

By Taffy Lee Williams

WHALE NEWS from July, 2016

Some of the news from the world of cetaceans

WORTH CELEBRATING

Early in June, 2016, the National Aquarium of Baltimore announced plans to relocate its Atlantic bottlenose dolphins to a seaside sanctuary, a move that has garnered praise and anticipation.

The sanctuary is expected to be ready to receive dolphins by the end of 2020. PETA says, "The National Aquarium's welcome move recognizes that the needs of intelligent, sensitive, far-ranging dolphins simply can't be met in captivity. This spells the beginning of the end for dolphin captivity and the start of an age in which SeaWorld, the Miami Seaquarium, and other marine parks reject excuses not to retire long-suffering captive dolphins including orcas to sanctuaries."

National Aquarium CEO John Racanelli seems to concur, stating, "Although this decision is about our group of dolphins, it is every bit as much about our humanity; for the way a society treats the animals with whom it shares this planet speaks volumes about us."

The plan calls for an outdoor location with natural sea water with more depth and space than their facility, tropical or sub-tropical climate and natural stimulus, such as aquatic plants and fish. Read more at <http://www.aqua.org/sanctuary/index.html?gclid=CLLiytXj0M0CFQFahgod2IwBtQ>

WE LIKE THIS PETITION

The petition calls on Carnival Corporation, the cruise ship giant, to end its support of a proposed marine mammal facility on Grand Turk in the Turks and Caicos Islands, a vacation hotspot southeast of the Bahamas. Testifying to the growing rejection of whale/dolphin captivity entertainment, thousands, both on the islands and off, are protesting the plans. Turks residents are even sporting "No to Captive Dolphins" bumper stickers.

Daniel Turner, of the Born Free organization says, "These animals have no life worth living in captivity, devoid of any form of stimulation and social interaction, unable to swim hundreds of kilometers a day or live in family groups.... If people really want to engage with these animals to truly be inspired by their intelligence and see how they live, they need to see them in the wild; there's plenty of opportunity for them to do so."

Read more at <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-33991679>. Let's help bury this project! Sign the petition at:

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/269/123/327/demand-that-carnival-corporation-oppose-the-proposed-grand-turk-captive-dolphin-facility/>

MORE BAD NEWS FOR THE TAMPERE FOUR, aka THE FINLAND FOUR

In Finland, after years of persistence by activists exposing despicable unnatural conditions in a cold concrete building, the Tampereen Sarkanneimi Oy dolphin entertainment facility has finally been shut down. Ric O'Barry explains that marine mammal dealer Dr. Jay Sweeney held the cap-

ture permits in Florida for the six wild-caught dolphins in the 1980's before the practice was banned by NMFS. (Sweeney still owns several dolphin captive facilities, including lucrative swim-with facilities in Bermuda, Tahiti and Hawaii.)

Just how deplorable are the conditions in Sarkanniemi for Veera, Delfi, Leevi, and Eevertti, sadly dubbed the TAMPERE FOUR?

Ric writes, "The dolphins now need constant medical attention. They have never seen a live fish, never experienced the tide, never seen a seagull overhead, never even seen the sky. They are freaks that we have created for our amusement. They were created for corporate profit." There are two survivors from the original six. Two replacement dolphins are afflicted with a captivity-related blood disease known as hemochromatosis."

Cetacean advocates at FINNS FOR THE WHALES are reporting that the TAMPERE FOUR have been sold to the Attica Zoo Dolphinarium, a non-accredited facility that has lost six dolphins prematurely between 2010-2015.

"I strongly believe this shocking news is also part of [a] manipulating plan by the captive industry to destroy any hopes for Greece to place a permanent ban on dolphinariums, as already promised by the Government of Greece," says Viivi Senghore of Finns for the Whales.

Many now believe that instead of prolonging their suffering, these dolphins belong in sanctuary in their home waters. Read more about the Finland Four at <https://dolphinproject.net/blog/post/the-finland-four/>

THE LAW IS ON THE DOLPHINS' SIDE IN PERU

Blue [Voice.org](http://BlueVoice.org) has announced that three fishermen in Peru are being charged with killing dolphins for shark bait, a practice that is decimating dolphin and shark populations and creating ecological imbalances in the region. Some 15,000 dolphins are reportedly slaughtered each year to make thin strips of dolphin-meat-shark-bait, a widely-condemned practice that is causing localized extinctions.

Hardy Jones, renowned filmmaker of BlueVoice.org is telling us, "Our investigations have documented a shark holocaust off the coast of Peru. Dolphins are harpooned then butchered for shark bait used in the extreme overfishing of sharks (including some endangered species). Not only are legally undersized sharks taken, our camera team documented pregnant females aborting dozens of shark fetuses. These fishing operations are wiping out sharks in a vast area of the Pacific....

