



The Wild Side

Quarterly newsletter of
Peace River Refuge & Ranch
- Forest Animal Rescue

June 2011
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www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

A personal letter from Lisa...

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In 13 years since we founded the sanctuary, I never really shared my personal feelings with our supporters until recently. I'm not sure why, maybe I just assumed it was "unprofessional" - I guess that's a carryover from working in the business world for so long.

In April, I sent out an email through teary eyes that exposed my emotional pain over the death of Zulu, the tiger who inspired us to start the sanctuary (see next article). The heartwarming replies started rolling in and I realized that our supporters don't just care about the animals, they care about the *whole* sanctuary, including Kurt and I; you truly are our *friends*.

2011 has been a hard year; financially as well as physically and emotionally. Donations have been at an all-time low; as a matter of fact, you may have noticed that the last printed issue of this newsletter was in November 2010. The first issue in 2011 only went out in email format because we didn't have the funding needed to print and mail the physical copies.

About a month ago, I took the lesson learned from the heartwarming responses of to my personal email about the loss of Zulu and sent letters to some of our supporters. These letters outlined some of our recent hardships including Kurt's shoulder infection that has us nervous about how we will fill his shoes if/when his health gives out.

Once again, the responses did our hearts good. Our friends came through. Several friends have pledged to give small monthly donations so that we can budget and plan ahead in the event we need to hire someone on short notice. Others made special donations to help us breathe a little easier, knowing that the animals will continue to receive the care they deserve even when things are so tight. As I sit here writing this my eyes tear up again, but this time it is from the feelings of relief and appreciation.

I can't thank everyone enough for the support they have given us over the years—both financially and emotionally . You are truly our friends and we are looking forward to staying in touch with you for years to come. We have big plans for the future of the sanctuary and we are happy to have you along with us!

Sincerely,

Lisa Stoner, Vice President

Peace River Refuge & Ranch — A True Sanctuary

- * Fully licensed by state and federal authorities
- * Accredited by the American Sanctuary Association (ASA)
- * Recognized as a World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) *Member Society*
- * Animals receive *lifetime care* and are never bred or exploited
- * **Guided tours offered only twice a month by reservation**

In Memory of Zulu

After knowing Zulu for 16 years it is hard to fathom a sanctuary without him. He held a very special place in our hearts; we knew him since he was a cub and he was our inspiration for starting the sanctuary 13 years ago.

Zulu had a long history of medical issues starting with a fractured pelvis before he came to us. After he arrived, his pelvis was narrowed from the old fracture and as he grew, his large intestine would no longer fit through his pelvis properly.

He became impacted in 1999 and had emergency surgery to have his large intestine removed by the University of Florida Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospital. The doctors passed his small intestine through his pelvis and reconnecting everything. This corrected the problem and with careful attention to his diet and any health concerns, Zulu was able to live a full life.

We have recently been introducing two new tigers, Tony & Roy, to Zulu and his long-time friend, Blizzard - with the plans of having all four tigers living happily together in one large compound. Introducing strange tigers is never something to rush, so we have been rotating them together for one-on-one contact with their new playmates.

On April 12 it was Roy and Zulu's turn to spend the day together. They had a small spat early in the day and then everything calmed down nicely. Roy wanted to play but Zulu didn't. A few hours later, Zulu was noticed lying down in the shade breathing heavily. By the time we could shift Roy out of the enclosure to allow a closer look at Zulu, he was already gone.

The exam determined his cause of death to be cardiac arrest.

With Zulu's history of orthopedic problems, we had anticipated that his old age would be spent with pain management concerns from the old fractured pelvis.

Although this outcome was unexpected and no less painful for us, this was a much kinder way for him to go. The lifespan for a tiger in captivity is 15-20 years, so we shouldn't be so stunned to lose him now - I guess we were just hoping that he would go for 20.



Zulu was our friend for almost his whole life. He was a wonderfully cooperative tiger - voluntarily standing still and accepting injections and much of his veterinary care through the wire of his habitat without a flinch. He knew we were here to help him and he trusted us with his life.

This tiger was the one who inspired us to sell our house and everything we owned to build a sanctuary to rescue him from the place where he was going to be killed due to his injury.

