



# The Wild Side

Quarterly newsletter of  
Peace River Refuge & Ranch

October 2009  
Volume 2009 No. 4

[www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org)

## Another great year for volunteers

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Peace River Refuge & Ranch works with an ever-increasing number of both international and domestic volunteers and interns. We also host several "Alternative Break" college groups every year.

In exchange for their hard work and dedication, we teach them about the problems facing wild animals in captivity, coexisting with our wild



**Fresh fruits and vegetables are a large part of most of the diets**

neighbors and what we can do to provide the best life for rescued animals as possible.

Since we have no paid staff, the volunteers and interns work closely with us on all facets of operating the sanctuary.

Some volunteers help to prepare fresh, nutritionally balanced diets for the wide variety of animals at the sanctuary. They learn how to help observe the animals for unusual behavior or illness and safely deliver

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## Upcoming events

You can help care for the animals and have fun at the same time. Please join us and have the chance to meet other great people who also love the sanctuary. Watch our website at [www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org) for more details....

### *Poker Tournament*

**Saturday, December 5**

6:30pm—??

Address:

Celtic Crossing  
222 W. Main Street  
Wauchula, FL 33873  
(863) 773-0070

Fantastic prizes, silent auction, raffle prizes and great fun. \$50 donation to play (but you can watch for free) Great food and spirits!

### *Golf Tournament*

**Saturday, December 12**

8:00am shotgun

Address:

Sun 'n Lake Golf and Country Club  
5223 Sun 'n Lake Blvd.  
Sebring, FL 33872  
(863) 385-4830

*Voted #1 golf course in Highlands County!*  
\$75 per person includes lunch, silent auction, raffles and more.

9th annual

### *Christmas for the Animals*

**Saturday, December 19**

1:00-4:00 pm

Address:

Peace River Refuge & Ranch  
2545 Stoner Lane  
Zolfo Springs, FL 33890

Come watch the animals open their gifts! Paper mache "prey animals" for the carnivores, stockings for the monkeys and more. \$15 minimum donation per person -bring your camera!

### 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**

## Donor spotlight: Mindi Lasley, P.A.

The animals have a very thoughtful and generous friend who just celebrated her 30th birthday!

The best part is that her birthday wish was to help the animals at the sanctuary.

Mindi started by opening a fundraising page at



Mindi Lasley

[www.firstgiving.com](http://www.firstgiving.com). She created her personal fundraising page and emailed her friends.

Finally, she requested that monetary gifts be given to the animals on her behalf in lieu of gifts to her.

*As of the time this newsletter went to print, she had raised \$730 for the animals!*

PS—check out Mindi's website at [www.lasleylaw.com](http://www.lasleylaw.com)—send her a message and wish her a happy birthday!

**If you would like to help the animals like Mindi did, you can create your own personal fundraising page at [www.firstgiving.com/18088](http://www.firstgiving.com/18088)**

## New freezers needed

When we started out 2009 with the new legislation resulting in the shock of losing \$120,000 per year in donated food for the animals, we didn't know how we were going to manage.

Now the year coming to an end and we have been fortunate that your help made the difference.

We told you, our best friends and supporters about the dilemma and you came through for the animals.

We asked you to help us with the purchase commercial refrigerators, capable of handling large, wholesale shipments of produce and you came through. We asked you to help us with the increased monthly expense of purchasing food and again, you came

through.

Now, once again, we are asking for your help. Two of our old freezers that we were still using for meat for the carnivores have failed. We need to purchase two new freezers immediately.

To top it off, with the onset of fall and winter, the produce prices are increasing. By this time next month, they will be 40% higher than the have been all summer.



African Serval: Kenya

We need your help once again. *Your gift will make a direct difference in the lives of the animals.*

*Please donate today.*

Charitable 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](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org)

*Thank you for helping the animals!*

## Another great year for volunteers...

*(Continued from page 1)*

their food each day. They help in providing enrichment and cleaning enclosures.

Still other volunteers help with fundraising events, construction and other projects.

