



PAW PRINTS

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

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\$1.00 DONATION

FALL 2008

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.

Quarterly Update on our Animals at Moonridge Animal Park

Each quarter we will present a recap and update on our animals here at the Moonridge Zoo. If you want more detailed information about any particular guest, please send us an email to FOMZ@moonridge.org.

We have such a wide variety of creatures here at MAP that I must lump a few different species together in order to be concise enough to fit in PawPrints. You're probably familiar with the layout of the zoo grounds, so I'll start this walk-about at the stairs down from the Entrance and work my way around counterclockwise through the public areas of the zoo.

Also, please know that from time to time our animals change... a few are released, but mostly our friends live here in a "Home for Life". New creatures come to the zoo during the year, and some of our creatures leave as well. So, the cast of characters discussed below will change as time marches on.

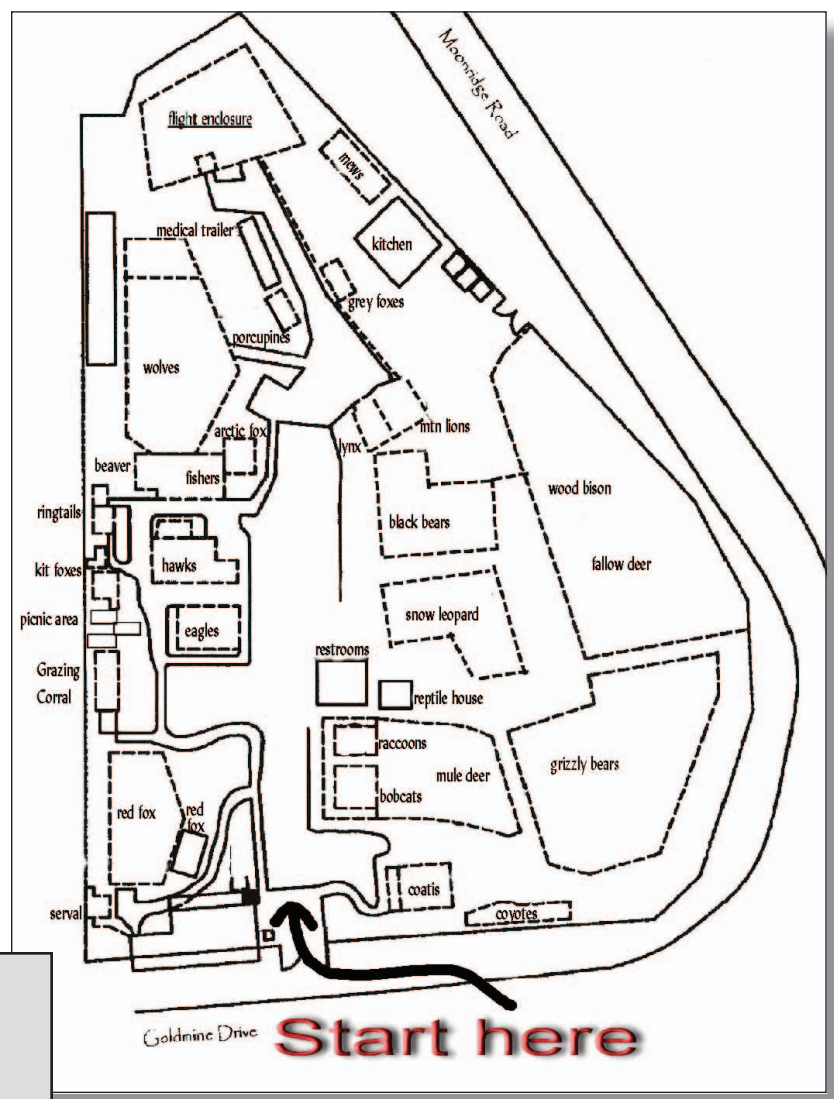


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Coati enclosure: We currently have 3 Coatis living with us... Cheyenne, Peanut, and the male Elvis.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Boy, did this year fly by! Here we are just about to send out our Holiday Cards (be sure to look for them, they're really great!) and wrap up another year.

It was a wonderful, eventful one too. We just installed our new Board of Directors. This year we welcome two new directors, Barbara Jordan and Mike Traxler. Barbara is a long time member of our Big Bear Community. She is an active member of the Sierra Club and world-renowned wildlife photographer. Mike is a recently retired Principal and schoolteacher who has already taught two of our docent classes and lead many, many tours at the zoo. We are thrilled to have Barbara and Mike join us!

