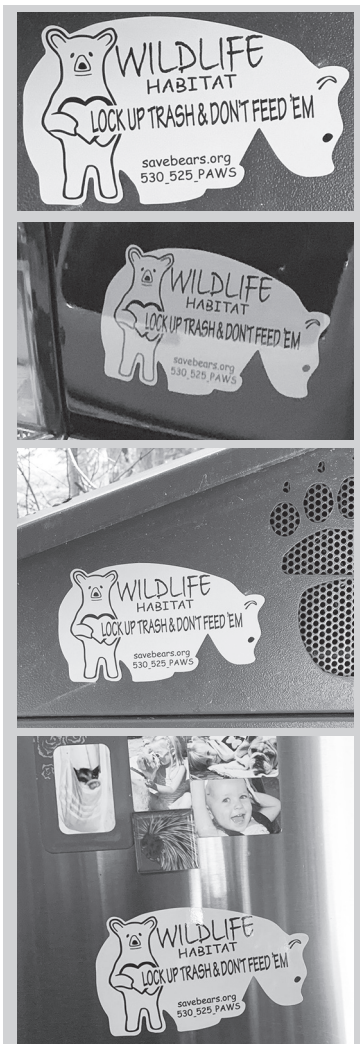


October 2021

Issue #38

Magnet 'Sneak Peek' for our Members

We are thrilled to announce the release of our new Bear Magnet Educational Campaign. This project has been in the works for several months and we now are finally ready to get them 'out there' and put them to work. The magnets are designed to be simple and quick to read so everyone can easily grasp the important message. We worked with our friends from SustainTahoe in creating the design and we've produced enough for every bear box in the Tahoe and Truckee area to 'wear' one. They also look great on vehicles and are perfect for refrigerators. The goal is to get these everywhere, by the thousands, at zero cost — free — so our residents and visitors are constantly



reminded to 'Lock the trash and Don't feed the Bears'. We intend to give enough of these to all rental and real estate agents, so every new homeowner gets one and all rental units have one on the fridge as well as the bear box. We are looking for shops in all the areas around Truckee and Tahoe who will work with us to help make them available for the public, free of charge, to stop in and pick one up. Let us know if you'd like to help with this. When we issue the press release, we'll list all the distribution locations where they will be available. The various shops will be listed on our website and on our Facebook page, as well.

It is our goal to have this magnetic message everywhere so locals and visitors simply cannot forget to **LOCK UP THE TRASH & DON'T FEED 'EM.** 🐻



A Word from Brenden...

I first discovered the BEAR League in my early teens, after finding a sudden vibrant interest in bears, which drove me to scour the early 2000's internet for bear information and activity. I looked for advocacy and conservation efforts to get involved in, especially ones who weren't afraid to voice opposition to bear hunting, and sought means to coexist with bears, using non-lethal techniques to confront bear-related problems. I stumbled upon the BEAR League's website, loved the cozy local feeling of it, and its unabashed politically incorrect approach on certain issues, rather than the sanitized speech of most larger, corporatized organizations in their mission statements. If no one is offended, no one is really defended either. I knew immediately I had found a good cause. I contacted Ann and was inspired by the conversations we started. In 2007, I visited during the summer as I was starting college majoring in wildlife biology, then came back and volunteered in 2012 after graduating, and finally returned yet again for an extended stay through the summer and fall this year to work as a full-time assistant.

I don't want to understate how incredible and enriching the experiences have been, and as well don't want to imply it's been all roses. The ups and downs are both an integral aspect of any undertaking as Sisyphean as this work. From receiving dozens of injured and orphaned animals at a time for rehabilitation to getting panicked calls about bears entering homes in the middle of the night, it's a 24/7

schedule with no timecards to punch and no breaks. We seek to encourage co-existence between people and bears in the Tahoe basin, and this co-existence must be sought in a world where one side is always gaining ground, and the other is losing it. The best we can do is mollify the inevitable conflict that results from this ongoing transition. Even if we are fighting one of Tolkien's "long defeats", the effort must not waver. Each new resident or vacationer who decides to let a bear live, and find non-lethal ways to protect his home, is a little victory. Each raccoon rescued from a storm drain, each bear cub rescued from a dumpster, and reunited with his mother, is a payment forward to a fellow traveler. Each tiny bird, squirrel or chipmunk brought back from the brink of perishing and opening his eyes again, getting a renewed chance at life, makes it all worth it.

