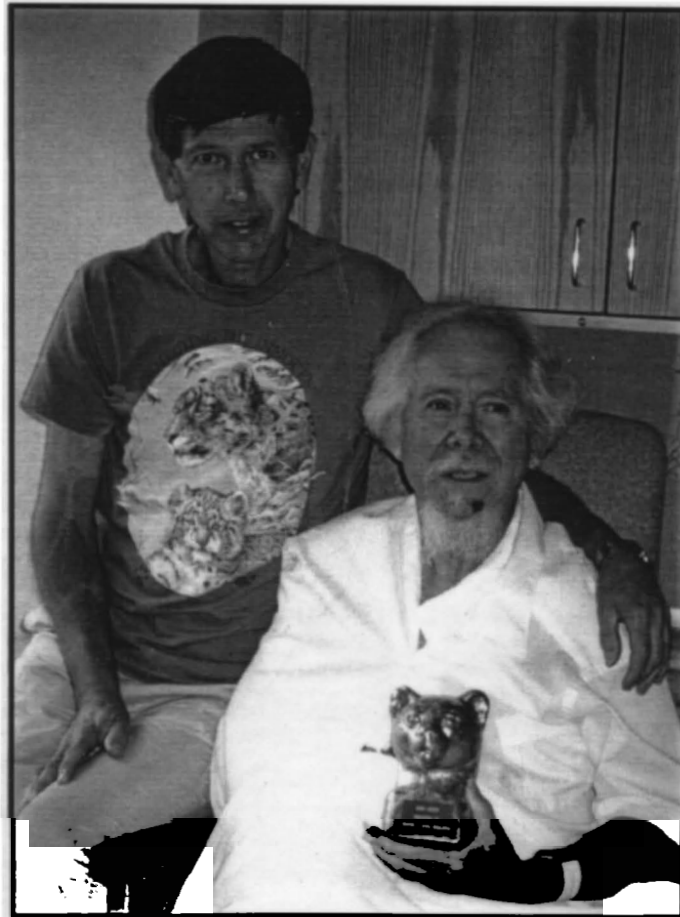


Volume 43, Issue 5

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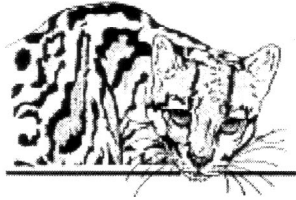
*ENDANGERED SPECIES
CONSERVATION FEDERATION, INC.*

1999 Convention



Bob Turner and Marvin Hierlmeier

*Marvin Hierlmeier
1999 Lotty Recipient*



LIOC

Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc.

This Newsletter is published bimonthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. We are a nonprofit (Federal I.D. 59-2048618) noncommercial organization with international membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of this newsletter is to present information about exotic feline conservation, management and ownership to our members. The material printed in this newsletter is contributed by our members and reflects the point of view of the author but does not necessarily represent the point of view of the organization. LIOC ESCF, Inc.'s Statement of Intent is contained in our bylaws, a copy of which can be requested from the Secretary. Reproduction of the material in this newsletter may not be made without

the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner LIOC. Since the Newsletter consists primarily of articles, studies, photographs and artwork contributed by our members, we encourage all members to submit material whenever possible. Articles concerning exotic felines are preferred and gladly accepted. Articles involving other related subjects will also be considered. Letters and responses to articles may be included in the Readers Write column. Deadline for the next issue is the 1st of even-numbered months. Please submit all material to the Editor. Persons interested in joining LIOC should contact the Term Director in charge of Member Services.

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A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO

Tim and Anne Amadon
Kelly Jean Buckley
Ron Eldgridge
Harold Epperson
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John Lussmyer
William Olsen
Stephen Pierce
Dawn Simas
Bob Turner
Shirley Wagner
Ton Veldkamp
Barbara Wilton

for contributions to this newsletter. This is YOUR newsletter. ALL contributions—new or old, long or short, technical or humorous, personal story, article or advertisement—are welcome and needed. I'll be happy to assist with writing and/or editing. Calls, emails, or faxes are welcome.

Marge Maxwell, Editor

LIOC Caging and Handling Guidelines

34 pages of practical tips and guidelines for proper caging and handling of exotic cats.

Includes diagrams on construction of proper equipment for any size feline, including squeeze cages, collars, leashes and much, much more.

Send \$5.00 (US) plus \$1.25 postage to:

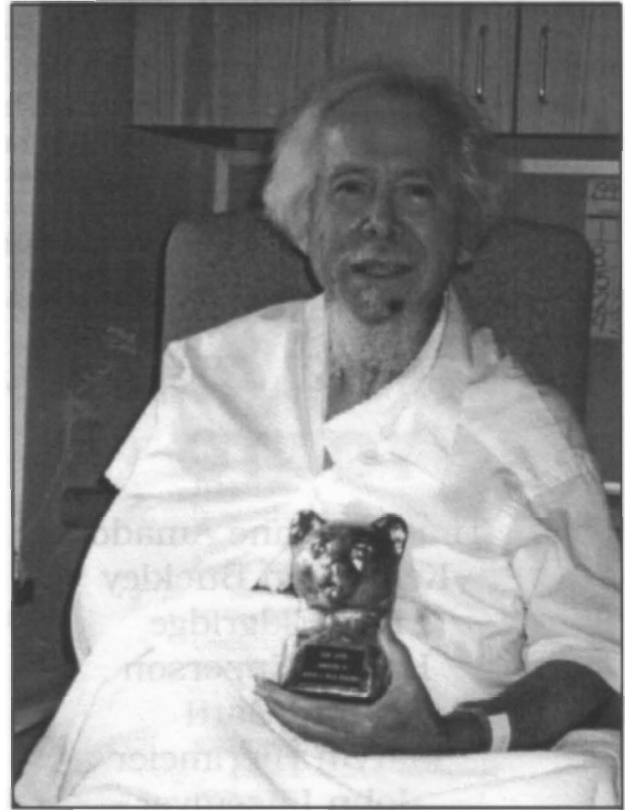
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Marvin & Hush Presented 1999 Lotty

For over ten years Marvin Hierlmeier and his serval Hush have been bringing joy to shut-ins. Traveling thousands of miles a year, their first stop is always a nursing home in whatever locale they may be in. (see article Vol.42 #4). This remarkable pair have been featured on television over 54 times, and in over 400 newspaper articles. It is estimated close to a million (yes, a million) folks have been able to see and pet Hush up close and personal.

