

The Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo is a non-profit organization whose purpose is to support the Big Bear Alpine Zoo by inspiring understanding, respect and environmentally responsible action for the conservation of wildlife and wildlife habitat through: public education, volunteer support, fundraising and development, and key project financial support.

The Big Bear Alpine Zoo is owned and operated by the Big Bear Valley Recreation and Park District of San Bernardino County. The zoo is an alpine wildlife sanctuary and rehabilitation center. For those animals that cannot be released, the park provides them a "Home for Life".



Staff at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo prepare for the arrival of two Snow Leopard cubs

Two new, and very special residents will soon make their home at our Zoo. Asha and Shanti, who just turned two years old are expected to arrive in Big Bear in mid-June. They will be coming to us from the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle, Washington, where they were born in May of 2012. As we prepare their new home, the staff at the Woodland Park Zoo has made it clear that we should never underestimate Asha and Shanti. We graciously thank the Woodland Park Zoo for the following text and photos, used with their permission:

"Though both snow leopard sisters are blind in one eye, they have developed into playful huntresses. We have watched them overcome their obstacles, and soon, we will watch them become fully independent and move out on their own. The snow leopard sisters have just wrapped up their pre-shipment veterinary exams, and the countdown to their spring departure begins. Though we do not yet have an official last day, we're heading into the final weeks for the girls at Woodland Park Zoo before they move on to their new home at Big Bear Alpine Zoo in California. You'll want to plan a visit soon to say farewell to the tenacious two-some who survived a rocky start and have gone on to amaze and inspire us all. Born May 2, 2012, Asha and Shanti were celebrated with an outpouring of joy from the community—the announcement of their birth remains our most read blog post of all time. It only took a few weeks, however, for the challenges to emerge, (continued on page 3.....)



Asha and Shanti at 3 months old. Photo by Ryan Hawk/Woodland Park Zoo.

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All you have to do is visit our website at

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/newsletter/>



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Kathy Greenwood, FOBBAZ President

Over the past fifteen years or so we have all dreamt of the day when we could make the statement that a new zoo was on the way. Well, that dream is now a reality----at last!

On March 25, 2014, the County Board of Supervisors voted for the zoo relocation project. Due to budget constraints, the zoo footprint has been reduced to approximately five acres. Although we all wish it were the whole 10.4 acres it makes sense to start with a smaller size which fits the current budget.

I say "start" because the Friends now have the opportunity and the challenge to raise additional funds which would potentially allow the entire acreage to be developed. At the very least we could make it possible for the county to enhance the present engineering plans to include a few items on the wish list, or should I say "dream list" i.e. state of the art medical equipment or a waterfall for the grizzlies.

To accomplish this we have engaged the services of a marketing company which we feel has the proper credentials to guide us through this complicated fundraising effort.

As of this writing, the county is in the process of selecting the firm which will develop the plans. The next step will be to select a contractor and break ground next spring. If all goes well (of course weather is always an issue) the new zoo will open in mid to late 2016.

Once the ball gets rolling, things will be moving pretty quickly and we have high hopes that we will touch the hearts (and pocketbooks) of many, many people who understand the importance of providing our precious animals with a new home.

To quote Debbie Richardson, the curator: "These animals have already gone through so much just to survive. They are now part of our family and we treat them as such. The least we can do is to give them the best life possible." That is our goal, to assist the county in providing the best facility possible.

For those of you who haven't had the chance of visiting the zoo recently you should try to plan a visit. Not only is it a time for spring flowers but we are all anticipating the arrival of our two Snow Leopard sisters, Asha and Shanti who will be unveiled to the public on June 28th. Their enclosure is almost finished and was intentionally designed to be an example of what the new zoo's enclosures will look like.



