

# ANNUAL REPORT

# 2020

## **Shasta**

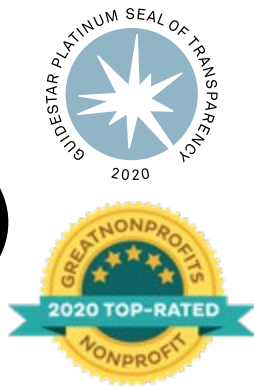
**Species:** Tiger (*Panthera tigris*)

**Sex:** Female

**Birth:** February 14, 2007

**Arrival:** September 14, 2012





## AFFILIATES



As we begin a New Year filled with hope and determination, I want to give thanks and recognize each and every member of our TCWR Family for their part in helping us survive the past twelve months. The year 2020 was incredibly challenging but was also filled with many moments of joy. Our dedicated Animal Care team worked from morning to night, focused on ensuring that our animals never felt the fear and loss going on in the world around us. The dedicated winter of '19 Interns will always have a special place in my heart for choosing to stay on with us, caring for their animal charges vs. returning home to their families during the quarantine. Our administration support staff and Board members continually adapted, innovated, and tightened budgets to prevail over every obstacle this year.

Lastly, and most importantly, I want to thank our incredible supporters. Your unfailing generosity not only allowed our mission to continue despite formidable odds, it allowed us to save and transform the lives of 12 big cats during the pandemic in three successful rescues!

Meanwhile, hundreds of you took our Pledge to Complete 10 Simple Advocacy Steps. Your efforts resulted in historic progress being made on the Big Cat Public Safety Act, which passed through the US House of Representatives with a 2/3 'yes' vote! We've seen long time animal abusers put in jail, cub-petting facilities shut down, and animals lives saved and transformed. Awareness of the plight of exploited big cats has become a national sensation and a 'hot button' topic for many people. This January the bill was reintroduced to the House as H.R. 263 and there are already over 50 House Representatives signed on. With your help, we can see this legislation passed into law in 2021!

Along the way, our organization has changed and come out stronger than ever before. This year we made great strides in virtual education, both around the U.S. and the world. We networked together with fellow Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance members to spread advocacy and awareness while improving the care we give to all our animal residents. We implemented safety measures, expanded our team, updated and improved habitats, and completed the first step towards our Visitor Education Center with the final touches on our new water system and an outdoor learning Pavilion. **It has been a year of growth, but only with your help can we make a better future for our animal residents and all survivors of the Big Cat Trade across our country a reality.**

**Here are just a few things we accomplished in 2020 . . .**

**Mission Statement:** To provide lifetime refuge for abused and neglected “Big Cats” with emphasis on tigers, lions, leopards, and cougars.

**Vision Statement:** Through public education we work to end the Big Cat Trade. Together, we can preserve and protect these magnificent predators in the wild for our children’s future.

*To Fulfill this Mission and Vision our Goals are:*

## EDUCATION, PRESERVATION AND COMPASSION

### Education:

TCWR is evolving how we educate today’s youth, in classroom visits, onsite programming, and around the world through our new partnership with Skype in the Classroom.

Our Certified Wildlife Interpreters introduce students to our animal residents and their stories along with the workings of a true sanctuary to teach why predators should never be made pets or exploited for entertainment. Through awareness we can foster advocacy and environmental stewardship to end the Big Cat Trade in our lifetime.

### Preservation:

Turpentine Creek is a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) licensed facility for exotic and native wildlife, accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) and a member of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance (BSCA), and the American Association of Zoo Keepers (AAZK). We rescue Big Cats and Bear from exploitation, neglect and abuse, providing them a safe lifelong home with exceptional care, while working to preserve endangered species in the wild through public education and advocacy.

### Compassion:

We believe Big Cats and Bear are predators, not pets or entertainment for the masses. They and other exotic and native wildlife deserve to live out their lives with dignity, allowed to be the wild animals they instinctively are. We will continue to be their voice, both for those forced to live in captivity and those struggling for survival in the wild.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

### OFFICERS:

**Tanya Smith:**

Founder, President and Chairperson

**Scott Smith**

Vice President

**Amanda Smith**

Secretary/Treasurer

### BOARD MEMBERS:

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**Dave Schoonover** (U.S. Army Veteran & Patriot Guard)

**Dr. Heather Kimberly Klatt** (DO)

**Tracy Garry** (Retirement Administration)

**J.R. Shaw** (Veteran Tourism Professional)

**Amanda Rials** (Engineer - Food Safety with the Alabama Technology Network)

# WITH YOUR HELP: 2020 ACCOMPLISHMENTS



## **ADVOCACY:**

Last year, we created a pledge that many of you participated in. It listed 10 simple steps to help end the exploitation and abuse of big cats, and protect vulnerable animals. Many of our rescues came from significant criminals working within the Big Cat Trade, and the Big Cat Public Safety Act caught the attention of politicians unlike ever before. This happened as the result of hundreds of you taking the 10 simple steps throughout 2020.