Hush is an exceptional serval! He will readily approach a total stranger, and then gently, as if sensing their infirmities, ease himself onto the bed of the patient or into the laps of those in wheelchairs, patiently accepting their sometimes timid pats. It is truly gratifying to witness the wonder on the faces of those never before exposed to an exotic "wild" cat. And such a cat. Hush tips the scales at about 50 pounds and is ten years old. Marvin, quietly signals it's time to move on and they move off to visit another.

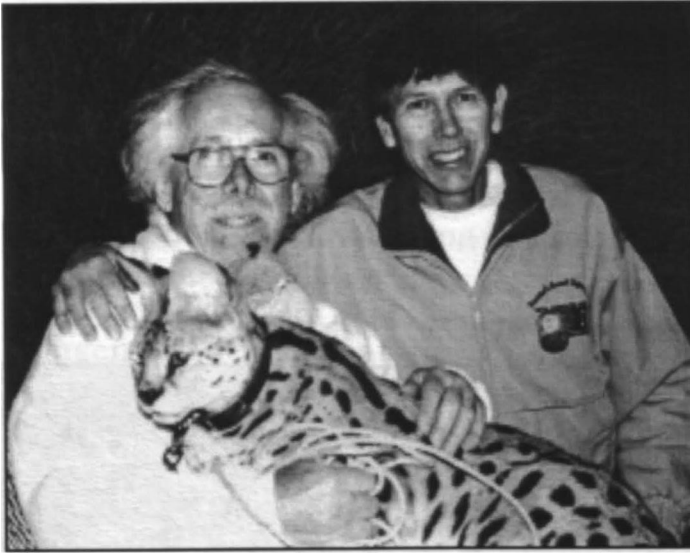
The bond between Marvin and his cat is truly exceptional. We often hear of ambassador animals, but this team, without reimbursement or reward have truly warmed the heart of millions - one nursing home at a time. We print the slogan - "Sharing is Caring" from time to time in the newsletter to remind folks to share information. Marvin goes hundreds of steps further in sharing Hush. After all, as the saying goes, "You cannot love what you do not know." By sharing Hush and demonstrating the wonderful bond that can develop between humankind and



the exotic feline perhaps fewer folks are asking the question "Why would anyone want a wild cat?"

Unfortunately, Marvin, a member of the Midwest branch, fell shortly before convention, breaking his shoulder and wrist. He has been released from the hospital and is recovering at his son's home. We all wish him a speedy recovery.

This is the 33rd Lotty presented. It is LIOC's way of recognizing those going above and beyond in their efforts to serve the cats and or the organization. It is a bust of an ocelot's head, sculpted by Brenda Duprey of her cat, Zapata. Previous Lotty recipients nominate and vote on each year's recipient. No Lotty is given if there are no worthy candidates, obviously not the case this year.



**Marvin Hierlmeier, Bob Turner, and Hush
October 2, 1999 at the Midwest Exotic Feline
Educational Society Meeting**

From Marvin:

I would like to thank all of the previous Lotty recipients for voting for Hush and I to be this year's recipient. I would have given anything to be able to be present for this year's meeting, but it was just not possible. It means a lot to me that you were all thinking of me. Thank you again.

Marvin & Hush

From Bob Turner:

What a nice convention and thanks to the LIOC for the "Newsletter Reporter of the Year" award that was presented to me. It was so nice meeting other cat lovers at the convention.

We made a surprise visit to see Marvin at the hospital in South Bend, Indiana, on our way home. He did not know we were coming. We walked into his room and he was eating his meal and it was a little while before he looked up. When he did, he was overcome and cried. He was so happy to see us.

I told him the LIOC had something very special to present to him, and...was he ready? He said OK. I opened the box and presented the Lotty to him. He took it and put it up against his chest, just like a child getting their first ever teddy bear, and cried I bet for five minutes and he repeatedly kissed the Lotty on the head and said, "It is for you, Hush."

Boy, I am here to tell you I have never seen anything like that. Three nurses, plus Pat, Peggy, and Harold, all had to leave the room for a moment unable to control their emotions seeing Marvin crying and kissing the Lotty and saying, "this is for you, Hush." Old me, being a little on the emotional side, held my control and stayed by his side patting him on the back.

I wish you and all the past Lotty recipients, plus the convention attendees, could have been there to see the joy the Lotty gave to Marvin. Marvin said, Tell everybody thank you and I love you all."

**LIOC Membership
Directory
Printing in
January, 2000**

We are selling BUSINESS CARD ads for \$12.00 to be placed in the LIOC Membership Directory.

Give your fellow LIOC members an opportunity to patronize your goods and services. Both animal related and nonanimal related ads will be accepted.