I'd also like to note that this new year has brought the retirement from the board of Len Backus. Len has served for 6 years on the board as Director of Ways and Means. Len has graciously agreed to continue to oversee our collection can program. We truly appreciate all the Len has done for us over these past years and wish him all the best.

We have some good news about our relocation project. The plan is now before the public for review and comment. When that period is completed the Forest Service will make their decision on our permit. Hopefully, I will be able to give you even more good news by our next newsletter.

As always, I really appreciate comments and questions from our members and patrons. Don't hesitate to email me: bhenke@moonridgezoo.org or call me: 909 878 4200.

I wish you all a happy and peaceful holiday season.

Betsy Henke



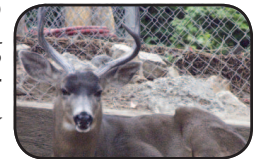
Coyote enclosure: Lakota the female and Link, the male, are doing fine.



Grizzly enclosure: As you know, Tutu (momma bear) is the 2008 Animal of the Year for MAP. Her two children, Harley and Ayla, are about as full grown as a Grizzly will get.

Tutu has been busy for the last several months digging a tunnel beneath the enclosure. From time to time the keepers must move big rocks into the tunnel to keep these big bears from digging too far. The keepers report that it is amazing how strong these 600-800 pound animals are when they shove big rocks around.

Mule Deer enclosure: The two boys, Booper and Bucky are working on a full set of antlers. These deer look so lovable and soft, but Bucky will bite any time of the year. And Bambie the female is always ready to eat leaves and branches that are in the enclosure.



Bobcat enclosure: Our three Bobcats, Tornado, Sassy, and Mica, are doing well too... a squirrel recently snuck in to the bobcat enclosure to the delight of all three cats... nobody was hurt, but it'll be a long time before the squirrel does that again. Our Food Enrichment keeper, Diane Roberts, recently got the chance to put Mica for quiet a while... through the chain link fence that is. These guys look like a giant friendly house cat, but they're full-on predators.

Raccoon enclosure: Tempest, Rocky, Zeus, and Trinity are busy watching human creatures walk by. Zeus is a member of the Traveling Staff as an education animal. There are 11 raccoons here in total.



Friends of the Moonridge Zoo

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Hours:

Office Open Tuesday - Saturday

10 am - 6 pm



Reptile house: The animals who live in the Reptile house change from time to time, but you can almost always see spiders, snakes, and assorted bugs in this shelter.

Lotus Blossom, the Badger: She is familiar with people, so she's not too afraid of visitors calling her name. She is such a fantastic digger that the bottom of her enclosure has chain-link fence material buried about a foot into the dirt so she can't dig out.



Wood Bison: Most zoo visitors say "wow, those two buffalos are the biggest things I've ever seen." Also commonly known as the Wood buffalo, something of a misnomer for this animal as it is only distantly related to either of the two "true buffaloes", the water buffalo and the African Buffalo. These bad boys (Norman and Tito) are also the largest terrestrial animals in North America.



Black Bear enclosure: Here is where our three black bears live... Zuni, the big guy... Hucklebeary, our 3-legged friend, and Hollybeary- the newest addition... actually, Holly's real name is Pakuma, but we all call her Hollybeary... hmmm, I wonder if Holly Berry knows this?



Canadian Lynx: Aslan continues to be an entire show unto himself. Part of his diet is steak... if you try to sneak a little ground beef in there? It won't work... he'll let it sit there without eating it. But if a bird flies into the enclosure (which happens from time to time) you'll be able to see just how far and high Aslin can leap!



Mountain Lion enclosure: One of the truly wonderful sights is when Debbie (the zoo's Curator) goes into the enclosure and plays with these cats. Debbie raised the three sisters from tiny little kittens. Peg left this earth last year after enduring a fatal feline illness. However, both Cascade and Canyon climb up and nestle under Debbie's. The sight of Debbie and



the cats playing is something that our human visitors can't get enough of. One of the funniest sights is to see both big cats jammed in the plastic Igloo with their heads hanging out and stacked on each other. Both cats also enjoyed the pumpkin part of the "food enrichment" program.



Gray Fox enclosure: Here is where the three hand-raised girl gray foxes stay... Penny, Celeste, and JorgaFox.