In 1998, Peace River Refuge & Ranch was founded to provide lifetime care Zulu and other animals in need. All of the animals in our care have Zulu to thank.

I personally have Zulu to thank for showing me that a wild animal as magnificent as a tiger can learn to trust people and accept our care.

Even though, for safety reasons, we restricted his playmates to others of his own kind (as opposed to humans), the love and affection in his eyes is a feeling I will never forget.

Zulu, I'm sorry that you won't see the new property in the Ocala National Forest - I know you would've loved the habitat we have been planning to build for you.

You will be sorely missed by me, Kurt and your lifelong playmate Blizzard.

The lessons I've learned from you alone are some that have changed me as a person and I will carry them with me for the rest of my life.

Thank you for sharing your beautiful life with me you truly are irreplaceable and unforgettable. May you rest in peace.

All of the animals at the sanctuary have Zulu to thank

To our friends—thanks to your generosity, Zulu lived most of his life under the oak trees and blue sky without having his life prematurely ended simply because of veterinary expenses.

It is because of you that our work is possible.

Thank you for caring,

Lisa

Would you like to visit the animals?

Since we are a true accredited sanctuary, our concern for the well being of the animals always comes first.

You probably know that most of the animals at the sanctuary have suffered at the hands of humans before their arrival here. Likewise, it is not in line with the definition of 'sanctuary' if we allow our need for funding to override the right that the animals have to a stress-free environment.

The compromise that we have found is to offer two-hour exclusive guided tours twice a month, led by one of the sanctuary founders.

By limiting the frequency of tours and ensuring that all visitors are accompanied by someone that the animals know and trust, we can satisfy everyone.

We are still mindful of the privacy that the animals require and the animals are confident that the visitors will maintain a respectful distance

because they are accompanied by a friend they have grown to trust.

The tours are by reservation only and we request a minimum donation of \$15 per person to help with the care of the animals.

As of the printing of this newsletter, the upcoming tours on the calendar are **Saturday, June 25, 2011** and **Saturday, July 16, 2011** at the sanctuary in Zolfo Springs, FL.

If you would like to get more information or reserve a spot, please contact us at 863-735-0804 or through our website at www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

Tours are scheduled on weekdays as well as weekends, depending on everyone's schedules.

If the dates above won't work for you, feel free to contact us to see what the next ones are. If they haven't been scheduled yet, we may be able to accommodate your requested date.



Bring your camera!

You can volunteer without leaving home

Would you love to volunteer but can't get away? Do you have a computer?

We have a job for you!!!!

You can help the animals by promoting the sanctuary online and helping to spread the word to encourage others to join our cause.


Social networking is our friend...


Although we are currently redesigning our website, we have an online presence on many different sites.


You can join in and collaborate with us and we will all help the animals together.

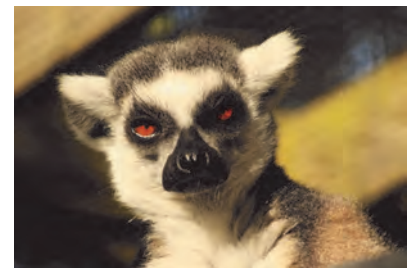
*You can be a **virtual volunteer** from anywhere in the world!*

 **"Like" our page on Facebook and share it with your friends:**
<http://www.facebook.com/peacriver>

 **Follow and share on Twitter:**
<http://twitter.com/PeaceRiverRefug>
(NOTE: no 'e' on the end)

 **Watch our videos on YouTube and then "Favorite" and share them:**
<http://www.youtube.com/PeaceRiverRefuge>

 **Create an online fundraiser and invite your friends to join you on Razoo:**
<http://www.razoo.com/story/Peace-River-Refuge-And-Ranch>



If you spread the word and your friends do the same, the animals will win in the long run

Progress report: Moving the sanctuary to Marion County

When a huge housing development was approved near the sanctuary, we realized that a fight would eventually begin and we would be forced to move.

We made our plan to secure the future of the animals by making a commitment to move them to a new location sooner, rather than waiting until we were forced to spend money on legal battles only to prolong the inevitable.

We have 80 acres of heavily wooded land in the Ocala National Forest, *surrounded* on three sides by federally protected land. The animals will no longer be at risk of losing their home to development.

