

Paw Prints



A Publication by the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo

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VOLUME XLII

SUMMER 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.



HEATWAVE (not quite) HEAVEN!

Summer is upon us in all its heat and blazing sun. Temperatures up here at 7,000 feet have been in the high 80s to mid-90s, so some of our alpine animals are staying in their air-conditioning for more of the day! The bears' and raccoons' pools are being well-used, however, though not by any humans. Misters around the zoo help cool down both animals and people, and we're hanging in there!

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

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

President's Message



Our long-awaited concession stand/snack bar is now open: we are selling snacks and drinks to zoo visitors. Many thanks to Erin Whittle and all her hard work to make it happen. If you would like to volunteer to help, please call our office 909-878-4200. The concession stand/snack bar is open Fridays to Sundays, 10am to 3pm at the Big Bear Zoo.

Our new docent training is moving along nicely. We have about 15 docents in various stages of training. If you're interested in becoming a docent volunteer at the zoo, please visit our website to fill out an application: www.friendsofthebigbearalpinezoo.org.

We had three photographers participate in the photography contest. Our board members chose the finalist photo submissions for next year's calendar. Laurey Haviland has been overseeing this annual contest that serves as a fundraiser for our beloved zoo animals. Please be on the lookout for next year's calendar which will be available for purchase within the next few months.

This time of the year we are also in the process of our new board elections. The new board members will serve for the next fiscal year and will be announced in September.

Many thanks to Anita O'Connor who organized this year's Zoo Keeper's week to appreciate all our wonderful staff at the zoo. Thank you for all you do!

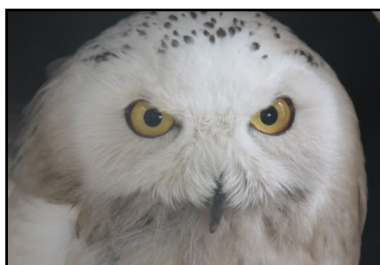
Moonridge Mondays Street Fair is starting on September 4th, every Monday, to September 25th from 4:00-7:00pm. The zoo will have a booth and we need FOBBAZ volunteers to help. Please call our office if you'd like to sign up: 909-878-4200.

The Twilight Safari will be the last Friday and Saturday of September and the first two weekends of October. More information will be provided closer to the date.

Once again, thank you all for your continued support and well-wishes.

Sharon Johnson, President

Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo



Though not his cup-of-tea, Cyrus (our Arctic Owl) is managing this year's heat pretty well: he stays within "mister range" or in his "igloo." Of course, the feathers on the bottoms of his feet (great for Arctic living) are superfluous this season, but they'll serve him well again come winter!

FOBBAZ

Calendar of Events



Twilight Safari

Fridays and Saturdays

September 29 & 30

October 6 & 7, 13 & 14

Evenings ONLY

Pre-registration REQUIRED



Wolf Awareness Day

Saturday

October 21



Boo at the ZOO

Saturday Oct. 28

Come in Costume!

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:

Ground squirrel-orphaned

Pigeon-not flying well

Sparrow-fell out of nest

Scrub jay-fell out of nest

2 skunks orphaned (transferred to another rehab facility)

Mule deer fawn orphan (transferred to another rehab facility)

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 Zookeeper Kimberly Bechtol

My name is Kimberly Bechtol. I grew up in Victorville, Ca. My desire to learn more about animals began early in life. Playing with my childhood dog, Chelsea, a golden retriever mix, was what I wanted to do much more than go to school and make friends. A game played often with my best friend growing up was to drink water out of a bowl on all fours and walk around pretending to be a dog. The only T.V. or movies I was interested in had animals in them. Family at Christmas time knew getting me a Barbie Doll would not make me happy but a plush animal would. My parents suggested I would be a veterinarian one day. In college, I studied in the Animal and Veterinary Science department learning how to work in an animal hospitals helping pets. I am very grateful for my secondary education and the opportunities it has brought me; I am currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Animal Science and hope it will lead to a job working for the USDA in the future. My job at the zoo has been one of the most surreal opportunities of my life and I have to pinch myself every day that I get to work with all of these really amazing animals. FOBBAZ is a place to share my passion and work with like-minded individuals to improve the lives of animals.

Note: Kimberly is on the FOBBAZ Board of Directors as well as being a zookeeper at BBAZ. Whew!



They're Not Little Babies Anymore!

Hazel—back, Holly—front



Holly and Hazel are starting to show their spots—well, actually, they're losing their baby spots and beginning to look like grown-up Mountain Lions! These girls are not sisters, though they're the same age and coloration. Both were found orphaned in the Santa Cruz Mountains of California at the same time, and were sent to receive much-needed rehab in Oakland, CA, where DNA samples were taken and the girls were found not to be sisters. They're now out of mandatory quarantine with us, and are getting used to the new "rules & regs": zookeepers coming and going, new feeding schedules, people looking down at them, training for stepping on weight machines for health checks, and so forth. The best news is — they're taking it all in stride!

