

# THE BIG CAT TIMES

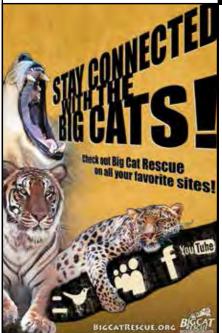
# DSONG MEMORIAL HOSPITAL



Select Big Cat Rescue as your designated charity at:

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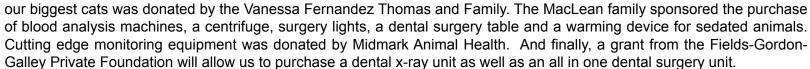


Photos by Jamie Veronica unless noted.

#### WINDSONG MEMORIAL HOSPITAL NEARS COMPLETION

We are absolutely thrilled to announce that the Windsong Memorial Hospital is nearly complete. The two story, 16 x 40 foot building has been constructed and power has been hooked up. The lower level is outfitted with scrubable walls, stainless steel cabinetry, and a wash sink for surgery. Thanks to a group of very generous supporters the lower level is also furnished with state of the art equipment that will allow us to provide the best veterinary care possible to all of the cats.

Funds to acquire a powerful x-ray unit as well as a matching grant towards the construction of the new building were donated by Sarah and Bruce McWilliams. A custom surgery table that is specifically designed to handle the size and weight of



As of now there is a small amount of finishing work to be completed on the upper level. The upper level will house an office for our volunteer veterinarians as well as a viewing window where observers can watch procedures below through a plexiglass



Reservations are now required for all tours. Call 1-888-316-5875 or go online at: zerve.com/bigcatrescue

Day Tour: Mon, Tue, Wed & Fri 3 PM, Sat & Sun 10 AM & 3 PM Kids Tour: Sat & Sun 12 PM

Feeding Tour: Wed, Fri & Sat 9 AM Keeper Tour: Sat & Sun 10 AM



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The Windsong Memorial Hospital mid construction

Transporting

too big for these machines

to give a good result. The closest place that has x-ray

machines, powerful enough

to use, means a 5 hour

round trip to the University of

Florida in Gainesville. When

cats are ill or in many cases

just as old as ours are, that

trip can be very stressful

and in some cases life

animals also come with risks

that could affect the public. A

traffic accident could result

in a big cat being released

putting the public in danger.

threatening.

window in the ceiling.

This whole project started because many of our cats are too big to go to local veterinary clinics for x-rays. Pet vets have x-ray tables that can handle some of the largest dogs, but our smallest tigers are far



Dr. Wynn and Jamie Veronica x-ray Nakita the tiger

Intern and artist Julia Doane presents BCR Founder Carole Baskin with an original oil painting of Windsong the bobcat that started Big Cat Rescue and namesake of the new hospital

composed a wish list of remaining items needed for the new Windsong Memorial Hospital at the website below. On behalf of the cats we would like to sincerely thank everyone who has made this project a reality!



bigcatrescue.org/cat-hospital-wishlist/

When the McWilliams offered to fund the machine last year we were so excited, but it turns out that a machine large enough to do the job wouldn't fit in any of our existing buildings and requires 3 phase power, which wasn't available to us. That turned into a marathon of constructing the building, locating electricians who could work with 3 phase power via a special generator, and obtaining all of the county and state approvals needed to bring the Windsong Memorial Hospital from the misty world of our imagination to its nearly completed stage today. This was made possible thanks to the McWilliams' matching grant and wonderful donors who pitched in from all around the globe.

In order to be able to provide a full range of services to our cats on site we have

#### **VET CARE REPORT**

Big Cat Rescue is very lucky to have two dedicated volunteer veterinarians who make it their mission to ensure that each and every cat receives the best care possible. Here we would like to share with you some of their most recent cases and success stories.

#### SKIPPER LYNX SURVIVES SEPTIC ABDOMEN

Skipper, an 8 year old male Canada lynx, was rescued in 2013 along with Gilligan another Canada lynx, Mr. Howell, Lovey and Mary Ann the bobcats and Ginger the serval. The group referred to as Gilligan's crew were

rescued from an abandoned facility in Kansas. They along with 2 cougars and a tiger were left to die with no water or food.

Skipper was the bravest of the cats and the first to explore his new home once he arrived at Big Cat Rescue. He now lives in an enclosure next to



Gilligan and both have air conditioned cave dens in which they can escape the hot Florida summers.

A few months after his rescue Skipper became constipated, so badly that he needed to be sedated and manually deobstipated. In this procedure a veterinarian removes feces with the assistance of repeated enemas.

The procedure was successful and Skipper was returned to his enclosure. Several months passed with no further incident.

Skipper loves to eat, so when he was suddenly uninterested in food his keepers became alarmed. Upon examination it was found that not only had Skipper become badly constipated again, but that he also ruptured his colon straining which leaked fecal material into his abdomen. This caused his abdomen to become septic.



