



WE ♥ OUR VOLUNTEERS!

Now that Spring is here and there are currently 3 cubs at the ABR facility, our Betty's Bears are busy doing what they do so well... getting the word out about bear safety, ABR's mission and ABR cubs...Bonnie Blue (#202), Ridgeway (#203) and Marvin Bear (#204).

Our Volunteers had a blast at Ben & Jerry's "Free Cone Day" on April 14, 2015, where store owner, Julie Hester, featured ABR at both the Sevierville and Gatlinburg, TN locations. We are thankful to Julie, her employees, and to all of our Volunteers for this fun and successful event that benefited the cubs in a big way.



A myriad of events and activities take place throughout the year and we could not do these without our wonderful ABR Volunteers. Our Betty's Bears are involved in outreach, education programs, fundraisers, facilities work, Visitor Center staffing, fruit picking, donation jar collections,

- May 21-22:** Memorial Day Weekend Bear Splash at Townsend IGA Market
- June 6:** ABR and Townsend Artisan Guild at Cades Cove Cellars
- July 3:** Independence Day Weekend Bear Splash at Townsend IGA Market
- July 7:** Pint Night Fundraiser at Riversports Sutherland Avenue in Knoxville, TN
- Sept. 4-5:** Labor Day Weekend Bear Splash at Townsend IGA Market
- Sept. 18:** Bear Necessities Dinner and Auction
- Sept. 25-26:** Townsend Fall Festival

artistic displays, photography, etc. All of their efforts, along with our supporters' contributions, allow ABR to continue helping black bears in a BIG way!

We invite ABR cub supporters, friends and FB fans to come out and meet our Volunteers at upcoming events. Our Volunteers love talking about ABR cubs—that's our "spe-ci-al-i-ty."

If you'd like more information about these events, or about becoming an ABR Volunteer, please contact DiAnne Wilson, Volunteer Coordinator, at skyangeldianne@aol.com. We'd love for you to join our outstanding Betty's Bear's group to offer your time, talents and skills to further ABR's mission to help return orphaned and injured black bear cubs back into the wild!!!

SAVE THE DATE!

Save the date...Friday, September 18th! Join us in Townsend for our 5th Annual Bear Necessities Dinner and Auction. We will host our signature fundraising event at The Barn Event Center in Townsend, Tennessee. Sam Venable will join us as our Master of Ceremonies, and Robert Tino will again paint live during the evening, with his painting being featured in the Live Auction. Enjoy spending time with fellow bear cub supporters while participating in our lively silent and live auctions. You don't want to miss the famous cheesecakes...all twenty or so varieties! Reservations will be available for \$100 per person. Call us or visit our website to make your reservation today.



We hope you enjoy this newsletter. Any donation, large or small, helps ABR to continue helping the orphaned bear cubs. Thank you so much for all your generous support.

www.appalachianbearrescue.org/donations.htm

BEAR TRACKS

FIRST CUBS OF 2015

By Janet Dalton

Editor's note: The ABR curators refer to the cubs only by their numbers, as do the wildlife officers. This is the scientifically correct designation. However, as you know, the cubs are also given names during their stay with us. For most of us, a name is easier to remember. When Curator Janet wrote this article, she added the names for our benefit.

Appalachian Bear Rescue knows that as spring arrives each year, so do the calls to help orphaned or injured bear cubs. Shortly before midnight on April 3rd, 2015, ABR President Dana Dodd received the call we had been expecting. Two small cubs, less than 3 months of age, and weighing less than 4 pounds each, had been observed for an extended period of time on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Officials from the National Park Service managed to capture the small cubs who had been away from their mother for a number of days. The cubs were weak and dehydrated and needed help. ABR was asked if we would help and responded with an absolute, "Yes!" The NPS official asked if ABR would travel to North Carolina to pick up the cubs right away. President Dodd



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promptly called ABR Curators Coy Blair and Janet Dalton to inform them of the situation, and the immediate travel plans. Both curators were still hibernating and President Dodd had a difficult time waking them. Curator Coy couldn't quite get his thoughts together, and Curator Janet kept asking, "We're going when?" Eventually, the sleepy curators emerged from their dens and the threesome (Coy, Janet, and Dana), met in the wee hours of the morning and began the long drive to North Carolina. They arrived at the Blue Ridge Parkway National Park Service headquarters shortly after 4:00 a.m. The two cubs, a male and a female, appeared in reasonably good health considering how long they had been away from their mother, but the male appeared more lethargic. Curators Coy and Janet each took a cub and began to administer Pedialyte. Curator Janet had no difficulty getting the male to take Pedialyte from a baby bottle, but the female was unable to adapt to the bottle. Curator Coy had to feed her small amounts at a time by syringe. The little female was a feisty cub and proved to be a challenge. After a quick feeding, the cubs were loaded into the vehicle to be transported to ABR. ABR bears 202

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CUBS OF 2015 (CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1)

(Bonnie Blue) and 203 (Ridgeway) arrived at the facility at 7:30 a.m. to begin their “second chance” at life.

