



# PAW PRINTS

A  
Publication  
by  
Friends  
of the  
Moonridge  
Zoo a non-profit  
organization

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The Friends of the Moonridge Zoo is a nonprofit organization whose purpose is to support the Moonridge Animal Park through (1) educating the public regarding the treatment, protection, and conservation of wildlife, (2) recruiting and coordinating zoo volunteers and (3) fund-raising.

The Moonridge Animal Park is operated by the Big Bear Recreation and Park District of San Bernardino County. The park is an alpine wildlife rehabilitation center. For those animals that cannot be released, they are provided a "Home for Life" in the animal park.

## Girl Scout Troup #1126's Silver Award Project

Our SPECIAL Girl Scout Troop #1126 from Rancho Cucamonga returned to the zoo on Saturday, June 2nd to deliver their special projects that they had been busily working on for some time for their troop's Silver Award. Don, our curator, Len Backus, and Diane were there to welcome them back and accept their "gifts" to the zoo. These amazing girls and their leaders, Heidi and Diana, came in carrying two very large, GORGEOUS, display cases for our Education Center - one at a time, because 7 girls and 2 leaders could not possibly carry in two of them at once! The girls had made an animal track display case and an animal scat display case, complete with VERY authentic track and scat molds accompanied by beautiful photographs of our special animals - all very artistically and creatively done by the girls themselves! To say we were completely blown away by these beautiful "works of art" is an understatement! Absolute museum quality...no doubt about it...and we are VERY PROUD of the girls for all of their hard work and long hours. A true labor of love for our zoo and our animals indeed! From the very moment they were setting up those beautiful display cases, patrons were right there admiring their work...proving to be an instant popular and valuable educational tool! And to make it even more special, the leaders told us that the girls raised the money for this Silver Award project by sponsoring and putting on two separate Father/Daughter dinner dances in May - with a total of



1,000 people attending! WOW!!! These talented girls TOTALLY ROCK! And....as if this was not enough...they proudly came in carrying SEVEN beautifully handmade owl nesting boxes too!! AND...they came back the next day to help make a whole bunch of groovy enrichment gifts for the animals! We cannot find enough words to begin to thank them enough for their special love of our animals and the Moonridge Animal Park! SO....next time you are at the zoo, make a special stop in the Ed Center to look at these WONDERFUL new additions.

"Our POP is REALLY SPECIAL"! And with this thought in mind, our African pygmy hedgehogs, Joey & Ross, and Phoebe & Karen, along with Mama Grace set upon planning a very special luncheon to honor their fabulous Dad, Will, to celebrate Father\*s Day on June 17th! The luncheon menu featured Daddy Will\*s most favorite food: mealworms and crickets....and they were gaily wrapped in specially decorated tubes with hearts and Will\*s name on them as "FATHER OF THE YEAR at Moonridge Animal Park"! As a large excited crowd gathered around the lawn area at the zoo, Diane held a beaming Will, as his proud children and Mama Grace enthusiastically surrounded him. As Will excitedly gobbled down

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## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

I was born in Toledo, Ohio with my twin brother. In my earliest years, my grandfather was very involved with us. It was from Grandpa that I first learned to love animals. He had a small, working farm and we loved to visit there. I lived in Toledo until high school when I went to Connecticut to boarding school and then to California for college. I received my Bachelor's degree in Sociology from the University of California at Santa Barbara. While at UCSB, I adopted my first cat. I have had at least one cat in my life ever since.

In 1976, my daughter, Erica, was born. In 1977, we moved to Simi Valley in pursuit of gainful employment. In Simi Valley, I had my first farm. I raised a few goats, chickens, and lots of rabbits on my several acre property. In 1983, I received an Associate degree in Animal Science from Moorpark College. It was a program that emphasized domestic animals with a particular emphasis on horses.

In 1989, we moved to Westlake Village. I had been working for Hughes Aircraft since 1986 and worked there until 1994 when I began working for the City of Thousand Oaks in their theatre as a lighting technician and master electrician.