Dr. Boorstein surgically removed the blockage and flushed Skipper's abdomen thoroughly. While the surgery went well, the prognosis was poor. A septic abdomen is a very serious and often fatal condition.

Because of his surgical incision Skipper had to spend 4 weeks recovering indoors. Thanks to the efforts of the veterinarians, staff, and volunteers Skipper was patiently nursed back to health over the next month.

It has been 2 months since his surgery and Skipper is doing great. He is on a maintenance dose of special oil that helps lubricate his intestines and colon making it easier for him to pass feces. Skipper is a very lucky boy and beat the odds.



## DUAL SURGERIES FOR ZEUS THE TIGER

Zeus is one of our most recently rescued tigers. He was rescued along with Kimba and Keisha from a backyard collection of exotic pets in New York. His cramped cage had no soft earth to walk on, only large, sharp rocks. His water was old and dirty, and he had not eaten in quite some time. He was emaciated. In addition he had suffered from an eye injury resulting in a luxated lens which had been left untreated for more than a year.



We arranged for eye specialist Dr. Miller to visit Zeus upon his arrival. She agreed that he required treatment, but feared that due to his poor physical condition he would not survive being sedated.

Zeus would spend the next few months getting eye drops in his affected eye several times a day. His new balanced diet would help him regain his strength and once he was in better health he would be sedated for an exam.



It was a good thing that Zeus loves treats. Because of this his keepers were able to lure him into his feeding lock out 2-3 times a day where he was given meat snacks on the end of a stick while the eye medication was dropped into his eye from above.

Six months after his arrival Zeus was sedated for his eye exam. He was neutered at the same time. In New York he lived next door to Keisha and after their arrival at Big Cat Rescue it became quite clear the two had a thing for one another. Neutering Zeus would allow us to reunite him with Keisha.



During the eye exam, Dr. Miller discovered that the eye with the luxated lens actually had more vision than his "good" eye. We thought that the luxated lens had been causing discomfort and that is why Zeus teared and squinted, but it turned out that there was also an ulcer on the "bad"



eye. The ulcer was repaired and Zeus was again put on a strict regimen of medicated eye drops.

So far he seems much more comfortable, however, if he has problem with his eye again we will have to consider removing it. This will blind him as his "good" eye has little to no vision.

In the meantime he and Keisha were introduced. At first the two did not trust one another. Keisha started off on a bad "paw" by ambushing Zeus. She loves to play and thought he might like to as



well. Because of his limited vision he was spooked and then became very untrusting of Keisha. There was never any big fight between the two. A few roars, and a couple of good slaps, but those quickly subsided. Zeus and Keisha are now a happy couple and will benefit from each other's company.

# 25 YEAR OLD SERVAL GETS SPAYED



Arizona the serval will turn 26 years old this April. She has been at Big Cat Rescue since 1997.

Recently Arizona started feeling ill. She was vomiting as well as not defecating. These two symptoms combined usually indicate there is some sort of blockage prohibiting food from being able to pass through.

She was taken to the Humane Society of Tampa Bay where volunteer veterinarian Dr. Boorstein examined her. He found that she had a golf ball

sized mass in her reproductive tract. Because of the mass' location it was easily removed by spaying her.



The surgery was successful and after a few weeks recovering in the Cat Hospital she was returned to her enclosure.

During her stay in the on site Cat Hospital she was entertained with daily enrichment which included the

Cat Sitter DVD. This compilation of video clips geared towards the interests of a cat is one of



our go to enrichment strategies for cats that are cooped up indoors. The video features squirrels, birds, fish, lizards, and other fun animals that cats love to stalk. It is amazing to see the cats in the Cat Hospital become mesmerized with this video.



It has been 2 months since her surgery and Arizona has returned to her normal hissy, spitty, self.

Photos from beginning of article; Skipper, Dr. Boorstein operates on Skipper, Dr. Wynn examines Skipper, Zeus, Keisha looks down on Zeus on their first day together, Dr. Wynn adjusts Zeus' anesthesia, Dr. Boorstein neuters Zeus, while Dr. Miller operates on his eye, Keisha and Zeus, Arizona, Dr. Bard and Dr. Boorstein examine Arizona while techs Talma and Ashley prepare her for surgery, the mass removed from Arizona, Arizona watches the Cat Sitter DVD in the Cat Hospital

#### **UPDATE ON ARIEL THE BOBCAT**

Ariel was taken from the wild shen she was just a kitten. She was thought to be orphaned.

However, some times when wildlife appear to be orphaned there is usally a fearful mother that slinked away at the approach of humans. In other cases the mother may have left her young to find food. Bobcat

mothers in particular will leave their kittens for long periods of time in order to hunt.

