



Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo Newsletter

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FOBBAZ

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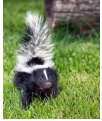
The Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo’s **VISION** is to be a valued nonprofit, whose cooperative support will be a key partner to ensure the success of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo.

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.



Big Bear Alpine Zoo is proud to be a REHAB & RELEASE center!

Spring is in the air...and our rehabilitation area is busy with the addition of some little babies:



- 2 little skunks
- 3 baby squirrels

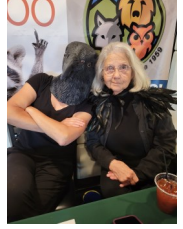
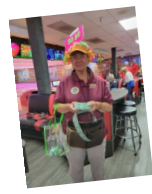


These animals are kept separately from the zoo’s collection, and the keepers make sure they’re not overly exposed to humans as a preventive measure to ensure they don’t become dependent on people—they stay “wild” and can therefore be released to thrive on their own. Further, every effort is made to release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

If we feel they will not thrive back in the wild, we will keep them with us and the Big Bear Alpine Zoo will be their forever home.

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 our environment.





Bowling for the ZOO

took place on Sunday, April 28th at the Bowling Barn in Big Bear Village. Many thanks to the entire crew for all their assistance during the event. There were 16 lanes packed with energy and laughs as teams competed for a variety of prizes and bragging rights. There was a silent auction as well as several raffle items. Many Thanks go out to our wonderful supporters from all over the Big Bear Valley. This event was a great success that exceeded our initial goal...we raised over \$13,000 .

Thanks everyone and see you all again next year !



Crossing the Rainbow Bridge...



With heavy hearts, we say goodbye to a very special bear. Mama Tutu, originally known as # 163 first came on the radar of the Montana Authorities in 1988. At just 4 years old she was caught munching on newly planted grass seed by a road. Over the years, # 163 had several encounters with the "authorities" and had several sets of cubs. In 1995, she and her cubs # 255 and # 256 (Harley and Ayla) began getting into more frequent human related issues near the North Fork Shoshone River in Yellowstone.

The determination was made that # 163 and her cubs were considered "nuisance" bears. They were rounded up and temporarily placed at a zoo in Washington. Word went out that these bears needed to find a permanent home-FAST. The Friends of the Moonridge Zoo (eventually FOBBAZ) launched the Grizzly Come Home campaign and raised enough to not only bring the little bear family to Big Bear but to assist with the cost associated with a new enclosure for them.

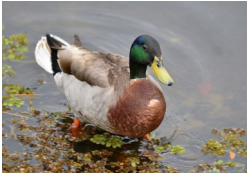
Mama and her cubs soon became very popular residents at the Moonridge Animal Park. In 2020, Tutu, Harley and Ayla were moved to the new location of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo where Mama spent her final years swimming and exploring her new environment.

Mama Tutu lived to the amazing age of 40. In her later years she was being treated for a variety of age related issues. She went peacefully one April morning surrounded by loving zoo staff. She was quite the little rebel !

We are sad to announce that Cyrus, our Snowy Owl passed away in May.

Cyrus arrived at the zoo in 2007 with a severely damaged wing that eventually was amputated. He spent the next 17 years at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo as an ambassador for his species. He was a favorite among guests with his striking appearance and extremely "cool" attitude.





We also need to announce the passing of Daffy the Duck in the Zoo Marsh Area in April. Daffy came to live at the Big Bear Alpine Zoo in 2021. The children at the Big Bear Elementary School spent the spring of 2021 watching mama duck and her babies play in the school yard. Daffy seemed to have a feather deformity that made it difficult for his wings to function properly. Daffy was not able to move away from the school with the rest of his siblings. Mama hung around with him for a while- but eventually she left as well. The school contacted the zoo and Daffy joined the mountain family. Daffy passed of some unforeseen circumstances, and we will miss his entertaining voice in the Marsh Area.



Many Thanks to Our Local Supporters...

by Kimberlee Kidd, Docent

Donations Dedicated to Veterinary Services

Our busy ski season might be over but this local ski shop continues to support Big Bear Alpine Zoo year around.

In this shout-out, we meet Rob Blauer and furry store ambassador Riley. Rob is second generation family co-owner of **Blauer Ski and Board Shop** since 1975. His dad, Steve Blauer and 2 other brothers operate this successful family business... soon to celebrate their 50th season in Big Bear.



How does this happen? Rob’s magic formula is his knowledgeable sales staff and the tremendous foot traffic around 2 busy registers year around. When customers get change, they gladly donate to a zoo can that sits proudly by each register. It is just that simple because rehabilitating wildlife back to good health to return them to their natural habitat is a good cause... and, of course, sweet Riley’s furry presence reminds everyone to treasure all living creatures.