In 2000, I bought a home in Big Bear. I was planning to retire and I've always wanted to retire in the mountains. I joined the Friends of the Moonridge Zoo in 2001. I was a part-timer in Big Bear until February of 2002 when I moved up permanently. I joined the Friends of the Moonridge Zoo in 2001 but I became a docent in June of 2002 and the rest, as they say, is history. In the summer of 2002, I decided I didn't have enough room for animals at my house and moved to my present home on Shay Road in the "horsey" part of town. Now I have more than enough room for a large family that consists of 20 chickens, 7 cats, 6 goats, 5 llamas, 4 dogs, 2 horses (plus 2 boarders), 1 rabbit, 1 guinea pig, 3 "loaner" burros (you all have read about our 3 wonderful burros in previous issues), and 2 beautiful granddaughters, Kyra, 8 and Athena, 5.

I guess my plan to retire didn't exactly pan out. I'm busier now than I ever was when I worked full-time, but I wouldn't change a thing. I love working for the Friends and I adore all my animals (those at my house and those at the Zoo). It's a great life!

*Betsy Henke*



*President Betsy Henke*



### Cats like Listerine, Who Knew?

By Diane Roberts

Here is a special little enrichment story Diane Robert's food enrichment program: Our smaller felines (Serval, Bobcats and Canadian lynx) in the zoo have been thoroughly enthralled with various boxes sprayed with different scents like Listerine (who knew?!) and rose and coconut oil filled with bison fur and catnip. They all rub and rub and rub all over these specially scented "gifts" for long periods of time and it is ALWAYS a BIG HIT with the animals, patrons, and staff as they watch all of this playfulness taking place!

As you know, our gorgeous snow leopard, Ivan, recently went to the big Zoo in the sky. Ivan was generally not interested in "enrichment items"... but when Diane and the Keepers gave him a special made box covered with their unusual concoction of Listerine, Bison fur, and catnip, Ivan became very active and started rolling his face and entire body all over the box... you could tell that from the glassy look in his eyes, he was definitely happy with Diane's efforts.





his special lunch, his sons and daughters and Mama Grace joined right in and a special Father\*s Day feast was had by all! A special thank you to LaVonne for her loving assistance in keeping our excited little hedgehogs in tow! They really wanted to go into the crowd and personally honor ALL the DADS that were there at the zoo that day! What a FUN party, indeed!

**NEAT, NEW ADDITIONS TO OUR ZOO FAMILY:**

A 3 year old Snowy Owl named Cyrus from Akron, Ohio has recently joined us. He was born with an S-shaped bone in his wing that has rendered him flightless. He is a TOTAL BEAUTY and has a very special personality and we are beyond thrilled to have him here with us! It is a definite must that you come by and see him and welcome him to our family!

On June 16th, the day before Father\*s Day, one of our female Fallow Deer, Taffy, gave birth to a sweet and most handsome little baby boy! Snickers is the father, but being the "rogue" he is, A VERY PROUD Grandpa Adam and Mama Taffy are looking after their special little guy! He is doing exceedingly well and as you can imagine, he is well loved by all!!!.....especially his Grandpa Adam! We have observed Grandpa Adam and his sweet little grandson lovingly curled up together on numerous occasions...each time we go and check on them! Tender and special moments indeed!

And....more fun "baby" stories.....Miss Penny, the delightful female baby gray fox whom keeper Jenna has been raising at home, and the two baby red foxes, Fire



and Pippin, have been introduced recently to our gray foxes, Jorga and Celeste, for short periods of time. And...as you can imagine...it is like one wild and fun "playdate" ...for sure! LOTS of tail wagging, jumping, rolling, and playing all over each other, interspersed with joyful fox yelps. You must drop by and see this FUN FEST in person and you will have instant giggles...for sure!

