

## Emotional Reunion for Fisherman Who Rescued Winter the Dolphin

*He Saved Winter 14 years ago. Unknowingly, the story inspired his Great Niece to fight her own battle.*

**Clearwater, Fla. (December 10, 2019)** – Three years ago, Grace Savage’s dreams came true when she got to meet Winter the dolphin during a trip of her lifetime thanks to the Make a Wish Foundation. Back then, she did not know that her Great Uncle, Jim Savage, was the fisherman who rescued the dolphin (in Mosquito Lagoon, Florida) who inspires her to keep fighting. In fact, Grace learned that her Great Uncle Jim rescued Winter while reading the book “Winter’s Tail: How One Little Dolphin Learned to Swim Again,” a true-life story of Winter’s rescue and rehab. She had seen him depicted in *Dolphin Tale*, but incredibly, never knew it was him.

Jim Savage has enjoyed seeing his rescued dolphin inspire tens of thousands of sick or special needs children, but didn’t know a member of his own family was living that life. On December 10, Grace and Jim Savage met again at Clearwater Marine Aquarium (CMA) to celebrate Winter’s 14<sup>th</sup> Rescue Anniversary and Grace’s improving strength in facing her health battles.

- [View a video from the reunion.](#)
- [View photos from the reunion.](#)

“We didn’t know if our baby was going to make it, just like Jim didn’t know if Winter was going to make it,” said Katie Savage, Grace’s mom. “Seeing this dolphin thriving has given Grace a reason to keep thriving as well.”

“If Winter can keep going then I can too,” said Grace Savage.

Also called DiGeorge or velocardiofacial syndrome, Grace, now 13 years old, has 22.q11.2 deletion syndrome, which is a chromosomal disorder that results in poor development of several body systems. This condition can cause heart defects, poor immune system function, a cleft palate, and low levels of calcium in the blood. Throughout her short life, Grace has relied on Winter’s story of perseverance to get through her difficult times.

Millions of people all over the world continue to be inspired by Winter’s story of overcoming adversity. She has inspired CMA’s work with several groups and organizations that serve individuals who are tackling their own challenges. Hope’s 9<sup>th</sup> Rescue Anniversary is on December 11. To learn more about Winter, Hope, and Clearwater Marine Aquarium’s mission, visit [seewinter.com](http://seewinter.com).

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### 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. Clearwater Marine Aquarium also 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.

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