- **7,938** advocacy page visits
  - 7,575** returning advocates
  - 363** new advocates
- **1,557** emails sent to Congress
- **153** advocacy tweets

The Big Cat Public Safety Act has already been re-submitted as H.R. 263, and we are going to need your help to get it passed quickly! Please visit our Advocacy Page to contact your Representative, and tell at least one person about why passage of HR263 is so important to you! Please ask them to:

1. Visit our advocacy page to contact their Representatives
2. Pass on the message to one other person.



## **EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH:**

In January of 2018 we established a formal Education Department. In 2020, the program has innovated to expand online worldwide.

- **Graduated 18 animal care interns and 1 education intern**
- **1 new education internship**
- **Virtual Classes: Spoke to 3,040 students in 24 different states and 12 countries: U.S.A., Canada, Ukraine, New Zealand, Argentina, United Kingdom, Columbia, Turkey, Brazil, Mexico, Bangladesh, India, and Egypt**
- **30,953 people of all ages educated on site**
- **1,125 students educated off site in February prior to COVID**

With virtual classes gaining popularity worldwide due to the pandemic, and no return to 'normal' anytime soon, the need for expanded indoor facilities to transmit educational programming year-round has become more pressing than ever before.



### **RESCUES/ANIMAL CARE:**

We were down a bit this year in wellness exams from last year due to COVID and quarantine, though we performed more sedation events. Many of these events were for BB King's treatments or for elderly animals for whom we could no longer provide adequate quality of life.

- 4 lions and 8 tigers rescued
- Performed 12 complete wellness exams, for individually tailored health plans
- Performed 2 comprehensive dental exams and cleanings
- Ran blood work using our in-house blood work machines 35 times
- Took over 60 radiographs (x-rays)
- BB King was sedated first for his wellness exam that revealed the mass, then a follow-up 'Staging of the cancer' procedure, followed by 5 total chemotherapy treatment events, one every 3 weeks. Dr. Kellyn performed a 3-month follow-up exam, and she observed that clinically he appears to be doing very well! BB King will get another exam in 6 months, and then yearly thereafter.
- Fed our residents 194,979 lbs. of meat (average 534.2 lbs. per day!) including Nebraska specialty diet.



### **INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS:**

- Completed our new well and water system to support future growth.
- Revamped our Discovery Area with a spacious cement walkway and wood beamed shade Pavilion.
- Opened a new multi introduction small cat habitat in our Discovery Area.
- Repaired the water damage to our Gift Shop and updated the design with an outdoor check in system.
- Converted to an open air tram system for all tours for our guests' safety and comfort.
- Remodeled some lodging units to improve your visitor experience.
- Processed over 1,000 pounds of meat, fruits and veggies daily in our commissary.
- Resumed Capital Campaign preparations for our planned Visitor Education Center.
- Began strategic planning to accommodate future rescues.



### **VOLUNTEERING:**

- 2017: 123 volunteers
- 2018: 145 volunteers
- 2019: 190 volunteers gave 1,749 hours to help the animals.
- 2020: 47 volunteers gave 682 hours (of those, 5 were recurring volunteers who gave 351 hours and 37 were pre-quarantine January-March).



**EVENT AND ONLINE FUNDRAISING:**

- Northwest Arkansas Gives - \$20,289
- Cats at the Castle - \$5,300 (COVID canceled/tickets converted to donations per supporters)
- AR 500 - \$12,275
- Online Auctions:
  - 28 Year Anniversary Auction - \$10,814  
(in addition to the auction we received, for Giving Tuesday Now, \$39,784)
  - Bids For Big Cats Auction - \$4,955.04
  - 2020 Santa Paws is Coming to Town Auction - \$8,632.99
- Giving Tuesday – \$46,527
- People Donated via Facebook for a total of \$84,808  
Part of that total arose from 149 Supporter Fundraisers that generated \$24,257



**MAJOR EXPENSES:**

- Habitat/Buildings/Grounds Repairs/Maintenance \$49,897
- Animal Food \$58,968.36
- Animal Care/Rescue/Enrichment/Veterinary/Medications \$43,168



**2020 FINANCIAL TOTALS:**

*Note: In 2020, we focused on the General Fund to build funds back up due to COVID.*

• Foundation support:	\$163,500
• Private donations:	\$995,899
• In-kind donations:	\$198,160
• Revenue from lodging, entry & other revenue streams	\$1,358,761
<hr/>	
• <b>TOTAL INCOME (ordinary):</b>	<b>\$2,716,320</b>
• <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,508,324</b>

# RESCUES

# 2020



January, a federal court judge finally granted placement for **Luna** and **Remington** after a three-year court battle. Today, after safely neutering Remington, the chuffy pair clearly enjoy each-other's company.