Adding excitement to the whole program, all volunteers observe and assist with any veterinary procedures that are performed while they are



**It takes a LOT of people to lift a tranquilized tiger!**

here. There is always plenty of work to go around. The days are long and the work is hard, but their dedication to the animals is amazing.

**We couldn't provide such excellent care for so many rescued animals without such dedicated volunteers**

*Thank you!*

We have been fortunate to have some of the best friends we could wish for.

## Land update—still negotiating...

When an 8,000 acre housing development was approved near the sanctuary, we realized that a fight would eventually begin.

Similar fights in other areas have shown that the animals always lose the fight and are forced to move from the property with very little notice.

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

**Please help us to be proactive so that we are not backed into a corner with nowhere to go.**

We have had our eye on a piece of privately owned land in the Ocala National Forest, one of the largest black bear habitats in the State of Florida. This land is surrounded on all four sides by thousands of acres of Federally protected land so that there will never be a risk of human encroachment again.

Before the economic downturn, we had agreed on a price for the land, but

things have not gone as smoothly as we had hoped. We are still in negotiations with the seller but the bottom line is that we still need as much of a downpayment as possible to make the purchase happen.

Once we have secured the land, it will still take us several years to completely build a facility before moving the animals.

Please help us to be proactive so that we are not backed into a corner with nowhere to go.

We hope to finish negotiations and close on the land by the end of 2009

**Your gift today will help to secure this land and the future of the animals.**



## Holiday shopping at your favorite stores helps the animals

What if even a fraction of the money generated by online shopping was directed towards rescuing abused or neglected animals?

That is the concept behind [GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com), consumers are helping their favorite causes by shopping at hundreds of well known retailers including Amazon, Target, Apple, Macy's, Best Buy, Orbitz, eBay, OfficeMax, Staples and others.

The shopping experience and the prices are exactly the same as going to the retailer directly, but by going

through GoodShop, up to 37% of the purchase price is donated the user's favorite cause!

**Simply visit [www.GoodShop.com](http://www.GoodShop.com) and choose Peace River Refuge & Ranch as the charity you support**

Every penny helps...while shopping online why not raise money for the animals? There is absolutely no reason not to use GoodShop - it's so easy!

Once you visit the GoodShop website and select Peace River Refuge & Ranch as your favorite charity, that information will be stored for future online shopping.

Later, when you go to the GoodShop site and then click through to your favorite store, a percentage of your online purchases will automatically be donated to the animals.

If you download the GoodShop toolbar, your shopping experience is even more streamlined and that helps to ensure that the animals never miss a cent!



## Animal spotlight: Mahari

Reports had been coming in for almost a year to the Department of Natural Resources in Minnesota that an emaciated mountain lion was roaming freely in the area posing a potential danger to humans and live-stock.

For months, officials were on his trail but unable to capture him each time. Eventually, he was found wandering around in snowy and icy conditions and completely emaciated.

In the end officials were successful in capturing the mountain lion alive so he could be examined.

Mahari is a perfect example of a mountain lion that was born in captivity and unable to survive in the wild. He was missing half of each ear due to frostbite, over 100 pounds underweight, with broken canines and scars from head to toe. After further investigation, officials found he was limping from what appears to be an

extremely cruel “backyard” declawing.

Immediately there was cause for alarm since this was not a *wild* mountain lion as suspected. The search to find a sanctuary that would take an animal with this many severe health problems was on.

Since Peace River Refuge & Ranch was already home to several mountain lions that were born into the pet trade and the sanctuary had the space and expertise available to assist in this case, Mahari was shipped to sunny Florida to begin a better life and receive lifetime care.

As soon as he arrived at the sanctuary, he was examined by veterinarians experienced in the care of mountain lions. The veterinarians discovered

that he also had an old spinal injury that will probably plague him in his old age.

Mahari was put on a very special diet to ensure he would gain his weight back gradually in order not to cause any damage to his internal organs.

Since then, he has come around beautifully.