Over many years, *Friends of Big Bear Alpine Zoo* is grateful for hundreds of dollars **Blauer Ski and Board Shop** and many other local contributors have donated for ongoing veterinarian services. Every donation no matter how big or small benefits rescued animals that get rehabilitated and are either released to their natural habitat or permanently reside in *Big Bear Alpine Zoo* because they can no longer survive in the wild. Our zoo animals are true ambassadors. Their life story helps us learn how to better protect and preserve all wildlife so they never end up in a zoo.



Blauer Ski and Board Shop is a popular all-season sport shop for locals and visitors. During the winter it is all about ski/snowboard rentals and quality snow apparel and accessorizing for the slopes. Blauer adds tobogganing to their winter fare and more recently are proudly expanding to online retail through Amazon and BlauerSkiandBoardShop.com. In the spring, summer and fall, Blauer transitions to everything electric and cruiser mountain biking in our beautiful San Bernardino National Forest. In addition, this store stocks retail for fun Big Bear Lake activities like, inner tubes, wake boards and wake surfs. It is also a premier skateboard shop.



A trip down “memory lane”....

Its hard to imagine, as you watch our sweet Holly Beary cruise around her enclosure at a svelte 400 pounds that her start with us was anything but ordinary.



A Northern California Rehabilitation center found an interesting container on the doorstep one morning in late March 2005. The Airline type kennel had in large type inscribed on the side - “Honey Bear”. What was inside was an approximately eight week old, female bundle of fur that was somehow separated from her mother.

The baby bear was wobbly on her feet and weighed a touch over eight pounds and she was so scared that she was refusing to eat. Someone needed to step in. The Moonridge Animal Park (soon to be known as- The Big Bear Alpine Zoo) was that “someone”. The Zoo agreed to take on the baby who was suffering from a skin condition and needed to be bottle fed. It took over a week for then curator Don Richardson to finally get the baby to take the bottle.

Because of all this attention and human contact the baby could not be returned to the wild and the Moonridge Animal Park decided keep “Holly Beary” as part of the mountain bear family and by November of that year, she was introduced (habitat next door) to the other two black bear residents—Huckleberry and Zuni



Holly- soon after her arrival in Big Bear



Holly- today



A little early [Moonridge Animal Park](#) Trivia....Back in the 1960’s and 70’s...There was a “ gentleman’s agreement” between the then...Park Superintendent, Harold Darling and George Toth an animal trainer who worked with many Hollywood productions.

Many of George’s “clients” found temporary and sometimes permanent homes at the Big Bear Wildlife facility – like this friendly and cigar smoking chimpanzee who loved to have his picture taken !





What happens to your donations ?

Memberships...Adoptions....Zoo Events....Fundraising....

All of the activities above generate funds for Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo along with donations made in our name via annual donations or trusts and wills. All of these are made by people with the same love of our animals as we have. Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo is a non-profit, set up in 1989 as a support group for the Zoo. Since that time and with the generous support of donors, members and gifts, FOBBAZ has been able to assist the zoo with many projects and items for the zoo that might otherwise be slightly out of reach.

How did Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo (FOBBAZ) get started?

In June of 1988, three bald eagles were stolen from the zoo, and were later found dead on the North Shore of Big Bear Lake. This was the trigger to start the formation of the Friends of the Moonridge Zoo (now called the Friends of the Big Bear Alpine Zoo). Four concerned citizens, headed by Carol Dingley, went to investigate the security at the zoo, and they found it to be non-existent.

Something had to be done...In early 1989, Carol Dingley, along with Melinda Hope, Phyllis Siegel, and Louise Dand formed a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation to raise money for a new security system. Over the next few months, about 10 more people joined them.

The little group not only raised the money to install a security system, but also began helping the zoo staff improve the facilities. Here are some highlights from 1989 to today...

- 1990 Funded construction of improved enclosures for the coyotes and mountain lions
- 1993 Helped fund enclosures for deer, gray foxes and bald eagles
- 1995 and 1996 "Grizzly Come Home" project (raised \$150,000 to relocate and house three Grizzly's from Yellowstone National Park)
- 1996 Funded a Wildlife Education Center (gift shop, education center and admin offices)
- 2005 Purchased a new Toyota Van for the Zoo
- 2008 A generous Redlands woman left Friends \$100,000 in her will.... Since then, we have received many gifts from people who appreciate the commitment to the ZOO
- 2008 Purchased emergency transport cages
- 2010 Funded a new wolf enclosure for the growing pack
- 2012 Purchased a PA system for the ZOO
- 2015 Funded the new Raccoon Saloon with the proceeds from a Golf Fundraiser.
- 2019 Supported the construction of the new ZOO with a \$500,000 donation. In addition, we funded the cost of the stream and pool you see in the Grizzly enclosure
- 2019 With the proceeds from a Holiday Card Campaign, FOBBAZ also contributed \$100,000 to plan, build and equip a playground and picnic area including a gazebo for the new Zoo
- New location for the Zoo opens on November 5, 2020
- 2020 Purchased x-ray equipment and additional signage
- 2020 Funded 2 electric carts large enough to transport injured or sick animals around the zoo.
- 2021 Purchased Ultrasound equipment and centrifuge
- 2021 Purchased an Autoclave, induction chamber and generator
- Tree Project - over \$8,000 raised to provide trees at the new zoo location
- 2021 and 2022 More restrooms and the concession stand. FOBBAZ donated over \$200,000 for the building to be designed, purchased and delivered. Also a number of sheds were purchased for various locations within the park
- 2022 Fencing project – FOBBAZ assisted the county with the purchase of slats to be installed on the fencing to afford our residents some more privacy and security.
- 2024 FOBBAZ has donated over \$250,000 to date for a shade project within the zoo.

