

Friday, November 13, 2009

TIME'S RUNNING OUT TO NAME THE BELUGA CALF!

November 22nd is the deadline to submit your entry at visitvanaqua.org

Vancouver, BC – The Vancouver Aquarium has invited Canadians to submit name suggestions for the newest beluga calf. The public have been challenged to find a name from the Inuit language, Inuktitut, to reflect the Arctic origin of beluga whales (helpful info is available online to learn more about Inuit culture and language). **Submission deadline is November 22.**

At one week into the Name the Baby Beluga contest, the Aquarium has received over 1800 entries! Here are just a few of the name suggestions received to date:

- **Anana** or **Ana**: short for *aananaujuk* meaning "beautiful" and "pleasant" in Inuktitut
- **Borealis**: in honour of the baby beluga's mother, Aurora
- **Qannik**: short for *qanniktuq* meaning "snowflake" in Inuktitut
- **Miki**: short for *mikijuuq* meaning "little" in Inuktitut
- **iPod** is a play on words since a group of belugas is known as a pod

A judging panel will shortlist the Top Five name suggestions, then Aquarium members will have the opportunity to vote for their favourite and select the calf's name. On **December 2**, we'll announce the name of the baby beluga! To get in on the voting action, please contact membership@vanaqua.org or call 604-659-3526.

The lucky person who suggests the winning name receives the grand prize: A one-of-a-kind beluga encounter, plus an annual family membership to the Vancouver Aquarium and a \$200 gift certificate for the Gift Shop just in time for the holidays. Four secondary prizes for the remaining shortlisted entries include choice of a family membership or animal encounter for four.

The best way to choose a name is to get to know the beluga calf – visit the Vancouver Aquarium or see her anytime on the Aquarium's 24-hour Beluga Cam at www.vanaqua.org/belugacam. We've also created an amazing video of the calf's life so far to help you get to know her. You'll find that video on our **Name The Baby Beluga contest** page at visitvanaqua.org

The baby beluga was born June 7, 2009 at 3:39pm to her mother 21-year-old Aurora. They live in the Canada's Arctic habitat with two other belugas, 14-year-old Qila and 1-year-old Tiqa.

About Inuit

A large majority of the people who live in Canada's Arctic are Inuit. They live in 53 communities across Canada's Arctic: the Inuvialuit region of the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, the Nunavik region of northern Quebec and the Nunatsiavut region in northern Labrador. Thousands of other Canadians have also made the Arctic their home.

About Inuit Language of Inuktitut

Inuit means “the people” in Inuktitut. It is their traditional oral language and their official language. For thousands of years, Inuit from Greenland, Canada, Alaska and Siberia have used Inuktitut and its many regional dialects to pass stories and legends from generation to generation. Inuktitut syllabary – symbols that represent words or syllables – is used mainly in Canada, especially in Nunavut and Nunavik. The Latin alphabet is used in other parts of Canada, Alaska and Greenland.

About the Vancouver Aquarium

The Vancouver Aquarium is a global leader in connecting people to our natural world, and a self-supporting, non-profit association dedicated to effecting the conservation of aquatic life through display and interpretation, conservation practices, education, research, and direct action. Learn more at www.vanaqua.org

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