

# Paw Prints



A Publication by the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo

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VOLUME XL

WINTER 2023

The Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo's VISION is to be a valued nonprofit, whose cooperative support will be a key partner to ensure the success of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo.

The Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo's MISSION is to support the Big Bear Alpine Zoo by inspiring understanding, respect, and environmentally responsible action for the stewardship of wildlife and wildlife habitat through conservation, education, volunteer support, and fundraising.



## WINTER SURROUNDS US

*Winter is definitely here! Right now we have several feet of snow and huge numbers of visitors—some just to play in the snow, some to ski and snowboard, some to simply take in the beauty of Big Bear in the winter. Please remember that the zoo has its own parking lot (just south of the zoo itself on Moonridge), and that other areas and businesses are private property. Being towed isn't a great deal of fun!*

*FOBBAZ thanks each and every one who has supported us over the years. ♥*

Many and profound thanks to the Board of Directors, Docents, our Office Manager, and Zoo Staff for their generous contributions to this publication.

Laurey Haviland, Editor

**Thank you for helping us “go green” by joining our online service!**

**☛ IF YOU NEED TO UPDATE YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS.....**

**Please send us an email at [fobbaz@fobbaz.org](mailto:fobbaz@fobbaz.org)**

**E-newsletters arrive promptly and allow FOBBAZ to use more of our funds for the zoo!**

## President's Message



Welcome to the new year! This is shaping up to be a great year! We have a wonderful new curator, an ambitious new Board with great new ideas, and eager docents. Please check emails and other social media to see what's happening. I would be remiss if I didn't give a big thank you to our members and generous donors. We are working on opening our concession stand soon. We will start with Friday, Saturday and Sunday openings until warmer weather.

It's never too early to starting planning for the Photo Contest. Seasonal photos of our animals are needed. If you take a photo of Fall or Winter, or animal scenes, please keep them for the photo contest coming this Summer.

Christmas card donations are doing well. The plans for the Rehabilitation Center will begin soon. When you visit the zoo watch for enclosure and grounds upgrades, as a few new arrivals may be introduced soon.

Thanks to all our generous donors.

Sharon Johnson  
FOBBAZ President



## It's Getting There!

The FOBBAZ Concession Stand is slated to open the weekend of February 11th. Our cash register has been delivered and is being installed now. (And no, the picture is NOT the model—ours is so hi-tech, many of us worry about being able to understand what in the world to *do* with it!) We plan to start out slowly (some drinks and packaged snacks) and ultimately working toward items cooked/baked on the premises. Please be patient, as certificates and licenses are sometimes excruciatingly slow to be approved!



## FOBBAZ Calendar of Events



### Feel the Love

**Saturday, February 11, 2023**



### Forest Day

**Tuesday, March 21, 2023**



### St. Patrick's Day

**Leprechaun Scavenger Hunt**

**Friday, March 17, 2023**



### Arbor Day

**Friday & Saturday,**

**April 28 & 29, 2023**



**See You at the Zoo!**



## BBAZ is proud to be a REHAB & RELEASE zoo!

Here is a listing of *a few* of our recent releases:

2-raccoons (one brought in as a 1-week old found by a dog) fully grown now and another who fell from the rafters of a building—the only survivor of the litter

1-grey squirrel who was “down on his luck and freezing”

The remainder of animals who've recently come in to rehab will be released when they've healed or remain with us at the zoo, and will be on exhibit ultimately.

These animals are kept separately from the zoo's collection, and the keepers make sure they're not overly exposed to humans as a preventive measure to ensure they don't become dependent on people—they stay “wild” and can therefore be released to thrive on their own. Further, every effort is made to release these animals in their NATIVE habitats.

Unfortunately, most of the animals brought to the zoo for medical assistance have been hit by cars and left injured on the road. Some other injuries are animal attacks, and some are unresponsive animals. **We ask you to continue to be aware that this mountain is home to many, many species of wild animals, all of whom are vital to the environment.**

Please Meet

# Jessica Whiton

BBAZ Curator



My name is Jessica Whiton. I grew up in a small town in Michigan. I have had a passion for nature as long as I could remember. As a teenager that passion evolved into how behavior and learning played a part of the lives of the living things around us. I earned my degree in Biology and Psychology and started working at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Illinois. I spent 27 years working with the amazing animals and people at Shedd before I started a new adventure at the Sea Life Trust Beluga Whale Sanctuary in Vestmannaeyjar, Iceland. My husband and 2 dogs packed up and moved across the world two weeks after the pandemic hit. There I opened the world's first Beluga whale sanctuary. Three years later we decided it was time to come home. Big Bear Alpine Zoo seemed the perfect fit. The small town feel of Big Bear, a passionate staff with an incredible mission and great community support made it an easy decision. I am also a competitive cyclist, so the lure of miles and miles of mountain bike trails was also very appealing.