It's common to see baby wild animals outside during spring, as a new generation makes its way into the world. If the situation permits and the baby animal is not in

danger it may be best to give the animal plenty of space and observe from afar. The baby animal may call out for its mother repeatedly. The mother will only come and collect her young if she feels completely safe so staying out of sight is very important.

You can see a video of a bobcat kitten that was separated from his mother

calling out to her until she rescues him at our website here;

http://tinyurl.com/oudnopb



Bobcat kittens this age start to explore away from the den.

Unfortunately for Ariel she was not relinquished to the proper authorities when she was found. Instead she was raised as a pet for 4 years. Because of this she was too imprinted on humans to be a candidate for release.

In accordance with regulations Big Cat Rescue took Ariel in and attempted to re-wild her. While she proved to be a successful hunter, her non-fear of humans persisted. She will walk right up to her keepers and follow them when they come to feed her or clean her enclosure.

If Ariel were to be released she would most definitely approach the first humans she saw and would be deemed a nuiscance bobcat and euthanized.

Thankfully the authorities have granted her permission to live at Big Cat Rescue permanently. We will provide Ariel with a great life here and use her story to educate the public about the importance of leaving wild animals where they belong, in the wild.

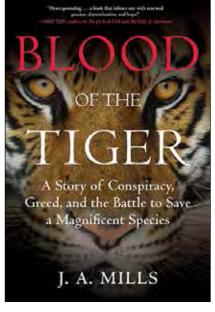
#### BOOK REVIEW: BLOOD OF THE TIGER

"What an extraordinary, must-read book for anyone interested in international wildlife policy! From her seat at the center of it all, J.A. Mills has pulled back the curtain on the global effort to save the tiger and in doing so has given the world a primer for any effort to save the world's iconic species: tigers, elephants, rhinos, whales, and more. Endangered species need accountability. Blood of the Tiger makes those who got us here accountable."

—Bryan Christy, director of Special Investigations at National Geographic, author of The Lizard King

If you love Big Cat Rescue you will love the chapter Judy Mills devoted to our work in this heart thumping, non fiction, thriller. Don't forget orders made through Amazon Smile will result in a donation to the cats. Simply choose Big Cat Rescue.

http://tinyurl.com/nwpfnfh



# THE 2014 GUARDIAN ANGEL AWARD PRESENTED TO VANESSA FERNANDEZ THOMAS

We know that Vanessa will say she had a lot of help and that she didn't do it by herself, but Big Cat Rescue is proud to bestow the 2014 Guardian Angel Award on Vanessa Fernandez Thomas for her brave work in purr-suading Mexico to ban the use of big cats in circus acts last year.

Vanessa and her family led a billboard advertising campaign to raise awareness about the cruel fate of circus cats. Pictured here is one of her advertisements. She is a vivacious woman with a heartfelt compassion for these cats and the tenacity to never take "no" for an answer.



# Big Cat Rescue needs a perimeter wall to surround the sanctuary and protectthe cats. The total perimeter is 7,200 feet. We have completed 2/3 of the project, but need your help to finish 2,300 feet. You can help by sponsoring one linear foot of construction. The cost per linearfoot is \$100. In honor of your gift you will receive a Big Cat Screensaver, 2-for-1 Tour Pass, and name recognition on sign. http://tinyurl.com/o5nigcm

#### **NEW ONLINE GIFT SHOP ROARING SUCCESS**



listed in our online gift shop there is something for everyone. Check it out today!

announce the launch of our new online gift shop! This shop has a sleek new look with easy to use features including; search inventory by favorite species, photo zoom to see product details, and suggested products. With more than 300 items

We are very excited to



BigCatRescue.biz

## GIFT SHOP PURCHASES DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE BIG CATS







Zipper Hoodie with Tiger Art on Front

Keep Calm and Big Cat Rescue Green or Black S, M, L, & XL \$42.52 XXL \$45.73 Orange S, M, L, & XL \$19.05 XXL \$21.05 S, M, L, & XL \$24.40 XXL \$26.54

Luminous Tiger, Fitted Cut

Tiger Poop Brewed Daily at Big Cat Rescue S, M, L, & XL **\$24.40** XXL **\$26.54** 

Lion Outburst, Fitted Cut S, M, L, & XL **\$24.40** XXL **\$26.54** 

**BCR Travel Mug** 18.oz **\$15.84** 



Panthera Tigris V-neck S, M, L, XL **\$24.40** XXL **\$26.54** 



Side Print Big Cat Rescue S, M, L, XL **\$24.40** XXL **\$26.54** 



BCR Est. '92 with Cameron Lion S, M, L, XL **\$24.40** XXL **\$26.54** 



Rhinestone Fitted Cut, Stretchy Tiger, Snow Leopard or Leopard S, M, L, XL \$24.40 XXL \$26.54



