Winter is upon us. The air is crisp and the Big Cats are frisky. The bears are slowing down a bit; all except Bam Bam, the Grizzly bear, who is as active as ever.

Just a reminder, November, 2013, marked a year since we started saving the 34 Big Cats from Mountainburg, AR. The continued care of these animals is very expensive. With the age of our animals it is imperative that we build an onsite veterinarian clinic. We are currently working on a design and plan for the building.

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More exciting news -

Big Cat Chronicles

Maggie Whitt is a humble supporter of Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge from Murphy, Texas. She was first brought to TCWR around 2004 by her good friend Rose, who had been coming to the refuge since 1994. Ms. Whitt began returning to visit, bringing along her late father who was an avid animal lover. Her father donated the money for the construction of our Okavango Safari Lodge, which was made handicap accessible for him and all other handicapped individuals so they could enjoy experiencing what a night in Africa would be like right here in the Ozarks. During our RTS rescue, Ms. Whitt donated a substantial amount of money which helped ensure the rescue could be completed. She feels blessed that she has been able to donate so much to TCWR, and hopes that she will be able to donate more in the future.

Ms. Whitt agreed to be featured in our donor spotlight not because she wanted the recognition but to challenge others to do what they can to help our mission. She has seen how much we have grown in the past nine years, and is excited to see what will happen in the future. She knows that we have only been able to achieve what we have because of our donors and supporters. Ms. Whitt is already thinking about what we could achieve with double the amount of donor support; can you? Ms. Whitt wanted to include a quote which she thinks sums up what we do here.

“Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.”

Donate today at www.turpentinecreek.org
MARY SCHLIEVE STAFF BIOLOGIST

As many of you know, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge specializes in rescuing big cats nationwide from places ranging from private ownerships to other sanctuaries/zoo’s who either may not be able to properly care for their cats, don’t have the funds or simply can’t maintain their current housing. Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge is home to 125 cats (ranging from tigers, lions, cougars, bobcats, leopards and servals), 6 black bears, 1 grizzly bear, 1 thaisus macaque, and small hoof stock, all of which have been rescued from all over the country. It is now estimated that there are between 10,000 to 20,000 big cats that are currently privately owned in the U.S.

The Big Cat and Public Safety Protection Act (H.R. 4122) was introduced on February 29, 2012, by Rep. Buck McKeon (R-CA) and Rep. Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), which will essentially prohibit the private possession and breeding of big cats. The bill will insure that those big cats kept as pets/exploited in roadside zoos and traveling exhibits do not threaten public safety, diminish the global big cat conservation efforts, or end up living in deplorable conditions where they can be subject to mistreatment and cruelty. This bill would also make it illegal to possess any big cat except at accredited zoos and wildlife sanctuaries where they can be properly cared for, and would only allow breeding to happen at accredited zoos. However, current owners would be allowed to keep the cats they currently have provided they register their cats with USDA. There is no federal regulation telling owners how the cats should be kept; however, state laws do vary from no restrictions, to requiring registration, to some states banning ownership as pets.

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge’s main objective is to help save these big cats and provide them a forever home where they can roam and live “free” in grassy habitats. We now currently have 34 big habitats, along with our 20 Rescue Ridge yards/habitats, and are in the process of tearing down more of our oldest section to build more habitats. With supporting the Big Cat and Public Safety Protection Act (H.R. 4122), it would prevent the possibility of humans being injured or killed, stop the illegal trade in captive animal parts, and end the potential misery these cats may have from being poorly cared for.

To learn more information on this important bill, feel free to contact Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, visit CatLaws.com, or do a simple search on the bill. Also feel free to personally call your own representatives to urge them to cosponsor this important act and help all big cats who are currently privately owned. If not for us, who will be their voice?

**Brick Program for Habitat Expansion**

$100 - 4x8” Plain Brick: Text up to 60 characters
$125 - 4x8” Picture Brick: Choose animal & up to 45 characters
$250 - 8x8” Plain Brick: Text up to 120 characters
$275 - 8x8” Picture Brick: Choose animal & up to 90 characters
$25 - 4x6” Replica Tile (to be shipped to donor)

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

**Buy a Brick from Bam Bam**

Bam Bam is selling bricks to help his fellow ‘compound critters’ get a GRRREAT new habitat like he has. Your purchase of a “Bam Bam Brick” will go towards our Habitat Fund.