I am enraptured from the experiences of working with the BEAR League this year and I hope we do not waver in our efforts and that the great work we've already done in our 25 years continues to tip the scales towards a more respectful, peaceable coexistence between people and wildlife.

~ Brenden Garrett
Wildlife Biologist and Bear Protector
Mont Belvieu, Texas

“Without close and reciprocal relationships with other animal beings, we're alienated from the rich, diverse, and magnificent world in which we live” ~~~~Mark Berkoff



From the Bear Den



Just One Busy Morning...by Ann Bryant

Every day at the BEAR League is unique, and we never know what will happen the next minute, much less before the sun goes down. There are many days during the busy summer months when we have answered over 100 calls before noon. The phones ring all night and by morning they are non-stop.

I'm going to pick one morning from this past August to share with you, to give you an idea and just so you get a feel of what we do. Hold onto your hats....

Frantic call from a vacation renter who had left his kitchen window open overnight and heard noises from his bedroom at the crack of dawn. He opens the bedroom door to investigate and down the hallway are four bears, a Mama and her three cubs. Mom and one cub are happily munching on the fruit and cookies on the counter, eating ice-cream from the freezer, checking out the pantry and cupboards to see what else smells tasty. The other two cubs are play-wrestling in the mess on the kitchen floor. This human is not a local, he's never experienced anything quite like this. We immediately respond, chase the bears out, comfort the man and his wife and explain that it's best not to invite bears in with open windows. He probably won't be back.

While our responding volunteers are dealing with that, someone rescues two Golden Mantle Squirrels---beautiful little Disney-like characters---and they bring them to our clinic. It is a mother and her young daughter; they are both unconscious. We fight hard to save them from the poison a neighbor illegally put outside. The little girl dies first, her mother suffers longer, and we ultimately lose her as well. We bury them together while wishing people weren't so cruel, thoughtless and disassociated from the rest of Creation.

Before we have time to wash the dirt from our hands a golf course groundskeeper calls, desperately pleading with us to come right away to help one of the Canada geese who lives on the course. A golfer accidentally hit him on the side of the head with a golf ball and he's stumbling, and his mate is calling frantically for help. This sweet man is beside himself and obviously cares deeply for the goose. As we prepare to get one of our volunteers on scene the goose 'collects his wits' and waddles to the pond---accompanied by his worried mate---and together they swim contentedly off into the water. The groundskeeper will continue to watch and call us back if he thinks the goose needs our help. Both he and the geese are doing much better now.

A call from a rancher in Humboldt County (happening at the same time as the goose situation) with a young bear who is twitching and can't walk. Many, many phone calls later, we are successful in getting the Biologist from the CA Department of Fish & Wildlife to the ranch and they are extremely helpful, but unable to save the bear. Necropsy reports are not back yet, but they will share them with us. They were compassionate and professional... we are grateful.

During this same time we loan out five electric bear mats to residents in the North, West and South Shore areas....we coach an unknown number of callers on how to keep the bears out of their cars by removing all food and locking the doors....we explain to at least 20 various people that there is no relocation of bears in California....we take in and stabilize a red-tail hawk who was hit by a car and arrange transport for him to our veterinarian....we feed and medicate all the animals in our care, including our bulldog....and we answer a dozen or more emails with questions about bears. And this is all before the clock strikes noon. 🐻

Bear Mat Loan Program

Several years ago, we initiated a pilot program whereby we loaned out emergency electrical door mats right after a bear had gained entry into a home by breaking a door or window. The bear will almost always return the next night and we wanted to help the homeowners be ready for his 'next visit'. With the mat there, he won't feel as welcome the second time. And having the mat protecting the access point gives the resident time to repair the damage and find a permanent solution, such as having bear wires installed on all the vulnerable doors and windows. The electrical current is small enough not to harm the bears, or a dog, or a child, or a squirrel---we don't believe in harming anybody---but it's scary and does the trick to stop the bears from getting back inside.

