

# the Wild Side

Newsletter of Forest Animal Rescue (formerly known as Peace River Refuge & Ranch)

<http://ForestAnimalRescue.org>

## Forest Animal Rescue - *a true sanctuary*



### Moving forward into 2014

We couldn't have come so far without you!

The entire sanctuary and all of the animals were relocated to our new 80 acre property in the safety of the Ocala National Forest. This was a massive undertaking and certainly had its challenges; but we overcame the obstacles and have continued with our work.

*continued on page 2*

#### Don't miss these articles:

It's always  
worth it but  
some days are  
hard...

Page 3

Illinois State  
University  
students  
volunteer to  
help the animals

Page 4

We will miss  
you Blizzard

Page 6

- Dedicated to the *lifetime* care of non-releasable wild animals to prevent them from being destroyed
- Registered 501(c)(3) charity
- Fully licensed
- Accredited by the American Sanctuary Association
- Internationally recognized
- Animals are never bred or exploited in any way
- Rescued animals live in large, natural habitats with high quality care by our all-volunteer staff



## Moving forward into 2014

We have more construction to do before the animals will be completely comfortable in their new surroundings. As soon as they have ample space to hide if they choose, we will begin to allow visitors.

We hope to complete enough of this project to allow small semi-monthly tours for our supporters within the next few months; we would love to have you visit us at that time - watch our newsletter for updates!

Meanwhile, we would like to express our appreciation for your generosity over the years. Your support has enabled us to provide the highest quality care for so many animals in desperate need of our help – and to move our entire sanctuary to a safer location when our old location was under threat of encroachment.

Over the years we have been able to turn so many tragedies into blessings. Together we have made a real difference!

Here are a few of the highlights:

- We have rescued hundreds of captive wild animals with nowhere else to go, providing them with lifetime care and the chance to heal emotionally and physically; once again learning to thrive in a true sanctuary setting.
- Our robust internship program has taught young adults from around the world about the issues facing wild animals in captivity and what each one of them can do to make a difference.
- As we enter 2014, we are beginning our next phase of construction; expanding the habitats to be as large as the animals had grown accustomed to at our old location.

*(continued)*



Now we are working toward the goal of a state-of-the art facility with increased capacity to rescue more animals in need.

Of course, providing a safe, secure environment and the ongoing feeding and medical care for our beloved friends takes money; each year we are forced to turn away over 500 abused or neglected animals that are desperate for our help.

With enough continuing monthly pledges, we can begin to increase our numbers, and rescue more of the cast-aside animals that so badly need our help.

### **Won't you consider pledging a monthly donation for all of 2014 and beyond?**

Recurring donations are as easy to make as one-time donations. On our online donation page, all you need to do is check the “recurring (monthly)” box where you specify your gift amount - your gifts will continue automatically! You retain complete control over changing the frequency or amount of the gifts at any time.

Of course, you can always mail a donation to us, all of the mailing details are on the coupon on the last page of this newsletter.

## It is always worth it, but some days are hard...

As we look at all of the animals that we have rescued over the years, so many of them came to us in the last half of their lifespan.

We almost completely stopped taking new animals while we were planning for the move and will not resume until we have finished expanding the habitats at the new facility for the animals already in our care.

The math tells us that we are headed for an emotionally difficult time over the next few years. With so many geriatric animals, we are bound to lose a higher number than we have ever experienced in the past, simply because so many are growing old.

It is always hard for us to say goodbye; just as it is hard for anyone who has loved an animal in their lives – they are part of our ‘family.’

The needs of the ones we rescue may be different from your cat or dog, they are wild and may not want us to touch them or come too close, but we have rescued them from the most devastating situations. We have watched them recover from lives of neglect or abuse, grow healthy and thrive in our care.

They show their appreciation in their own way.

We have lost some of our rescued animals already this year...luckily it has nothing to do with the move, but their loss hurts just the same.



