

Mount Desert Islander

On the Rocks

Written by Melinda Rice



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The proverb "It's an ill wind that blows no good," came true in bucketsful for Eddie Monet and Edna Martin during Thanksgiving week. First, the ill wind; a storm in the wee hours of Nov. 25 and 26 produced winds in excess of 62 mph that drove their boat – and primary source of income – the Seal onto the jagged, barnacle-coated rocks of Bar Island.

"I've had better days," said Eddie, who bought the boat in 2000 and has used it ever since for his Underwater Theater tours, dive charters and lessons, and scalloping.

Within 24 hours it was clear to the couple that the Seal was going to be totaled. The keel had been torn off, the rudder post was driven through the deck, whole parts of the hull were torn away, the engine compartment had flooded and all their diving gear, which had been aboard ready for a charter, was lost. "Everything is just toast," said Edna.

And then came the "good" part. People turned out, unasked, in droves to help. Fishermen arrived to help strip the boat, families scoured the beach looking for equipment and pieces of machinery, people formed a bucket brigade from the Seal to the top of the cliff on Bar Island, passing salvage from hand to hand. The owner of Town Hill market even showed up on Thanksgiving Day with pizza, eggnog and apple pie. "It was absolutely unbelievable the effort people went to," said Edna. "I don't even know half the people who came ... All those people there kept our spirits high."

The duo doesn't know exactly what they're going to do – they don't think most of the lost equipment is insured – but they vow to be back on the water in 2009.



The Seal's interior is a jumbled mess of splintered benches and ruined equipment after she was driven onto Bar Island.—

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MELINDA RICE PHOTO

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