This program has been immensely successful and has grown exponentially since we first started. We've needed to stock more and more mats, so we have enough on hand for all the emergency situations that arise. We have BEAR League teams who handle the mats for all the various areas around Tahoe, and we keep them all very busy.

We are so grateful for the funding provided by our Wildlife Partner, the Conservation Society of California/Oakland Zoo. Because of the generous support donated by OZ, we've been able to keep this program alive and growing and have saved many bears from a 'life of crime' and helped countless people who desperately needed a fast and safe solution to a dire emergency. No matter how much we all like the bears.... No one likes them in the kitchen. 🐻

Save the Bears T-Shirt

Introducing the New 'Save the Bears' T-shirts! Make a Statement and Support the Bears!



Just released and available for sale at
LakeTahoeGiftShop.com

A \$2.00 donation will be made to the BEAR League for each shirt sold. You can buy yours locally or order from the website if you're from out of the area.

Any questions please email
James.Lawrence.aspen@gmail.com

We'd love to see people wearing these shirts from all over the country.

"One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin"
--- William Shakespeare



2021 Bear Dinner with Tessie

Is everybody ready for the Bear Dinner? It's almost time! Each year, in the late fall, just before the bears go into their dens and snooze the winter away, we pretend to have a huge dinner party for them. You are all a major part of this imaginary event because you make it 'real' by treating the bears to the gala. It's one of our favorite fundraisers of all time and each year gets bigger and better. This year, we are inviting a special guest. Can you

guess the guest? Sea Monsters and Bears, what a mix....and what fun. Your invitations will be arriving in the mail soon. Think about how many bears you want to take to dinner and get ready for them all to have another grand evening... this time with a chance to have a dance with Tahoe Tessie. Come on, you all know how to pretend, you can do it. Be a kid again, it will be good for you. 🐻



Hi Everyone, my name is Marlene Prins and I am the person who writes the majority of the Thank You notes from the BEAR League. I am on the Board of Directors and have been an active volunteer for well over 10 years. I feel like I know most of you after all these years of writing to you. Very soon you will receive your 'Take a Bear to Dinner'

invitation and I'll be standing by and looking forward to hearing from you. I really enjoy reading your comments and I love when you play along with us. Let's make this year's party for the bears the best one ever! 🐻



"Some people talk to animals.
Not many listen though. That's the problem"

---A.A. Milne



Thoughts From the President



by Ali Van Zee

A lot has happened since I wrote my editorial for the spring newsletter... and we hope the horrific events we were forced to endure will never be repeated. As many, if not all, of you are aware, fires once again raged through California, threatening thousands of homes and destroying countless others including the homes and lives of our wildlife. While we were mourning the losses of those we hold so dear, we were able to rescue a young cub from the nearby Tamarack Fire which was burning by Markleeville - indeed, this was Tamarack the cub's brother. The kind, compassionate people who called us to help him named him Raymond. He was so thin and in very poor condition but our good friends at the California Dept of Fish and Wildlife had us bring him to their lab so he would get the excellent care he needed from the veterinarians on staff. We are so grateful to work with these professional and knowledgeable state biologists, veterinarians and burn specialists.

Smoke filled the basin for weeks making it almost impossible to breathe. Ash rained from the sky. We thought it couldn't get any worse. But then, the unthinkable happened ... the Caldor Fire ignited and was burning towards Lake Tahoe. Soon, all South Lake Tahoe and the West Shore up through Tahoma was under Mandatory Evacuation orders, everyone had to run for their lives. The BEAR League, just blocks away in Homewood, would be next to evacuate. Suddenly we were faced with the grim and terrifying reality that we had to prepare to be ready to leave at a moment's notice. But, how do you evacuate animals recovering and rehabbing in your care? What about all the animals who live freely on the

property? What about us? And what about all the animals people keep bringing us while we're trying to figure out what to do? It took several calls and lots of coordination, but we finally got all the animals in our rehabilitation clinic off to safety with our volunteers who live out of the danger zone. We got as ready as we could and planned, if necessary, to head out on our boat to make a getaway on the lake, a very dangerous undertaking and one that was not advised. However, we knew if we had to leave by car, we might not get back to our headquarters for a week or more and that would Not do when all the other animals on the property needed us! We were sick with worry, as you can imagine.

