Happy Holidays!

BIG CAT CHRONICLES
A USDA Licensed Facility for “The Vanishing Breeds of Big Cats”

2015 Calendars now on Sale! See page 11

tigers@turpentinecreek.org  |||  479.253.5841  |||  www.turpentinecreek.org
youtube.com/TurpentineCreek  |||  Find us on Facebook!
The animals that have been lucky enough to have them are enjoying their new enclosures. WE ARE SO CLOSE to having ALL of our rescued Big Cats, bears, and other animals out on the grass in natural enclosures. Most of you are aware that USDA gave us notice that all cage heights are going to increase to 12 feet tall with a 3 foot jump guard or 16 feet straight up on open topped enclosures. The TCWR team has been rebuilding all habitats that were built before 2005 to accommodate these new guidelines. A big thanks to Tigers in America and the many other people that helped kick off this part of our habitat campaign. We still have a long way to go but we are moving along swiftly.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU to everyone who has been able to help!

Since our last newsletter, lots of things have happened. My father, Donald Ray Jackson, Sr., passed from this life on September 7, 2014. Memories have been flooding my mind. I am so proud of my parents for their dedication in starting Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge. Their Legacy as TCWR Founders is one that continues to take so much effort even after they have passed on. The rewards are remarkable but they all come with a price. Not long before my dad passed he was asking/needing more and more of my time. I had to remind him that he wanted the refuge to be big and strong which leaves little time for much else. Everyone that lives and works at the refuge has put the refuge before his or her own needs, which is amazing.

In October my brother, Clif Jackson, was diagnosed with stage 4 brain and lung cancer. Last year, when Clif’s health was failing, he moved away from the refuge after devoting many years to our mission. He had had a couple of heart attacks and didn’t want to be a drain on the facility without being able to work. Please keep Clif in your prayers.

I am personally thankful for our team at TCWR. Even with the craziest days, we continue to rescue, grow, and maintain the refuge. One of our long time mottos has been “help us help them” when we refer to our animals and our mission. And with your help we will build an on-site vet clinic and a new education center which will include a gift shop, café, large multipurpose room, and museum expansion. Through these efforts we can grow our educational programs. After we get our vet clinic built and have a veterinarian on site, we will be able to offer preceptorships to veterinarian students. I believe that we must educate at every level. There is not one day that goes by that I do not learn something.

The need for rescue never seems to let up. I am happy to announce that the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) has verified TCWR. This sanctuary accreditation organization did an intense investigation of our facility to make sure we are using the best practices in animal care and financial responsibility. With your continued support we are making a difference. Each animal we save and provide lifetime care with love and compassion makes a difference at least in that animal’s life. Thanks for being a part of the solution. Until next time…

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**Featured Animal: Exxon**

**Species: Tiger**

**Sex: Male**

**Date of Birth: May 27, 1993**

**Arrival Date: Nov. 23, 1997**

Exxon arrived at the refuge on November 23, 1997, from Palestine, Texas. He was rescued from a private owner that was getting out of the breeding business. The owner’s health was failing, so they decided they needed to give up the animals under their care. Exxon was rescued along with another tiger and a cougar.

Exxon is one of our older residents of the refuge. He was born on May 27, 1993, and will be celebrating his 22nd birthday next year. Tigers typically live to be 10 to 12 years old in the wild and 15 to 20 years in captivity. Due to the excellent care from our staff and interns, our animals frequently surpass that average life span. Despite his old age, Exxon is in great health. He enjoys spending his days in his habitat. Exxon is one of our most vocal cats and greets his caretakers with moans and chuffs every morning. Make sure you take a guided tour on your next visit to see Exxon and the rest of the 100 plus animals under our care!
One year ago the Eureka Springs City Council passed a motion to declare the first Sunday in November “Bam-Bam Day” in appreciation not only of Turpentine Creek for its role as a major local attraction, but also to celebrate the opening of BamBam the Grizzly’s new habitat, which also took place one year ago.

BamBam had a wonderful day and continues to thrive in his spacious quarters, complete with pool and waterfall, thanks to the generosity of his friends everywhere.

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge continues making strides for our animals every day. Our next development necessity is an on-site veterinary clinic. With our aging big cat population, travels to St. Francis Veterinary Clinic (a 30-40 minute drive one way) have more than doubled in the last few years. Sometimes we have been on the road traveling twice a week. (Not every procedure with the cats can be performed in their enclosures, requiring us to transport them to St. Francis.) Winter is approaching fast, and winter has proven to be the hardest time of the year for our animals. Transportation was virtually impossible last winter. The benefits of an on-site veterinary clinic are therefore countless.