This investigation also put us on the trail of an international shark finning operation that sources sharks from the same fleet that kills the dolphins.... Our investigators discovered a mob of Chinese cutting the fins from newly landed sharks and trucking them away. But the mob turned hostile and our team had to withdraw."

THE TIDE IS TURNING?

Funded by BlueVoice.org, Stefan Austermuhle, of the Peru-based non-profit Mundo Azul, made the undercover film which finally compelled the state attorney to press criminal charges against

the dolphin-killers. Austermuhle will be a witness in Peru's first case of prosecution for dolphin-killing, a practice that is illegal thanks to a law which has never been enforced.

Calling it a major breakthrough, Jones is optimistic that this prosecution will help deter the ongoing slaughter. He says, "We are hopeful that the prosecution of these violators signals a turn in policy in Peru toward vigorous enforcement of the dolphin protection laws. The thought that we could save thousands of dolphins annually is tremendously moving to us."

Sharks contribute widely to healthy marine life populations. They feed on octopus, for example, who in turn feed on lobster and shrimp. With the sharks wiped out, octopus numbers have exploded, and now their prey lobster and shrimp numbers are plummeting. Read more at http://www.bluevoice.org/news_perudolphins131016.php, then sign this fitting petition to stop the dolphin/shark carnage in Peru: <https://forcechange.com/149067/stop-killing-dolphins-for-shark-bait/>

VETERINARIAN CALLS FOR LOLITA'S RETIREMENT

Dr. Ian Kupkee has recently been writing about Tokitae, the female Puget Sound Southern Resident orca known as Lolita, held in a substandard-sized tank in the violation-ridden Miami Seaquarium for some 45 years. Brutally torn from her family, she has managed to survive despite harsh conditions that include solitary confinement and a cramped prison tank. Kupkee makes the case that Lolita, as all orcas and dolphins, carry the same brain cells and neuronal mechanisms that make humans "human" – spindle cells that function to process emotions, express empathy, love, compassion, and more. Orcas even have an extra paralimbic brain lobe (lacking in humans) believed to be key to orcas' abilities to create strong social bonds and hierarchies, and facilitate the distinct languages of their varying populations. While the suffering orca languishes in her inadequate chlorinated world, her mother, now in her 80's, as well as her family and other matriarchs - including "Granny" at the spry age of 104! - continue their daily activities in Puget Sound. Kupkee believes, like many, that Tokitae can still contribute to her pod's survival. The only moral course to take is to send this whale to retirement in her home waters. Read more at <http://www.nbcmiami.com/news/local/Her-Name-Is-Not-Lolita-384283151.html>

STUDYING WHALES IN THE NY BIGHT

Both large baleen whales and smaller toothed cetaceans make their home in the New York Bight, a triangular shaped region that stretches from Montauk Point, Long Island south to Cape May, NJ. Little is known about them which has prompted scientists at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution and the Wildlife Conservation Society to place an acoustic eavesdropping buoy in the waters. The researchers hope to monitor the cetaceans for two years to help shed light on their conditions and activities in the Bight.

Cetaceans can be very vocal, emitting clicks, whistles and songs across the seas to others, which will be read by the hydrophones on the buoy. The sounds will be matched to vocalizations in a library of cetacean sounds and language to verify the identity of species, as well as their habits and communications.

The NY Bight is one of the busiest industrial port regions in the world. Whales are threatened both by the noise of vessel engines underwater, as well as pollution (oil, illegal dumping and garbage) and direct ship strikes. Scientists are concerned that the heavy shipping vessel traffic is interfering with cetaceans' survival. Read more, and watch the video at <http://www.whoi.edu/news-release/scientists-now-listening-for-whales-in-new-york>

PORT AMBROSE DEFEATED

Disaster for cetaceans - and everything else - in the NY Bight was averted when the proposed Port Ambrose Liquefied Natural Gas Deepwater Port - Import Facility was vetoed by Gov. Cuomo.

The NY Bight has been the scene of a long battle between the public (including government officials and scientists) and Big Energy to create a fracked (liquefied) gas import and export terminal at Port Ambrose, NJ, just off the shore of Sandy Hook and Long Beach, NY. Once known as the "Ocean Dumping Capital of the World," the NY Bight has been the recipient of raw sewage, garbage, refuse, street sweepings, along with dredged sludge, acid and industrial waste, wood incineration, even construction from the vast industrial zones of the metropolitan New York City area. A 22-mile sub-seabed pipeline carrying off loaded LNG to NYC from Port Ambrose would have resuspended the massive toxic sediments putting everything at risk in the Bight. Construction of the port and its vessel traffic would have ruined fisheries, marine industry, recreational and sport activities as well as leaving the shores at risk of major spills.