Send a business card or camera ready line art. Please send check payable to:

LIOC
720 Meadow Lane
Hickson, ND 58047

Larger ad space available:

¼ page \$25

½ page \$50

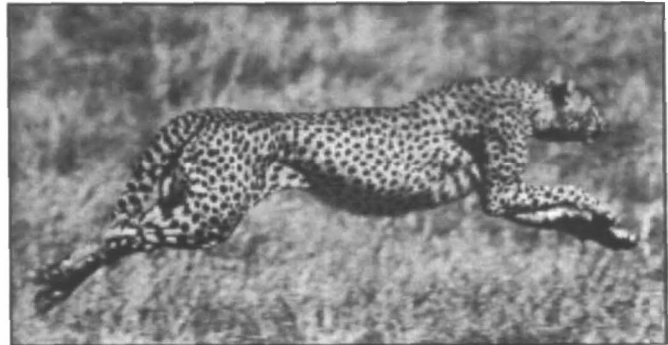
Full page \$100

Running for Survival

by Dawn Simas, Director, Wild about Cats

On December 15, 1998, we received a very important shipment on British Airlines from Africa. Two crates that contained chirping cheetah cubs, Shaka (brother) and Zulu (sister). These cats will be permanent residents at WAC as a part of multiple goals. These goals are part of our Conservation and Education, and separate from our Rescue work. No funds have been spent from our Rescue donations, and funding on this project is supported privately. They were sent to us in exchange for our ongoing promotion and support for De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Centre in South Africa, where they were born. Money we have sent to their project has built Phase Two of their small cat breeding compound (Black Footed Cats and African Wildcats). We are implementing them into several (non-invasive) research protocols in association with three universities, in an attempt to learn more about the health and welfare of captive cheetahs. They have become ambassador animals for our educational outreach program.

In a perfect world cheetahs and all wildlife would only live in the wild. However, the human population is at such a level that there is relatively very little space left to sustain the huge populations of wildlife that once existed. CCF (Cheetah Conservation Fund) does a great job of relocating "nuisance"



cheetahs that have been preying on livestock in Namibia to other reserves. De Wildt has had little success in introducing captive-born stock to a wild state. The cats that are all over the world in zoos from captive-bred cheetahs are wonderful ambassadors to their wild-born cousins, touching people's souls that are not able to ever come to Africa. In addition to being exhibited, they can be monitored closely in regards to behavior, breeding, health, and nutrition (what we are doing here) to learn more about their wild cousins. To learn this same information from wild cats, they are tranquilized and stressed heavily.

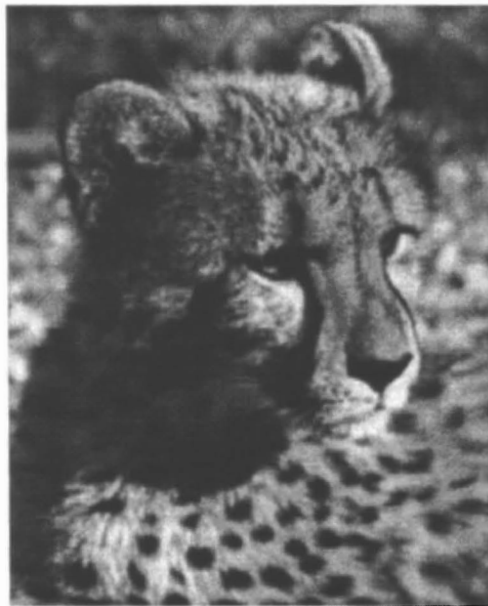
Unfortunately, the human population will undoubtedly continue to increase to astronomical proportions, creating even less wild habitat for animals, and certainly never *more* space. This captive population will continue to be healthy and well cared for into the millennium, due to places like De Wildt, zoos, and private collections, all over the world.

Shaka & Zulu's Surgery

Dawn Simas, Director of Wild About Cats, reports both cheetahs, Shaka and Zulu are doing well following treatment to correct focal palatine erosion (FPE). FPE is a congenital defect that occurs in both wild and captive cats. The two lower carnassial teeth grow slightly crooked and taller, which results in puncturing two holes in the upper palate.

Dr. Fagan, a wildlife dental specialist from San Diego, performed surgery on Shaka and Zulu at U.C. Davis, shortly after Dawn returned from the LIOC Convention. Dr. Lindsay Phillips (taking over for Dr. Murray Fowler) and Dr. Karen Terio were also in attendance.

Zulu's palatine holes had healed and recovered. "This is undoubtedly due to the removal of most foxtails in their yard," Dawn writes. "The holes in the palate are not serious as long as they do not get infected due to foreign matter. Most food and plants work their way out, but the foxtails that stick to their coat and are ingested by grooming, find their way in and won't back out. They can be deadly, getting infected, eroding the palate, bone and nasal passages. Zulu hadn't gotten any foxtails in the last two months and the infection cleared up with antibiotics. The skin on the top of the roof of her mouth had healed. There were two nice clean indentations where the lower carnassial teeth would fit into like a glove, but no lacerations.



"Shaka's indentations had remained about the same as we had discovered them two months ago. This is because there were two foxtails in each hole. Dr. Fagan stuffed his with gel-foam and superglue to allow some granular tissue to develop. Dr. Fagan decided against filing the teeth as they are not too tall. If given carcass ribs and spines, the normal chewing and gnawing motion should result in a normal wearing down of the teeth over time." Also, until fully healed, Shaka must stay on soft food for about two months. Dawn and Dr. Fagan will do a follow up inspection in about

LIOC T-SHIRTS



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Wild About Cats in Africa

Journal Series

September 27, 1998 - Johannesburg, South Africa

I arrived in Johannesburg after 36 hours of traveling from California. I actually feel quite refreshed and ready to go. I got some decent rest on layover for a few hours at Midway Airport in Chicago, and again on the 14-hour flight over the Atlantic. I was met at the airport by our host, Bob Masson, that runs the Somerset Guest House where we are staying. He has a kombi (van) and can shuttle us about. His house is beautiful. He used to be a pilot and was injured, now running guests in he and his wife's (Gay) home, which can accommodate twelve. I have brought six others with me this year for the first time. Two volunteers, their husbands, and two other WAC members. They are my guinea pigs at hosting safaris. If this goes well, I will consider doing this annually for WAC members as a form of fundraising (and bringing U.S. dollars to Africa).

