



CLEARWATER MARINE AQUARIUM™

Youngsters Inspired to Persevere Celebrate the Birthdays of their Heroes

Clearwater Marine Aquarium Invites Young Guests to Lead Birthday Celebration for Dolphins featured in Dolphin Tale Movies

Media Information:

- On Friday, Oct. 11 at 10:00 a.m. CMA will celebrate Winter and Hope's birthdays by singing happy birthday and presenting a birthday "cake" with the help of two inspirational guests. Media advised to arrive at 9:45 a.m.
- Location: Clearwater Marine Aquarium: 249 Windward Passage, Clearwater, FL 33767. Parking available in CMA parking garage or St. Brendan's Church Lot
- Photos and video to be available upon request.
- For further information, contact Kelsy Long at klong@cmaaquarium.org or 727.686.3499. Cell 410.507.1453.

CLEARWATER, FL (Oct. 4, 2019) – Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is celebrating the birthdays of Winter and Hope, the rescued dolphins featured in the *Dolphin Tale* movies, with two special young guests. On Friday, October 11, Myleanna Siedlecky and Lauren Davis, who are deeply inspired by Winter's story of surviving with a prosthetic tail, will lead the birthday celebrations and enjoy interacting with the two dolphins.

Two years ago, nine-year-old Myleanna from New York, was riding a lawn mower when she fell while trying to retrieve a shoe that was slipping off. Shortly after, Myleanna need a below the knee amputation on her left leg.

In early August, the *Hicksville News* covered Myleanna's story and her family's four hour car ride from their countryside home to A Step Ahead Prosthetics in Hicksville, where the fourth grader was fitted for a prosthetic blade which is better suited for athletic activities the youngster enjoys. The article indicated that the family was saving up for a trip to Florida so Myleanna could meet Winter and Hope, a dolphin with a prosthetic tail and one rescued as a calf. That's when CMA's Inspire Department Coordinator, Thomas Poe, took notice.

"When I read about Myleanna's story and her connection to Winter and Hope, I knew we could make her trip to Clearwater Marine Aquarium a special one," said Poe. "Winter's story has inspired millions of people all over the world and it is our mission at CMA to help create powerful experiences of hope through a connection to the animals here."

In fact, Clearwater Marine Aquarium has an entire department dedicated to catering to special guests who connect to the animals in care at CMA. The Inspire Department coordinates animal encounters, travel, events, and individualized tours for children, adults, and groups with uniquely compelling stories of perseverance.

It was through the Inspire Team's online portal that Lori Davis shared her daughter's story.

"Although she was born with bilateral hypo-plastic thumbs and a hole in her heart, she's never let anything slow her down. Over the past 13 years she's battled asthma and Von Willebrands syndrome with strength most adults would only dream of having," Lori wrote. Immediately, Poe's teammates reached out to help coordinate Lauren's trip to CMA.

“Clearwater Marine Aquarium has become a mecca for very special individuals who find a connection to our animals,” said David Yates, CEO. “I’m extremely humbled by each story and encouraged by the strength I witness every day. We’re very proud to provide a place of belonging, inspiration, and comfort for our visitors,” said Yates.

Myleanna and Lauren will join in helping CMA celebrate the dolphins’ birthdays with a happy birthday song, playtime, and presenting a dolphin-friendly birthday cake.

While no one knows Winter and Hope’s true dates of birth, the team at CMA estimates Winter’s birthday to be Oct. 10, as she was only estimated to be two months old when she was rescued on Dec. 10, 2005. Hope, also estimated to be about two months old, was rescued Dec. 11, 2010. CMA will be celebrating Winter’s 14th birthday and Hope’s 9th birthday with Winter and Hope’s Birthday Bubble Bash October 1st – 13th. For more information visit seewinter.com.

About Clearwater Marine Aquarium:

Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit working marine rescue center dedicated to inspiring the human spirit through leadership in education, research, rescue, rehabilitation and release. CMA is home to rescued dolphins, sea turtles, river otters, stingrays, nurse sharks and more. Winter the dolphin’s story of survival, after an injury that caused her to lose her tail, has impacted millions of people around the world. Major motion picture *Dolphin Tale* (2011) features Winter’s story and its sequel *Dolphin Tale 2* (2014) features the incredible story of Hope, a young resident dolphin of CMA. Through Clearwater Marine Aquarium Research Institute, CMA conducts important global research focused on protecting manatees, right whales and sea turtles. The mission and potential to change people’s lives differentiates Clearwater Marine Aquarium from any other aquarium in the world.

[WE BELIEVE](#) in preserving our environment while inspiring the human spirit through leadership in the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of marine life, environmental education, research and conservation.

249 Windward Passage | Clearwater, FL 33767 | 727.441.1790 | SeeWinter.com

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