As many of our neighbors left with tears and fear, not knowing if we would ever see each other again or if our homes would still be standing when fate brought us back together, the wind changed and we were spared the evacuation order, by just a few blocks. We were advised to be prepared and watch closely in case things changed, but we felt there was hope. We collected all our animals and brought them safely back home over the next two weeks. Whew!

Thanks to the enormous effort by Cal Fire, USFS, many local and state fire departments, and Firefighters from far away.... and no small thanks to the weather which finally brought cooling temps and a tiny bit of rain, the Caldor Fire was brought much closer to containment. We were spared one of the most frightening events of anyone's life and our hearts go out to all who had to flee their homes and all those who lost theirs. Let's hope the events of this year don't repeat themselves ever again. 🐻



New Bear Cub Facilities to Support

Twenty-five years ago, when the BEAR League was first founded, there was no such thing as bear cub rehabilitation in the state of California. Orphan cubs were killed by the DFW, or simply left to die. This was NOT acceptable and so, new to the scene as we were, we jumped right in and demanded a state policy for cub rehab. It wasn't easy, but we got it and for many years our sister organization---Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care---was the only facility in the state who was permitted to raise bear cubs.

Fast forward to present....

With the DFW now fully supporting cub rescue and rehab, the need has grown for more facilities where the bears can be taken, cared for, and then released back into the wild. Two more excellent rehabilitation centers have recently been given their bear cub permits. We are strongly encouraging our members to help them get their new and larger enclosures built so the cubs will be safe and happy while they grow and prepare for life in the wild. Please state you are supporting the Bear Cubs.

Sonoma County Wildlife Rescue
PO Box 448 Cotati, CA 94931
www.scwildliferescue.org

Gold Country Wildlife Rescue
PO Box 4162 Auburn, CA 95604
goldcountrywildliferescue.org

*"Maybe it's animalness that will make the world
right again: the wisdom of elephants,
the enthusiasm of canines, the grace of snakes,
the mildness of anteaters.*

Perhaps being human needs some diluting"

---Carol Emshwiller



photo by Denise Russell

Board of Directors

Ann Bryant, Executive Director
Ali Van Zee, President
Laura Seligman, Secretary
Peta Ross, Treasurer
Kim Ferguson
Marlene Prins
Rick Van Zee
Bill Ferrall

Advisory Board

Steve Stringham, PhD
Jacque Avery
Jim Davison
Lynn Rogers, PhD
Steve Searles
Mark Smith
Cheryl Millham
Mark Fuller Wilson
Rebecca Woodruff
Fran Gerhardy

Webmaster - Sue Gage-Jennings

Newsletter - Ginger Janssen-Winters

Emeritus Board Member - Louis Gerhardy

Honorary Board Member - Marvin the
Porcupine

Office Administrator - Kim Ferguson



If you are already a member & have paid your annual dues,
why not share this membership offer with a friend?

Just cut along the line and mail to address below.

Name _____ Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

New Member

Renewal

Donation

Please indicate the annual membership category
you wish to support:

_____ \$35 Bear Cub

_____ \$500 Kodiak Bear

_____ \$60 Polar Bear

_____ \$1000 Grizzly Bear

_____ \$100 Cinnamon Bear

_____ \$2000 and above Spirit Bear

_____ \$250 Black Bear

The BEAR League needs your support -- Thank You!

We do NOT share our members names with anyone!

501c.3 tax exempt organization

Your donations are tax deductible.

P.O. Box 393, Homewood, CA 96141

(530) 525-PAWS (7297)

email Ann Bryant: bearsnsquirrels@sbcglobal.net

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/SaveTahoeBears

www.savebears.org