The others arrived before me on another flight this morning. I had



Sleeping baby Shaka

arranged for lunch for them and a tour of Soweto, which they'd had and thoroughly enjoyed. Laura, however, was jetlagged and skipped the tour and was resting. After getting settled in my elegant room and making some phone calls, we grouped for a drive to The Carnivore restaurant for dinner. Bob hasn't been there, but got directions and said it's about 35 minutes away. I called Ian (Dr. Ian Espie, head vet at Pretoria Zoo) and told him to meet us there at 7:30pm. After about 45 minutes of driving us along in the dark in the kombi, Bob pulled to the side of the road and said, "I think we may be lost." He turned around to double back for awhile. There was a tremendous lightning storm going on and we were all enjoying the show as we drove along. Johannesburg is the "lightning capitol of the world." With constant flashing and bolts all around us, it was nothing like we have in the States. After driving for another 20 minutes or so, Bob pulled aside again and this time said, "Now I know we are lost." Hmmmm. Bad news, as we were in the middle of nowhere. He used his cell phone to call the restaurant and just as he was getting the directions, his battery went dead. So much for technology. We drove on to a gas station and nobody knew where it was, which wasn't a good sign, because I'd think they would if it was anywhere in that area. We found a bank of pay phones, of which three out of three were not working. We then drove on to another restaurant to ask for a phone. They were closing and refused to let Bob inside. A comedy of errors haunted us until we eventually got directions and found The Carnivore, albeit two full hours late. Poor

dear Ian had been waiting and was waiting still. He apparently was on his sixth beer and sitting alone at our table for ten. He jumped up with a happy grin and said it was "no problem at all!" The beer, I assume, had kept him company. He's such a sweet guy and I always enjoy seeing him. We had driven right past the restaurant because the lightning had caused a power outage and their sign was darkened. The power was still out when we arrived. A security guard met us at the car and escorted us with a torch (flashlight) across the grounds and down the restaurant's staircase inside. It was like walking into the bowels of a cave. The smoke was so thick you could barely see because the electric fans were not working. There were candles everywhere glowing in the smoky haze. The Carnivore is a bushmeat restaurant. You pay one price, which in American dollars was only about \$13, and they will bring around various meats until you tell them you want no more. You also get to select from some excellent desserts for that price. The menu of meat changes, depending on what is available. Most of the meats come from culled or ranched game and the money goes into the reserves, so a great idea from a conservation point of view. Tonight we had waterbuck, wildebeest, kudu, ostrich, and the more common beef, pork sausage, and chicken wings. No giraffe or crocodile, which I would have liked to try. Of the game, we all liked the kudu and ostrich the best, being incredibly tender. The wildebeest was gamey and rather dry. Every hour or so the staff would leave the bar-b-que pit and gather in the center of the room and sing traditional African songs. The chanting in the smoky darkness, feasting on game meats, firelight glowing, this set off the perfect tone for our trip. Yes, we are indeed on the Dark Continent now and greatly anticipating our upcoming adventures.

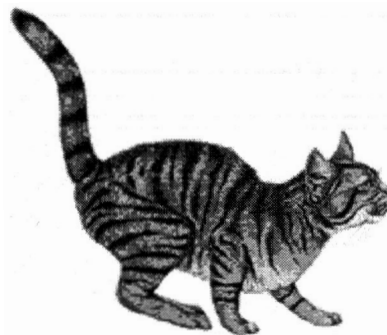
LONG JUMPER

When a cat runs or jumps, the strong muscles of its hind legs provide the thrust. A cat can jump many times its own body length.

One of the largest muscles of the hind leg is the gastrocnemius muscle. It is attached to the heel bone by the Achilles' tendon. When a human or a cat crouches, pushing the heel to the ground, the tendon is stretched like a rubber band.

Catapult

When the cat crouches before it springs, it stretches the tendons and muscles of its legs, storing elastic energy. Just as the stretched rubber bands of a slingshot throw a pebble forward, the tendons of the cat's leg muscles rebound and help thrust the cat forward and upward.



GOING FOR THE GOLD

The cheetah is one of the fastest animals alive. It can reach speeds of 110 km per hour (70 mph). This is made possible by its long legs and flexible back. By flexing and extending its back, the cheetah greatly increases the length of its stride.

1999 LIOC 28th Annual Convention

Many of the convention attendees arrived on Tuesday, August 3, at the Alex Johnson Hotel in downtown Rapid City, South Dakota. Attendees were able to spend more time together this year, due to a Wild Feline Husbandry Course that was held on Wednesday, a day prior to the convention. George Stowers and Ron Eldridge instructed the eight-hour Husbandry Course. This course provided students with the basic knowledge required to practice responsible captive husbandry of wild felines.

The hospitality room opened on Wednesday, with check-in for attendees and time to spend with the exotic cats. Max and Marge brought three three-week-old tigers that all needed bottle feeding every six hours. This is a chore, and fortunately there were many members who assisted with feeding the cubs. Ethel brought three six-week-old melanistic geoffroys and a nine-month old safari cat. Ethel kept the babies fed and due to an eye injury at birth, the safari cat required eye drops twice a day. Tracy and Keith, Arleen, and Loretta brought young servals. Loreon brought a young ocelot and John brought an adult melanistic geoffroy. Joan stopped in with her Canadian Lynx for a short visit. The hospitality room was open for all free time during the convention. This gave attendees a chance to introduce themselves and exchange information about their felines.