Although no one can ever repair his damaged teeth, his frost-bitten ears and backyard declawing, he is now at the proper weight and is very appreciative of the loving care he has received at the sanctuary. He was imprinted on humans, which explains why he was unable to hunt for food in the wild.

Mahari is still a dangerous animal and should not be in contact with humans, but he lives a great life at the sanctuary with others of his own kind.

In spite of his previous ordeal in captivity and the short time he spent in the wild, he is the most loving mountain lion you will ever meet. His name was decided easily – “Mahari,” meaning “Forgiver.”

With the other animals at the sanctuary he will now serve as an ambassador to his counterparts in the wild as a reminder that these beautiful animals need to be conserved in their wild environment and that we need to continue to educate future generations about the need for conservation.



Photographer: Douglas Rosen

## Volunteer spotlight—Kirsten K.

Kirsten came to Florida from the Philadelphia, PA area. She arrived at Peace River Refuge & Ranch in September with arrangements to stay with us for almost three months.

In school, she played frisbee, tennis and softball and was nominated as “most likely to enter the Peace Corp.” She enjoys ceramics, art and photography.



She decided to volunteer with Peace River to see if she truly wanted to pursue a career with animals and has already determined that this *is* the field for her.

She was up to the challenge of working in an unfamiliar environment and in turn has made the absolute best of her time here.

At the sanctuary, Kirsten’s favorite activity is observing the behavior of the animals—especially the big cats

and the deer.

She has learned about a wide variety of animal diets & behaviors and that caring for the animals is very hard work. Most importantly, she learned that the hard work can be enjoyable because it is so rewarding.

We are thrilled that she has worked out so well and hope that she will stay in touch as she develops her career.

Please join us in welcoming Kirsten to the Peace River Family!

**Yes!! I will help!!**

Oct 2009

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: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ 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!!**

## Why doesn't the sanctuary have regular visiting hours?

As a true accredited sanctuary, our concern for the well being of the animals must always come first.

As many of you already know, most of the animals at the sanctuary have suffered at the hands of humans before their arrival here.

As a result, it is not in line with the definition of 'sanctuary' if we allow our need for funding to override the right that the animals here have to a stress-free environment.

The compromise that we have found

If you would like to visit the sanctuary, please call us at 863-735-0804 or contact us through the website at [www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org) to schedule a guided tour

is to offer exclusive guided tours twice a month, led by one of our founders.

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

We are still mindful of the privacy that the animals require and the animals are confident that all of the strangers will maintain a respectful distance because they are with someone they have grown to trust.

We request a minimum donation of \$15 per person for a 2-hour guided tour, to help with the care of the animals.

The more notice you give, the more likely we are to be able to accommodate your requested date. To request a tour, contact us at 863-735-0804 or through our website [www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org)

## 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 monkey biscuits for all of the primates for five days
- **\$ 75** feeds the fruit bats for a day
- **\$200** provides glucosamine supplements for all of the arthritic animals
- **\$1,000** pays for the care of all of the animals for one day
- **\$5,000** feeds a tiger for a year

# Peace River Refuge & Ranch

PO Box 1127

Zolfo Springs, FL 33890-1127



## The Wild Side

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

Phone: 863-735-0804

Fax: 863-735-0805

E-mail: [info@PeaceRiverRefuge.org](mailto:info@PeaceRiverRefuge.org)

Nonprofit wild animal sanctuary  
and educational facility



*Would you like to volunteer?*

We have volunteer positions open to help with all facets of operating the sanctuary—from animals care to construction, grounds maintenance and more.

We are located in Zolfo Springs, FL. If you live too far away to manage an ongoing, monthly commitment, try a "working vacation." We offer programs where volunteers can pay in advance for room & board for a minimum of 4 weeks, stay in sanctuary lodging and learn to help the animals on a full-time basis!

Some restrictions apply. Learn more on our website at [www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org](http://www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org), then click on "Volunteer"

We hope to work with you!

Lisa Stoner, VP  
Peace River Refuge & Ranch