Rhinestone Tank Snow Leopard S, M, L, XL \$22.26



Tigers Photo 15 oz Mug \$15.84



**Embroidered Cadet Cap** Blue or Pink **\$20.18** 



Embroidered Baseball Cap Gold BCR Logo \$22.40



BCR Supporter Bracelet \$3.68



Leopard Clicky Pen Rotating message w/ each click \$4.00



Photo Collage Mouse Pad \$15.84



**BCR Tumbler** 



Big Cats Photo 15 oz Mug \$15.84



Crazy Cat Lady Board Game \$26.54



comes with 6 cats \$15.84



Neck Pillow \$13.70 Choose Tiger or Lion



BCR Photo Collage License Plate Frame

features 18 resident big and little cats of Big Cat Rescue. Standard size and four holes make easy installation. \$15.84

Collapsable Tiger Purse Hook Keep your purse off the floor hang from table. \$29.75



16.oz **\$17.05** 



Medium Socks Women 6-11 & Men 5-10 **\$9.49 ea.** Choose White Lion w/BCR Logo, Black Tiger w/ BCR Logo, Lion March, or Shorty Tiger made of recycled materials



Animal-opoly Themed Monopoly Game \$28.54



12" Dream Eyes Tiger **\$15.48** 9" Serval **\$19.05** 7" Lionel Lion **\$8.35** 14" Lioness & Cub \$35.10



BCR Ribbon Magnet Gold or Silver \$8.35



Choose Gold, Black or Blue **\$5.21 each** Engraved Wood BCR Pocket Knife



\$11.70 Lighter \$7.35

### ORDER ON PAGE 10 OR PURCHASE ONLINE AT BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ

#### SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: SAND CATS - FELIS MARGARITA

Size and Appearance: Sand Cats weigh 4-8 pounds and reach lengths of 29-36 inches, and heights of 10-12 inches. Their feet are covered with a thick layer of wiry black hair, which insulates the footpads against extremes of heat and cold, and allows for easier

movement through the sand.

**Interesting Facts:** This is one of the more difficult cats to study in the wild. Their fuzzy paws allow them to walk on sand without sinking, leaving their pawprints nearly invisible. They also bury their excrement making it impossible to find and analyze so their diet can be studied.

Habitat: Sand Cats are specialists of sandy desert around sparse vegetation which can support small rodent prey. They are tolerant of extremes of hot and cold temperatures largely because of their burrowing behaviour.



**Distribution:** From the Sahara through the Middle East to Turkestan.

Reproduction and Offspring: Sand cats have been reported to have 2 litters per year in both March-April and again in October. Gestation is 59-63 days, after which females produce a litter of 2-4 kittens. At birth, the newborns weigh approximately 1.5-2 ounces. Kittens become independent by 3-4 months of age and reach sexual maturity at 10-12 months. In captivity, sand cats live up to 13 years, but have a high juvenile mortality rate of 41%.

Social System and Communication: Sand cats are solitary and primarily noctornal. Because their populations are so few, they have a loud mating call, which resembles the barking of a small dog.



Hunting and Diet: Sand cats hunt by digging. Their highly developed hearing allows them to locate prey underground. Their primary diet consists of 3 species of gerbils. It also includes birds, reptiles and arthropods. Sand cats are capable of satisfying their moisture requirements from their prey, but drink readily if water is available.

Principal Threats: Habitat degradation is the major threat to the sand cat. Vulnerable arid ecosystems are being rapidly degraded

by human settlement and activity, especially livestock grazing. Other localized threats include the introduction of feral and domestic dogs and cats, creating direct competition and through predation and disease transmission.

Our Sand Cat: Big Cat Rescue has one sand cat. Her name is Genie. Genie's grandparents were taken from the wild for their own protection during Desert Storm.

Genie was born in California at SOS Care and sent to Big Cat Rescue to be a genetic back up should a reintroduction program be implemented. Genie is very shy, but can not resist poking her head out of her den when keepers approach to see what they are doing. She has surpassed the average life span of a captive sand cat. At 14 years old she is quite the old lady.

You can help us provide a wonderful life for Genie by sponsoring her. See page 11.





## 2015 is the year to go circus free! If you

PLEDGE TO BE CIRCUS FREE!

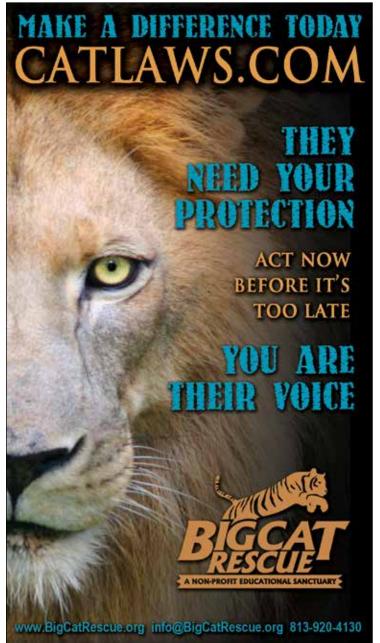
love lions and tigers and elephants, please pledge to never go to a circus that uses wild animals for entertainment.