The first few days in the cub nursery were challenging as the little cubs adjusted their new surroundings and life without their mother. The curators noticed that the female cub frequently suckled on the male cub’s ear. As time passed, the curators noticed that this activity seemed to be anxiety-related in response to the curators’ presence in the Cub Nursery. The female, given the name, Bonnie Blue, continued to be a challenge to feed. She was a little spitfire who did not like to be held. The male, named Ridgeway, was more docile and easier to feed...at first! After a couple of days, the male began to get stronger. Then, he became the feisty cub who no longer cooperated with the bottle-feeding routine. The cubs were old enough to lap from a bowl, so in response to the cubs letting them know they didn’t like to be held, the curators began transitioning them to syringe feeding, which could be accomplished without picking the cubs up and holding them, and then, eventually to bowl feeding. The female made an easy adjustment to bowl feeding, but the little male wouldn’t eat. The curators suspected that the ear sucking by the female sibling was preventing him from eating. The cubs would have to be separated at feeding time to make sure that both cubs were getting nutrition.

Two days after arriving at ABR, Bonnie Blue and Ridgeway had their first vet visit with the wonderful staff at The UT Vet Center. The cubs were unimpressed with the credentials of the staff and were wild, unruly patients. They expressed their opinion about all the poking, prodding, and handling. In spite of their behavior, the vets pronounced



them in good health and were impressed with their wild instincts.

No one knows what happened to Bonnie Blue and Ridgeway’s mother, but during her short time with them, she did a good job teaching them to be wild bears. Curators Coy and Janet are diligent in their methods of being “hands-off” to the maximum extent possible in order to keep this wild nature intact. On April 18th, fourteen days after their arrival, Bonnie Blue and Ridgeway graduated from the Cub Nursery to an outdoor acclimation pen. This is the first big step in their journey back to the wild. The cubs are enjoying their new outdoor playpen. They have plenty of room to run, play, and practice their climbing skills while growing stronger to prepare for their release into the wild enclosure. Bonnie Blue and Ridgeway will be with us for several months, and if all goes well, they



will be released back to the wild later this year.

At this writing, ABR has received a third cub; ABR Bear #204 arrived April 25th from Greene County, Tennessee, after wandering in someone's yard after dark. Twenty-four hours later, it was apparent that the tiny male cub was on his own. TWRA officials responded and brought the cub to ABR. Bear #204 was given the name "Marvin." He weighed 5.7 lbs. upon arrival. He appears to be healthy and has a good appetite. After a couple of days in the Cub Nursery, Marvin Bear has joined Bonnie Blue and Ridgeway in the outdoor acclimation pen. Cubs at this young age are generally very receptive to other cubs. There is always a short time for establishment of the "pecking order", and the cubs move on to continue developing their skills to live back in the wild. Skills are learned from the rough and tumble world of cub "politics."

Appalachian Bear Rescue regrets that these three cubs have had such a rough start in life, but we are glad to be able to help Bonnie Blue, Ridgeway, and Marvin grow and eventually return to the wild. We stand ready to help all cubs in need of our assistance.



FOLLOW OUR CUBS' PROGRESS

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



AWARD FOR TOM FAULKNER!

As you may know, Tom Faulkner has been involved and active with Appalachian Bear Rescue ever since ABR came into being as Appalachian Bear Center. He has been our "Jack of all trades" and has performed a multitude of tasks over the years. Our head curator nominated Tom for the Knoxville Lexus Leader of the Month award. Tom **WON!** Coy wrote about Tom's dedication for 20 years,

and particularly his involvement in the expansion of the facility and his tireless work to secure an additional 40 acres of county property for ABR.

Tom will be interviewed as a recipient of the award, but with his busy schedule he hasn't had time to do the interview as yet. We look forward to the presentation of this award to someone who truly deserves this recognition.

"BEAR U" AT SMOKY MOUNTAIN FIELD SCHOOL

This year, the University of Tennessee, through its online Smoky Mountain Field School, is offering a series of programs about the icon of the Smokies – black bears. Programs will be presented by various individuals who are knowledgeable about bears and their natural history. To learn more, go to the Smoky Mountain Field School website: smfs.utk.edu and look for this icon.





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A LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As you may know, Appalachian Bear Rescue has an Executive Director – the first ever for our nonprofit! Her office is in the new Trillium Cove Visitor and Education Center. This is her message to all of our supporters.