Since their fur is both gray and reddish, most visitors don't know if the little canines are Gray foxes or Red foxes...here's an easy way to tell: if the tip of their tail is black, they're a Gray fox... if the tip of their tail is white, they're a Red fox... the actual color of the coat doesn't bespeak their species. This species is considered to be among the most primitive of the living Canids.

Birds of Prey enclosure (MEWS):

This is where our Educational birds are kept... the Bald Eagle (Yukon), and the Great Horned Owl (Cosmo) go off-site to help schools and other learning centers become familiar with these special representatives. Other animals in this enclosure include: The Peregrine Falcon (Isis), two Turkey vultures (Ralph and Chuck... funny names, just think about it), the Red-tailed hawks (Avalon and Q), and Aries the Golden Eagle. By the way, in falconry, a "mews" is a birdhouse designed to house one or more birds of prey.



Flight Enclosure: Our winged animals in this enclosure received a new set of water features this year... Casper, one of our one-armed American Pelicans, spends lots of time in the new pool as well as Tully and Puff, his



two Pelican-pals. The collection of long-legged birds continue to squawk around the enclosure... especially Niles and Daphine, the two Sand Hill Cranes. Decoy, one of our mallards, and Frankenstein, our Muscovy duck are always cleaning up the grounds as well. Note: if you google "muscovy duck", you'll see why her name is "Frankenstein". Also, you may remember that our little Saw-whet Owl, Yoda, was in the safe entrance to the flight enclosure... Yoda

is about 5" tall and a fully grown bird of prey... we moved him to the inside of the Educational center at the zoo's entrance so he can keep track of the visitors better. By the way, Yoda will be our "animal of the year for 2009". Yoda's old home in the middle safe now house 3 Screech owls, Cricket, Pumpkin, and their friend. These guys are miniature versions of the Great Horned owls are just a little bit larger than Yoda... very cute little creatures.



Porcupine enclosure: This is where Willow, Spike (go figure), and Cordelia stay. You'll see them in the hammocks sleeping most of the day. Some visitors will not come close to the enclosure for fear of being "shot" by a bunch of quills. Although the quills are painful and difficult to remove from victims, they can't be thrown or sprayed... the tail actually has to whack the victim to implant the needles. The quills have a small barb on them that opens up when it comes in contact with warm flesh, making it very hard to remove the quills. Jenna, one of the keepers, enjoys her interaction with porcupines... each of the quill-creatures have their own personality, and each of them seem to enjoy Jenna's attention and company... just don't try to pet one of them backwards !!



Wolf enclosure.: Our Gray Wolves (aka Grey Wolf, or Timber Wolf) came from a Hollywood breeder that produces wolves for the Movie industry. Wakiza, the alpha male, and his harem, Navarre and Nova, keep the enclosure free of humans. Our Curator, Debbie Richardson, raised these apex predators from puppies, so she can go in the enclosure... but no human males are welcome... Wakiza will protect his ladies with vigor. Christie, our lead Keeper, remembers when she would wrestle the alpha male to the ground, tip him upside down, and remind him that SHE was the Leader of the pack. Then several months before Christie gave birth to her little daughter, she decided that she couldn't safely "play" with the alpha male any more, and stopped wrestling with him. She lost her "alpha dog" status. Then a couple of years later when Christie returned to the zoo, the lead wolf recognized her, but he was now the dominate male and she could never re-establish her role as "Alpha Dog".



Arctic Fox enclosure: These two little Canids (aka White Fox or Snow Fox), are naturally named Polar and Ice. Their fur is now changing from a brownish coat to a white coat so they could blend in with the snow if they were in the wild. At feeding time, it's a hoot to watch them wrestle for boiled eggs or a chicken leg, then try to hide it someplace new in their enclosure. Eggs have been stuffed in every nook and cranny in the enclosure for later feasting.

Fisher enclosure: These two cute but fierce creatures are constantly active in the enclosure, and are a Threatened species. Clover and Crimson are male and female and about three years old. The feature that most human visitors see is that all four feet on the Fisher have 5 large retractable claws. Also, several times a visitor has stopped me and said they heard a child scream... turned out to be the call of the Fisher... a little un-nerving to say the least when we have so many children visiting the zoo on the weekends.