If We Build It they Can run!
**TCWR Supports the Big Cat and Public Safety Protection Act (H.R. 4122)**

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**TCWR Supports the Big Cat and Public Safety Protection Act (H.R. 4122)**

**EMILY MCCORMACK CURATOR**

November 1st is most recognized as “All Saints’ Day.” Last year on November 1st, Turpentine Creek was approached with the largest rescue challenge in its history. TCWR staff met with the sheriff in Crawford County, AR, to find an extremely dangerous situation. There were 34 exotic cats that had the risk of escaping their confinement at any moment. With your support, we changed lives forever. Not only were animals saved but many people that were in danger without awareness. TCWR made a plea to all supporters in hopes of saving lives. You not only responded but exceeded our expectations. Saints definitely roose to our plea.

In one year we cleared and enclosed a 4 0 acre field with a perimeter fence (Rescue Ridge). We then built 20 enclosures inside to house and complete the 26 animal rescues in just 128 days. 10 habitats have been constructed and opened off of those enclosures thus far, with 10 more to go. Four mobile homes were acquired to house and increase our intern program from 12 to 18 individuals needed to incorporate the addition of animals and give the best exotic animal care. On top of that, we still completed Bam Bam bear’s tremendous new habitat, which incorporates the plan of renovating the entire compound. In between this, we are finishing the reconstruction of another habitat where Willy, the lion, will soon enjoy a piece of freedom.

What a phenomenal year! Over 900 people stepped forward to donate allowing TCWR to make strides of development. It marks the most accomplished year we have witnessed. TCWR wishes to challenge everyone again. Another field on the property is more than 3 times the size of Rescue Ridge. The possibilities are endless. The goal is to empty the original compound (which has served and saved many lives) and give all the animals a beautiful habitat at TCWR. We also need to be ready for the laws that are changing in many states, which will increase the number of exotic cats and bears presumably being homeless in the next year. So, we are asking all of you to step up again and help us develop the 13.6 acre vacant field waiting for animals to roam in a habitat. What was witnessed this past year was beyond remarkable! Let’s do it again.

If We Build It They Can Run!
About a year ago, plans were set in motion to start building a big grassy habitat for the one resident grizzly bear at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge. Bam Bam Bear was only five years old and quickly outgrowing his enclosure. However, when TCWR received the call that 34 big cats were desperately in need of help down in Mountainburg, AR, the grizzly bear habitat plans had to be put on hold. Now after months of waiting, fundraising, and construction, the habitat is finally finished.

On Sunday, November 2nd, 2013, at 10:00 a.m. central time, Bam Bam Bear was released for the first time into his new habitat. About a half acre in size, the habitat features a beautiful ingrown swimming pool and waterfall, compliments of Aquacrete, L.C. out of Bella Vista, AR (they donated over half of the costs for the pool), and a huge fire hose ‘jungle gym’ for Bam Bam to climb, play, and sleep on. Prior to the release, appreciation speeches were given by both Tanya Smith, president and founder of TCWR, and Arnold Fagin, long-time supporter of and contributor to TCWR. Over three hundred people crowded around the habitat to listen to the speeches and watch as Bam Bam took his first steps onto grass.

Somewhat apprehensive at first, he slowly moved into the habitat from his night house. Then with purpose, he walked right up to the edge of the pool and peered over. He took a second to look around him and take it all in. Then off he went exploring! His entire habitat had been filled with enrichment by the animal care staff. There were brush piles, log piles, persimmons branches scattered about full of fruit, two pumpkins including one on top of his waterfall, pieces of fruit for him to forage including a watermelon and two coconuts floating in his pool, a barrel full of acorns, honey squeezed about, etc. Basically, he had a lot to keep him occupied. But his first priority: the pool! He climbed right into the pool splashing and playing the whole way. He destroyed the watermelon that was in the pool and then grabbed the pumpkin from the top of the waterfall and destroyed that as well. Needless to say, he absolutely loves his pool!

Throughout the day, Bam Bam continued to forage, play, and explore. At one point, he full out ran along the habitat wall with Emily McCormack, TCWR’s curator, and he swung around some logs like a skilled ninja with a bō staff. What a fantastic day for him! The best part is he gets to experience it all over again tomorrow, and the next day, and so on!

