



DOLPHIN AID NEWS - 01/2006

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On Dec 17, 2005 the TV donation gala "A Heart for Children" took place. Our president, Mrs. Kirsten Kuhnert, as well as our Managing Director Mr. Kay Evers were invited to participate in this event.

Each month the magazine "Spielen und Lernen" (Play and Learn) honors child-friendly actions and initiatives with the "Raven of the Month". This January, this award was given to dolphin aid in general, and especially to our president Mrs. Kirsten Kuhnert.

### **ABOUT OUR AMBASSADORS:**

Nomi Baumgartl, photographer: Currently she is writing her new book. She donated proceeds from readings from her new book "Mumo" for the twins Aaron and Jeremias. Reason enough to travel to Curacao to see for herself how the boys responded to dolphin therapy. She now plans a photo documentary about the twins. In Curacao, she was joined by Dirk Walbrecker, a well known author of children's books; Claudine Wilde, actress; as well as Kirsten Kuhnert, president of dolphin aid.

Norbert Dobeleit, athlete and moderator: Has a new show, a lifestyle-magazine, on the TV station PRO7.

Barbara Becker: Recently launched a new fashion collection.

Irena Moebus: Launched a new CD.

Claudine Wilde, actress:

Goetz Otto, actor:

Frank te Neutes, actor:

Ralf Moeller: actor. These four ambassadors are busy making movies.

Juliane Hielscher: Presents the morning magazine on the TV station ZDF.

John Juergens, DJ: Twice already he performed at the gala of dolphin aid as DJ. Since October of last year he is one of our ambassadors, currently he is busy creating a talent agency.

Thomas Koschwitz: Presents a couple of radio shows.

Rolf Milser, hotel-owner: During the soccer world cup, his hotel will host the Italian national team.

Thomas Rupprath, athlete: For the seventh time in a row he was elected "swimmer of the year".

Hans-Joachim Stuck: Prepares for the new Formula 1 season.



## **PARENTS INITIATIVE AT DOLPHIN AID:**

The founder of DHT, Dr. Dave Nathanson, will quit the destination Key Largo in order to build a new therapy center without dolphins at a different location. For our children this means a reduction of 400 therapy spots per year. Dolphin aid has decided to fight for the maintenance of these spots. All parents and all children are kindly being asked to support dolphin aid in this.

## **OUR HEROES:**

Today we would like to present Katharina. Katharina, now 16 years old, became sick at the age of 4 months. When her mom wanted to get her out of bed she could not move, all muscles were completely limp, she could not even lift her head and had high fever. Even so, to date there is no clear diagnosis. Doctors assume that these symptoms might have been a reaction to a polio vaccination. Physiotherapy, Vojta-therapy, to strengthen the muscles, later on Bobath, ergo therapy, etc., followed. In 1995, her mother saw a report on CNN about a new method of therapy in Florida. During this therapy, special needs children spent time in the water with dolphins. 1996, through a newspaper article, Katharina's mother learned about the foundation of an organization called dolphin aid. With the help of Kirsten Kuhnert, president of dolphin aid (who back then still worked completely on her own) and the help of Claudia Ossenschmidt from the travel agency "Elberfelder Reisetreff", Katharina and her family went to Key Largo. By the end of the first week, Katharina had made great progress. She was able to endure body- and eye-contact, articulated her wishes, laughed a lot and had fun. She built an intense relationship with her therapist, learned fast and reduced boundaries. She also began to talk, partly even in English. Soon after, against the predictions of her doctor, she started to grow and gain weight.



## **SPONSORS:**

During their Christmas tour "with all my heart" Irena & the rainbow-kids were able to raise 9,300.00 Euro for dolphin aid. This amount also includes proceeds from the sale of CDs as well as donations from various spectators. Over the course of the last year Irena & the rainbow-kids collected more than 25,000.00 Euro for dolphin aid.

Initiated through Petra Siebert and her daughter Daniela, a couple of stores in Asberg agreed to organize a Christmas market and donate the proceeds to dolphin aid. However, what was missing in this beautiful picture were clients. On November 26, the day of the event, it was snowing. Rather than putting up the stands, snow had to be shoveled. Still, some clients made their way to the market. Thus the amount of 69.87 Euro could still be raised.

During the summer of 2005, two schools in Munich were able to raise a total of 333.46 Euro. These events were initiated by Beate Heyes at the "Turnerschule" and Ulrike Gillhaus at the Neubiberger Gymnasium. The money was raised through lottery. Each ticket won. The prizes were donated by parents, as well as lovingly created by students.