And last...but certainly not least...a special little enrichment story to end with: our felines (serval, bobcats and Canadian lynx) in the zoo have been thoroughly enthralled with their various boxes sprayed with different scents like Listerine (who knew?!) and rose and coconut oil filled with bison fur and catnip. They all rub and rub and rub all over these specially scented "gifts" for long periods of time and it is ALWAYS a BIG HIT with the animals....and the patrons and staff as they excitedly watch all of this playfulness taking place! Up to this point, Ivan our GORGEOUS snow leopard, had not been real interested in his "enrichment items". BUT recently, when we put a specially made box sprayed with different scents... yes, including the Listerine...and filled with Bison fur and catnip...in his enclosure, he TOTALLY CAME "ALIVE" and to the delight and awe of everyone there, he began rubbing his big beautiful face and body all over the box! WOW....what an amazing and special moment watching our elegant and handsome Ivan being so playful!



## Don Richardson, Curator Extraordinaire

Don Richardson joined the Moonridge Animal Park as curator in December 1993, following 13 years at the Los Angeles Zoo. While serving as a senior keeper at the L.A. Zoo, he was responsible for South American primates, worldwide hoof stock, and the zoo's entire North American animal collection. His professional background includes 23 years of zoo keeping management.

At Moonridge Animal Park, Mr. Richardson has initiated numerous improvements and programs. Music in the Zoo, an evening of animal talks and strolling musicians; and Flashlight Tours, narrated visits with the parks nocturnal inhabitants, are among the activities that Richardson has introduced for the enjoyment and education of park visitors. He has added several new animals during his tenure, including fishers a rare type of weasel that is rapidly disappearing from its natural home in the alpine forests of the Sierra Nevada. Two snow leopards enjoyed their time at the zoo until they make their departure to the big zoo in the sky, and three grizzly bears are also among the many notable inhabitants who make their home at Moonridge Animal Park.

Under Mr. Richardson's direction, facilities at Moonridge Animal Park have undergone major renovation and landscaping improvements to benefit animals and humans alike. He has established an on-site medical center to aid in animal care and rehabilitation, along with an Education Center to provide a richer learning experience for park visitors.

For nearly 30 years, Mr. Richardson has been active in emergency veterinary care. He is licensed by the State of California as a Registered Veterinary Technician, and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in biology (animal ecology) from California State University, Los Angeles. His chief undergraduate study was taxonomy and systemics.

Mr. Richardson is a member of the American Zoo Association, the American Association of Zoo Keepers, the National Wildlife Federation, the American Institute of Biological Sciences, and has served on the New World Primate Taxon Advisory Group.



### Friends of the Moonridge Zoo

42001 Big Bear Blvd., Suite 3  
Big Bear Lake, CA 92315 • 909-878-4200

*Mailing Address:*

PO Box 2557 • Big Bear City, CA 92314

*Hours:*

Office Open Tuesday - Saturday  
10 am - 6 pm





# Did You Know?

- **The Bald Eagle** builds a large stick nest (sometimes weighing more than **1 ton**) that is usually about 6 feet in diameter and over 6 feet tall.
- **Grizzly Bears** love fruit. In midsummer, when berries are ripe, they may eat **200,000 berries a day**. Their diet is 80 percent vegetation.
- **Bats are not blind**. They have ordinary vision. They eat 600 mosquitoes per hour! So if you don't want mosquitoes, bring in the bats!
- **Tarantulas are essentially blind**, and find food by vibration. They wait at the entrance of their habitat for suitable prey to lumber past. Tarantulas don't spin webs but line their holes or burrows with silk. Most tarantulas stay inside their hiding places and only come out in late afternoon or at night.
- **Often a Black Bear is not black!** Their color ranges from black, chocolate brown, to cinnamon, to nearly white. In the same litter the Black Bear cubs can be in different color phases. Usually they have a patch of white on the chest, and the face is always brown. That brown bear you saw was probably a Black Bear!
- **The 150 animals at Moonridge Animal Park eat the following each year:**