Beaver pond: Timber, our beaver, is usually not to be seen... He was born 7 years ago at our zoo from parents Thelma and Louise (ok, so we guessed wrong on one of them). When visitors do see Timber, they are shocked to see how large he is... he weighs in at about 40 pounds and eats LOTS of branches and other wood products. Beavers are the 2nd largest rodent in the world (after the South American capybara).



Barn Owls: Jareth is our two year old Barn Owl that goes out on Educational tours. And we have a new baby in this enclosure. However, the new owl quickly grew to the same size as it's parents, so if you peek in the nestbox, you'll see two owls but it's hard to tell baby from Mom.



The Low Light enclosure: If you give your eyes enough time to adjust, you'll find Luke and Lorelei, a pair of RingTail Cats. They are pretty hard to see, but if you look in the shadows,



they're there. And the Spotted Skunk pair, Oleander and Gardenia, stay pretty much hidden in the shadows too... well worth the time it takes for your eyes to adjust. And just outside the Low Light enclosure is the ground-hugging Cyrus, our 1 yr old Snowy Owl. Take a good look now before the snow arrives... he'll be hard to see when there's 6" of snow on the ground.



Great Horned Owl enclosure: Barbie and Boo are the principle residents in this enclosure. Cosmo is in the Mews, and he makes regular trips outside to show off as one of our majestic birds of prey. His humongous eyes and ear-like tufts are always a treat for human visitors to see.

Red-Tailed Hawk flight enclosure: Quasimodo, Fluffy, and a few others are at home in this enclosure. Unfortunately, our animals are here because of gunshot wounds and other accidents that will keep them here for life.



Golden Eagle flight: Lulubelle, a 19 year old Golden Eagle, came to our zoo about 14 years ago. She is pretty much flightless, but she can hop from limb to limb. At feeding time, our human visitors express different reactions to seeing how Lulubelle eats her food. Some visitors say "aaah, that's gross", some say "wow, she downed the whole head", and others are completely fascinated at the methods she uses. Our keepers and docents tell visitors that she's doing exactly what she would do "in the wild". Yes, she tears the food into bites she can manage, and yes, if you have a pet rat, you'll wince, but that's how nature is in the wild. What a wonderful experience for kids and parents to know how and why nature will survive. You may also remember Old Man, the very old Golden Eagle... well, Old Man made his final journey earlier this year. In John 3 Hawks words: "Today you have gone home... Real freedom now lifts you wings...No longer earth bound...You soar to a new Spirit Lodge".



Bald Eagle flight: Wow, have a look at their talons. These are expert hunters who have physical impairments that keep them here at Moonridge zoo. Both Alaska and Yakima are victims of gunshot wounds, and Valentine is mostly blind from drinking contaminated water in her pre-Big Bear life. By the way, *(Continued on Page 7)* -5-

Recent Relocation Progress

On October 24, 2008, the National Forest Service released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and began their public review process, which ends on November 24, 2008. This is a milestone event! The Environmental Study was started June 14, 2006, over two years ago.

Given that public review comments the Forest Service receives are positive, a final review will be made of all relocation project documentation. Then the Forest Service will decide whether, or not, to issue a 20 year Special Use Permit to build a new park on National Forest Land. If the Forest Service receives any negative comments during this public review period, and they have not already been addressed in the DEIS, then back we go to address those new issues. Hopefully no new issues will arise, because at the beginning of the environmental study public input was requested at that time. Based on that input, the environmental study addressed all known issues.

After the Special Use Permit is issued, then the master plan will be taken to the next step, which is producing construction documents. As the construction documents are rolled out -- starting with the basic utility infrastructure and proceeding to exhibits, walkways and then buildings -- Request for Proposals will be announced to bid on building various parts of the park. It is possible that we may have more than one contractor simultaneously working on different aspects of the park to shorten the building time. The Moonridge Animal Park lease expires February 2010. It would be great to have enough of the park built so that we can move all of the animals to the new park about the same time the lease expires.

We were surprised when cost estimates for creating the construction documents was in the neighborhood of \$1.5 million and from two different resources! Our original ballpark estimate was in the range of \$300,000 to \$500,000. The short of the story is we can really use some help with getting more donations to defray the higher than expected costs. Can you help? Or do you know of someone else that can help? You can call us at 909 878-4200 or email btreadwell@moonridgezoo.org. By the way, if you would like to read the DEIS and other relocation project documents, visit our web-site at <http://www.moonridgezoo.org/lfwc/futurevision.html>. The project documents are listed towards the bottom of the web-page.