The circus makes big cats and elephants do unnatural tricks like jumping through rings of fire or balancing on balls. We believe the animals perform because they are afraid of the circus trainers who use painful bullhooks. electric prods, and whips. Tigers and lions

should not live in tiny circus cages with barely any room to move. Elephants should not be tied to ropes and chains so short they cannot even walk.

Big Cat Rescue would like to see one million people pledge to live circus free! Take the pledge today at www. nocircuskids.com .Next time you visit Big Cat Rescue, be sure to ask for your free gift for making the pledge to go circus free!





The most effective way to save big cats from abuse and abandonment is not by rescuing them and providing sanctuary...The most effective way to ensure that these cats are no longer exploited, neglected, or left homeless once their appeal profitability wears off is to speak out for them. By using our voice for those who have none, we can promote legislation that will protect big cats currently suffering all across the country. Big Cat Rescue has made it easier than ever to speak out to your legislators to let them know that you support laws that will protect the big cats. With just a few mouse clicks vou can make the biggest difference in their lives.

#### SAD FAREWELL TO FIVE FRIENDS

Taking care of 100 exotic animals is a roller coaster ride of emotions as we try to provide the best possible life for them and yet deal with the gut wrenching decisions of life and death. Of our 97 animals, 78 of them are over the age of 12, which is about as long as they live in zoos or in the wild. An amazing 69 are over the age of 15 (90+ in human years). Even more incredible, 29 are 20 years or older. It is with heavy hearts we must say good bye to these beautiful cats who have touched our hearts forever.

#### **RAMBO**



his primary caregiver being a 12 year old girl. She and her relatives agreed that they did not want to see Rambo exploited as part of a hybridization breeding plan for profit and asked if he could come live at Big Cat Rescue. Rambo was always very talkative and loved to carry on conversations with his keepers.

1999 - 2014

Most Jungle Cats only live 10 to 12 years in captivity. Rambo surpassed those statistics and lived to a ripe old

Rambo, a male jungle cat, was rescued in 1999. He had

been born into the pet trade. His owner had sent him to live

with her daughter who died unexpectedly and resulting in

age of 15. In the end it was kidney disease that claimed his life. Many will miss his bright spirit and nightly caterwauls.

#### **CANYON**



2000 - 2014

Canyon, a male sand cat, was tragically taken from us when he choked to death on a piece of food. Despite his keepers taking quick action and staff removing the lodged chicken and peforming cpr within minutes of the incident it was too late. His death struck everyone who knew him.

Canyon was sent to Big Cat Rescue in 2000 as a genetic back up for his species in captivity. His parents were born to a pair of wild caught sand cats that were removed from the wild during Desert Storm. These offspring would provide a viable genetic pool should a reintroduction program be initiated.

Canyon will be deeply missed. He was a true favorite among keepers and visitors. His fiesty attitude and cute kitten looks made for an irresistable character.

#### **ALACHUA BOB**



1987 - 2015

Alachua Bob, a male Florida bobcat, found his way to the sanctuary back in 2003. He was a wild native who had been hit by a car and left for dead. Alachua's injuries were so severe that he never fully recovered and therefor was not a candidate for release.

Instead he lived out his life being fawned over by one of our veteran senior keepers, Marie. Every day Marie would take special treats to Alachua Bob and spend a little time with him. He relished this attention and made Marie his person. Because of his wild roots Alachua was usally leery of most people, but not Marie.

Eventually failing health including kidney disease overcame Alachua Bob. He was estimated to be 15 years old upon his arrival, making him 28 at his passing.

Nakita, a male tiger, was rescued in 2007 when he was 12 years old. He along with Joseph, Sasha, and Simba were abandoned props once used in a big cat training scheme in Ohio. Nakita and other big cats were drugged and chained so that paying guests could pose with them for photos. The facility was shut down by USDA, but the owners ignored this and continued their operation until they were evicted from the property years later after not paying their rent. Once evicted the animals were abandoned and the authorities seized the animals.

#### **NAKITA**



1995 - 2015

After his rescue, Nakita spent the next 8 years living the good life at Big Cat Rescue. He loved to swim in the lake, lounge on his over-sized jungle gym and play with a variety of toys donated especially for him.

Earlier last year he started wheezing when he got excited, which was usually around dinner time. About the same time he also sustained an injury to his eye which needed to be repaired. While he was sedated for his eye surgery his throat was examined.

It turned out that he suffered from laryngial paralysis. Laryngeal paralysis is a disorder in which the nerves that control the muscles and cartilage that open and close the larynx do not function properly, causing difficulty with eating or breathing.