In February, we rescued **Naula** and **Kiara** from a small closing facility in Oklahoma. Their owner told us that they came from another facility in Oklahoma that was “not a good place to grow up.” They quickly adapted to their new grassy home.



Four tigers (**Avalanche**, **Hurricane**, **Miles** and **Glacier**) and four lions (**Chief**, **Mauri**, **Ungowwa** and **Savanna**) were rescued from a shut down facility in Indiana in September after a federal court judge ordered their removal. The facility had multiple USDA and Endangered Species Act violations. Many of the cats had been cruelly declawed, and all eight required treatment for worms. Seeing the transformation of the “Indiana Eight” has brought some much-needed hope and joy to us all during these stressful times.

# INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

# 2020



We began building a new well in 2019, which we completed early this year. This legal requirement will accommodate more visitors, allow us to expand our team and rescue more animals.



We made necessary repairs to water damage on our gift shop building, using this opportunity to update the design to handle new safety and social distancing efforts with an outdoor check-in system.



Just weeks before our COVID-19 shutdown, we began to revamp our Discovery Area with a beautiful cement walkway to make it easier for everyone to navigate. This project also included the construction of a new wood-beamed shade pavilion, providing our Education Department an area to conduct outdoor classes focused on creating awareness and inspiring advocacy.

We also took this opportunity to rebuild our old small cat habitat. The new single habitat has 1,800 sq. ft. exceeding four times the footprint of the three old habitats. This fully roofed enclosure will stand for years to come and provide a lifelong safe home for any small cats that need future refuge.



We acted on previous plans to upgrade from our old bus style trolley to an open-air tram system. Due to social distancing requirements during COVID-19, we converted exclusively to tram tours, which offers extra enrichment for the animals and makes traversing our half mile plus tour loop easier for everyone!





When a routine wellness exam resulted in the discovery of a rare cancerous growth on BB King's tongue, we decided to treat with chemotherapy to give him the best chance of recovery. Many of you have watched BB King's progress and have contributed to his treatments and care.

## *In Memoriam*

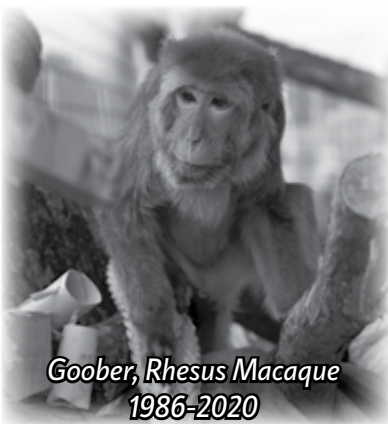
*Sadly, in 2020 we had to say goodbye to some of our oldest and most beloved animal residents. Thank you for giving them many beautiful years. Thank you for giving us the privilege of caring for them. Rest in peace...*



*Bombay Tiger, 1996-2020*



*Elvis Bobcat, 2001-2020*



*Goober, Rhesus Macaque 1986-2020*



*Koda B. Black Bear 2004-2020*



*Tammy Tiger, 2002-2020*



*Shakira Liger, 2007-2020*



*Styx Tiger, 1996-2020*



*Savannah Lioness 2000-2020*



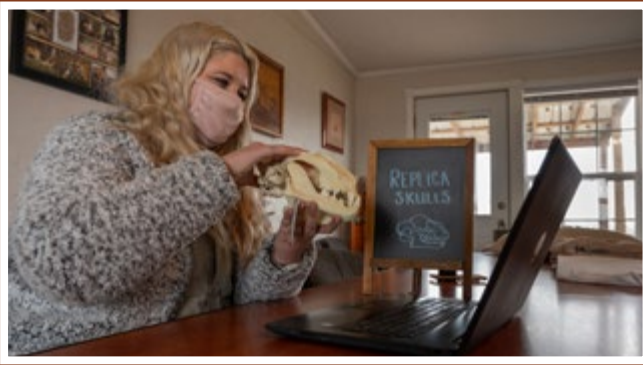
*Izzy Tiger, 2002-2020*



*Magic Leopard, 2004-2020*



*Nala Cougar, 2000-2020*



Virtual classes allow our educators to reach students from NW Arkansas to across the U.S. and all over the world!