To officially start the 1999 LIOC Convention, the general membership meeting was held Thursday afternoon. The general membership participated in discussions for current and future LIOC programs. (Meeting report will be submitted by LIOC Secretary.) Thursday

evening we gathered for a reception dinner.

On Friday we boarded two buses and traveled to Mt. Rushmore National Monument. We then traveled to Wildcat Valley Resort and Campground. Most of our time was spent at Wildcat Valley. We enjoyed lunch next to beautiful Battle Creek, and then had a tour of the facility given by Jim Morrow and Judy Penland, who were also this year's convention hosts. Jim and Judy explained the history of each of their animals. Jim sure does have a gentle way with handling cougars. We then had a tour of their antique/gift shop with many exotic cat items.

The next stop was in Keystone for a short shopping excursion. The Sturgis motorcycle rally was the following week, and already 100,000 motorcycles were in town. (Once the rally starts each year, there are over 300,000 motorcycles.) There really weren't any cars on the street because the motorcycles were lined up by the hundreds. The feeling was similar to a festival. After shopping we went to Bear Country USA. This drive through wildlife park had Rocky Mt. Elk and Goat, Arctic and Timber Wolves, Buffalo, Cougars, Bobcats, and LOTs of Bears!

Both Friday and Saturday morning the LIOC board of directors met for their annual meeting. Saturday's agenda was filled with presentations and guest speakers as follows: Kelly Jean Buckley, LIOC Director Member Services, "Long Island Ocelot Club - 30 Years Ago and Today," read the history of LIOC, while showing a film, that was donated by Loreon Vigne, from an LIOC meeting held 30 years ago. George Stowers, LIOC Vice President, presented a "Briefing on the 1999 Mid-Year Meeting of the AZA Felid

Taxon Advisory Group.”

Dawn Simas, Founder/Director, Wild About Cats, Feline Rescue, Conservation, and Education - Auburn California, “In-Situ/Ex Situ Cheetah Conservation Program: Cheetah the Spotted Wind,” presented information, slides, and a video on the Cheetah program at Wild About Cats. Everyone enjoyed the video of the Cheetahs exercising in the wheat fields. Dr. Mark Griffin, Purina Mills/Mazuri, “Exotic Feline Nutrition.” Mark explained how Purina Mills developed the Mazuri Feline Diet and the nutritional requirements specific to cats. Purina Mills gave all attendees a copy of a video about Mazuri Exotic Feline Diet along with a coupon for a free bag of the product. Alan Shoemaker, Collection Manager Riverbanks Zoological Park and Garden - Columbia, South Carolina, “Raising the Bar: The Evolution of Felid Management in Zoos.” The topics covered AZA and Related Conservation Organizations, AZA Conservation Programs - Studbook, SSP, PMP, TAG, and RCP, AZA Felid Tag Regional Collection Plan 1998-2001, Felid TAG Support, Felid TAG Eliminate, Felid TAG No-Support, Private Owners and Felid Management. (Text from Alan Shoemaker’s presentation will be condensed and included in upcoming LIOC newsletters.)

Saturday evening began with the annual awards dinner and was followed by the auction. Exquisite table centerpieces were made by Joan Martin. These ceramic exotic cats were made to sit in potted flower plants that Judy Penland grew. Judy has such a green thumb that the flowers grew very tall and they couldn’t be used on the tables, so she donated the plants to the auction. Jim Morrow and Judy Penland won the annual newsletter photo contest. Bob Turner was presented the newsletter Reporter of the Year award. Marvin

Hierlmeier was this year’s Lotty recipient. Bob Turner accepted the Lotty for Marvin because Marvin was unable to attend.

The convention ended Sunday morning with a breakfast meeting. The next LIOC meeting was announced to be held in Raleigh, North Carolina on August 9-13, 2000 and will include a visit to Carnivore Preservation Trust. See you in Raleigh!

Submitted by Kelly Jean Buckley

Letter from new conference attendee:

Hi, This is Tracy Wilson from Arkansas. I just wanted to tell you from a new member and first time attendee’s perspective what a great convention! We joined a few months ago from information off of the Internet. We didn’t know any members of LIOC at all. We didn’t know what kind of people would be at the convention, and we were afraid we wouldn’t fit in. Were we in for a surprise! We met the most wonderful people, and made friendships that will last a lifetime! We even cried when saying goodbyes with some of our new friends! A good job was done of making sure everyone mingled around and met new people, instead of staying with the first few people you met. We also left the convention with a wealth of knowledge we would never have gotten elsewhere. The husbandry course was very informative, and we also learned a lot from just talking to all the other members. We just couldn’t believe what a good time we had and how much we liked the people there! I came home and immediately told friends about the LIOC, and that they needed to join PRONTO! I hope we won’t have to miss any future conventions, it’s well worth the time and money we spent!

