

Mark Berman

1925 – 13 May 2016

A gentle friend of marine mammals and the sea

It is hard to imagine not to meet Mark again, not to make jokes and laugh with him ever again as we did each year at the Seafood Expo in Brussels, at the booth of Friend of the Sea from where he literally fanned out with his dolphin saving message to the industry while I welcomed clients at the booth. Unfortunately I did not attend this year and thus missed the very last chance to see Mark again.

Mark had a special kind of humour by which we became friends. I respected him as an expert in marine conservation and I sense the loss his death must mean for the Earth Island Institute and the marine mammal friends in general. But beyond that, I liked Mark as a person, and he will stay in my heart.

Billo Heinzpeter Studer



Parting words from the Earth Island Institute

Mark Berman had been an integral part of the California based Earth Island Institute and its International Marine Mammal Project for more than 25 years, and we will all sorely miss his friendship and dedication.

Mark had chronic intestinal ailments over the years, and unexpectedly needed surgery on May 11. A series of post-operative complications compromised his lungs. The inability of his lungs to adequately oxygenate his blood led to cascading shutdowns of his major or-

gans. Despite every effort by Mark's doctors, he was not able to survive.

Mark had dedicated his life to helping whales and dolphins, and elephants and sharks as well, with particular emphasis on opposing captivity for these wonderful animals. He succeeded in many important victories for marine mammals such as his legislation in South Carolina banning all captivity for dolphins, his successful efforts to block imports of live exotic dolphins into the US, and his numerous demonstrations against captivity all around the US and the world, leading to closures of captive facilities and scrapping of plans for new ones.



Mark Berman with Patricia Forkan and Dave Phillips of the Earth Island Institute in front of the collection of Dolphin Safe tuna cans (photo :EII).

Mark's intense work ethic, numerous phone calls, and dogged determination led to his nickname of "The Bermanator", a title that made him smile.

Without Mark, we never would have taken on the historic Keiko effort. He was part of every facet of Keiko's odyssey from Mexico to Oregon to Iceland to Norway. He had still been sending out Keiko packets to children up to his last days.

Mark also worked closely with Lawrence Makili in the Solomon Islands to negotiate a successful end to the dolphin hunts. Lawrence continues to make progress there in spite of numerous challenges.

Mark also served as Director of our International Dolphin Safe Tuna Monitoring Program, ensuring tuna was caught without harm to dolphins. He traveled tirelessly, especially in Asia, to monitor canneries, and oversee our monitoring in other parts of the globe. He ap-

peared regularly at tuna conferences and fish marketing events, persuading companies to become Dolphin Safe. Under his watch, our Dolphin Safe Program has grown to more than 550 tuna companies around the world, all pledged to fish for tuna in ways that do not harm dolphins.

Our hearts go out to Mark's family, his sons Bennett and Nat, former wife Yowadee, and two sisters Ellen and Lynn. Mark will be dearly missed by us all. And thanks for all your efforts to keep Mark's spirit alive and his life's work moving ahead.

David Phillips, Mark J. Palmer, Mary Jo Rice, Laura Bridgeman, and our Dolphin Team at the International Marine Mammal Project, Earth Island Institute

savedolphins.eii.org/news/entry/immp-and-dolphins-lose-mark-berman-dear-friend-and-colleague

www.animals24-7.org/2016/05/18/marine-mammal-activist-mark-the-bermanator-berman-63/



Mark's photo of Keiko in Norway.



Mark with Keiko in Norway (photo: Ell).