14,600 pounds of meat	13,500 pounds of omnivore/herbivore food
5,475 pounds of fish	2,920 bails of alfalfa and Sudan hay
3,650 pounds of produce	51,100 chicks
	3,300 pounds of chicken scratch
- **Four of the top ten stinkiest animals** in the world live at Moonridge Animal Park. They are the skunk, the fisher, the beaver, and the fox.
- **An adult Grizzly Bear female can weigh 300 to 500 pounds**. Male Grizzlies can weigh between 400-600 pounds. The bears may reach up to 8 feet in height. Grizzly cubs weigh only **12 to 14 ounces at birth**.
- **Animals come to live at the Moonridge Animal Park** because they have been orphaned, injured, imprinted by man, confiscated by the Department of Fish and Game, or are a threatened/endangered species. Today, Moonridge Animal Park is home to 153 animals representing 83 species.
- **Moonridge Animal Park is one of two Alpine Zoos in the United States**. About 95 percent of the resident animals represent species indigenous to an alpine or sub-alpine environment. Most of the resident animals are comfortable year round in their alpine surroundings.
- **The oldest bird** at Moonridge Animal Park is named "Old Man". He is a Golden Eagle, whose estimated age is between 65 and 72 years. "Old Man" was born in the 1930's, and entered captivity as an adult after being shot. He was on exhibit at Pierce College in 1975. He is missing part of a wing, and is kept in a large enclosure with Lulu belle, another Golden Eagle.
- **The largest animals** at Moonridge Animal Park are two Wood Bison. These males weigh between 1800 and 2000 pounds. The Wood Bison is larger than the Plains Bison, and at one time they were thought to be extinct. "Kiowa" was born in June of 1992 and "Taza" was born in May of 1992. They were both born at the Park. Their mothers returned to the herd preserved in Canada. These are the only two Wood Bison on exhibit in North America.
- **The smallest animals** at Moonridge Animal Park are the Rose Haired or Brown Kneed Tarantula. These are two of an estimated 900 species of Tarantulas. According to National Geographic, a large species of this group has a bite that is painful but never, so far as accurate records show, fatal to humans.
- **Wild animals are never tame!!!** They may become adapted to certain people, such as keepers, who spend so much time with them. Even so, wild animals are always wild because of their instincts, which allow them to survive.



## Join Friends of the Moonridge Zoo!

(a non-profit organization)

Members of the "Friends" are scattered across the U.S. from California to Maryland to (2) members in the United Kingdom!

See benefit packages under box at right.

### Check appropriate box

Individual Membership .....\$30.00

Couple.....45.00

Family Membership .....65.00

# in Family \_\_\_\_\_ (immediate household family members - 2 adults & 3 children under 18. Each additional child add \$3.00 to pass price)

Contributing Membership \$150.00

Sustaining Membership \$500.00

Keepers' Circle \$1000.00

Curator's Circle \$5000.00 - One Time

Are you interested in docent training?  Yes  No

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. with area code \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Paid by:  Check  Mastercard  VISA

Acct.#: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp.Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to:

**FRIENDS OF THE MOONRIDGE ZOO (FOMZ)**

Mail to: Membership

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..... 928-717-6006

## MOONRIDGE ANIMAL PARK

Curator: 909-584-1299

### Open Year 'Round

Park Hours September-May

Monday-Friday 10:00AM-4:00PM

Saturday-Sunday 10:00AM-5:00PM

Animal Presentations at Noon

Group Tours 909/866-9700

Monday-Friday 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

Admission General (Ages 11-59) .....\$7

Seniors (Ages 60 plus) .....\$5

Children (Ages 3-10) .....\$5

Children under age 3 ..... free

## MEMBERSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS, DUES & PRIVILEGES

### BASIC MEMBER BENEFITS

- Free admission to the Big Bear Zoo for one year
- Free or reduced entry to reciprocal zoos
- Subscription to Paw Prints, FOMZ newsletter
- 10% discount in gift shop
- Free or reduced entry to zoo special events
- Docent training

### MEMBER CATEGORIES AND BENEFITS

**INDIVIDUAL** – \$30 per year, one person –  
*Basic member benefits*

**COUPLE** – \$45 per year, 2 adults –  
*Basic member benefits*

**FAMILY** – \$65 per year, 2 adults, 3 children  
(under age 18, immediate household) - additional children  
\$3 per child per year – *Basic member benefits PLUS*