So make sure you come visit Bam Bam Bear in his new home at TCWR! Look into our adoption and sponsorship programs if you would like to help him out. He could also use some new toys such as a heavy duty planet ball from Boomerball.com, a 50-gallon heavy duty box from WildlifeToyBox.com, and floating iceberg toys from OttoEnvironmental.com. And as always, your donations make a difference in all of these animals’ lives here at TCWR so please, ‘Help Us, Help Them.’
Recent Rescues

SCOTT SMITH VICE PRESIDENT

In late September, TCWR received a call from a man in Missouri about his two tigers and two lions. He said he lost his full-time trained helper, Missouri’s new legislation now required expensive insurance, and the fact that he lives half his time in Missouri and half in California, were reasons to rid himself of his big cats. At this time, TCWR is not able to bring in any more big cats because we are still feeling the impact of the RTS rescue earlier this year. It is extremely difficult to say, “no, we cannot rescue your big cats at this time.”

Because of recent advances in networking, TCWR now has a different plan. Two representatives from twenty one big cat sanctuaries were invited to a workshop in North Carolina. The International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries hosted the workshop that put these people in one room for three days. A new network of sanctuaries was born as many facility directors have never met previously.

On October 29, Emily McCormack and I drove three hours to Osceola, Missouri, to load the two tigers, Cruz and Bubbles, into transport crates. The crates were then loaded into a USDA licensed transporter trailer (Loving Friends Transport). Loving Friends Transport dodged high winds in Nebraska and driving rain, the lions were loaded into crates and then moved into the luxury transport trailer (which is equipped with cameras and temperature control capabilities) which then made its way directly to the lions new home in Nevada.

On their return trip, Loving Friends Transport agreed to pick up the two lions, Deucy and Danka, and transport them to Cedar Hill Animal Sanctuary in Mississippi. Tanja Smith, Emily McCormack and I once again drove the three hours to Osceola, Missouri, to crate the lions. IFAW sent two representatives to help along with the main animal caretaker from Mississippi. In the driving rain, the lions were loaded into crates and then moved into the luxury transport trailer. The lions then loaded into a USDA licensed transporter trailer (Loving Friends Transport). Loving Friends Transport dodged high winds in Nebraska and driving rain, the lions were loaded into crates and then moved into the luxury transport trailer (which is equipped with cameras and temperature control capabilities) which then made its way directly to the lions new home in Nevada.

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This rescue effort was a collaboration between Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, Safe Haven, Cedar Hill Animal Sanctuary, Tigers in America, Big Cat Rescue, the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, and the International Fund for Animal Welfare. Transportation was provided by Loving Friends Transport.

Volunteer Spotlight: Nancy Silvers

IVY COOPER STAFF BIOLOGIST/VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

Nancy Silvers has been volunteering with us for about a year now. She answered the desperate call last year for volunteers when we were beginning the RTS rescue. She volunteered the first time at Rescue Ridge while we were sorting supplies and preparing for the groundbreaking last November on the largest rescue to date. The work at TCWR is physically demanding and Nancy wanted to help in another way if she could. Nancy now helps our secretary, Pat, with office filing and shredding documents. Although these tasks are not the most glamorous, Nancy knows that she frees Pat to do more pressing jobs; Pat told me that she loves having Nancy come and help her out.

Nancy and her husband, Bill, provided a wonderful Thanksgiving Day feast for all the staff and interns last year; it was when Nancy was checking out the kitchen for that meal, that she met Makita the cougar. Makita had just been rescued from RTS and was very shy. Nancy loves seeing that Makita has grown to love being at TCWR and loves to talk to anyone who will listen.

Nancy’s favorite cat is India, the tiger, but she holds a special place for Makita too. Nancy’s favorite part about volunteering at the office is being able to hear the lions caroling and Cheyenne, the coyote, joining in with the lions; she says it’s music to her ears. Nancy is a wonderfully spirited person and has such a love for the animals and TCWR.
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During this workshop, Tanja Smith (TCWR President/Founder), found reputable facilities to give these precious big cats from Missouri a new home for life. Safe Haven, which is in Nevada, agreed to provide a life home for the two tigers, and Cedar Hill Animal Sanctuary offered a safe place for the two lions. A plan was made and transportation was arranged.

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More exciting news - tigersinamerica.org has offered TCWR a 50% match on donations to build habitats. If you are interested in having your donations go further and participate in this match, please contact me directly at tanya@turpentinecreek.org. One of the requirements is that you have to donate your funds through Tigers in America in care of Turpentine Creek. For example: if you donate $2,000 up to $44,000 to Tigers in America in care of Turpentine Creek, then they would send TCWR a check for $3,000 up to $66,000 to match your donation.

In the winter, TCWR relies heavy on your donations. TCWR doesn’t see many visitors, the days are shorter and the nights are long. Don’t forget; get your donations in by the end of the year for your 2013 Tax Deduction. Please help us provide the best care we can. Thanks for your support.

I’m next to get a habitat, thank you for supporting TCWR.