Grading and rock installation have begun in the area which will soon be home to the two snow leopards. Photo courtesy of Bill Young/FOBBAZ

Thanks to these companies with big hearts for the following:

- **OMYA Lucerne Valley mine for the mountain of rocks,**
- **Leoco Fence Co. for the severely discounted fencing,**
- **Porter Paving for yards and yards of paving material plus the transporting and placement of the rocks.**

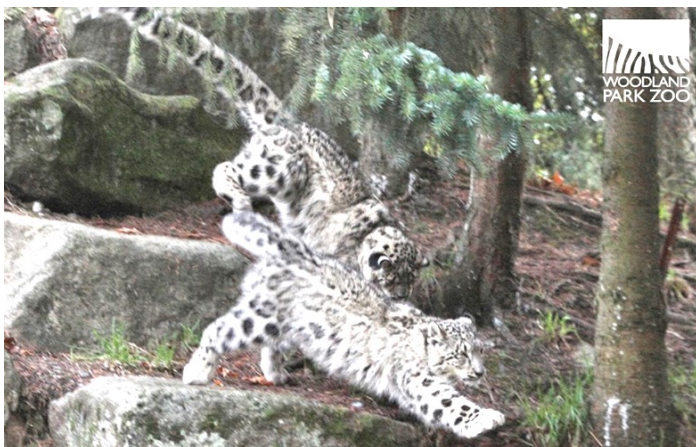
We also had a golf tournament for the Snow Leopards in February. Again, we had the generous support of many people. The major sponsors were:

Subaru, OMYA, Porter Paving, Supervisor James Ramos, Palm Springs Motors, Tim Wood and Michael Perry, Mitsubishi Cement, Big Bear Sports Camp, KBHR Radio, Webb and Assoc. Lance Ray and Coldwell Banker.

All of the people and companies who came together to help make a home for our new girls demonstrate how much our community cares. Now we are on to the next big adventure; to help the San Bernardino County Special Districts and the Recreation and Park District in building a new "Home for Life" for the animals. With all of us pulling together we can do it.

Two Snow Leopards coming to Big Bear (cont. from page 1)

First with the loss of their brother and littermate, and then with a diagnosis of a relatively rare congenital eye anomaly. The girls both exhibited multiple ocular coloboma in which the eye stops growing before it is fully developed. This left the girls each with functional vision only in their left eye, and ultimately each had their right eye removed to prevent infection and future complications. But has that stopped them from growing up into active, spirited leopards? Not a chance!



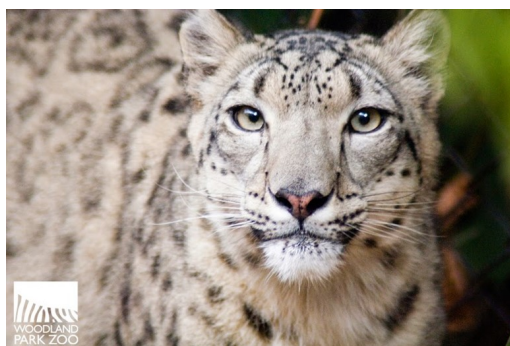
A young Asha and Shanti on the chase. Photo by Dennis Dow/Woodland Park Zoo

Thanks to the extraordinary care provided by the zoo's keeper and veterinary staff, volunteer veterinary ophthalmologist Dr. Tom Sullivan with the Animal Eye Clinic Seattle, and, of course, experienced snow leopard momma, Helen, Asha and Shanti have thrived here at Woodland Park Zoo. As the girls are maturing and have grown independent of their mother, it is now time to find them a new home.

Working with the Species Survival Plan (SSP), a collaborative effort to manage species popula

tions across conservation zoos, we found a new home that will fit Asha and Shanti's unique needs. At Big Bear Alpine Zoo, which is known for its wildlife rehabilitation program, Asha and Shanti will be able to remain together and continue to receive specialized medical care.