Thanks again,
Keith & Tracy Wilson
ktwilson@aristotle.net

1999 LIOC 28TH



George Stowers and Alan Shoemaker



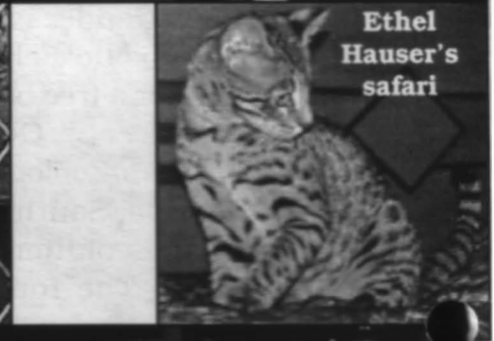
Jim Morrow
Wilbeat Valley
Convention Host



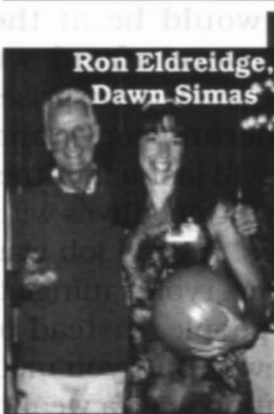
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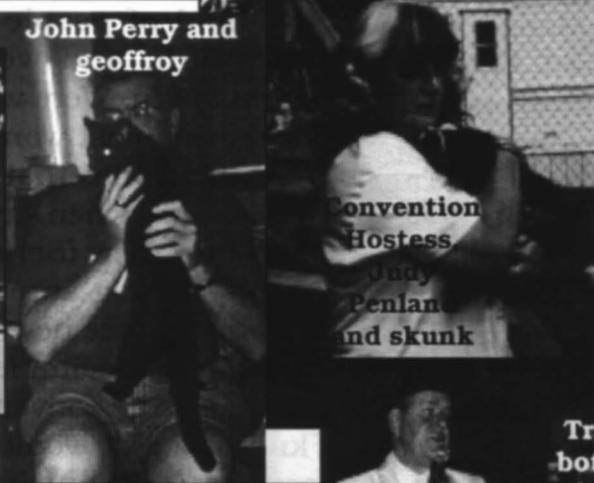
Karen Jusseatme, Carin Sousa,
Shirley Wagner



Ethel
Hauser's
safari



Ron Eldridge,
Dawn Simas



John Perry and
geoffroy

Convention
Hostess
Andy
Penlan
and skunk



Steve and Cheryl Hahn, Bob Turner



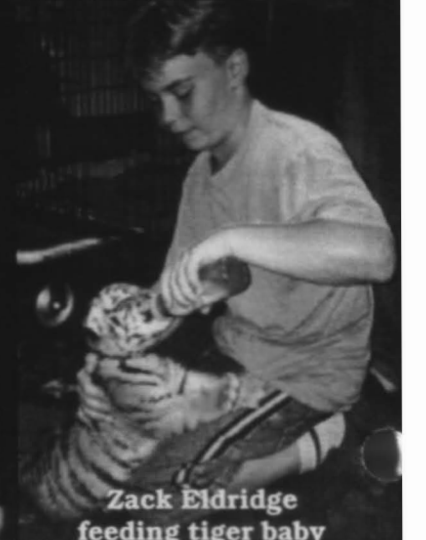
Peggy Epperson, Patricia Turner, Bob
Turner, Debbie Walding, Harold Epperson,
Kelly Jean Buckley



JB, Autioneer



Tracy Wilson
bottle feeding
baby serval



Zack Eldridge
feeding tiger baby

ANNUAL CONVENTION



Barbara Wilton,
Reva Anderson,
Ethel Hauser



Cheryl Malone,
Maybellyne Tackett
with baby geoffroy



Bob Turner receiving
"Reporter of the Year"
Award from Kelly Jean



Jana and
Brittany Londre,
Mark Griffin



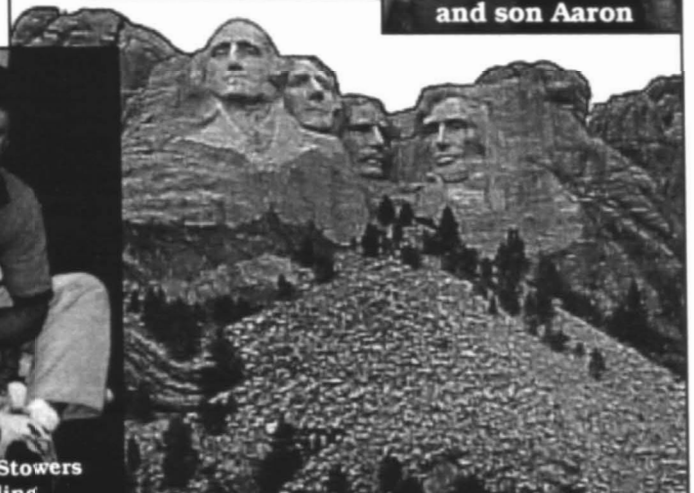
Joan Martin's
Canadian lynx



Joan Martin
and son Aaron



George Stowers
feeding
tiger baby



Convention group at
Mt. Rushmore



Leesa
Dannheiser



Letta Rowe, Arleen Goffena, Leesa Dannheiser,
Tonya Jones, Diana Dannheiser, Murray
Rakowsky, Reva Anderson, Vivienne Rakowsky

President's Perspective

Convention '99 in Rapid, City, SD was our first meeting with the new Board of Directors. First, this is the first time I've had a Vice-President in attendance. Those of you who attended the husbandry course on Wednesday met VP George Stowers. He put the Husbandry Course together and taught a good portion of it. He is also our representative liaison between the private sector and the AZA. He also attends the Felid Tag Meetings on our behalf. What better representation could we have!

Life Director Shirley Wagner is a walking Robert's Rules of Order, LIOC Constitution and LIOC by-laws. Longest standing LIOC member, her involvement goes back to appointments by Catherine Cisin. She contributes all year long with any problem or concern any of us may have. She is always available. She also makes the Lotty and all plaques and awards for the convention. Thanks, Shirley! Make yourself an award!

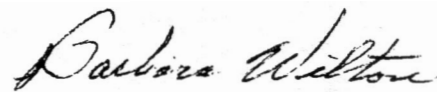
Life Director John Perry keeps us on the straight and narrow when it comes to balancing the budget. I remember when the budget used to be the dreaded subject on the agenda which was always put off until last. It still is the last thing on the agenda but now we do that so we know

what expenditures we have approved which need consideration in the budget. With John there, he generally has it all figured to the penny so few changes have to be made in the treasurer's advance budget.

