Your Support Saves Lives
Finishing Rescue Ridge and Planning For Three More Habitats
Tanya Smith Founder / President

As I am writing this I am looking out my office window to a Winter Wonderland with lots of tigers, lions, and bears that need to have care every day. This is always the time of year when we get snow and ice and have to endure freezing temps. For the past 22 years we have survived and are learning to thrive through the winters when there is no business as far as customers. It is always a challenge, but our team does their jobs extremely well. Even as cold as it is I am seeing smiles. Our new group of interns started on Feb 1st. They seem to be a great addition to our team. Training new people, especially in this freezing weather, is not an easy task. Emily McCormack, TCWR Curator, and the team she has assembled to give the daily care to the animals have my utmost respect. I am grateful everyday for the love I see and care they give to our animals. Thank you!

Lots of changes happening this year; WE DID IT! WE DID IT! Thanks for your help. I am so proud of YOUR support! TCWR will build 3 new enclosures for tigers THANKS to YOUR contribution. Weather dependent, and with lots of volunteers, we should be able to start this project by summer. We are finishing up construction on Rescue Ridge. Only 4 more extension yards left to build onto the 20 cages that we built in one of our lower pastures. This area was built to save 28 Big Cats from Mountainburg, AR. We started that rescue in November of 2012. Due to YOUR support, 128 days later, we had all 27 tigers and 1 cougar moved. A great accomplishment…

Tigers In America has been so generous to match your donations by 50%. Their part equaled more than $22,000 which equals 1 habitat. Through your donations we raised more than $44,000, which should build two large enclosures, making it three habitats in total. Our ultimate goal is to get every rescued cat/animal in a grassy area with trees and lots of enrichment on the 459 acres available. TCWR plans to tear down our main compound and rebuild it into larger enclosures. The rare times when we do receive complaints it is always due to the small cages when the visitors first walk in; most don’t realize how many animals’ lives those cages saved. We are so grateful that we are growing and getting the animals out on to the grass.

Please continue to do what you can to help us provide the best life possible for these magnificent, unfortunate creatures. Our ultimate goal is that there would be no need for a Big Cat refuge like TCWR. But until laws change and people stop breeding and selling these animals the need for refuges like ours IS necessary. Our goal is to be a shining example of how to care for these animals while educating interns and the general public about the proper way to help. Let me know if I can be of further assistance. Come visit when you can. Thanks again. Until next time…

DONATE TODAY to get your 2014 TAX DEDUCTION
The tigers love to run and play in the snow, so this winter has been enjoyable for the tigers as we have been hit by 3 major winter storms that have covered our landscape with ice and snow. Just like in the summer, the tigers love the water; they love to roll around and play in the snow and some of them even like to catch snow balls.

While the tigers are romping in the snow, the keepers have a hard day of work. Within just one day of the cats walking around their enclosures, they pack the snow into ice. When it’s above freezing we are able to clean their enclosures with water hoses, but when it’s below freezing we have to lock the cats in their dens and enter their enclosures to shovel the snow and ice. We have to use floor scrapers to chip the ice and snow; we are able to get 8-12 enclosures cleared a day for the cats. We break the ice out of the water dishes for all of the animals 3 times a day so that they have water to drink.

Even on cold days, when the sun is out you’ll see many of our cats belly up soaking up the sun; so bundle up and come visit the cats.

IVY COOPER STAFF BIOLOGIST

Tubby loves the snow and is often seen playing with his brother, Ralph, and sister, Katy.
As another group of interns departs, reflection of character and growth comes to mind. Each intern becomes an important staple of everyday life and progress at the refuge. In the past six months TCWR has had continued development. Due to our supporters and amazing team, we were able to revamp a habitat for Willy, finish Bam Bam’s habitat, and opened the 16th habitat at Rescue Ridge to date. Pieces of freedom built, revealed personality changes and defined characters.

The expansion at Rescue Ridge has been phenomenal in the last 6 months. More importantly, the animals dispositions have changed immensely. When the RTS rescue began, the cats were scared as any new resident would be adjusting to their surroundings. After arriving at Rescue Ridge, most of the tigers were tucked away in their dens, unsure of trusting. Construction, the humming of welders, and unfamiliar people took time for them to absorb. But slowly, some of them were seen slinking around their enclosures. As we recently drove the final pipe in the ground, Grumpet was restfully sleeping on her bench in her yard. It is amazing and uplifting to now see all the cats at Rescue Ridge enjoying their habitats and peaceful new home. The change from seeing them hiding in their dens to watching the cats gain trust and await our arrival each morning is truly fulfilling.