More changes are in store, as the girls' father, Tom, will be heading to Oklahoma City Zoo in the coming weeks, another move recommended by the SSP to keep the genetic diversity of the snow leopard population always moving and mixing. Remaining here will be Helen, the cubs' mother, who will receive a new mate through the SSP with the hope that they will breed in the near future. Helen has raised two sets of babies already and has proven capable of nurturing cubs through even the toughest obstacles. Endangered and elusive in the wild, snow leopards are hard to track and harder to study. Working with the [Snow Leopard Trust](#), a Woodland Park Zoo [Partner for Wildlife](#), we have seen breakthroughs in research methodologies in the snow leopards' native Central Asia, where techniques like motion-sensor cameras and radio collars are shedding new light on the range, behavior and health of snow leopard populations. As we learn more about the health of these animals thanks to research and care in zoo settings, we can apply these two tracks of knowledge to better understand, and ultimately, better protect these disappearing predators."



Helen—photo by Tiana Klineburger/Woodland Park Zoo.



Photos of Asha and Shanti getting their first exam at two weeks of age. Photos by Ryan Hawk/Woodland Park Zoo

THE NEW ZOO LAYOUT



This is the rendering of what the new Big Bear Alpine Zoo will look like. As mentioned by Kathy Greenwood, FOBBAZ President, plans have been scaled back to include only the land that is on the west side of Rathbun creek. This will still provide almost double the space that we have at the current zoo.

Clubview Drive is shown on the left side of this drawing; Moonridge Road is at the upper edge and on the far right, and does not directly border the new zoo.

This undertaking is the culmination of years of planning. We are ramping up our fundraising efforts in order to make this new zoo the best it can be. If you would like to donate to the cause, visit us at:

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/help-build-the-new-zoo/>

Is It a Big Cat or a Small Cat?

Bill Young, President Emeritus

Did you ever get into a discussion about whether Shakespeare the bobcat, or Cascade the Mt. Lion, or Ghost the house mouser is a Big cat or a Small cat? I have had those discussions, and it usually happened with a teenager who just studied Felines in school and is armed to the teeth with facts. J



Is it a big cat or a small cat?: There are various factors which are used to define big cats from small cats. Size is important in making the Big vs Small classification, but doesn't always work. Most of these characteristics have exceptions to the "Size" rule. The shape of pupil is often quoted as a trait which separates the two classes. Small cats usually have pupils which are vertical slits under bright light. Big cats have round pupils.

However, the Mt. Lion and the lynx are small cats which negate this rule... both have round pupils. It is interesting to note that in the darkness, small cat's pupils are round too in order to gather more light. One evolution theory says that big cats (lions and tigers, etc) hunt by day and have circular pupils, while smaller cats hunt by night and have slit-like pupils. The small cat's vertical pupils help them endure the bright daylight by restricting the amount of light that penetrates the lens. Lions are less concerned with this nighttime stuff and spend much of their time asleep.



Feeding position is another often quoted difference between large cats and small cats. The big cats tend to feed lying down; small cats feed standing up. The snow leopard is the exception here, it feeds standing up like a small cat.



There is one thing which clearly differentiates large from small. There are no exceptions to this rule. All felines have a Hyoid bone which connects the tongue to the roof of the mouth. In big cats this function is flexible, while the hyoid of small cats is rigid.

It is this "hyoid apparatus" which allows big cats to roar, (and also prevents them from purring like a small cat). The 'purring' type of noise produced by big cats can only be made as they exhale, while small cats can purr during both inhale and exhale. Strangely however, the snow leopard has a flexible hyoid bone but doesn't roar... however it is most definitely a big cat by virtue of the flexible hyoid. Go figure. Here are some links to some interesting videos about big and small cats and purring:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pHZm52nvBB4&feature=em-sub&digest-vrecs> ... can you tell which is a big cat and which is a small cat?

http://www.liveleak.com/view?i=b45_1398206175 ... "Large cat" purring... notice that this Jag purrs only on the exhale, so the purring is interrupted.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-A6zLuXVJ4w> ... "Small cat" purring... small cat? 100lbs? Notice the purring is heard in both the inhale and exhale process.