Most procedures our cats need require them to be anesthetized. This causes a decrease in body temperature, which can be dangerous in the winter temperatures. TCWR needs your help to ensure that we can give the animals the absolute best care regardless of the season. Our new clinic will provide three recovery enclosures indoors, all with heat.

TCWR has had in this project the wonderful support of Terry J. McGuire Architect, a NW Arkansas Regional Architectural Firm. The firm has been in generalized architectural business for over 25 years and has practiced primarily in the NW Arkansas regional area since 1996. They have donated their time and the fees to provide the architectural design and construction documents for the TCWR Veterinary Clinic project. These fees would have amounted to approximately 8% of the project costs. A few other supporters have contributed and asked for their donation to be matched, and in the last few months strides have been made toward this goal.

So we are asking you, our wonderful supporters, to make this on-site vet clinic a reality. The preliminary project/building component cost is $304,992 for the 4,800 square foot building. This does not include the equipment needed for surgery, x-rays, etc. We will have those costs broken down in the near future so that donors can contribute in multiple specific ways toward the project. Thanks to the wonderful support we have received, the total proceeds thus far reach nearly the halfway mark -- $145,000!

$67,000 of the money raised to date has come from donors asking that their donations be matched. To meet this match fund, we are challenging our donors to match the $67,000 which will put us well on our way to reaching our fundraising goal for the clinic building.

This is the season for giving, and our cats need you. Please donate today so we can break ground on this project and continue our mission of providing lifelong care at the sanctuary.

Our vet and staff have worked in “less than perfect” situations to get the job done. Our aging population is requiring too many long trips to the vet clinic. We need your financial help making this much needed onsite vet clinic a reality. Thank you.
Since we finished rescuing all the cats from the RTS rescue, we have been busy caring for all the animals here and building new habitat areas for the few cats that we have left in our “compound” area. We continue to need donations in order to complete our goal of having all of our cats out in natural habitat areas, so please give what you can.

Since the completion of the RTS rescue we have not brought any more cats here to the refuge, but that all changed with one phone call. We received a call for the owner of a female tiger, Sadie. She was located very close to the refuge and the owners were going through a bitter divorce. In the divorce proceedings, the judge ruled that the tiger must be placed at a sanctuary; at that time, the husband had permission to come to the property from 10am-12pm each day to care for the cat, but this permission was soon to be revoked. We decided, as a team, that we needed to help this animal and bring her into the Turpentine Creek family. On Oct 27th we loaded up all the necessary equipment and personnel and made the short 40 minute drive to the location.

The house looked nice and part of the yard and area was well kept, but other parts were more overgrown. When we were shown to Sadie’s enclosure behind the house we were shocked. We had been witness to rescues like this before but it never gets any easier. Sadie was housed in a cage that was about 20x35 with 2 divider walls. It was dilapidated and dirty and had wooden “structures” that may have been benches at some point in their past. The ground was strewn with carcasses and bones from cows Sadie had been fed and her water bowl was a 55 gallon barrel filled with dirty green water.

The owner’s ex-wife was there when we arrived and told us her ex-husband was supposed to be coming over and taking care of Sadie while she was at work; but with the condition of the cage, this was obviously not happening. Sadie herself was friendly, stalking and playing with us, and she even chuffed a few times. We immediately noticed a limp and the signs of declawing. We asked the owner many questions about Sadie, including her age, diet and vet care. She seemed unable to answer many of these inquiries and told us her ex-husband was the one who would know. Since he was not available, we are left to try to fill in the blanks ourselves which is never easy.

The location of Sadie’s cage made it impossible to utilize a trailer to move her so we opted to sedate her and carry her up to our trailer. She sedated very easily. This gave us a chance to check her over as well; during the external exam we noticed a broken canine, damage to her paw pads from the declaw, and a slight popping sound in one of her elbows. Her overall body condition looked great, though, and within about a total of 1 1/2 hours we were back on the road returning to the refuge.

Sadie was also taken to our veterinarian for a more complete exam. X-rays did show a slight fracture in the front leg she was limping on, but it looked fairly old and should heal on its own; otherwise she looked to be in good health.