## OTHER BBAZ NEWS

✓ With wonderful congratulations and great pride, we send Bill Hoffman to his new job at the County Department of Special Districts as Regional Manager. He's still in Big Bear, so we know we're NOT losing him, just having to SHARE him a little.

✓ To add to our joys and boastings, we hereby announce that Christy McGiveron and Summer McElroy have been promoted to Assistant Curators! They've been tremendous, dedicated keepers at BBAZ for a long time, and now we wholeheartedly celebrate their new roles at the zoo!



## Heros All!

The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Squadron Headquarters and Headquarters Troop Maintenance platoon came to the zoo to help with maintenance and cleaning the grounds. What a fun, fabulous and *hardworking* group of men and women they were! Heartfelt THANKS to each member!



## FOBBAZ LOVES A PARTY!

*Each year we celebrate at the winter holidays and hand out awards to docents who have donated their many hours and selfless energy to our cause!*

*We LOVE you all ♥*



We were graced with an extra-special treat this year: Students from Big Bear High School singing club offered us 30 minutes of joy and beautiful holiday music! (Many of us couldn't help but sing along, which maybe was a bit unfortunate, but they were troopers to the end!) In fact, two of the singers here have been invited to train at Carnegie Hall—WOW!

Wonderful Congratulations !





# *Santa Claws*

## *Came to the Zoo!*



What a great time we had! Families (of several generations), couples, singles, kids of *all* ages enjoyed seeing and conversing with him. His helpers handed out goodie bags and took pictures for people, so our visitors could go home and share the joy. And to make it EXTRA–special, the same group of singers (Big Bear High School) FOBBAZ delighted in at their holiday party came to the zoo to serenade everyone. The fun just never ended!



Kids sharing their wishes  
for Christmas.



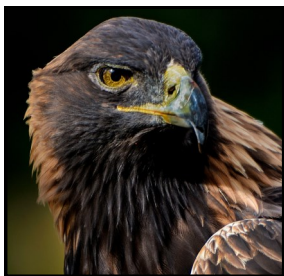
All ages loved chatting  
with Santa.

# Crossing the Rainbow Bridge

This is our way to phrase the passing of one of our beloved animals. We believe it offers a bit of hope, as a bridge always goes somewhere! Unfortunately, we must tell you of the loss of five of our friends.

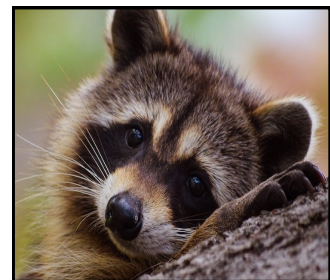


**Spirit** was the last of the nine wolf pups born in 2009 and raised here at the zoo. In human terms, she was well into her 90's! She was a spunky gal who loved her keepers and being showcased as a North American Grey Wolf. Her life-span was increased by more than double that of a wild wolf because of her loving care here at the zoo.



**Lulubelle**, a Golden Eagle, came to the zoo in 1988. She was brought to us by Fish and Game as a confiscated and cruelly-used pet: someone had taken her as a fledgling and kept her in a cage too small for her wings to develop properly, thus causing them to be permanently curved. She was never able to fly and soar like the eagle she was! She was a gorgeous and valiant lady, however, who was never without an attitude!

Both raccoons (sister and brother) **Bonnie** and **Clyde**, passed within a short time of each other. Coming in as youngsters, they had been with us for 12 years (the average lifespan of a raccoon in the wild is approximately 2 to 3 years!) and were both show-offs to the visitors of the zoo.



A yellow-bellied marmot, **Norman** was not a species representative of our SoCal mountains. He actually came to us as a hitch-hiker on a truck from Utah headed for the desert! As he wasn't an indigenous species, he couldn't be released, so he took up residence with us in 2015. We had no idea of his age, though he was fully grown, so being here for 7 years might have been a goodly amount. Marmots, the largest of the squirrel family, are nocturnal, and catching a glimpse of him was a rare treat, indeed!







## Kids' Korner

## Where Did He Come From?

The zoo is proud to introduce our newest wolf, so this page is dedicated to him. His name is Bohdi, which research told us comes from an eastern Native-American tribe and means “new beginnings.” What better name for this animal, who will be the first of the zoo’s new pack? But where did he come from? THAT’S the question to answer on this page! Clues and pictures will help you figure it out ;)



Here’s our new boy! He needed a new home where he would be properly taken care of and be free to be a wolf. This youngster is right at home in the snow, loves to play and cavort, and seems to fit right in at our Alpine zoo.

We’re absolutely in LOVE!



This young wolf came from one of the 50 states in the USA.



This is his home-state’s flag.



What kind of bird is his native state’s bird?



The White Oak is the state tree of Bodhi’s original state.



Our 43rd president was born in this state.



A gentleman first put a piece of candy on a stick and invented the lollipop in this state. Mmmm!

Bohdi came to BBAZ from \_\_\_\_\_.

Answer: Connecticut