A TCWR Intern uses positive reinforcement (meat treats!) to encourage participation in behavioral training. This training will eventually allow hands-off medical procedures like exams and even injections possible without the stress of anesthesia for the animals who voluntarily participate.



## ANIMAL HIGHLIGHTS:



We rebuilt our small cat habitat, which now has over four times the footprint of the three old habitats. This fully roofed enclosure will provide a safe, lifelong home to small cats that need refuge. Current residents are bobcat brothers, Tony and Prince.



When Chief was rescued in September of 2020 he was barely clinging to life. Now this regal 15-yr-old lion has regained his youthful vigor and enjoys leading the Refuge caroling!



Every one of our animal residents receives special birthday enrichment. Here, Heather marks her 20th with a very special party, complete with meat treats, of course, and staff singing!



19-year-old Willy loves his peaceful and flat habitat down at Rescue Ridge, where he still is an active participant in caroling. Here he cools off with a summertime hose bath!



Huggy, our resident Russian Brown Bear, delights in Christmas Tree enrichment. He also loves foraging for treats within the native fauna we've planted in the spacious wooded habitat he shares with black bears Holly & Lolly.

# MAJOR IN-KIND DONATIONS

# 2020



In April 2020 UA **R&R Solutions** of Gravette, AR donated 3,600 Bottles of Joint Supplement for our animal residents, valued at \$90,000.



**Tyson Foods** donated \$136,216.08 lbs of meat throughout 2020, valued at \$68,866.56

**Mike Reynolds** from **Cave Mountain Farm** donated 16,946 lbs of rabbit meat throughout 2020, for a total value of \$29,147.12.



**Google** donated Google Advertising valued at \$99,260.72 in 2020

## Thank You!

From the bottom of our hearts, we want to say, “THANK YOU,” to everyone who supported us on NWA Gives Day on Thursday, April 2! Because of your generous donations, personal fundraisers, and the amount of time you spent sharing our posts and spreading the word, we were able to raise \$20,289 for our animal residents! That is even more than you donated last year when things were “normal!” All of your contributions helped supplement what is typically brought in by visitors while we were closed to the public.



**GIVING TUESDAY**



You showed up Tuesday, December 2, to #GiveFreedom during Giving Tuesday, donating over \$46,201 to get us through the end of the year that seemed to go on forever. Despite the hardships 2020 brought to so many, you made it our **BEST Giving Tuesday EVER!**

*We would like to extend a special  
Thank You to all our Membership Level Donors*

The members of the Hilda Jackson Society, the Kenny Fellowship, the Bam Bam Benefactors, and the Friends of India include Turpentine Creek's most committed members who support TCWR's rescue and education initiatives. By enrolling in a membership tier and pledging to give again, these dedicated stewards enable us to budget for bigger projects and projects with further impact in the years to come. Our humble thanks also go to all of you who declined membership benefits but still chose to give at a tier level.

***Without all of your amazing support we could not have survived this past year. Thank you.***

*The Hilda Jackson Society*

*Annual Donation of \$10,000+*



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Annual Donation of \$3,000 – \$9,999

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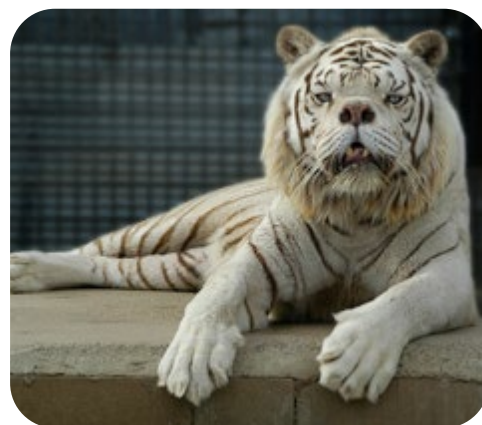
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Annual Donation of \$1,250 – \$2,999

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Annual Donation of \$300 – \$1,249

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I look forward to seeing what 2021 will hold for our mission. As in all years past, we are continuing to focus on creating a better future for big cats, one day at a time. We are grateful that you have chosen to continue this fight with us!

When the inevitable calls for rescue come, we must be prepared. At the same time, we will unveil new opportunities for you to take an active role in putting an end to the private ownership of big cats, and hands-on interaction with big cats by spreading awareness and advocacy.

Here we go! Welcome to 2021. ***The Trade ends here!***

Until then,



Tanya Smith, President/Founder  
Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge



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