Greetings to our friends and supporters. It has been a challenging year for The Belize Zoo. We made it through a harsh drought which had our zoo crew going to collect water in drums for our animal friends. When it finally rained, there was a noted sign of relief throughout the Zoo.

Life being as it is saw Yours Truly undergo back surgery and the biggest challenge of my life! The recovery was, and remains, not so easy. I am looking forward to strolling the Zoo once more, visiting our important animal ambassadors, and being a contributing person to this important institution.

I may have been forced to put on brakes, but this didn't stop our Education Department from seeing that another successful year of programs such as National Tapir Day, summer Conservation Camp, and teacher workshops happened without a hitch. Our General Curator, Humberto Wohlers, took charge of vet school clinics and the new expanded tapir exhibit. We have added three new zookeepers to our keeper crew, and a vibrant education officer, Vondalee Wade.

Our incredible IT Manager, James Lewis, is providing me with terrific assistance in a new publication, “The Best Little Zoo in the World,” an illustrated guide book which will be a memorable must have for our many zoo visitors. Our talented Operations Manager, Celso Poot, continues to successfully pursue his PhD at University of Florida, while remaining actively involved in TBZ activities.
Lastly, we must close 2019 by acknowledging the deep loss felt by the passing of our magnificent jaguar Junior Buddy. Junior Buddy touched the hearts of countless students and visitors from across the globe. All at TBZ are grateful that he was part of our world for almost 13 years. The overwhelmingly positive impact Junior Buddy had in Belize and beyond was never more obvious than when we made the announcement of this loss and received an outpouring of love and cherished memories from thousands of people whose lives he had touched. TBZ is committed to keeping Junior’s incredible legacy alive through continued awareness and education on behalf of his species. Plans will be made for another Belize Zoo Jaguar to take on the role of Jaguar Ambassador, once proudly held by Junior Buddy.

Thank you from, not just me, but the entire TBZ management and staff, for your support throughout this year. Happy 2020 to all!

~Sharon Matola