It will take us *years* to complete the construction and move the animals all at once, but with your help, we are confident that we can accomplish the move in time.

THE LATEST: With all of our zoning and permits in place, we have been moving on with construction.

We have been busy installing the 8' perimeter fence around most of the property and applying for grants to



help with restoring the habitat for native wildlife.

So far, we have about 30% of the perimeter fence complete and almost \$3,000 in funding approved for longleaf pine habitat restoration...

Now we need your help to finish the fencing and build animal habitats as quickly as possible so that we can move the animals to safety.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITY:

Any gift in the amount of \$5,000 or more will give you the opportunity to *permanently* name an animal habitat in your honor or in honor of a loved one at the new location.

Your gift now, in any amount, will help to ensure a lifetime of protection for all of the animals at the sanctuary.

Please donate today to help move the animals to safety.

Tax deductible contributions may be mailed to:

Peace River Refuge & Ranch, Inc.
PO Box 1127
2545 Stoner Lane
Zolfo Springs, FL 33890



Gifts can also be made securely through our website at www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

Bartering for heavy equipment

What do you do when you are trying to operate a sanctuary while building at a new location and donations drop off? You get *creative!*

One of Kurt's greatest skills is that he loves people. He talks to everyone, and remembers faces and names (unlike me, I am more of a hermit and like animals better than most people—haha)

Kurt's people skills and flexibility have once again paid off for the animals. He has been bartering a lot lately, trading donated equipment and car parts for repairs on our vehicles and now he has managed to trade

some parts and a donated tractor for a **BULLDOZER!**

This is *fantastic* news for our construction project. Now we can clear fire breaks around the forested land and clear rows to build fences without having to do it all with our little John Deere tractor and lots of manual labor.

Once the construction is complete, this bulldozer will be exactly what we need to protect the animals at the new property in the event of a forest fire.

Our projects will continue regardless of the tight budget!

Feel free to contact us if you have any creative bartering suggestions to help us reach our goals - together we will make this happen!



Yes!! I will help!!

Jun 2011

I know the need is great and I want to support the animals at Peace River Refuge & Ranch

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

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

-OR-

_____ Please charge my Visa___ or MasterCard___ in the amount of \$ _____

My card number is: _____ Exp. _____

Name on card: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

_____ Please send instructions for me to set up regular monthly gifts from my bank account or credit card

Comments: _____

The animals can count on me!!

We have the BEST volunteers!

During school breaks we are fortunate to host several "Alternative" Break college groups as they volunteer to help the animals.

Instead of partying with the rest of their classmates, these big-hearted students take a pledge to set a good example and help make the world a better place.

The groups that helped us this spring were Ohio State University and the University of Vermont.

These students helped us to finish the perimeter fencing on one whole side of the new property—what a great bunch!



For winter vacation, we already have

Alternative Break groups scheduled from the University of Maine and another group from OSU!

You can be a valuable part of this project by donating toward the purchase of materials for the students to work with.

Please help them accomplish their goal of building part of the new sanctuary during their stay with us.

What a fantastic opportunity for everyone to help guarantee the future safety of the animals!

**On any given day, there are almost 200 animals at Peace River Refuge & Ranch
Here's how your donations help with their care:**

- \$ 25 buys a whole bag of monkey biscuits for the primates
- \$ 100 provides nutritional supplements for the animals to keep them healthy
- \$ 500 provides life-saving veterinary care for a rescued animal
- \$1,000 cares for all of the animals at the sanctuary for one day
- \$5,000 builds a small habitat in your honor to move the animals to safety

Peace River Refuge & Ranch

PO Box 1127

Zolfo Springs, FL 33890-1127

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Peace River Refuge & Ranch
Forest Animal Rescue
PO Box 1127 - 2545 Stoner Lane
Zolfo Springs, FL 33890

Phone: 863-735-0804
Fax: 863-735-0805
E-mail: info@PeaceRiverRefuge.org

Nonprofit wild animal sanctuary
and educational facility



Dear Friends,

I apologize that the last issue of the newsletter only made it out in email format. Funding was too tight to print and mail physical copies but we are back on track and happy to share our latest news.

We have a few new ideas that we are working on and are looking forward to hearing your thoughts.

Thank you for your support!

Lisa Stoner, VP
Peace River Refuge & Ranch