Despite her friendly disposition at her previous home, once she arrived at the refuge and awoke from the sedative she was quite scared and confused. Because of her nervousness, we decided the best place for her was at our ‘Rescue Ridge’ area where she doesn’t have a lot of people around. She has a habitat where she can get accustomed to her surroundings. Sadie is a wonderful addition to the Turpentine Creek family.
They say you can’t go home, but what do they know. About thirteen years ago I was fortunate to be able to call Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge my home. For nearly ten years I was a part of that family, and even though I have moved on to discover other avenues, my heart has never really left. In 2011 I was hired at the El Paso Zoo in Texas as the Animal Training and Enrichment Coordinator. As with many AZA zoos across the country, one of the El Paso Zoo’s missions is conservation. The El Paso Zoological Society, which is a huge financial support for the zoo, dedicates a certain amount of money every year for the zoo to use towards conservation efforts of its choosing. All zoo employees are encouraged to put in proposals for ideas on how to spend this money. Fortunately, the Conservation Committee liked my proposal to put in proposals for ideas on how to spend this money. As TCWR alumni spread across the country and into AZA facilities, more and more zoos are becoming aware of the plight of big cats in America. The El Paso Zoo alone currently employs 5 former Turpentine Creek intern graduates. Allowing zoo employees to visit and volunteer at the refuge is a great way for the organization to give back, while learning about and experiencing sanctuary life for themselves.

This past September several of my colleagues and I made the 16 hour drive to Eureka Springs, Arkansas. The trip was extremely educational for the zoo employees, as none of them have worked in the sanctuary business. I brought two animal keepers who benefited greatly from seeing animal care from a different perspective. Also attending the retreat were two people from our Education department. As the voices for the zoo in conservation across the country, the first hand knowledge these employees obtained from this trip allows them to spread TCWR’s mission further. After a class with curator Emily McCormack, we toured the refuge, where they could see not only how the animals are cared for, but also how the commissary and maintenance is handled. After the education and tour, the zoo group spent several days helping to build catwalks and platforms in the bobcat habitats. We also built a step to allow CJ, one of their lions, easier access to his high bench. One day was spent lugging wire and hanging it for the habitat for Rayn, one of their female tigers.

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Donated Animal Status: Rayn is a 2010 rescue, an 8 year old Siberian tiger.

On October 18th, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge staff, interns, and guests witnessed Rayn, an 8 year old Siberian tiger take her first steps onto grass. Rayn was rescued back in 2008 from a small zoo in upstate New York along with another tiger and two leopards. Our Vice President, Scott Smith, and our Curator, Emily McCormack made the long drive up there to rescue all four cats. Since being here at Turpentine Creek, Rayn has lived in our Compound area awaiting her turn to go out to a habitat. Rayn’s habitat was sponsored by John and Kathleen Farrell and partly by a matching grant from Tigers in America. On the morning of the release, Kathleen Farrell got the honor of opening the habitat door while her husband John Farrell watched from a vehicle at the top of the habitat. Rayn gladly walked out into the grass when her door was opened and went to the top left hand corner to chow down on some grass; and she was very intrigued by the vehicle parked at the top corner. She displayed her interest by looking in the windows, and at one point stood up in the corner to get a better look at who was in there. It was almost like she was saying ‘hello.’ It was a very special moment that John Farrell got to share with Rayn since he was not really able to walk on his own due to being very ill.

Later on that morning, Rayn was a bit more courageous in exploring her habitat to check out how far she could walk and sniff around at all her toys, trees, and platform/bench. It’s always very rewarding and gratifying to watch as each cat gets its chance to experience freedom. We only have a handful of cats awaiting their turn to go out to their slice of heaven. Help us, help them by donating towards our habitat fund or come out to visit us to help spread our mission to others about big cats. Every little bit helps and we look forward to seeing you!
Donor Spotlight: John & Kathleen Farrell

John & Kathleen Farrell have been good supporters for Turpentine Creek for a long time. Not only have they provided financial support – including attending two of the Cats at the Castle fundraisers held at Castle Rogue’s Manor every April – they’ve also been monthly donors to our meat fund for quite some time.

On Saturday, Oct. 18, John, who was gravely ill, and Kathleen attended the opening of the habitat they helped pay for and the cat they had sponsored, Rayn, an eight year old Siberian tiger who was rescued from upstate New York in 2008. It was John’s wish to live long enough to see Rayn in her new habitat, and that’s just what happened. Sadly, John passed away only two days after that opening.

“Both of us have always loved big cats,” says Kathleen, “and we both felt that Turpentine Creek provides an invaluable service in saving the lives of your cats. Through the Farrell Foundation we hope to continue to help for many years to come. We thank you for including us.”

For all the contributions they have made to the refuge in every way over the years, we would like to acknowledge them in this issue’s Donor Spotlight. Thank you John and Kathleen.