Thank you to all of our supporters who believe and support this incredible sanctuary. I am so excited to see what we will do together in 2014!

This was, by far, one of my most challenging life decisions I have ever had to make. Everything leading up to now has been pretty easy - Move to Arkansas to work with tigers? Indeed I will! Then move to Hawaii to work with The San Diego Zoo to save endangered Hawaiian birds? Sure, twist my arm! Move back to those beautiful Ozark Mountains to work for the greatest refuge ever? Don’t mind if I do!

The hard part came when I discovered my other true calling in life, and I wondered if I had enough faith in myself to leave the best job I have ever had, working for the most incredible boss one could ever dream of having, working with some of the happiest, spoiled rotten, large carnivores you have ever came across. All of the Big Cats with their different personalities and love, almost showing gratitude as if they understand we saved their life. And knowing how hard every single person at TCWR works to get the cats out in those big beautiful habitats.

It has truly been an honor working for and with some of the greatest people I have ever had the pleasure of getting to know. I have gained friendships here in NWA that will last a lifetime! There are no words to describe how grateful I am for the 2 years I have been blessed being able to work here. The memories I made will always stay in my heart forever. Thank you TCWR for all that you do and all that you are—this place is true greatness!
To order your brick, go to www.turpentinecreek.org or use included envelope.

Adopt or Sponsor Your Favorite Friend Today!

Adoptions and sponsorships are a wonderful way for you to support your favorite cat(s) or other animals. When adopting, you will receive an adoption photo/bio of your animal and an annual visitor pass. When you sponsor, you will receive an 8 X 10 glossy photo, a unique sponsorship certificate, and an annual visitor pass.

To have your favorite Turpentine Creek animal friend become part of your family, use the handy order form included with this Newsletter and send it in along with your payment information.

Thanks for your grrreat support!!
We, and the animals, truly appreciate it.

Please adopt or sponsor me,
I need your support.

Volunteering...

Three groups are coming to volunteer soon:
The University of Missouri
The University of Kansas
The University of North Texas

Are you in a group that may want to help the animals?
Contact ivy@turpentinecreek.org to schedule your volunteer trip.

Brick Program for Habitat Expansion

$100 - 4x8” Plain Brick: 3 lines of text, max. 20 characters* each
$125 – 4x8” Picture Brick: 3 lines of text, max. 15 characters* each
$250 – 8x8” Plain Brick: 6 lines of text, max. 20 characters* each
$275 – 8x8” Picture Brick: 5 lines of text, max. 20 characters* each
$25 – 4x4” Replica Tile (to be shipped to donor)

* A character is a number, letter, or space.

Your choice of picture, bear (shown), tiger, lion, cougar, leopard, or bobcat.
Your choice of message and / or name.

A Sample 4x8 Picture Brick. When we reach our goal, your personalized brick will be displayed in Bam Bam’s viewing walkway.
Willy was rescued from an elderly gentleman in Arkansas. He was in failing health and being forced to move from his home, leaving Willy (and his cage mate Ava) in need of a lifelong home. He came to the refuge in 2008 and was housed in the smaller enclosures until a habitat was ready for him. He quickly became a favorite of long time supporters Mari and Arnold Fagin from Oklahoma City, OK.

They wanted to see Willy in a habitat and generously donated $22,000 to build him a large, grassy area to run and play. At the time we were currently in the process of fundraising for Bam Bam's habitat and they were kind enough to transfer the donation towards Bam Bam so we could complete that project with the stipulation that Willy be released as soon as possible. Last summer one of our oldest tigers, Loretta, crossed over the rainbow bridge; and after some renovations to the habitat area it was ready for Willy to move in. He is very stubborn about loading in a trailer so he was sedated, had an external check-up (he is in great health), and moved to the lock-down area of his new habitat. We had planned for his release in early December, but due to the harsh weather which Willy, like most lions, is not a fan of, we held off until things cleared up. On January 12th, he finally got to step out onto the grass, rub on the trees, and enjoy his ‘freedom.’