## **A LOT IS HAPPENING:**

A dolphinarium is currently planned in Glowe on the little island of Ruegen. The company "Nature Project GmbH" is building the project estimated at a cost of 5 million Euro. It should be finished in Fall of 2007. Next to dolphin shows, dolphin therapy for children is also planned. The organization for the protection of nature from Germany, as well as the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society (WDCS), point out serious shortcomings. Proper keeping will not be possible, says Karsten Brensing from WDCS. In order to justify the construction, dolphin therapy is being used, thus creating even more stress for the dolphins. Each day 6 children shall be treated through one dolphin. Furthermore, there might not be enough dolphins on the European market since only direct descendants are allowed to be used.

In Nuremberg lagoon 2000 a better living space for dolphins is being built. Congratulations Dr.von Fersen.

In Gulfport, Mississippi the dolphinarium is completely destroyed after the last Hurricane. 17 homeless dolphins have been transferred to the Bahamas. Maybe they will become therapists one day?



The Seaquarium in Miami closed for months after Hurricane Wilma placed 22 dolphins out of work. Here too dolphin aid is negotiating.

Furthermore dolphin aid is working on maintaining the therapy location Florida. Dr.Nathanson is renouncing, thus dolphin aid has to work on not losing at least 200 therapy spots per year for our children.

Our dolphin therapy center in Curacao is expanding.

Between the beginning of January and the end of March, 55 children have already attended dolphin therapy at the facilities of Dolphin Human Therapy, at the Curacao Dolphin Therapy Center or at Island Dolphin Care.

A therapy facility in Europe is in the planning. Here as well, dolphin aid is assisting.

Almost without saying, we support research. The latest study by psychologist Zita Stenczel conducted in Curacao shall be published this year. The medical board of dolphin aid is meeting regularly.

Goal: The medical recognition through the health system. Dolphin aid placed an order for research work with the university of Duisburg/Essen. They shall develop a waterproof wireless EEG. First tests have been very promising.

Smart con-artists hired masses of managers, clerks and therapists for a future amusement and therapy center "Atlantes e.V." on an artificial lake in Bad Breisig (district Bonn). Upon paying a security deposit on a future official residence a "fake" contract of employment was signed. Mainly people without employment or with little income were scammed.

## **RESEARCH STUDIES:**

Prof.Dr.Erwin Breitenbach, Psychologist at the university of Wuerzburg stresses that there are significant signs that animal-supported therapy helps. Children are naturally attracted to animals. They do not have to be artificially motivated to do something with them. This motivation is an important aspect. Best suited for therapy are dogs, dolphins but also lamas, cats and even snakes.

A new study has shown that dolphin therapy helps against depressions.

Professor Dr. Antonioli and Professor Reveley published a study:

"Randomized controlled trial of animal facilitated therapy with dolphins in the treatment of depression. The study was conducted on 30 patients between 18 and 65, between November 2002 and December 2003 at the Roatan Institute for Marine Sciences, Bay Island, Honduras. Interaction with animals in nature stimulates the entire nervous system through the senses.



## **NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD:**

41 year old Sharon Tendler from England married a dolphin in Eilat Israel. Through the ceremony she was kneeling down giving the dolphin a kiss as well as a piece of fish. She says: "I love this dolphin. He is the love of my life". She met the animal for the first time 15 years ago and since then has returned frequently in order to spend time with "Cindy". The marriage of course is not legally recognized.

The dolphin institute of Freiburg reported about four swimmers from New Zealand who had been saved from a white shark by dolphins. The swimmers are reporting that the dolphins swam around them in close circles. Their behavior showed that they wanted to protect the swimmers. Animal scientist Rochelle Constantine is not surprised by this behavior. She says that dolphins want to help the helpless. A self-sacrificing reaction such as this one is absolutely normal among dolphins.

## **NEWS FROM DOLPHIN AID AMERICA:**

As in the past few years dolphin aid America will once again participate in Dr. Juergen Eisermann's annual Mother's Day get-together. The event will take place on Saturday, May 6 at the Institute. For further information please call dolphin aid America at (305) 377 8861. Dolphin aid America hopes to benefit as previously from the sale of raffle tickets that will go to help special needs children to attend therapy.

Earlier this year young Brody Sorensen together with his parents had two weeks of therapy at CDTC in Curacao. We were advised that Brody made excellent progress of which we are delighted.