Docent Program

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge has many volunteers that donate their time to the animals. This year TCWR started a docent program to help enhance the educational experience of our guests. It was a great success and we’re hoping to expand the program. The docents are volunteers who are knowledgeable about the refuge and the animals. The docents help educate our guests to the mission of the refuge and other information about the animals. The program runs from March through October (during our busy season) and the requirements are as follows:

- Be at least 18 years of age and have a high school diploma
- Complete the interview process and 1 training session (TBA)
- Enjoy talking with guests and enhancing their educational experience at TCWR.
- Have an appreciation for animals and TCWR
- Be able to be in the heat (shade canopy provided).
- Be able to pay the materials fee for training materials and shirt ($30 for material and shirt for the first year and $15 each year to cover the cost of a new shirt)
- Be able to volunteer twice a month (total of 8 hours).

If you are interested in the Docent program please contact Ivy Cooper through email: ivy@turpentinecreek.org

Nutrition Collaboration

Staff Biologist John Chavez

One of the great parts of working at the refuge is the connections we make with other organizations like our own. My role as TCWR’s Commissary Manager has allowed me an amazing opportunity to collaborate in a joint effort with members from other animal establishments to create a document laying out the best practices for “Feeding Protocols and Nutrition” of exotic carnivorous cats.

Partners in this project included Black Pine Animal Sanctuary in Albion, Indiana; Cleveland Amory Black Beauty Ranch in Murchison, Texas; In-Sync Exotics Wildlife Rescue and Educational Center in Wylie, Texas; and the Wildcat Sanctuary in Sandstone, Minnesota. The collaborative project was overseen by the International Fund for Animal Welfare, a group that’s been saving individual animals, animal populations, and habitats all over the world for 45 years.

Our goal is that all this information, gathered from so many sources, will be compiled into a single document and made available online. This information can then be used by organizations everywhere to improve the care of their own big cats.

Much of the collaboration has been through emails and phone conferences. In late September, our group was invited to fly out to Cape Cod for a three-day workshop. We spent the time working through assigned sections to complete the project. (My own assignment? What to feed, where to receive the food, and the subject of whole prey and carcass feeding of big cats.)

We all share a deep love of our animals, and we continue to keep in touch to this day on the subject. Hopefully our dialogue will become commonplace amongst other refuges, sanctuaries and zoos.

This experience has been a very positive force for me personally and professionally. I am driven to work hard knowing that I’m representing Turpentine Creek. I’m also excited to see other future collaborations TCWR is invited to participate in.

The 16th Annual TCWR Calendar!

If you need Christmas gifts look no further! Turpentine Creek is releasing its 16th annual TCWR calendar, chock full of wonderful full-color photos of all our big cats and other animals, including info on their birthdays and other exciting events here at Turpentine Creek. It costs only $10, and all money raised goes to helping care for these amazing creatures. Order yours today!

Order Online by December 14 to receive your calendars by Christmas.

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“Thank you for the opportunity to enjoy each and every day.”

Exxon is our featured animal! See page 3

Enclosed is my Tax Deductible Contribution of:

- 2015 Calendars: $10 each X ___ calendars + $5 S/H = $________
- Non-Restricted Donations: $25 $50 $100 Other $________
- Annual Passes: Single Annual Pass $50
- Family Annual Pass $90

URGENT NEEDS:
- Habitat Fund Donation $________
- Veterinary Clinic Fund $________

Veterinary Clinic Needed!
Our animals deserve the best. As the average age of our animals continues to climb, we have found our trips to the vet have been very frequent. It is very hard to travel to our vet since he is 30 miles away. This makes it hard on the animals too. We need an onsite vet clinic. We have a $67,000 donation that has been set up as a match. For each dollar you give it is turned into two! Please help.

Adoptions and Sponsorships

Animal Adoption:
- Small Mammal/Bird $100/yr
- Small Cat/Monkey $100/yr
- Cougar/Leopard $125/yr
- Lion/Tiger/Bear $150/yr

Animal Sponsor:
- Small Mammal/Bird $700/yr
- Small Cat/Monkey $1,000/yr
- Cougar/Leopard $2,200/yr
- Lion/Tiger/Bear $2,500/yr

Adopted/Sponsored Animals Name: ______________________________

Monthly Payments Available For Sponsorships, see Website: www.turpentinecreek.org

Total Contribution: $________

Your Name: ______________________________
Address: ______________________________
City/State/Zip: ______________________________

Input Credit Card below or make checks payable to TCWR.

Credit Card #: ______________________________
Exp. Date: ___ / ___ / ___ CVC Code: __________