With the help of amazing supporters like the Fagin’s, we are able to ensure the best care of all of our animals — Please help by donating today.
Here at the refuge, the majority of our animals are over the age of fifteen. Now out in the wild, most big cats would usually only be living to about ten to twelve years of age. However, in captivity their average lifespan is around sixteen to twenty years of age as they receive proper nutrition and veterinary care daily. But just like how old age affects people, it also affects big cats. Muscle atrophy, arthritis, spinal fusion, etc. are examples of what aging big cats go through. Thus, with our ever-growing population of geriatric cats (especially after the Mountainburg Rescue of 28 elderly big cats) TCWR’s curator and veterinarians sat down to improve on our old pain management plan.

We have now implemented a plan involving the use of calcium, glucosamine & chondroitin, B-complex, cod liver oil, aspirin, and such controlled substances as tramadol hydrochloride and gabapentin. Calcium is given to help keep their bones strong. To help with the degeneration of cartilage, which causes aching joints and arthritis, many cats have been started on glucosamine & chondroitin. B complex helps with boosting both the immune system and energy levels of the cats. Cod liver oil helps ease stiffness of joints. Also, cod liver oil has a high level of both vitamins A and D. Receiving a high dose of both of these vitamins will help with boosting the immune system, eye health, bone health, and aid in digestion and absorption by the intestines. Aspirin is an anti-inflammatory that will help with swollen aching joints. The controlled substance of tramadol hydrochloride helps with the pain felt from arthritis while the controlled substance of gabapentin helps with more neurological-type pain from pinched nerves and such. Again, all of these substances help our elderly big cats live comfortably in their old age.

We have a total of about 54 big cats on our new plan. We began implementing it towards the end of November and have already seen improvements in many of our cats. Though we cannot stop them from passing on, we can at least make them as comfortable as we possibly can before their time comes. Please help us to do this! We go through an incredible amount of supplements/medicines monthly and need your help and donations in order to be able to afford to continue to give our elderly cats comfort. See our online wish list of supplements at Amazon.com. Look up wish list under the name Turpentine Creek or under the email address of turpentinecreek123@yahoo.com

Thank you in advance from our TCWR staff and all of our elderly big cats!
It's always hard saying good-bye to those that you have worked with and basically called family after only a few months, but even harder when it has been over 5 years. Sadly, the Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge family will be saying farewell to two of our beloved staff members, Kellyn Kearney and Jarrett Sweeley. Kellyn graduated from Manhattan College in New York, New York, with a Biology degree and Jarrett graduated from Coastal Carolina University in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, with a dual degree of Marine Science/Biology. They both started their first internship in August, 2008, and were eager to begin their work with the cats. When their internship ended in February, 2009, Kellyn and Jarrett found out coincidentally that they were both staying with family/friends in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

After spending 6 months away from Turpentine Creek, Kellyn and Jarrett decided to re-apply for a second internship, which both of them accepted, and have been part of our team ever since. Both completed a total of 3 internships and then in August of 2010, they were asked to stay on as Animal Care Staff here at Turpentine Creek. Both Kellyn and Jarrett have dedicated their lives over these past five years to caring for and providing a loving, forever home to the 100 plus cats who live here. In addition to caring for the animals, they have fallen in love and have recently become engaged this past year. It’s been a hard decision to make, but both of them have decided that they will be leaving us in March to pursue other dreams. Kellyn is now in the process of applying to vet schools, which she hopes to start in the fall, and they are in the midst of planning a Spring wedding that will take place right here in Arkansas since this is the place they fell in love and called home.

All of us at Turpentine Creek wish Kellyn and Jarrett the best of luck with their future endeavors and a lifetime of happiness. We want to let them know that we will be supporting them all the way and they will always have Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge to call their “home.” Love you guys!!!

**UPDATE:** Kellyn has been accepted to three veterinarian schools and is leaning heavily towards Georgia, but she is still undecided.

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**MARY SCHLIEVE STAFF BIOLOGIST**

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**What we do for you:**
1. Take care of the animals
2. Answer all your questions
3. Check you in when you arrive
4. We are your tour guides
5. Provide info through keeper talks, and much more.

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**tigers@turpentinecreek.org • 479.253.5841 • www.turpentinecreek.org**
Haley came to the refuge under weight and suffering from malnutrition. You made her well, built her a habitat, and gave her a bright future.

Thank you for my beautiful habitat!

My friends all need one too. You can make a difference. Donate Today   www.turpentinecreek.org