- Four (4) free one-day guest passes

**CONTRIBUTING** – \$150 per year –  
*Basic member benefits PLUS*

- Free admission to Zoo for family members
- Two (2) additional guests each visit
- 10 free one-day guest passes
- Animal Adoption of your choice

**SUSTAINING** – \$500 per year –  
*Basic member benefits PLUS*

- Free admission to Zoo for family members
- Two additional guests each visit
- 12 free one-day guest passes
- Animal Adoption of your choice
- Paving Stone with family name in a new specially designated area

**KEEPERS' CIRCLE** – \$1,000 per year –  
*Basic member benefits PLUS*

- Free admission to the Zoo for family members
- Two (2) additional guests each visit
- 15 free one-day guest passes
- Animal Adoption of your choice
- Paving Stone with family name in a new specially designated area
- "Behind the Scenes" Tour of the Zoo

**CURATOR'S CIRCLE** – \$5,000 – ONE TIME –  
*Basic member benefits PLUS*

- Lifetime free admission to the Zoo for family
- Four (4) additional friends each visit
- Unlimited one-day guest passes
- Animal Adoption of your choice
- Paving Stone with family name in designated area
- 20% discount in the gift shop
- Annual behind-the-scenes Tour of Zoo
- Annual Dinner Party with Zoo Curator
- Lifetime plaque on Curator's Circle Recognition Wall



# Feeding Birds in Winter

When winter has left trees barren and daylight hours are few, birds still fill our suburban landscapes. We marvel at the resourcefulness of wild birds as they search out food and warmth through the long winter months.

We can help to provide these birds with food, cover, roosting areas, and nesting spots by planting native seed and berry-producing trees, shrubs, and vines. Should we also set out feeders? Experts disagree as to whether backyard bird feeding makes a significant difference for whole bird populations, but for the individual birds in your own backyard, feeding certainly can help. Winter feeding also gives you a chance to observe wild birds at close range.

**When to feed**—Feed more often at times of peak energy demand, such as during temperature extremes, nesting season, migration, and in late winter or early spring, when natural seed sources are depleted.

**Where to feed**—Birds are most likely to eat where they feel safe. Make sure that there is nearby cover to which birds can quickly escape from predators, such as free-roaming cats. Place ground-level feeders in spots where predators cannot hide easily, and set up a loose mesh fence around the feeder.

If the feeders are near a window, alter the appearance of the glass to help reduce window collisions. Try covering windows with a fine plastic garden netting, placing hawk silhouettes about four inches apart on the outside of the window, or painting a scene on the window's exterior with soap. Many birds will feed at more than one level, but they do have their preferences.

Ground level: mourning doves, sparrows, towhees, juncos

Table level: cardinals, finches, and jays Hanging feeders: titmice, goldfinches, chickadees

Tree trunks: woodpeckers, nuthatches, wrens

**Selecting a feeder**—Plastic, steel, or glass feeders are best because they are easy to clean. Feeders with porous surfaces, such as wood or clay, can be difficult to clean and may grow dangerous algae and fungi. Smaller feeders empty out more quickly, so there's less chance of wet, spoiled seeds. Rain can be a problem, so make sure the feeder has drainage holes, and consider placing a plastic dome on top.

**Proper maintenance**—Regular upkeep is necessary to keep your feeder free from contamination by disease-causing bacteria.

Set up more than one feeder and allow ample space between feeders.

Choose feeders that have no sharp edges or points. To help keep food cleaner, use feeders that allow birds to perch away from the food.

Clean feeders often. Immerse them in a 5–10 percent solution of chlorine bleach and warm water for two or three minutes. Scrub with a stiff brush or a scouring pad, rinse thoroughly with clean water, and dry completely before refilling. Clean feeders designed for ground-feeding birds every two days.

Rake up spilled seeds, hulls, and feces at least once a week.

Keep seed dry, free of mold, and safe from squirrels by storing it in a metal can with a tight-fitting lid, such as a clean garbage can. Discard damp seed.

In wet weather, put out only enough seed to last several hours.