With your help...The Friends have provided funding for many important projects which now totals in excess of TWO MILLION DOLLARS !

With Spring in the air and Summer fast approaching, there has never been a better time to visit the Big Bear Alpine Zoo. It's been almost a year since FOBBAZ opened its snack bar and our volunteers are ready to provide great customer service, along with a variety of cold drinks, popular snacks and ice cream.

We are conveniently located next to the playground, so please stop and check us out. The proceeds from the snack bar go toward our continued goal of providing support to our Big Bear Alpine Zoo animals.



I would like to introduce you to our new addition to the zoo. We are now the proud parents of a baby Barn Owl. This little one is approximately 8 weeks old, as of the beginning of June. He fell out of his nest which was high up in a palm tree at the tender age of 1 week. The left wing was broken in more than one spot. The veterinarian team made the decision that his wing was not fixable, and the little one would not be able to be released, as they would be unable to fly. The next decision was the easy one and that was to keep him with the hopes he may become an encounter animal at the zoo. An animal ambassador to educate the public about these beautiful creatures.

One thing I have recently learned is that taking care of wild animals is not all that fun if you aren't going to keep them. To be able to return a wild animal back to the wild, they have to keep their fear of humans. Lucky for the keepers getting to raise this cutie is that they get to talk in front of him and show him humans aren't so bad to be around.



A few facts about Barn Owls:

- They are nocturnal
- They mainly eat small rodents and regurgitate fur and bones as pellets
- They screech instead of hoot
- There are up to 46 different races of Barn Owls
- Females are showier than males
- The Barn Owl has excellent low-light vision
- They can locate prey by sound alone, which is the best of any animal that has ever been tested
- Baby owls grow to adult size by 8 weeks
- The oldest known North American Barn Owl lived to at least 15 years old

There are two ways to determine whether male or female. One is DNA testing. The other way is to wait and see how big they grow up to be since females are always larger than males. We know we have a male through DNA testing. Keep an eye on the Zoo's Facebook page for updates and to learn what his name is going to be.

Jilda Hellinga, Docent



Lakeshore Clean Up



More than 20 Volunteers (zoo staff, concerned residents and FOBBAZ volunteers) gathered near the west ramp of Big Bear Lake on April 24th for shore cleanup. The volunteers tend to find bottles, cans, left over take out containers and a lot of fishing line ! Approximately 50 large trash bags were filled along with larger items that required special pick-up.

If you missed this opportunity to help clean up the Big Bear Lake shoreline, we plan on another volunteer outing in September- Stay tuned !



COMING UP....
“Ice Cream Safari”
June 15, 2024
11 am – 3 pm

Kids Corner

Word Search submitted by FOBBAZ Docent- Lori Beaver

Zoo

There are 10 words hidden in the word search below, the words may be found across, down, diagonally and backwards and can overlap with each other. The hidden words are listed beneath the word search; circle the words in the word search as you find them and cross them out from the list.



Bear
Eagle
Raccoon
Zoo

Bobcat
Fox
Rehabilitation

Coyote
Hawk
Wolf



Bear Awareness Day

A fun filled day dedicated to our bears took place on May 25th.

Informational tables were strategically placed near our Black Bear and Grizzly enclosures. There was also a very busy Art/Craft area where kids of all ages made bear puppets and colored on bear related pages. In honor of the day, many of our smaller guests donned pom-pom bears ears and demonstrated their ferocious roars!



Be BearWise When Visiting Bear Country and at Home

- ✓ **DO** pay attention to what's going on around you when outdoors. Leave earbuds and phones in your pocket.
- ✓ **DO** stay together when you're outside. **DON'T** run ahead or lag behind others.
- ✓ **DON'T** feed bears or try to get close to them.
- ✓ **DO** keep your camp and picnic site super clean.
- ✓ **DON'T** leave food, trash or pet food outdoors when no one is around. A few seconds is all it takes for a hungry bear to swipe it.
- ✓ **DON'T** store ANYTHING that smells in your tent. Food, candy, snacks, empty packages and cans, and even toothpaste and sunscreen smell tasty to a bear.
- ✓ **DO** put trash only in bear-resistant cans or dumpsters, or inside a sturdy building.
- ✓ **DO** keep dogs leashed at all times.
- ✓ **DO** take down bird feeders when bears are around. Bears love birdseed and hummingbird nectar.

