

# Community

## Glen Williams youngster has a mission in life

By LISA BOONSTOPPEL-POT  
The Herald

Watching dolphins and killer whales perform at marine centres if for most, just an entertaining experience, but for Branwyn Williams of Georgetown, witnessing the killer whales gave her a mission.

Ten-year-old Branwyn has dedicated herself to helping whales and dolphins and for her commitment, she has been nationally recognized by Owl Magazine, a magazine highlighting wildlife and environmental issues for youth.

It all began two years ago when Branwyn and her family travelled to Seaworld in Florida and got their first live sight of trained killer whales in action.

"I really liked them," said Branwyn, who began collecting whale paraphernalia and doing projects for school on the aquatic species.

As her collection and knowledge grew about whales, so did her concern. She decided to join Greenpeace, an international organization dedicated to preserving wildlife, the Whale Museum on San Juan Island near Seattle and adopted a killer whale on her birthday.

The adoption cost \$25 and helps the adopted whale survive in its natural environment. Branwyn's whale is from Puget Sound and named Princess Angeline. The whale belongs to the J-Pod (whales travel in pods comprised of family members) and is among several pods located in the Sound.

Branwyn's interest in whales soon spread to encompass dolphins after she and her family watched television documentaries where dolphins were unnecessarily killed in the drift nets

fishermen use to capture tuna.

Her concern led her to take action most youths her age wouldn't even consider. She trekked to local grocery stores, including Loblaws and Miracle Mart, asked their managers for the address of their headquarters and then drafted a letter, informing them of the dangers tuna fishing is causing dolphins. She urged the stores to market 'dolphin safe' tuna products. Starkist does have such a product.

She also stuck dolphin safe tuna information sheets in the stores to inform the public about the issue. The pamphlets were supplied by Greenpeace.

But she didn't stop there. After learning from Greenpeace that Japanese fishermen account for much of the drift net tuna fishing, she wrote the Japanese government begging for change in her commitment to stop the senseless death of dolphins in these nets.

Although the Japanese government didn't answer her, a few grocery stores did thank her for expressing her concern. Loblaws revealed it's intentions to provide dolphin safe tuna products.

After Branwyn had accumulated an extensive amount of information about Orca's and dolphins, she read in Owl magazine (of which she is a subscriber) about an environmental competition they were holding.

"I thought if I could get in the magazine, something would really be done about it," said Branwyn who was one of six winners in the national competition. Her profile and a brief biography were included under the caption "Whale of a Time" on the magazine's 1991 Hoot Club award winners page.

For her achievement,

representatives from the magazine will present Branwyn with an award at her school, Harrison Public, on January 30, in front of her peers.

Branwyn appreciates all the attention she can muster towards the dolphin and whale situation. She's already had an effect on her close school friends who've decided to stop eating regular tuna products and to adopt a killer

whale.

Branwyn's own commitment to the project is impressive. For two years, she's maintained a steady interest in the subject, something that impresses her father, David Williams.

"She's persevered with the subject all by herself. She initiated it all and needed no push," he said.

It appears from Branwyn's future ambitions that she'll continue to pursue knowledge about

these aquatic mammals as she intends to be a marine biologist.

"I want to learn more about them, especially killer whales and that's what biologists do - they study and try to communicate with the whales."

If she decides not to become a marine biologist, she'd like to be a whale trainer. But no matter what her future career may be, she vows to always support whales and dolphins.



### High school artists

Emily Tabuchi is one of the eight Georgetown District High School OAC art students putting on their own art show at the school. Opening night was Wednesday at the high school and the show continued through Friday during school hours. Emily, who is an

aspiring fashion designer and plans to attend the Ontario College of Art next year, calls this acrylic on canvas painting Pomegranate. Each artist had eight works on display. (Herald photo)

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