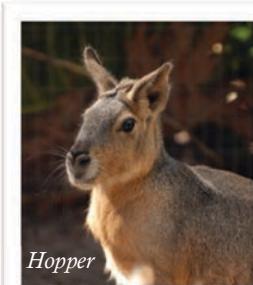
On January 19th, we lost Elvira, a skunk that was only 5 1/2 years old but battled chronic liver issues the whole time we had her. She passed away from an aneurism caused by her liver disease. The other three skunks that she lived with are all still doing well.

Elvira was always our ‘size zero supermodel’ – she was forever on the thin side and was extremely high energy. She was the first one to be up and running around during daylight to get her treats (we were always trying to put weight on her) and was so adorable.

She didn’t want to be handled and could inflict a nasty bite, but she was still one of everyone’s favorites due to her never-ending antics and curiosity.

The next animal that we lost was on January 27<sup>th</sup>; Hopper, our last Patagonian Cavy (South American wild guinea pig), she finally gave in to old age.

She came to us in 2000, along with several other cavies, from a closed Florida attraction called Cypress Gardens.



Once again, being touched was not on Hopper’s agenda, but she would make her guinea pig noises and show her enthusiasm for her favorite treats, fresh beets and artichokes, along with all of the healthy vegetables she ate every day.

She was extremely long-lived for a cavy and was happy and content right up to the end. We will miss her but are glad that she was able to spend so many happy years at the sanctuary.

On February 7, we lost Blizzard, the white tiger to renal failure. This was especially hard on us since he was one of the first few animals we rescued when we started the sanctuary.

A piece of our heart goes with each animal we lose. Fortunately, seeing them thrive under our loving care and compassion while they were here and the happiness of the ones still with us make it all worth it.

## Illinois State University students volunteer to help the animals

We have just finished working with our largest Alternative Break group to date!

ISU "Alternative Break" program sent 43 volunteers to work with us for a week solid.

What an amazing group of students; They chose to come to Florida for their winter break and instead of partying like many of their peers, they chose to do service work for a good cause.

They were cheerful, hard-working and full of enthusiasm, The gang helped us to clear brush and fallen trees from our new driveway around the perimeter of the property to reduce the risk of fire, and then they almost completed the entire horse pasture fencing!

The materials alone for each one-acre compound will cost a minimum of \$23,000!

**We have an estimated 60 more students from five different schools coming in March for spring break!**



## Come see us at the film festival in April!

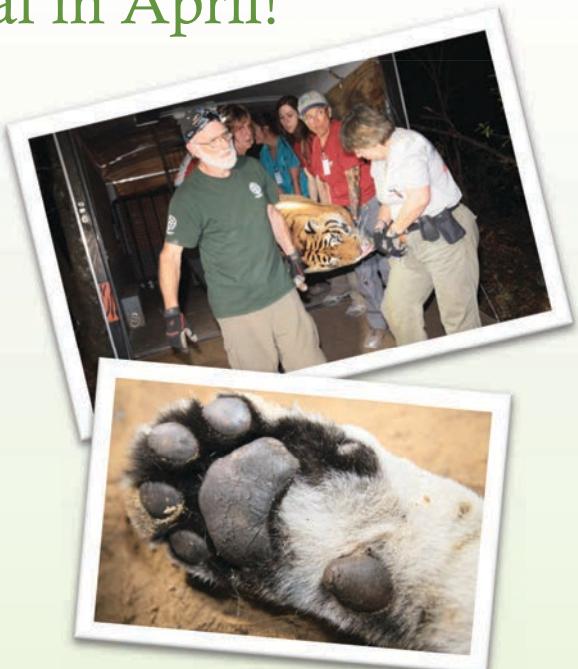
When we safely moved 138 animals in 4 days and made it a Disaster Response training opportunity, our friends Mark & Jackie Barrett filmed the whole process and made a movie for us.

The film has been entered in the Silver Springs International Film Festival and will be competing against other fantastic films April 3-6, 2014.