Dear Bear Lovers,

I want to thank you for your generosity and faithful support in helping us help the cubs. You have supported Adopt a Cub, Cubs for Kids, Newsletter appeals, iGive, Wild Enclosure Campaign, just to name a few, and answered the call to give without hesitation. Through your donations, large and small, we have been able to care for over 200 black bear cubs to give them a second chance at life.

A large portion of this last year's disbursements went toward the new Wild Enclosure and the upgrade and maintenance of ABR's Bear facility. Thanks to you, ABR's bear facility is "World Class" and the care provided to the young bear cubs by our curators far surpasses all expectations of excellence.

2015 is an exciting time for ABR. We are thrilled to announce that ABR has a face for the first time since its founding on July 31, 1990. We opened our doors in Trillium Cove, Townsend, TN hoping you would visit. You have not disappointed us. You are searching us out and coming in droves. The excitement and glow on your faces when you walk through ABR's new Visitors and Education Center is heartwarming. Thank you for helping us make our home a reality!

The new Visitors' and Educational facility provides a comfortable and inviting venue for our team of educators to reach a wider audience with our message. Not only are we caring for injured and orphaned black bear cubs and returning them back to the wild but we are providing educational programs to all ages on how to safely live with bears - the key to truly coexisting with a healthy black bear population.

Thank you again for your generosity and your help in spreading the word about Appalachian Bear Rescue. When you share your interest in the cubs with friends and family, the possibilities are endless.

Plan a trip to Townsend, TN – come visit ABR's Trillium Cove Visitors' and Educational facility so I can personally share with you what a difference your support makes in the success of caring for the bears.

Sincerely,

Kathy Wilbanks

Kathy Wilbanks
ABR Executive Director



WINERIES SUPPORT ABR

ABR is very fortunate to have Cades Cove Cellars and Eagle Springs Winery on our team! Both wineries work to support our efforts to give cubs a second chance at life in the wild. Cades Cove Cellars is located in our hometown of Townsend. CCC graciously donates \$1 for every bottle of blackberry wine that they sell. They presented ABR with a check for \$4,500 at Bear Necessities last year! When you stop by, the super-friendly staff will often greet you with stories of our cubs. Sometimes, you will even catch them wearing the cutest black bear ear headbands! Enjoy all of their delicious wines and sample them in their beautiful Townsend winery. Contact Cades Cove Cellars at (865) 325-9463.



Eagle Springs Winery in Kodak, Tennessee, is also a proud supporter of the cubs at ABR. Eagle Springs creates 1,000 bottles of a special wine to support the cubs each quarter. ABR receives \$5.00 for every bottle sold. We hope that you enjoyed a bottle of Cubby last Fall. Now you can purchase bottles of Blossom. In mid-March, Eagle Springs

and ABR sponsored a wine tasting at the new ABR Visitor and Education Center in Townsend. Hundreds of folks enjoyed tastings of the new Blossom, and ABR received the first \$5,000 donation representing sales of Cubby which was introduced at Bear Necessities in 2014. Blossom is selling quickly. Be sure to stop by for tastings at the Kodak winery. Order your Blossom wine by calling Eagle Springs at (888) 745-8119 or order online at www.eaglespringswine.com.

Please support both of these great wineries as they work to support our ABR cubs!

WHAT IS A CURATOR?

This is a question often asked of the ABR K-8 Education Team by students who attend their education programs. We explain that a curator is a “care giver.” At ABR the curators take care of black bear cubs that are orphaned or injured. The next question asked by the students is “How do they do that?” Knowing that all students are naturally curious about animals, the team decided to create a program that would focus primarily on the role of a curator at ABR. The newly created program is called “Be a Jr. Bear Curator for ABR”. During the course of this program, which is geared to children in grades 2-6, the students learn about the role of the ABR curators. They have the opportunity to assume roles as part of a cub intake team.

The students are divided into teams of five. Each team receives a stuffed black bear cub and limited information as to the circumstances that brought



the cub to ABR. The cubs vary in size, from a 4-pound cub to a 15-pound yearling cub. In order to make the stuffed cubs the right weights, rice was added into the cub’s body. The children assume roles, as each team is made up of a wildlife officer, a veterinarian, and the ABR curators. The team has to weigh the cub and evaluate its health.

Then they must come up with a plan for its immediate care. At the conclusion, each team selects a member to share the team’s findings with the rest of the group. A certificate is given to each participant congratulating them on becoming “A Junior Bear Curator for Appalachian Bear Rescue”.

This Jr. Curator program was first presented at Wilderness Wildlife Week this past January. It has been presented two other times since then with very positive responses from students, parents, and teachers.