Life Director Carin Sousa is a Godsend. She is soft spoken and has a great insight. She is on the Convention Committee and always willing to help. I know if she is appointed to a committee that she will be an active participant. I just appointed her to work on the "Big Cat Policy" committee.

Convention goes all know Life Director and auctioneer J. B. Anderson. In board meetings you wouldn't recognize him. He is very serious and quiet. When he has something to say, everyone listens. He can be funny or serious but always gives great thought to a problem or question before he gives an opinion.

Sometimes I think all I'm needed for is to bang the gavel but "someone has to do it."



Barbara Wilton, LIOC President



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Metabolic Bone Disease

By Ron Eldridge, BVSC

Metabolic bone disease (MBD) encompasses a number of conditions that develop as a result of calcium or vitamin D or an improper ratio of calcium to phosphorus in the diet. Many names are given to the syndrome including osteoporosis, ostiomalacia, rickets, and secondary hyperparathyroidism. MBD should be considered a disease caused by dietary husbandry mismanagement. Calcium is required for the formation of bones and other uses. Calcium is brought into the body through the gut by vitamin D. Therefore, deficiency of vitamin D will lead to a calcium deficiency. Phosphorus is an essential component of bone as well as having other important functions. Calcium and phosphorus are related in a very strict formula in the body and controlled by the parathyroid gland. The calcium to phosphorus ratio in the blood should be 1.4:1 (1.4 parts calcium to one part phosphorus). This ratio is essential for the body to function properly. Therefore, when one of the values change, the other must change to adjust the ratio. As phosphorus increases in the blood, calcium must also increase. The optimum calcium to phosphorus ratio in the diet is 1.3: 1.

Vitamin D, which is available in two forms - vitamin D2 (plant derived) and vitamin D3 (animal derived), is activated by the action of sunlight on the skin. The liver and kidneys convert the D3 to an active form and it is used to process dietary calcium in the gut into the bloodstream. Vitamin D deficiency is rarely a cause of MBD unless the animal

is totally deprived of sunlight. It must be noted, however, that for kittens raised *only* in the house, it could have a causative role.

An imbalance is present when the calcium/phosphorus ratio is not balanced properly. For example, an all red meat diet has a ratio of 1:20, that is 1 part calcium to 20 parts phosphorus. This is 20 times more phosphorus than the animal needs. When this happens the body must correct the imbalance to the correct 2.1 ratio. Calcium must be found to balance the phosphorus present. The only location available for calcium to be found is from the animal's bones. When this occurs the bones are robbed of their calcium and it is used to balance the phosphorus taken in from the red meat. If the diet is not corrected, the bones become weakened by the continual drain of calcium and break, bend, or thicken in an effort to compensate. You then have a case of metabolic bone disease or calcium deficiency.

It is important, therefore, when attempting to stave off metabolic bone disease to provide calcium supplements that *do not* contain phosphorus as well. More importantly, it is necessary to feed a diet with a proper calcium:phosphorus

That's Amazing!

On June 24, 1985, a cat named "Muddy Water White" jumped out of a van driven by his owner, Babara Paule, in Dayton, Ohio. Almost three years later, he returned to his home in Pennsylvania. "He just came in and flopped down like he was home," said Ms. Paule. She fed him for three days before realizing he was Muddy Whater White, an identification which was verified by her veterinarian! The determined kitty had traveled over 450 miles to find his way back home.

Response to Norman Stories

Dear Marge,

I guess this now is a letter better late. A few months ago, a story about a lion named Norman was published in the LIOC newsletter.

I wanted to write and ask Nancy's address to send her a letter. I wanted to tell her how much her story hit me. In the sense that I, too, have lost a very special boy. I wanted to let her know that despite a loss, we all should carry on for the sake of the wild cats. They need all of our help. I have read "More Norman Antics" and am very happy to read that Nancy has continued on!

About six years ago (as of October 18th) my world was destroyed. That morning I learned from a vet, who had my loving, little white Siberian tiger in his care, had passed on. A story that I do not wish to write at this time, but would only like to mention that I was blatantly disregarded. This vet ignored all my instructions, which would have prevented the tragedy. If he had done what I had asked, Brutus would not be a memory that I mentally visit everyday. Norman's story brought back a flood of pain and opened back up an old wound for me, true.

But after a week of waiting for my own end, I was able to find a person out there to help me "regain" myself. I wanted to do the same for someone else. Since my loss, I have been building a new state-of-the-art sanctuary for tigers and other cats in need. I have more work and obstacles to overcome, but soon I will be able to bring home the two tigers I currently own. Since, I too, did not give up nor will ever do so as long as there is breath in my lungs, I will always be in service to exotic cats and the people out there that need

help or a person to talk to about exotic cats. If anyone needs someone to relate to about their loss, a compassionate listener or help in any way, I am available. These cats are my passion!

I commend Nancy and wish her the best in her pursuits. I am also again very happy to see that she, too, has a "family" again!

Sincerely,
William Olson
401 1/2 Hayden Ave.
Oglesby, IL 61348
815-883-9230



Remember the Scholarship Fund

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Midwest Exotic Feline Educational Society

Meeting Minutes for July 18, 1999

By Harold Epperson

The MEFES quarterly meeting, combined with a pitch-in lunch, was held July 18, 1999 at Me's Zoo near Parker City, Indiana. In attendance were 24 members and three guests. Craig, Leyna, and Bret Bohning were guests of Carol Siegley.