<http://mentalfloss.com/article/12312/how-do-cats-purr> ... good layman's explanation of how "Small cats" purr. Have a look at the article's discussion of the "neural oscillator" that produces a purr...



We are on Facebook

www.facebook.com/bigbearzoo

FOBBAZ WELCOMES OUR NEWEST DOCENTS

The first docent class of 2014 finished in April. We congratulate and welcome:

- ◆ Nicole Kompaniez
- ◆ Brad Halvorson
- ◆ Camille Holsheimer
- ◆ Bonnie Kelso
- ◆ Sandy Tocalino
- ◆ Christy Jones (Christy is a former active docent who has taken the classes as a refresher—welcome back!)

Passings.....



When any animal at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo passes, it is extremely sad for the keepers and staff who work tirelessly every day to provide love, care, and clean enclosures for them. We all know that these animals would never have survived in the wild, and that their lives were both extended and enriched by the loving care they received at our Zoo. Still, it is difficult to say goodbye when their time comes. This year, we have lost four of our most beloved animals and, although we mourn their passing, we must reflect on the ways we impacted their lives as they, in turn, impacted ours.

NORMAN (TAZA) THE WOOD BISON

Norman was born at what was then called the Moonridge Animal Park in 1992. His mother was part of a small herd of Wood Bison that were on loan to us from the San Diego Zoo. An agreement was in place that would allow us to keep the first two calves born to this herd, and Taza was the first. Kiowa, an-



other male, was born shortly after. Not long after the birth of the two calves, the rest of the herd was transferred to a breeding facility in the Midwest, and then eventually transferred to a breeding program in Canada—leaving Taza and Kiowa as the only Wood Bison on display in the entire United States. When Kiowa passed away in 2012, Norman (as he was called by most people) was the only Wood Bison left in the U.S.

Many people mistakenly thought that the giant beast they became accustomed to seeing on the hill when they drove by the zoo was a buffalo, but it was stately Norman, the wood bison. Rain or shine, hot or cold weather, Norman was almost a fixture in his enclosure off of Moonridge Road. Kiowa was with us for 20 years, and Norman for 22. A wood bison in the wild seldom lives more than 15—20 years. To say they had a good life would be a huge understatement! As Norman got older, he developed arthritis, so Debbie (our curator) found special hay and herbal supplements to ease his pain. It worked well for quite a while. Norman weighed close to 2000 pounds, so he did have a lot of weight to carry around. Debbie and the keepers watched him closely to make sure he was not in pain, but one day he laid down and made no attempt to get up. Norman was surrounded by his keepers and was lovingly told by Curator Debbie to go find his brother Kiowa and his parents. We have a happy vision in our minds that Norman is happily running through a big field alongside his prestigious family. He will be greatly missed by the keepers and guests alike. Happy Trails big guy!

WAKIZA THE FEMALE GRAY WOLF

On April 7, 2014 we said goodbye to our beautiful Wakiza—mother of our 9 wolf pups. She had been suffering from complications of thyroid cancer and, after a wonderful 15 year life, she succumbed to her illness. She was surrounded by her keepers, who had been with her since she was a two week old pup. Humans seldom



get close to wolves in the wild, but our 3 adult wolves considered Debbie and Christy to be a part of their pack. Although they are definitely wild animals, a special bond developed between these wolves and these humans. The love was mutual and unmistakable.

