a nightmare, but we were lucky. Other fishing vessels came to our aid and towed us 360 nautical miles to Kodiak."

The first to the rescue was the 81-foot F/V LISA MELINDA. She towed the MISS SARAH for three days until she had her own mechanical difficulties. Fortunately, the 112-foot F/V

MICHELLE RENEE was only 43 nautical miles away and graciously agreed to complete the tow to Kodiak's safe harbor.

On January 20, 2012, the MISS SARAH became Kodiak Boatyard's 100th vessel to be hauled out by the yard's 600-ton Marine Travelift. "This is an important milestone in the history of the new boatyard," said Marty Owen, Harbormaster. "We lifted our 100th vessel just two years after we opened, and we clearly showed the importance of having this facility and its heavy-lift capability in Kodiak when the MISS SARAH came in for emergency repairs."

The lift of the 350-ton MISS SARAH was particularly challenging due to the vessel's hull configuration and, of course, Kodiak's winter weather. The hull has anti-roll chocks which required blocking where the lifting straps pass under before the lift can be made. Diver Lance Parker spent two hours in Kodiak's frigid water positioning twelve heavy wood blocks while the boatyard crew shivered in sub-zero wind-chill temperatures. Everyone was dressed for the arctic weather, but all agreed that they were "chilled to the bone" when the operation was finally over.

In addition to engine work, the MISS SARAH needed emergency repairs to her keel coolers which were damaged by floating debris as the 107-foot steel fishing boat crossed the stormy Gulf of Alaska earlier last week. When repairs are complete she will drag for cod fish.

Captain Chirrick is very grateful that the City of Kodiak has a 600-ton Marine Travelift. "Without the Kodiak Boatyard we would have missed the season. I am very happy with the service in Kodiak. It means a lot to me, and it must give a big boost to Kodiak's economy."

Deputy Harbormaster, Lon White, supervised the operation and directed the blocking effort carried out by the diver. "If the straps were not positioned properly," said White, "significant damage can occur to the vessel and the lifting straps." Kodiak's 600-ton lift functioned flawlessly under the operation of Liftmaster Bill Feda. Feda moved the vessel to the heated wash-down pad where the vessel will remain for repairs.

The MISS SARAH is owned by Lloyd Whaley of Brookings, Oregon and is skippered by Kelly Chirrick. Dennis Butts of Kodiak Quality Marine has been hired to do the cooler repairs. Estimates are the MISS SARAH will be "gone fishin'" again after a few days in the yard.

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