If you notice dead birds or obviously sick birds (they're less active and less alert) near your feeding station, stop feeding immediately. Discard all seed; then clean and disinfect all feeders and the ground below them. Wait a week before resuming feeding.

**Water**—Birds need water year-round for drinking and bathing. Set up at least one birdbath. The surface should be easy to clean, and there should be a gently sloping shallow end. Place the birdbath away from the feeders to keep the water from being contaminated. Rinse the birdbath daily before refilling it, and clean it once a week, using a 5–10 percent solution of chlorine bleach. You can use a birdbath heater that has a built-in thermostat to warm up the water just enough to keep it from freezing. Never add antifreeze or other chemicals to the water.

**In your absence**—Keep your feeding schedule consistent, but don't worry if you must stop feeding briefly—while traveling, for example. Wild birds will find other food in your absence, especially in suburban areas, where other bird feeders are just a short flight away. If you live in a rural or isolated area, however, try to arrange to have a neighbor maintain the feeders in your absence, just as you would have someone look after your pets or houseplants.

Providing food for wild birds will help the winter pass more comfortably for them, while adding interest and activity to your winter days. Come spring, as the nesting season unfolds, you'll have the added pleasure of recognizing many of the birds as individuals.

*Excerpted and adapted from The HSUS's brochure, Backyard Feeding of Wild Birds.*

## Notice

All donor bricks and paving stones will be moved to the new zoo where they will be replanted. We will be transitioning sometime in the near future to donor recognition trees (where the brass leaves will be engraved with the donor names/recognition.) Leaf pricing remains to be determined.

The purchase of bricks and paving stones has been discontinued.

## VISIT US ON THE WEB

Before your next visit to the Zoo why not spend a few minutes browsing our website [www.moonridgezoo.org](http://www.moonridgezoo.org)?

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

Looking for a way to help the Friends of the Moonridge Zoo or want to join the Friends yourself? You'll find out right here. There is even a wish list where Don Richardson, our Curator, has listed some of the special needs he has for providing the best possible environment for our animals.

**Yes! I'm wild about the  
MOONRIDGE ANIMAL PARK**

*Please help me Adopt a wild bird or animal for \$25.00*

I want to adopt \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of bird or animal)

for \_\_\_\_\_  
(name of person)

Mail this form to: FOMZ, Adoptions  
P.O. Box 2557 • Big Bear City, CA 92314

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Make check payable to: **FOMZ**  
(Friends of the Moonridge Zoo)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Paid by:  Check  Cash  MasterCard  Visa

Acct. # \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Relocation Update of the Moonridge Animal Park**

*Dec 27, 2007 - by Bill Treadwell*

You may remember that we have historically been saying that the lease at Moonridge Animal Park is up on February 2009. Well, the Big Bear Park and Recreation District recently reviewed the lease and discovered that the lease is actually up on February 2010. Furthermore, Reese Troublefield, the Big Bear Park and Recreation District Executive Director, has talked with the group that purchased the Animal Park acreage. The new owners said they would allow the animal park to stay at no extra cost for up to six months past the lease, if needed. Any further extension would be subject to a rental fee.

The relocation project is about to reach another landmark point. The environmental study will be completed this January 2008, and then the National Forest Service will conduct a public review. We are expecting all to go well and anticipate receiving the Forest Service's Special Use Permit around May-June 2008. Having the Permit means the land is secured and the park can be built, but not too quickly. We will still need to go through the process of producing construction documents upon receiving the Permit. We cannot start construction documents prior to receiving the Special Use Permit because we do not know what our landlord, the National Forest Service, will permit us to build. The master plan has been submitted and is part of the environmental study; yet, we do not know what will actually be approved until after the final public review and Forest Service's response to that public review.

A PowerPoint presentation of the proposed park master plan has been created. If you belong to an association or civic organization, and would like a half hour presentation at one of your meetings, please contact Bill Treadwell (909) 878-4200.

Return Service Requested

[www.moonridgezoo.org](http://www.moonridgezoo.org)

Gift Shop: 909-584-1171

Office: 909-878-4200

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P.O. Box 2557

FRIENDS OF THE MOONRIDGE ZOO



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