Please join us to see the screening of our film as well as the other entries – and you can meet us to discuss it in person! <http://www.springsfilmfest.com>

Watch the trailer:

[http://forestanimalrescue.org/film\\_trailer/](http://forestanimalrescue.org/film_trailer/)



## 2:1 Matching Grant to build a tiger habitat!

### We have great news!

The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) is giving us a grant to help with the construction of our acreage tiger habitats!

**For every dollar you give, IFAW will match it with TWO dollars up to \$15,400!**

The next \$7,700 donated to help with construction will be added to their gift, giving us enough to purchase the materials needed for a one-acre tiger compound!

*Now is your chance to have every dollar you give add up to THREE dollars for the animals.*

During the month of March, we have an estimated 60 volunteers coming from colleges around the country to help us build. This is the best opportunity for us to utilize this amazing labor force and give the tigers the space they deserve!



## Are you a member of our Legacy Society?

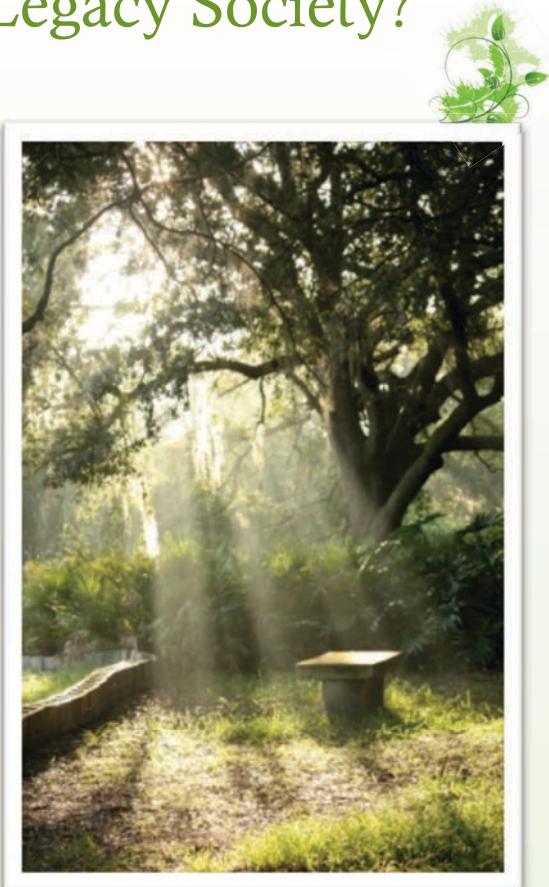
Forest Animal Rescue honors every planned gift donor with a membership in the Legacy Society—but we can't honor you with this if you don't tell us!

This society is created exclusively to honor and recognize people who have helped to continue our life saving work through a gift to Forest Animal Rescue in their wills, estate plans or trusts. As a Legacy Society member, you will receive a certificate of appreciation and a Legacy Society lapel pin to serve as a reminder to others of your support of our mission. Your gift can be recognized publicly, unless you prefer to remain anonymous.

If you have already arranged for a bequest or other planned gift, please notify us so you can receive your membership perks. If you are still considering such a gift, please let us know so we can help you and your advisors complete your gift in a way that benefits your estate and makes clear your intention to help the animals at Forest Animal Rescue.

You can call us at 352-625-7377 or email [development@forestanimalrescue.org](mailto:development@forestanimalrescue.org)

When you join the Society, you demonstrate your commitment to the prevention of cruelty to animals and help ensure the long-term strength of Forest Animal Rescue and the lifetime care of all of the animals at the sanctuary.



## We will miss you Blizzard...

Sitting on the ground, I cried. The decision was made and I'd been the one to make it. There was no other choice, no other option. Blood testing and many long talks with the veterinarian had confirmed it. As the finality sunk in, the cool drizzle continued as it had most of the day.