Big Bear is thrilled they're here, healthy, and happy!

Bear Awareness Day

We always have a great time when we show off our beloved American Black and Grizzly bears!



Our Greeters' Table had our handmade "Bear Ears" for sale. They are a fun and unique way to show off your love and appreciation for beautiful bears around the world!

P.S. That's Birdie in the lower right—she graces our FOBBAZ offices, but just had to share the fun that day!

Kimi shared fascinating pelts from various species—bear included. Amazing how Mother Nature knows just what her animals need for thriving in a variety of climates!



All the kids (and some adults) LOVE making bear puppets! All were creative, but some, of course, were "scariest" than others ;)

A game asking "How Do Bears Smell" is always a fun activity for kids and adults. Aside from the obvious "ugh," it's a surprise to learn that a bear can pick up the merest scent over a mile away! The players have only a couple of inches in which to make their choices.





ICE CREAM SAFARI



Warm day + lots of friends = a great safari! People waiting patiently in line to purchase their “5 scoops for \$5” tickets.



Of course, the results of being patient is getting to choose your flavors and number of scoops...or select one, then return and change up your order!



As the various flavors were stationed all round the zoo, people were able to enjoy seeing our beautiful ambassadors on their treks.

It's truly a SAFARI!

Many and *delicious* thanks to **NORTH POLE FUDGE & ICE CREAM CO.** on Pine Knot in the Village.

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 three of our friends.



One of our most beloved (and certainly exotic) ambassadors, Aurora Borealis (an Arctic Fox) has passed due to cancer. She had been an illegal pet (in SoCal, no less!) and was rescued by BBAZ in 2012 at a fairly young age. Aurora was always a great visitor favorite, happy to smile at everyone!

Both Jupiter and Juno (Virginia Opossums) passed away due to age-related illnesses. Though not related, they shared housing here comfortably for quite a while. They were both separately surrendered illegal pets, and were able to live out their lives here at the zoo with appropriate enclosures and medical care.



New Friends at BBAZ



The Turkey Vulture received its common name from the resemblance of the adult's bald red head and its dark plumage to that of the male wild turkey, while the name "vulture" is derived from the Latin *vultur*, meaning "tearer," and is a reference to its feeding habits. They feed on carrion—acting as Mother Nature's "clean-up crew."

Our two new friends came to us from Puerto Rico when their zoo had to be closed down. We're thrilled that we could help these animals find a wonderful new home!



Kids' Korner

The World's Bear Species

Did you know that bears live on four of the seven continents around the world? Africa, Antarctica and Australia are the bear-less places (and no, Koalas aren't bears, even though that's what we call them). There are actually eight species of bears worldwide, and some even have sub-species. Whew, that's a lot of bears!



Here is a Spectacled Bear (sometimes called an Andean Bear). Just look at his "eye glasses!" He is the only species of bear that lives in South America.



Yes, that's a Giant Panda! For years they were not considered bears, but modern science has put the word out—on a molecular level, they are, indeed, bears! In fact, they are sometimes called Living Fossils because they've been on Planet Earth so long!



Take a look at the Asiatic Bear's big round ears and light-colored markings. Can you see why he's sometimes called a Moon Bear? These bears live in several Asian countries.



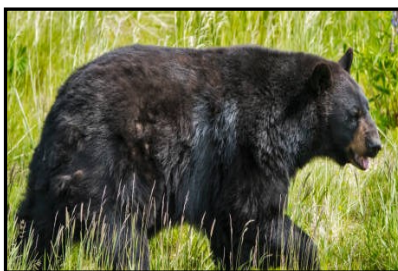
This fuzzy-looking bear and her babies are Sloth Bears. They live in India, Sri Lanka and southern Nepal. Mom may look cute, but they are one of the most aggressive bears. They can hang upside down to gather fruit from a tree.



Polar bears live way up on the planet in the north polar—read COLD—regions! They are the largest bears on earth and eat meat regularly.



What a tongue this Malayan Sun Bear has! He uses it to extract termites, beetle and bee larvae, and some types of fruit. They live in Southeast Asian tropical forests, and are a *very* endangered species.



The American Black Bear is indigenous to North America, and is the most populous. They are medium-sized bears who climb trees in the blink of an eye, thanks to their curved claws and bowed legs. They eat mostly plant-based foods, but will sometimes eat meat. Black may be their name, but they come in ALL colors, from mahogany red to brown to black, even to cream!

The Two Species at Our Zoo



The Grizzly is actually a sub-species of American Brown Bears. Notice the round little ears, the "dish" (concave) face, and the hump on the shoulders. They have very long claws and are expert diggers, though they can climb a tree if they wish. Their diet, too, is filled with plant-based foods, but they can also bring down an elk or a moose if they are extra hungry!