At that time only one side was affected so it was decided to monitor his condition. He was moved to an enclosure in a more secluded area of the sanctuary to avoid being over stimulated. Several months passed and his condition persisted, but did not worsen. That was until the beginning of this year when Nakita's breathing took a turn for the worse.

Thankfully our new x-ray machine was fully operational. We were able to sedate Nakita in his enclosure and then transport him to the Windsong Memorial Hospital where we took x-rays and examined his throat again.

The radiographs showed that he had kidney stones as a result of his renal failure, arthritis, and his lungs were in poor shape. Upon examination Dr. Wynn and Dr. Boorstein also discovered that now both sides of his throat were paralized. Because of this he would no longer be able to breath comfortably nor keep from choking on his food. We made the heartbreaking, but necessary decision to let him go. While we were increadibly saddened that nothing could be done to save him, we were happy that we were able to sedate and examine Nakita on site. It can be very stressful for both the big cats as well as the staff and veterinarians to go to an off site clinic. Thanks to many generous donors our new Windsong Memorial Hospital allows us to do most routine procedures right here at the sanctuary.

#### **NATASHA**



1993 - 2015

Natasha, a female Siberian lynx, was rescued, along with 27 other cats, from a fur farm when she was just a few months old in 1993. She has had a wonderful life here at Big Cat Rescue sharing most of it with her best friend Willow. Sadly we had to say goodbye to Willow in 2013. Natasha carried on, although, never quite with the same spark as when her dear friend was by her side.

In October of last year Natasha became lethargic and inappetent and was reported to be coughing. She was taken to Ehrlich Animal Hospital where volunteer veterinarian Dr. Wynn examined her. Upon examination a mass was

found in the back of Natasha's throat. Samples were collected and sent to the the lab for testing. The lab results indicated the mass was cancerous. It was decided to try a course of chemotherapy in which the mass would be injected every two weeks.

After the first treatment Natasha seemed to improve. Her coughing subsided and she regained her appetite. So we decided to continue with the therapy. Following the second treatment there was not as much improvement. In addition, in the days leading up to her next scheduled tretament Natasha began having a hard time eating.

When it came time for her third treatment the mass was re-examined. Unfortunately it had worsened and as a result her throat was badly compromised making it difficult for her to swallow food. The decision was made to let her go. This was heartbreaking for all, especially those who had known her for her entire life.



#### BIG CAT RESCUE SUPPORTERS

Donations Received

Oct 1st - Dec 31st \$49,704 Patricia Lamond \$42,500 Sarah & Bruce McWilliams \$40,000 Cyrus & Joanne Spurlino \$25,000 Berwind Fund \$15,000 William Kuni \$10 000 Fields-Gordon-Galley Private Foundation \$10,000 The Kors Le Pere Foundation \$10,000 Steven Pereira \$10,000 Lawrence & Pamela Trissel \$9,395 Fran Ezer \$8,000 Royal Little Family Foundation \$7,919 Estate of Margaret Welke \$5,512 Mireille McGail \$5,000 Litter Quality Propane \$5,000 Stanley and Lucy Lopata Charitable Foundation \$5,000 Whitney Charitable Foundation \$5,000 Mike Amdur \$5,000 Jean Fraley \$5,000 Jordan Knab \$5,000 Robert & Doretta Marwin

\$4,500 Saint Pete MRI

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\$900 Timothy & Jenifer Boul \$900 Suzanne & Alan Lucas \$900 Pamela Olson Koonts \$895 Murder House by Shane Downs \$850 Bill Chambers \$845 Matthew Glass \$800 Karan & William Beynon \$800 Melinda A. Faulkner

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so we can investigate and correct our records if there is an

These donors were omitted from the last issue. We would like to sincerely apologize and thank them for their generosity:

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#### **VOLUNTEERS AWARDED** FOR OUTSTANDING **DEDICATION**

Congratulations to the following Big Cat Rescuers who have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to the mission of Big Cat Rescue. In honor of this service they were each presented with an award called the S.A.V.E. and allotted \$500 to spend on their favorite feline friends.

S.A.V.E stands for Scratch's Award for Volunteer Excellence. Named for an outstanding cougar, Scratch, whose lifespan reached 30 years, the SAVE Award is presented to one outstanding volunteer or intern each month.

We are so excited to present this award to Sue Messineo. Sue is a kind hearted person and а wonderful volunteer coordinator. She has volunteered at BCR for nearly 7 years.



Interns Karma Hurworth, Julia Doane, Jessica Lazarz, and

Michael Heap received this award for their outstanding efforts caring for our domestic foster kittens.



Sharon Henry is volunteer new of almost 1 year. Sharon received the SAVE in celebration positive her attitude and endless



willingness to help out in any way needed.



Long time volunteer of 8 years and staff member Jeff Kremer was honored with this award in recognition of his exemplary work on securing much needed donations to fund the sanctuary's work.