In early 2009, Wakiza began showing signs of what we thought was a false pregnancy. At 9 years of age, she was almost certainly too old to breed—as was her 9 year old mate, Navarre. On April 9th, 2009, 9 year old Wakiza surprised us all by giving birth to 9 healthy wolf pups! Navarre and the 9 pups, along with our other adult female, Nova continue to inspire and amaze us all. *RIP, dear Wakiza.....*

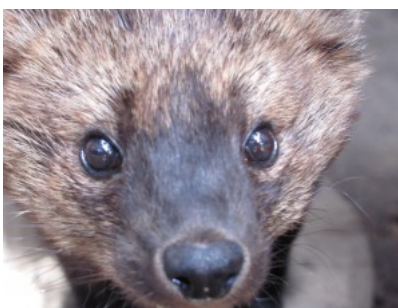
Passings.....continued from the previous page

Sienna was the only female kestrel at the zoo and she came from the American Wilderness Experience in Ontario Mills Mall when it closed down in the year 2000. She was born in 1997 and lived until 2014,



making her one of the oldest kestrels in captivity. Kestrels in the wild are thought to live only about 3 years, so we are pleased to have given her a long life in a loving environment. All of our kestrels have been imprinted on humans, and can not be released into the wild.

Clover, our 12 year old female fisher, succumbed to cancer this spring. She had been with us for 10 years. She was rescued from an animal breeder that had her for two years, but no longer wanted her. She was a very active animal and was often seen running back and forth in her enclosure in the



morning and evening. When she saw her keepers coming she always ran for the gate to get the treat she knew they always brought her.. She usually grabbed the treat and ran to her den to eat it in

the peace and quiet of her private sanctuary. She is missed by all of us.....



**Saturday
September 6, 2014**
9:30am to 5:00pm (rain or shine)
Big Bear Lake, California

19th Annual Run for the Grizzlies

Poker Run



LOCATION...We are back at
Chad's Place, 40824 W. Big Bear Blvd.



**Prizes – Raffle / Opportunity Drawings –
Silent Auctions - Chapter Challenge –
Vendors – BBQ – Live Music**

\$25 Rider and \$20 Co-Rider - both include Poker Run Pins & T-Shirt

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC – ALL MOTORCYCLES WELCOME

Registration Options: Day of the Event from 9:30 am to 12 pm
OR
register on our website at www.RunForTheGrizzlies.com

For more info call 909-878-4200 or email info@fobbaz.org
All proceeds benefit the Big Bear Alpine Zoo Grizzly Bears



Sponsor:



Event presented by:

For more information on these and our other special events for 2014, please visit our website at:

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/calendar/>

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Saving Wildlife Since 1959

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 \$30 Advance, \$35 Day of Show
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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 2014

ON THE BEACH AT SWIM BEACH OUTDOOR AMPHITHEATER – BIG BEAR LAKE, CA
Music 1:00pm to 5:00pm • Gates Open at 11:00am

WORLD CLASS MUSIC • FINE FOOD • LOCAL ARTISANS • FESTIVAL SEATING
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 MUSIC PRODUCED BY THE OPEN SKY MUSIC FOUNDATION, INC.



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Visit Us on the Web

Discover More

Before your next visit to the Big Bear Alpine Zoo, browse our website at

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/>

Learn what's new at the park and when the next Special Event is scheduled. You can read about some of the animals and find out why they are with us.

Also background information of the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo can be reviewed, and you can read details regarding the relocation efforts to move the park.

Membership

Has your membership lapsed or would you like to join as a new member?

You can renew or become a new member online at <http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/membership/> or call 909 878-4200

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Publisher.....FOBBAZ

Yes! I'm wild about the BIG BEAR ALPINE ZOO

☐ Would like to donate \$_____ for relocation

☐ Would like to donate \$_____ for general use

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/donate-now/>

☐ Would like to adopt an animal for \$25

I want to adopt: _____
(name of bird or animal)

For: _____
(name of person)

<http://friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org/adopt-an-animal/>

Your Name: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Email Paw Prints Newsletter: _____ YES _____ NO

Paid by: ☒ Check (to FOBBAZ) ☒ MasterCard ☒ Visa

Account #: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Signature: _____

Mail form & check to:
FOBBAZ, PO Box 2557, Big Bear City, CA 92314

It's Springtime, and there are lots of new babies at the zoo....

