



RESCUER

8-year-old saves
his father's life

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THIS MAN

Is a 13-year-old girl

P3

Woman hands in lost \$3500

by Kristin Edge

If you found a bank envelope containing \$3500 cash, would you hand it to police?
An honest Whangarei Woolworths supermarket worker did.
Staff at Whangarei police station were amazed the cash was handed in.
And a visiting yachting enthusiast was delighted to have the money returned.
Property officer Amanda Beere was astonished to have the cash handed in.
"With all the doom and gloom it was amazing to have such a positive piece of news," Mrs Beere said.
"You would think there would be a temptation to keep it for some people, given the amount."
The money was left near a check-out at Whangarei's Woolworths last Wednesday. As soon as the staff member realised the money had been left behind she contacted the store manager.
A quick scour of the shop and the carpark by staff failed to find the owner.
Store manager Tim Harris said the cash was taken to the police straight away.
"The staff member was really surprised to find it and said if it was her money that was lost, she'd want someone to hand it in," Mr Harris said.
About 2pm the same day, an upset woman contacted Whangarei police.
The woman, known only as Sue, had visited Whangarei from Opua to stock up on items for her yacht before leaving for Vanuatu.
Her friend had told her not to bother notifying police because her money would be long gone, but she contacted police anyway.
"She called to report it lost and was heartbroken that she would never see it again. When I told her it had been handed in you can imagine her relief and disbelief," Mrs Beere said.
It's not the first display of honesty from a Whangarei resident when it comes to handing in large sums of money. Last year \$1000 cash was handed into the station.
The owner never reported it missing and the money was given back to the finder.
On Monday, another honest person had handed in \$100.
Mrs Beere does not underestimate the honesty of the public, the majority of whom do not adopt a "finders keepers" policy.
"The general perception out there is if you lose it, it's gone for good.
"But there are so many honest people out there."



FROM LEFT : Rescuers battled waves to free a stranded Orca, before he gave a flick of his tale and headed for the ocean leaving rescuers to celebrate. The fin in the background belongs to his mother, Yin.

PICTURES/MICHAEL CUNNINGHAM

HAPPY ENDING TO WHALE STRANDING

Whale's mum and brother surf in to try to help

by Kristin Edge

A tear of joy rolled down Ingrid Visser's face as a black and white Orca whale gave one last flick of its tail and swam off from Ruakaka Beach.
The experienced whale watcher and Tutukaka-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.
There was a round of cheers and clapping from the the crowd, which included Department of Conservation staff, police and residents who had watched the rescue from the beach.
The crowd had watched on with some apprehension as two other Orcas, responding to Putita's distressed calls, surfed in waves perilously close to shore.
It was Putita's mother Yin, and his older brother Rua, who risked stranding themselves to get closer.
But it was a whale tale that had a happy ending.
At 4.18pm a group of rescuers managed to push Putita to safety. The whale had been beached for nearly two-and-a-half-hours.
The relieve for Miss Visser was evident.
"I got the call there was a stranded Orca and when I got down here I knew straight away who it was. I've known this guy since he was a kid," she said.
"His mum and brother were sitting out there waiting for him. I know all of these whales ... they



HELPING HAND: Whale expert Ingrid Visser clings to the dorsal fin of stranded orca whale Putita while other rescuers help at Ruakaka Beach yesterday.

are my whanau. It doesn't get any better than this."
Miss Visser said it was not the first time Putita had stranded and he had previously been rescued from Mangawhai.
He was a great hunter and may have been catching stingrays in the surf when he got into the shallow water yesterday and struck trouble, she said.
The alarm was raised by

Ruakaka residents 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 surfed in on the wave and then got grounded and was lying on his side," Mr

Slight said. "He was making squeaky noise 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 never stranded. They just seem helpless."
Word spread quickly and within minutes a group had gathered to right the struggling whale.

Brian Challenor waded in and with the others managed to point the whale back out to sea.
"We could hear him whining distress signals. We had to battle the waves before we could get him up right. It was bloody hard," Mr Challenor said.
■ If you see orca anywhere around the New Zealand coast, the Orca Research Trust would like to hear from you on 0800 SEE ORCA

German flasher rescued

by Kristin Edge

A German tourist lost in Northland sand dunes used the flash on his camera to attract the attention of rescuers using night vision goggles in a helicopter.
Houhora Police Senior Constable Chris Yarnnton said the 20-year-old was part of a group of international tourists who had gone to Cape Reinga and had stopped at the sand dunes at Te Paki on Monday.
But the German man became separated from the group and became lost about 6pm.
The alarm was raised at 10.15pm and police and local farmers scoured the area on quad bikes and four-wheel-drive vehicles.
Mr Yarnnton said he called in the Northland Electricity Rescue Helicopter and night vision goggles were used to find the man who had been activating the flash on his camera.
He was found uninjured about 1am yesterday in a remote area of Te Paki Station.

WEATHERKIWI



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