Big Cat Rescue is so lucky to have outstanding volunteers and interns who give not only their time to help the big cats, but also go above and beyond the call of duty!

Do you want to help the big cats and make new friends? Big Cat Rescue is always looking for volunteers. Keepers clean enclosures, feed the animals, and landscape. Partners work in the gift shop and guide tours of the sanctuary. Check us out online to get all the de-tails!



BigCatRescue.org/volunteer



Get a close look into our day to day operations, the conservation efforts we support, and the 100+ feline residents of Big Cat Rescue



#### **FEATURED GIFT ITEM**

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#### 2015 Big Cat Rescue Calendar

13-month calendar features glossy color photos of the big cats of Big

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#### **AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - JOIN THE SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY**

Big Cat Rescue makes it easy and convenient to donate monthly with no worry. You can do this either by credit card or by direct debit to a checking account for as little as \$5/month. For credit card donations, just fill in the highlighted line on the order form above and provide your credit card information. For checking account direct debit email finance@bigcatrescue.org, or leave a message for Howard at 813-920-4130. This is a G-R-R-eat way to spread out your donations and provide steady support that is so meaningful for

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Special Comment, Request, or Question:		
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#### **TOUR TIMES & PROGRAMS**

**Reservations Required For All Tours** www.zerve.com/bigcatrescue (888) 316-5875

Closed Thursdays, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day Tours may be cancelled due to inclement weather Current pricing available online



#### **KIDS TOUR**

#### Tour Times: Saturday & Sunday 12 PM

Children of all ages and their parents can learn about the big cats on this guided tour of the sanctuary. This tour is given on a child's educational level. Tour is 1 hr. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

#### **DAY TOUR**

#### Tour Times: Mon, Tues, Wed, Fri 3 PM Sat & Sun 10 AM & 3 PM

Guided tour of the sanctuary. Learn about the big cats and the threats they face both in the wild as well as in captivity. Hear their personal stories of how they were rescued. Tour is 1.5 hrs. No children under 10 years of age.

#### **FEEDING TOUR**

#### Tour Times: Wed, Fri, Sat 9 AM

Follow a keeper as they feed the big cats. Observe the big cats eating and learn about the their nutritional needs in captivity. Tour is 1 hr. No children under 10 years of age.

#### **BIG CAT KEEPER TOUR**

#### Tour Times: Sat & Sun 10 AM

This tour takes you behind the scenes. Enjoy making enrichment (treats and food puzzles) for the big cats and watch as the keepers hand out the enrichment you made. You will also observe operant training sessions with the big cats. Tour is 2 hrs. No children under 10 years of age.

#### **WILD EYES AT NIGHT TOUR**

#### Tour Times: Last Friday of the month Night

Tours are the best way to see the animals come alive! As you journey through the sanctuary you will be stalked and pounced at from the shadows! This is an adventure that's sure to please! Tour is 1 hr. No children under 10 years of age.

Also offered - WEDDINGS, PARTIES, **EDUCATIONAL OUTREACHES AND** FIELD TRIPS, VOLUNTEER & INTERN **PROGRAMS AND GIFT CERTIFICATES** 

Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change. Visit us online for the most current tour information.

THE BIG CAT TIMES ORDER FORM Spring 2015

Qty.

Size

Yes, I would priority shipping for an additional charge of \$3.00 \$

**METHOD OF PAYMENT** 

CCV#

Signature

FROM:

American Express

Yes, I would like a receipt for tax purposes

Check

**Credit Card Number** 

Exp. Date MMYY

Money Order

**MasterCard** 

Grand Total \$

Discover

Price Each

Total

#### **US CONGRESSMAN ROSS VISITS BCR**

We were honored to have a visit from Florida US Representative Dennis Ross and his staff just before year end. Congressman Ross represents the 15th District of Florida, a large area just east of Big Cat Rescue. The Congressman is pictured here with Joseph the lion looking on attentively.

After his visit the Congressman sent us this very nice comment about his visit: "I had the pleasure of visiting Big Cat Rescue a few weeks ago and appreciated learning about the challenges big cats face in U.S. captivity and in the wild.

Big Cat Rescue provides rehabilitation for injured and abused big cats, and it was great meeting their dedicated and passionate staff."

We thank Congressman Ross and his staff for taking time out of their busy schedules to visit the cats and learn about the issues they face.





#### BIG CAT RESCUE GOES GR-R-R-REEN

Big Cat Rescue is committed to protecting exotic cats from captivity and in the wild

and some may think that we put cats ahead of people, but that's not true. Protecting habitat where cats live free is crucial to saving the planet for all of us because our forests are our planet's lungs.

We have tried to reduce our impact on the globe by installing two huge solar arrays, thanks to the help of some wonderful donors. These solar panels helped us reduce our dependency on dirty fuels and are a focal point on tours to get people thinking about what they can do to walk more softly on the earth.