As the cold mist continues, warm tears fill my eyes until they reach the brim and flow down my cheeks, falling like the rain into the damp soil beneath me. "But he's still alive, he must be ok" is all I can think, and I feel ashamed to cry in front of him. The facts are right in front of me but are so hard to look at. At least it is dark and there is no unnecessary audience to see my tears. It's late, we waited until everyone else had gone.

He greets me with a friendly greeting – "chuff" – appearing content, but I know his kidneys have failed completely and he will never eat enough to regain the massive amount of weight he has lost. He now feels so poorly that he won't even eat enough to take his medicine; he's getting weaker.

He quietly listens to me as I talk to him, thanking him for accepting our loving care for so many years and allowing us to do the best we could for him. He started out life being so severely mistreated by humans it's a wonder that he was able to have faith in humans at all.

I was the first person he learned to trust when he was only a few months old and now I will be one

of the last faces he sees. Although I give him the distance and respect he deserves, he has been my friend for 16 years. Why, after all of these years of rescuing animals is this still so hard?

The drizzle continues as we proceed with the grim task at hand. As the injections are given the reality hits and the illogical questions of doubt arise and are dismissed internally. Respirations are counted...waiting...until they finally stop.

Unbraced for another surge of reality I'm once again overwhelmed, I sit on the wet ground and cry. Slowly, I attempt to say my goodbyes and collect myself.

Kurt and I both have tear-stained faces by the time we are

finished burying him, but he was laid to rest by people who loved him – people he knew almost his entire life.

To Blizzard, our final goodbye. You are sorely missed and will never be forgotten. You were with us when we first started the sanctuary and gave us the inspiration to always try our best. You taught us that with enough time and nurturing, even the most traumatized animals can once again learn to trust and thrive.

**Thank you to all of the hard-working volunteers and supporters who have helped care for Blizzard and his friends over the years. We could never rescue and provide lifetime care for so many animals in need without you.**



## Yes!! I will Help!!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I am enclosing my tax-deductible donation of \$\_\_\_\_\_

- OR -

\_\_\_\_ Please charge my: Visa \_\_\_\_ MasterCard \_\_\_\_ Discover \_\_\_\_ in the amount of \$\_\_\_\_\_

My card number is: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on card: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Please contact me about volunteering (must be 18 or older)

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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Socialize with us:



[www.facebook.com/forestanimalrescue](http://www.facebook.com/forestanimalrescue)



<http://www.youtube.com/peaceriverrefuge>



<https://twitter.com/ForestAnimalRes>



### Please join us in thanking our “Groundbreaking Sponsors”

#### Gold Sponsors: \$5,000 or more

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Mr. Guy Marwick & The Felburn Foundation

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Consie VonGontard

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We are offering an exclusive sponsorship opportunity. With your tax-deductible donation, you will have the opportunity to have your name permanently displayed at the new location, recognition on our website and in all of our upcoming media releases as a groundbreaking sponsor, a VIP Membership and more. The higher the level of sponsorship, the greater the benefits!

Visit our website at [www.ForestAnimalRescue.org](http://www.ForestAnimalRescue.org) and visit our “Donate” page for details, or you can call us at 352-625-7377 for details.



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by Peace River Refuge & Ranch  
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Join our email list



MEET THE ANIMALS

Scan this with your smart phone

THE WILD SIDE

FEBRUARY 2014



## Building a state of the art facility

We are finally off and rolling at our new location! We have power and full time water for the animals; we have volunteers coming to help and fundraising for construction is going better than ever.

We hope to finish expanding the animal habitats to the point that they are comfortable with strangers coming to visit them – then we will begin our semi-monthly guided tours.

Thank you for joining us as we build a state of the art facility to rescue cast-off animals in need.

Warm regards,  
*Lisa Stoner*

PS – Do you have a topic you would like us to write about? Drop me an email and let me know!

[lisa@forestanimalrescue.org](mailto:lisa@forestanimalrescue.org)

