

FLA. FRIDAY, APRIL 6, 2001 The Herald 38

# THE REGION

## MANATEE REHABILITATED AN OLD FRIEND GOES HOME AGAIN



Phil Clough, a member of the Manatee Rescue Team, speaks to manatee Bonnie just before she is returned to the site of Islamorada on March 23. Clough and Bonnie met previously, when the manatee was injured and rehabilitated.

## Court preserves recall drive against Islamorada official

**BY LISA FUSB**  
Islamorada.com

An emergency motion filed to block a recall drive to remove Islamorada Councilman Ron Levy from office was denied Thursday, after a judge ruled that the petition did not show evidence that he would suffer irreparable harm.

Levy's lawsuit, filed Monday, was in response to statements made by a former Islamorada Village of Islamorada employee who said the councilman met routinely with city staff concerning daily operational matters.

David Young, Islamorada's former

**Critics say Councilman Ron Levy has interfered with city operations.**

public works supervisor, also alleged that he observed Levy and a city building official involved in a heated discussion because Levy wanted a sanitation permit issued for a friend.

The building official had allegedly refused to issue the permit.

Critics say Levy has interfered with

day-to-day city operations long enough and want him immediately removed, though his four-year term expires in 18 months.

Recall organizers have already obtained signatures from more than 10 percent of Islamorada's 3,445 registered voters as called for under the recall procedure outlined in the city's charter.

They now must gather another 5 percent — about 200 signatures — to force a recall vote.

Miami attorney Eugene Stearns, who is representing Levy, said he planned to appeal Circuit Judge Luis Garcia's ruling.

## 'Touching' seen as loving, not hurting

Psychologist adds to sanity debate on ex-counselor

**BY PHIL LONG**  
Psychologist.com

**KEY WEST** — Camp counselor Dieter Charles Vogt, who police say fondled young teenage boys, believes he was lovingly helping them, not hurting them, a Key West psychologist testified in federal court late Thursday.

But whether Vogt's state of mind at the time of the alleged crimes meets the federal standard for legal insanity will be debated more today. On Thursday, Dr. James W. Holbrook, a first agreed with defense attorney Edward Carhart that Vogt met the threshold, but later, on cross-examination, said he wasn't so sure.

Vogt, 39, a wealthy South African who was a counselor for 13-year-old boys at Sasecamp on Big Pine Key, was at Holbrook spoke.

Vogt faces a criminal indictment charging him with possession of child pornography, interstate travel for the purpose of sex with a minor and causing a minor to engage in sexually explicit conduct for the purpose of being photographed. If convicted, he could spend the rest of his life in prison.

that he can not appreciate the nature, quality or seriousness of his act, attorney said.

In other testimony, Jim Clemente, one of the FBI's experts on sex crimes against children, described the typical actions of child predators in ways that fit closely with testimony given by the defense regarding Vogt, although he did not name the defendant.

A predator showers kids with attention, affection and gifts to gain access to them, Clemente said. He warned of the dangers of predators who prove the information highway.

**INCREASING ACCESS**

With the advent of the Internet, Clemente said, "they can get access to children around the country, around the world. It reduces the boundaries."

Earlier in the day, two more teenagers fought back tears as they told the jury how Vogt fondled them, then performed oral sex on them. Two others testified earlier in the week that Vogt fondled them. A fifth alleged victim testified in secret before the jury Tuesday.

Seven of the youths were fondled at Sasecamp and others at their homes out of state, witnesses have testified. Assistant U.S. Attorney Michael Brown has shown jurors many sexually explicit pictures they say Vogt made of the boys with a digital camera and an infrared light that allowed him to take photos almost in total darkness.

Some of the pictures show the genitalia of sleeping boys. Brown has told jurors.

**IN CAR WITH VOGT**

One youth who testified Thursday was in the car with Vogt when he was arrested last September.

After interviewing the youth at a sheriff's station, police turned him over to state child-protection officials until he could fly back home the next day. Despite the fact the youth saw Vogt one last time before they took him away.

"He just apologized for everything," the teen said. "He just whispered: 'Don't tell anyone.'"

## Massive damage reported at fragile reef off Key West

Boat captain faces federal charges after grounding

**BY LISA FUSB**  
Islamorada.com



**WHAT WAS HIT:** A live habitat of mostly elkhorn coral, shown above at another spot off the Keys, as well as mustard hill and mounds of star corals was damaged.

Scientists from Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary went underwater Thursday off Key West, surveying massive reef damage from a boat grounding that is being called one of the Keys' worst in years.

Pilot error is believed to have led the Connecticut, a 100-foot luxury cabin cruiser purchased just days earlier, to smash into the delicate reef at Western Sambo Ecological Reserve March 27.

Initial assessments at the grounding site indicate the vessel hit the shallower part of the reef at cruising speed, about 25 knots, and ran hard aground, crushing a live habitat of mostly elkhorn, mustard hill and mounds of star corals.

Legal efforts to determine responsibility and damages will probably take months, if not years, but marine experts already have a good idea of what they're dealing with.

"It's very serious," said marine biologist Harold Hudson, better known as the sanctuary's reef doctor.

**GROUNDING HURTS KEYS REEF**

Marine ecologists are assessing reef damage caused by a cabin cruiser that ran aground off Key West on March 27.



Although Bondhus, 28, was not behind the wheel at the time of the incident, he was cited for careless

**'It's very serious. We're just trying to figure out what we can save.'**

**HAROLD HUDSON, marine biologist**

operation of a vessel. He also faces federal charges for damage to the protected coral reef, said Steve Acton, spokesman for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Nearby reef should never have been so close to begin with, says Acton, adding that the captain's planned course brought him within half a mile of the reef line.

Sanctuary officials say 2001 has been an unusually bad year for boat groundings in the Keys — with nearly 100, including 66 in March alone — but contend the Western Sambo accident has been the worst by far.

The grounding site, which ranges from one to four feet in water depth, also was close to the spot where biologists have been extracting live coral that was damaged in Hurricane Georges nearly three years ago.

The grounding "is really disappointing considering all the work we've done there," said sanctuary spokesperson Chris Beck. "We were just making progress."

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