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Guy who came to Bethenny Frankel's 'rescue' says it was bogus

WITH BILL ZWECKER October 10, 2011 7:00PM



Bethenny Frankel and her husband Jason Hoppy were supposedly stranded off Nantucket for 21 hours. A camera crew was on hand to capture the rescue for Bravo's "Bethenny Ever After."

Updated: October 11, 2011 5:14AM

Another example of how staged "reality" TV has become is the embarrassing revelation that Bethenny Frankel's "lost at sea" story apparently was greatly exaggerated — to say the least.

The Bravo TV personality made a big deal about allegedly being stranded on a boat off Nantucket for 21 hours — a harrowing tale she related to various media outlets, including E! Entertainment and Ellen DeGeneres' show.

Now, Tim Russell — the guy who "rescued" Frankel, husband Jason Hoppy and their boatmates, has come forward to reveal that no one was ever in any danger.

ARTICLE EXTRAS



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Russell tells the Jewish Journal he was called by the boat's captain (also Frankel's therapist) to tow them into shore after the Coast Guard refused — because the boat was completely *functioning* and didn't require a tow.

Turns out Frankel was accompanied by a six-man film crew from her "Bethenny Ever After" Bravo show, all eager to film the "rescue" for a future episode.

Russell's claim may be tied to him never getting that \$2,800 "rescue fee" Frankel publicly bragged about paying him.

So far, no response by Bravo to Russell's side of the story, and Frankel merely tweeted that the report is one of several "idiocies" from the press.

PRINCE OF A GUY: Not only did Prince Harry party hearty with military buddies at the San Diego Andaz Hotel's rooftop this past weekend, but the British royal even picked up everyone's bar tab.

A source on the scene laughed, "It could have cost him a lot more than it did, since almost everyone was just drinking beer — and domestic at that!"

<http://www.suntimes.com/entertainment/zwecker/8138820-452/guy-who-came-to-bethenny-frankels-rescue-says-it-was-bogus.html>

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† For security reasons, Harry has been told he can't visit Mexico when he goes on leave during his two months of advanced helicopter training in California, due to safety worries tied to the ongoing drug gang violence.

WHAT'S TRUE? The ongoing marital drama for Ashton Kutcher and Demi Moore has snared bigger headlines lately, but Hollywood folks still whisper about Will and Jada Pinkett Smith. The couple's teams continue to deny problems, but there's buzz about them living separately — plus a story their kids Willow and Jaden are begging them not to split up.

STARGAZING: While he understands how media works, Billy Bob Thornton is telling pals he's *still* ticked off that "every single, solitary story" about estranged daughter Amanda Brumfield mentions him in the headline. Brumfield was sentenced last week to 20 years in prison for aggravated manslaughter in the death of her 1-year-old goddaughter, who suffered a fatal head injury while Brumfield was baby-sitting in 2008. A close Thornton friend says the Oscar winner's attempt to reconnect with Brumfield several years ago went awry, "because Amanda was *only* interested in Billy Bob's money."

† Given how good he looks, it's not surprising Rob Lowe is launching a men's line of skin-care products.

† Achtung! Though Kirsten Dunst says she speaks German only at a child's level, the actress now has joint U.S.-German citizenship. Her dad's from Hamburg, but Dunst's reasons are about being able to work in European Union countries without having to hassle with non-E.U. work permits.

SPECIAL VENUE: There was a surprise wedding on the set of "Guys and Dolls" at the Theatre at the Center in Munster the other night when Doris Ramona wed fiance Rodney Speed. While the groom knew he was getting married that day, Ramona kept the locale a secret.

The fun twist: The couple met in a high school production of "Guys and Dolls" 34 years ago and finally tied the knot after reconnecting three years ago.

SIGHT SEEN: Now that Ryne Sandberg's season managing the Lehigh Valley IronPigs AAA team is over, the Hall of Famer is back in town — seen stocking up on groceries with wife Margaret at Potash Foods on State Street. ... Before that alleged bar brawl involving Channing Tatum, he had a much quieter dinner, celebrating his birthday with wife Jenna Dewan at Mercadito on West Kinzie. ... Before leaving town (now that "The Playboy Club" has been canceled) Dewan joined castmates David Krumholtz and Wes Ramsey for a last blowout Sunday at the Underground.