March 20, 2019 – It is with deep sadness that we report the death of beloved black bear Arthur who arrived at PAWS 17 years ago this month. His estimated age at that time was about 10 years.

Arthur was born in the wild around 1991 and had been living in a culvert on a golf course in Southern California before his arrival at our Galt sanctuary. After receiving numerous reports about a bear seen “hobbling on three legs” at the golf course, he was finally captured by the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (CDFW). Unable to forage for natural food sources because of his injuries, Arthur had been surviving on garbage. He bore numerous scars on his face and an injury to his left eye from fighting with other wild bears before his capture. X-rays revealed the bear had been shot and the buck shot was embedded in his hips, too deep to be removed. Arthur was treated by veterinarians from both CDFW and the University of California, Davis, and transferred to his permanent home at PAWS’ Galt sanctuary on March 5, 2002.

PAWS’ co-founders Ed Stewart and the late Pat Derby designed an especially comfortable habitat with features that were easily accessible and could accommodate Arthur’s special needs. Our veterinarian, Dr. Jackie Gai, developed a treatment plan to address his pain and arthritis.

Arthur held a very special place in the hearts of his caregivers, who catered to his every need. When Arthur required eye drops for his old injury, care-giving staff were able to call him to the fence where he would stand patiently while eye drops were administered in a gentle mist. When he needed a nail trim, Arthur would let us clip his claws through the fence while he enjoyed a special treat. He had a calm and gentle nature and he taught us about resilience and welcoming every day with a positive outlook.

Arthur passed peacefully from this life on March 20th, surrounded by many who loved him. He leaves a giant, bear-sized hole in our hearts and he will be greatly missed by all who knew him and who had the honor of caring for him.