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

Couple45.00

Family Membership65.00

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

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Are you interested in docent training? Yes No

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Mail to: Membership

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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)\$9

Seniors (Ages 60 plus)\$6

Children (Ages 3-10)\$6

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

SUPPORTING – \$200 per year –
Basic member benefits PLUS

- Free admission to Zoo for family members
- Two 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



Valentine loves to hear human voices... you'll see her walk closer to the enclosure if she likes the sound of your voice. This is cleaned each including the pond There are several love to swim in the the pond is drained cleaned. When kids see the dry pond with the turtles trying to climb out, they all start cheering for each turtle to get out... then the Keeper fills the pond again and the kids cheer both the turtles and the Keeper.



Crow/Ravenflight: Generally speaking, crows don't want to live above about 5,000ft, but our Ravens love it here at 7,200ft. When you see both a crow and a raven together, it's pretty obvious that the raven is much larger than a crow. These guys can also make some very human sounds, and almost any other sounds as well. In fact, I put my hand to the enclosure and Bubba came to the side... I said "Hi Bubba" and he said it right back to me... and he used a high-pitched voice as well as a low-pitched voice... very funny stuff to hear.



Snowy Owl enclosure: Cyrus spends all of this time on the ground or in his "dog house". He came to us last year with an inability to fly. But, even though he can't fly, he wastes no time hopping over to food that comes his way. Like the Artic foxes, this little guy will disappear into the snow leaving only blinking eyes to give away his position.

Kit Fox enclosure: "Oh, look at the miniature coyotes", "are they fully grown?", and "they are so cute"... that's what I hear when I



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.

hang around the little Kit Fox enclosure. Duncan is about 14 years old now, and has been at the zoo for about 9 years. She was accidentally trapped, then bottle-raised... but she's still jittery around us giant humans. These tiny foxes are a Threatened/Endangered species. Roseanne, Alice, and Scrub came from the Living Museum in Bakersfield, CA two years ago to keep Duncan company. Even though they are mostly desert creatures, they do well in the snow. In fact, in the snowy Big Bear winters, you can find them huddled on top of a little house next to the heat lamp.



Snack Bar:

Here you'll see humans at the "2008 Boo In The Zoo" event standing in line for snacks and refreshments.



You'll see large humans, and small humans... do not be afraid...it's ok for them to be outside of their enclosures... some of the smaller humans will make sounds like the Fisher or Raven or a dinosaur... don't be fooled.



Red Fox enclosure: Are Red Foxes really red? Yes, and no. Their coats can be any color from red to brown to silver to black... the key in telling if it is a Red fox or a Gray fox is in the tip of their tail... Red foxes have a white tip, and Gray foxes have a black tip. In fact, we have a completely "black" red fox, Miranda, but she has a white tip on her tail... stop in and say hello to Miranda and her cage-mate Cinnamon the Serval... they both enjoy the chat.

Also, we find our other red foxes, Windsong (in the big enclosure), with Pippin & Fire in the smaller enclosure. When human visitors come close to the Fox enclosure, they'll ask where the Skunks are... that natural fox aroma can be just as... um..."aromatic"... as the skunk's smell... big surprise to most folks.

VISIT US ON THE WEB

Before your next visit to the Zoo why not spend a few minutes browsing our website 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 our right here. There is even a which 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

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Supporting the Moonridge Animal Park

The Friends of the Moonridge Zoo is a 501(c)(3) non-profit public benefit corporation organized to support the Moonridge Animal Park, which is a San Bernardino County Facility of the Big Bear Park and Recreation District.

The Friends of the Moonridge Zoo's (FOMZ) current mission statement is to support the Moonridge Animal Park through: (1) Educating the public regarding treatment, protection, and conservation of wildlife; (2) Recruiting and coordinating zoo volunteers; and (3) Fundraising.

As part of our support program to the park, we annually sponsor special events in the park during May through October of each year—yes, those warmer mountain months. Check our website for the current event calendar.

Have you ever thought about becoming a member of the Friends of the Moonridge Zoo, and help support the unique wildlife animal park? Depending on your level of membership you and your guests can get into the park for free. There are other member benefits too. For more details please visit our website at moonridge-zoo.org/fomz/join.html or call our offices 909-878-4200.

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FRIENDS OF THE MOONRIDGE ZOO



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