

May 20, 2022

Health and Welfare Assessment of Tokitae (also known as Lolita), killer whale housed at Miami Seaquarium, Miami-Dade County, Florida.

Report of James McBain, DVM retired, and Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD
(Biographical statements below)

At the invitation of Friends of Lolita, a non-profit organization formed by Pritam Singh, we personally examined Tokitae on Friday, May 13 and Saturday, May 14. During our two days at Miami Seaquarium, we conducted a health and welfare assessment of Tokitae (Toki.)

In the course of our assessment, we reviewed the medical records of Toki's health and behavior including the various medications she has received during the period from 2016 to the present, in addition to speaking with her medical and husbandry care staff to answer any questions we had. During the two days we were there we also observed her condition including her behavior during enrichment sessions and also while she was not engaged in enrichment behaviors, noting her responses to interactions with her environment, the training and medical staff, and her pool mate, a male Pacific white-sided dolphin.

Most importantly, we noted that, in the period beginning in late December 2021 and continuing into March 2022, just prior to the change of management of the Miami Seaquarium (MSQ) from Palace Entertainment to MS Leisure (The Dolphin Company), Toki suffered from an acute illness evidenced through her blood examinations and behavior monitoring. This was a very serious health event. Bloodwork results and responses to treatment confirmed this illness and the ongoing subsequent recovery, but they did not specifically reveal the cause of this illness.

At this time, based on our examination over the two days we were present and our review of her medical records, Toki is demonstrating return toward normal hematology and chemistry values. We hope to see indications that her blood work has stabilized within the next few weeks. From our observation she is receiving constant and high-quality care from her MSQ veterinarian team. She remains on appropriate medication with the plan to discontinue the current therapy once blood values show stability. There is a low-grade chronic anemia that appears separate from the recent acute episode. Therapy and further diagnostic assessment will be

considered once Toki shows evidence of full recovery from her recent severe illness.

Our short-term plan going forward is that we will continue to monitor her health in consultation with her MSQ veterinarian and the consulting veterinarian. We will perform on-site health and behavior assessments on a regular basis and issue public updates on a monthly basis. We anticipate that we will maintain this schedule of assessment for the next few months.

During this period, we will consult with Friends of Lolita and MSQ to assist them in evaluating all approaches for Toki's continued welfare and quality of life. She is a unique animal with a unique story who is loved and cared for by the team at MSQ and loved by people the world over. She is now progressing nicely and we are committed to working collaboratively with her medical, husbandry, and oversight teams to ensure her continued welfare.

Respectfully submitted:


James McBain, DVM retired


Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD

Dr. James McBain, DVM, Retired Vice President of Corporate Veterinary Services for SeaWorld and Busch Garden Parks. is considered a pioneering expert in marine mammal veterinary medicine. His career at Sea World included serving as senior staff veterinarian corporate director of veterinarian medicine and Vice President of Corporate Veterinary Services. He has authored and coauthored more than 83 scientific papers, books and presentations on marine mammals and is recognized worldwide for his experience and expertise. Dr. McBain is seen by his peers as having fundamentally altered the way in which marine mammal medicine is practiced. Dr. McBain has served as a mentor and trained countless veterinarians seeking his specialized knowledge. In 2009 he received the Distinguished Veterinary Alumni Award for Outstanding Service from Washington State University.

Dr. Stephanie Norman, DVM, PhD, veterinary epidemiologist and wildlife veterinarian, received her DVM from Texas A&M University; her Master of Science in epidemiology from the University of Washington, Seattle; and her PhD

in wildlife epidemiology from the University of California, Davis. She has been involved in the field of animal health, disease, and conservation for more than 20 years. Dr. Norman has extensive clinical and teaching experience, and has authored or co-authored more than 40 peer-reviewed scientific papers and reports. In addition, she has served as a wildlife epidemiologist for NOAA, National Marine Fisheries Service.