This week Arcadia Power made it possible for Big Cat Rescue to completely switch to clean energy! It took about 5 minutes, and will only cost us about \$20.00 a month over our typical electric bill for the entire sanctuary. (For a regular house, it's more

like \$7.50 a month over your regular bill) There was nothing to install, no hassle, no red tape; just a quick call and a simple contract that can be freely terminated at any time (if we want to go back to using the dirty stuff).



Arcadia Power is the first nationwide Clean Energy utility option. By partnering with wind and solar projects, Arcadia Power provides homes and businesses with 100% pollution-free energy via local utilities. Members support their values through their monthly electricity bills, decreasing demand for fossil fuels and helping to grow American jobs. Arcadia Power partners with sustainability-minded companies and organizations to combat climate change and secure a better future for our planet. To see if it is available to you visit www.arcadiapower.com and just type in your zip code to check.

#### DR. JIM SANDERSON LECTURES AT BIG CAT RESCUE

After a 20-year career as a top Los Alamos National Laboratory mathematician, Dr. Jim Sanderson left his job to study biology and ecology. He traveled to Chile to study an endangered cat called the guigna, and soon he was tracking elusive small cat species around the world.

Dr. Sanderson, PhD, has become one of the world's foremost experts on small wild felines and founded Small Cat Conservation Alliance in 1996.



Jim was the first to capture a photo of the Chinese mountain cat with a camera trap he had set on the edge of the Tibetan Plateau in China's Sichuan Province at an altitude of 12,300 feet. Images such as this have the potential to reveal important information about endangered cats and popularize these cats as species that need protection.

On January 30th Dr. Sanderson gave his

slide show presentation to a packed house at the Lion's Lair Party Pavilion and undoubtedly inspired the next generation of field researchers with his stories of how he has worked with local people to help them come to know and love the wild cats who live near them. Big Cat Rescue funded a Fishing Cat project being done by local researcher, Ashan Thudugla, to protect Fishing Cats in the wild. Find out more about small cat conservation at: **SmallWildCats.com** 







# HELP FUND THE FIRST EVER INTERNATIONAL FISHING CAT CONSERVATION SYMPOSIUM IN NEPAL

Of the 38 species of wild cats, most people cannot name the 31 small cat species. 99% of the money raised globally for conservation each year goes to the 7 big cat species.

You can help save one of the most interesting small cat species, the fishing cat. This May, thanks to a matching grant provided by Big Cat Rescue and donations from small cat lovers like you, Dr. Sanderson will be hosting a meeting geared towards the conservation of Fishing Cats. Researchers and experts will gather together in Nepal to discuss key habitat for fishing cats as well as develope an action plan to save them in the wild.

From now until April 30th your donation will be matched 100% by Big Cat Rescue until a grand total of \$8,000 has been raised.

Donate today at: http://www.razoo.com/story/smallcats

#### **BIG CAT LASER TREATMENTS**



Thanks to K-Laser, many of our big and little cats have been benefiting from laser therapy. K-Laser offered the use of one of their state of the art Low Level Lasers (cold laser) to use on the big cats, free of charge, on a trial basis. Cold laser therapy uses light or photon energy to penetrate below the skin surface causing an increase in cellular metabolism. Cold laser is used to treat a variety conditions of the soft tissues and joints from wounds to arthritis.

Some of the cats who received treatments are Little Feather and Raindance the bobcats, as well as Simba and Jumanji the leopards.

So how do you get a wild cat to sit still for a laser therapy treatment that lasts anywhere from a 1-4 minutes? Meat flavored popsicles of course! Our wonderful enrichment team makes special popsicles on a long stick that keepers use to distract the cats during treatments. Every cat blissed out as they lick the popsicle over and over so much so that they do not even notice that they are being treated!



Jumanji has a small lick granuloma on his toe. The area is often red and irritated. We have been using a combination of laser treatments and enrichment to help subside his behavior and heal the wound. We are glad to see the results of these two therapies are working. Fur is slowly growing back in at the site of the hot spot.





Both Simba and Raindance have chronic arthritis. They have been receiving regular laser treatments to help ease this impediment. It may be working too well as both would rather

jump from their lower platforms to the ground rather than use their ramps.



Little Feather suffered from a stroke which left her paralyzed on one of her rear legs. In addition to not being able to utilize the limb she also sustained an abrasion on the top of her foot from dragging it. After a couple of months of laser treatments we are thrilled to report that not only has the abrasion healed, but Little Feather is walking much better on the affected limb.



The cost of this laser is \$25,000. At some point we hope to have one here permanently, but until





From top: Jamie Veronica lasers Simba, Jamie & Gale Ingham laser Jumanji, Jumanji's toe, Kathryn Quaas and Gale laser Simba, Jamie & Gale laser Little Feather, Little Feather enjoying her popsicle, Karma Hurworth and Jamie laser Jade