FACILITY NEWS

As most of you know, ABR began work on our largest project in history at the end of February 2014. We began the process of doubling our Wild Enclosure space. This is the large space with trees, water features, enrichment activities...all the things necessary for our cubs to learn to be bears. Just over a year later, our project is complete. Our 2015 cubs including Bonnie Blue, Ridgeway, and Marvin will spend the summer growing in the new Wild Enclosures. Our original enclosures can rest this year. Cubs wreak havoc on vegetation, particularly saplings. Everything needs a year or so to grow and regenerate.

To some, a Wild Enclosure is just a fence or two. To our facility staff, a Wild Enclosure is much more. There are pine trees to clear, access to provide, fences to build, a Cub House to design and build, water and electricity to provide, a new well to dig, gates to install, overlook towers to build, water features to install. The list seemed nearly endless. Tom Faulkner, Ed Owens, Curator Coy and many of our volunteers have worked for a year to make the new Enclosures a reality. You are our partners as you support our efforts all along the way.

We offer special thanks to Seven Islands Foundation for our new well. Seven Islands awarded ABR with a \$15,000 grant to dig the new well. This well provides water for the new Wild Enclosures. It is also a back-up for the original



well. Water is essential to all growing things, and now we have a back-up supply in case of emergency. We also added a new structure to the new Enclosures. Curator Coy designed and named the new Cub House. We thank Aslan Foundation for a very generous grant of \$10,000 to help pay for the Cub House.

At ABR, we know that the key to giving cubs their second chance at life in the wild is to severely limit contact with humans. Tiny cubs begin their stay at ABR in our Cub Nursery. The Nursery allows our Curators to bottle feed, administer medicines if needed, and to provide

care in a climate controlled and sanitary place. We must wean our cubs from bottle feeding at a very young 10 weeks. At that point, the cubs must learn to lap from a bowl. Bottle feeding is problematic, as it puts our Curators in too close proximity to the young cubs. Curator Coy knew that it would be ideal to move the cubs out of the Nursery and further away from Curators as quickly as they are able to lap formula from a bowl. Curator Coy also knew that our climate in Tennessee did not permit a complete move outside at this critical point in a cub's stay at ABR. It is still a bit too cold outside here in very early April.

Curator Coy worked with ABR past-President and architect,



TOWNSEND ARTISAN GUILD – CREATIVE FRIENDS OF ABR

Appalachian Bear Rescue appreciates the support and help offered by members of the Townsend Artisan Guild, a group of very talented artists in our community. Every year for our fall fundraiser, Bear Necessities, several of the members assist us in displaying the art that is offered in our silent auction, and many members contribute one or more pieces of art to be featured at the event.

The organization has 63 members: 44 artists and 21 supporting members. The arts represented are: Fiber Arts, Glass, Jewelry, Natural Fibers, Painting, Photography, Sculpture and wood working. Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month. They participate in two important community events. The first is to work with the Walland and Townsend Elementary Schools to create scarecrows which are then auctioned off to raise funds for the art programs and classrooms in the schools. The children envision the design and TAG members assist the art teacher and other teachers to complete the scarecrows. 2015 will be the 3rd year of this initiative. The second major effort is a “children’s (of all ages)” art tent at the Blue Ribbon Fair at the Heritage Center. 2015 will be the 5th year at the County Fair. The Smoky Mountain Fiber Arts Festival



the third weekend in April is our major event. The goal is to raise awareness and teach the traditional fiber art processes and to promote a profitable, sustainable, and supportive Fiber Art community.

Several TAG members collaborated to design and paint a woodland scene on the walls of the new Cub House at ABR. It’s too bad the photo is not in color, because it is truly a work of art!

Thanks to our good friends at TAG – ABR values your friendship and creativity!



Tom Caldwell, to design a solution. Coy calls the solution the ABR Cub House. Think of the Cub House as a very large divided cage. The walls are made of insulated concrete blocks. The roof allows natural light. A wall splits the building into two sections. A guillotine door provides access from one side to the other. Our Curators can trap the cubs in one side of the Cub House while they clean and place fresh food in the other side. Then the Curator and cubs can change sides. The cubs know that a Curator is there, but the cubs do not see the Curator and do not associate the Curator with food. During critical weeks for the cubs, the ABR Curator is at greater distance. Curators Coy, Janet and Rick spend a lot of time working on ways

to reduce human contact while still providing top notch care for the cubs.

Curator Coy had another idea about the ABR Cub House. He wanted the walls to look more like the outdoors and less like a cell. Our wonderful artists from the Townsend Artisan Guild (TAG) came to the rescue. The walls of our Cub House are now filled with murals of the woods, complete with trees, rocks, dogwood blooms, redbuds, daffodils, and everything wild. Some have asked, and the answer is YES, bears do see in color.

Our cubs will only spend a few short weeks in the Cub House, but these weeks will be a critical step in keeping them WILD.