The heart of the North

WEDNESDAY, May 26, 2010

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Helping Hand

A German flasher rescued

German flasher rescued

8-year-old saves his father’s life

WEDNESDAY, May 26, 2010

Woman hands in lost $3500

by Kristin Edge

A tour of joy rolled down Ingrid Visser’s face as a black and white Orca whale gave her last flick of its tail and swam off from Ruakaka Beach.

The experienced whale watcher and Tahiti-based Orca expert punched her fists into the air and let out a whoop of joy after a battle to free the adult whale, named Putita, from the beach yesterday.

“Putita was a round of cheers and clapping from the crowd, which included Department of Conservation staff, police and residents who had watched the rescue yesterday.”

Miss Visser said it was not the first time Putita and his older brother Rua, who risked their lives to try to help the stranded Orca, and when Ingrid got a glimpse of the whale’s mother Yin, she could hardly believe her luck.

It was Putita’s mother Yin, and her eldest brother Rua, who risked stranding themselves to get closer. Word spread quickly and within minutes a group of rescuers had managed to point the whale back out to sea.

The alarm was raised by Ruakaka resident Bob Slight and Ashley Osborne who had been sitting on a bench looking out to sea when they spotted a huge dorsal fin cruising south along the beach. Mr Slight said the whale had been at the back of the surf when it turned and swam straight towards the shore.

“It looked like he wasfoobaring the wave and then got ground out of the water,” Mr Slight said. “He was making way towards the shore and then the others showed up.”

For Mr Osborne, the sight of the struggling mammal was alarming.

“I’ve seen them in the surf before but it is the first time I’ve seen them stranded. They feel very helpless.”

Wheat spread quickly and within minutes a group had gathered to right the stranding whale.

Brian Challenger waded in and with the others managed to point the whale back out to sea.

“They could hear him whining through the waves. We had to battle the waves before we could get him up right. It was bloody hard!” Mr Osborne said.

If you see any whales anywhere around the Northland coast, the Orca Research Trust would like to hear from you on 0800 086 548.

HAPPY ENDING TO WHALE STRANDING

by Kristin Edge

The Northern Advocate

A German flasher rescued

FRIDAY

WHALESTRANDING

WEATHERKII

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Ph: 0800 868 548 (press 2)
or 09 435 6023
Fax: 09 435 6023
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WEATHERKII

HAPPY ENDING TO WHALE STRANDING

by Kristin Edge

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