Read more about Port Ambrose at <https://cleanocean.wordpress.com/bight>, and http://ny4whales.org/Comments_to_USCG-DHS_re_Port_Ambrose_LNG_Terminal_3-15.pdf. For NY Gov. Cuomo's letter vetoing Port Ambrose visit: <http://marcellusdrilling.com/2015/11/ny-gov-cuomo-vetoes-port-ambrose-lng-import-terminal/>

NOT ANOTHER DOLPHINARIUM IN THE DESERT?

That's right. This time on the tribal lands of the Salt River Pine Maricopa Reservation, home of the Maricopa and Pima Tribes near Scottsdale, Arizona.

Dolphinaris, the new facility's owner, is part of the Mexican-based company Ventura Entertainment, which runs five dolphin encounter parks south of the border. This is a company that has sourced dolphins from the Taiji and Solomon Islands dolphins-slaughter drive fisheries that butcher tens of thousands of dolphins each year. The drive fisheries are motivated by the high mortality rate of dolphins in captivity and the international aquarium facilities that pay big bucks - up to \$250,000 for one dolphin - to the fishermen for dolphins suitable for the business.

How does Dolphinaris treat its Mexican inmate dolphins? Here's a clue, from this nauseating attempt to entice the public: "Dolphinaris Riviera Maya Park is the [sic] unique interactive park with dolphins in the world, that offers you the unique program: Triple Adventure, in this dolphin swim program where you'll be able to learn all about them, play, pet and hug them." (<http://www.dolphinaris.com/swim-with-dolphins/>) In other words, constant harassment, and certainly not a natural approach respectful of the animal's needs and abilities. Interestingly, the dol-

phin swim with programs at Dolphinaris do not provide dolphin assisted therapy. Instead they offer dolphin entertainment exclusively: Dolphin Swim Program, Dolphin Swim & Ride, Dolphin Ride Experience COZ, Dolphin Interactive Program, Dolphin Swim Speed Ride, Triple Adventure, Dolphin Trainer, Trainer For A Day.

Nauseous enough? During the Swim Speed Ride one will perform different interactive behaviors in deep and shallow water like “shake the dolphins fin, receive and give a kiss and caress the dolphin.” (ibid.)

With all this cuddle-the-dolphin mindlessness, there is no mention of the risk to the public from the high level of injuries, dolphins bites, scratches, tail slapping and broken bones children and adults suffer from these “loving” encounters. The Triple Adventure features “access to three of the five activities -Foot Push, Belly Ride, Boogie Push, Snorkel or Interaction- and other great and fun features such as kissing, hugging and greeting, among others.” (ibid.) Good grief. Risky business, indeed. Not advising the public, who might not be aware of the hazards of a particular commodity, service or activity is known as an “unconscionable trade practice”, one that takes advantage of the public’s ignorance, or inability to protect one’s self.

Who wants to stop enterprise on Native American tribal lands? (Haven’t they suffered enough?) Well, no one really, except if it involves cruelty to those dolphins wholly unsuited to a tortuous confinement in the desert! What might the dolphins be thinking as they face their fate in the shadeless Arizona sunshine? (Yes, scientists are sure they “think”!) Resignation? Defeat? Unfathomable grief? Their bodies betray their dismay in prison tanks. The litany of predictable captivity woes include ulcers, digestive disorders, sunburn, depression, pneumonia, muscle necrosis, weakened immune systems, broken teeth, bites and scratches from pool-mates, erysipelas (infectious diamond skin disease), myositis and even nasty bacterial diseases like clostridium. All for a perverse Swim-With-The-Dolphins exploitation scheme. Questions remain regarding the import of these dolphins from Mexico, their true origins, as well as violations of the Marine Mammal Protection and Animal Welfare Acts and others. Despite strong objections - the concrete is already being poured!

Read more at <http://www.takepart.com/article/2016/04/14/dolphin-attraction-arizona-desert>
Ask the Native American Community to prohibit dolphin captivity on their lands: 1-480.362.7740.

If you haven’t already, sign the petition at:

<http://www.thepetitionsite.com/234/874/624/a-big-%22no%22-to-captive-dolphins-in-arizona/>

X-FILES FOR DOLPHINS?

EVERY VOICE HELPS! Gillian Anderson calls on SEAWORLD to free its 23 ORCAS
The X-FILES SUPERSTAR is adding her voice to the many who have condemned SeaWorld’s continued confinement of whales and dolphins for “stupid human/animal tricks”. During a recent PETA meeting, Anderson said the whales “break their teeth gnawing on bars and concrete, and they go insane from the reverberations of their sophisticated sonar off the tank walls...” Anderson posed a question: “When will SeaWorld retire the orcas to protected sea sanctuaries and reinvent the park with attractions glorifying the ocean, rather than traumatizing its most intelligent inhabi-

tants?” Read more at <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/gillian-anderson-calls-for-sea-world-to-free-the-last-23-orca-whales-in-captivity-a7084136.html>

Read more Whale News at http://csiwhalesalive.org/csi_newsletters.html.