We had a formal meeting and lunch followed by a tour of the Me's Zoo facility. A special thanks to Eileen Oren, owner/operator of Me's Zoo, who is a member of MEFES, for allowing MEFES to hold the July meeting on the grounds. Me's Zoo is a 42 acre, very clean, very well-run facility with a staff of six employees. They have a nice collection of wildcats along with several types of other animals. Me's Zoo is a well-planned and designed facility for the benefit of the animals.

MEFES wants to welcome first time meeting attendees, Ron Rathert, John Tonyan, Tom and Terri Bolen, and Eileen Oren. We look forward to seeing the new attendees at future meetings and encourage MEFES members who have not attended a MEFES meeting to try to attend the final meeting of the year in October. With Steve and Cheryl hosting this exciting special end-of-the year meeting, evening wiener roast, and hayride party. It's a guaranteed a fun time that afternoon and evening.

Membership renewal forms were distributed to those who were present at the meeting and the balance will be mailed.

An announcement was made by Bob Turner that Marvin Hierlmeier had fallen outside a restaurant in Lafayette while

en route to a family funeral in Wisconsin. Marvin was walking Hush when he fell and sustained fractures to his elbow and his shoulder as well as a badly bruised hip. Upon release from the hospital, the plan is that Marvin and Hush will be staying for a while with his son and daughter-in-law in North Judson. It is very unlikely that Marvin will be able to attend the LIOC national convention to be held early August in Rapid City, South Dakota. Both were scheduled to attend the convention and they will be severely missed by all at the convention. Let's hope for a fast recovery for Marvin and we look forward to seeing them at the October meeting.

Concerns were voiced by several members for the need to take extra precaution to protect our animals from anti-conservation (hate) groups. Some animals have been found dead by their owners and the cause of death appeared to be the work of some such group or individual.

Bill Olson, who has a facility at Oglesby near Peoria, IL, presented an offer on surveillance equipment available through Heartland America for \$599.00. It consists of four cameras with built-in microphone for one way sound, mounting bases, cable and 12" black and white monitor (VCR compatible). It is product no. 9024, model JCM-20 Quad Security System. To order, call 1-800-229-2901 or for information, call customer service 1-800-966-1233.

Workdays are scheduled to help Rob Craig and Joe Taft at their facilities on separate weekends. The weekend for Rob is July 31 and August 1, and for Joe

August 21 and 22.

Our final quarterly meeting of 1999 is scheduled at the home of Steve and Cheryl Hahn on Saturday, October 2,

1999. Also, new officers of MEFES will be elected during the October meeting for the year 2000. All members are urged to attend.

Aliance for the Conservation of Exotic Felines - Cascade Branch Meeting Minutes for August 29, 1999

The meeting was held at the Mucsi's house this time. Only two lynxes (Konga and Moriah) attended accompanied by eleven humans. We covered quite a lot of business, along with the usual random discussions. First, our President, Marc Watkins, resigned due to health and work problems. This means that our Vice President, Steve Johnson, is now the president, and we will be holding a special election at our next meeting to elect a new VP. Anyone interested in the position will need to be an LIOC member.

On the good news side of things, it was announced that Mike Jones and Jennifer Ellard are engaged to be married! Our congratulations go out to both of them. Since we have several excellent photographers in the club, it was suggested that we take photos of the various cats in the club and print up some calendars, postcards, or whatever with those images. These would be available to sell at any special events (like the 2000 LIOC convention). It was also mentioned that if anyone has questions or comments for the LIOC board at the 2000 convention, we need to get those submitted by January, 2000. I will be collecting all submissions for consideration and if accepted by the group, submitting them.

We talked some about the process of

getting a USDA Exhibitors permit, since one of our members (Dave Coleburn) has recently gone through this ordeal. I'm working on getting one as well. We will very likely talk about this process some more as time goes on. A proposal has been submitted to change the club officer term length from two years to one year. We discussed this a fair amount at the meeting. The pro's are that it will make it easier to find willing people to run for office, since it would be a shorter commitment. It's also the more common term length for organizations like ours. The only con's brought up were that for the Secretary/Treasurer position it can take quite a while to learn all the duties, but of course there is nothing stopping the person from running for the position again. We will be voting on this issue at the next meeting.

Speaking of the next meeting, it will be on Sunday, September 19th, at my house on Whidbey Island. Anyone who wants to get a cheaper fare for the ferry should contact me by the 11th. I'll mail Commuter Coupons to those people, which will only cost \$3.60 instead of the cash price of \$5.75.

John G. Lussmyer

<mailto:Griffin@Whidbey.Net>

Dragons soar and Tigers prowl while I dream.... <http://www.CasaDelGato.com>

Hot Issue: Declawing

Three Members' Opinions

Dear Marge Maxwell, Editor,

I would like to respond to "What's Your Opinion?" in LIOC newsletter, July/August 1999 issue, page 22.

I strongly oppose the procedure of declawing. The procedure of declawing is simply "vanity," yes, to suit an owner's convenience. If this butcher is such a convenience, how about having one's own fingertips "the first digit" surgically amputated? That would be convenient too, no fingernails for file, trim, paint, etc. and no added expenses of manicures! Who knows, maybe after one has healed both mentally and physically, one could begin to relearn basic daily skills such as writing, tying a shoelace, manipulating small objects, etc. Only if one has not endured further suffering from an infection or bad surgical job leaving fingers and hands useless or worse.

Here are two alternatives I use. I have referred to fellow owners of both exotic and domestic cats who have had equal success.

First, uses a measure of verbal command and tapping the paw. Effective if begun at an early age; every time the adolescent cat claws you in play, gently tap on the offending paw while giving a verbal command such as "put your claws away." This positive reinforcing technique should have results in less than a week (two - three days for my tigers.) From then on reinforce the verbal command only unless tapping is warranted (at your discretion.) But over time, they do learn to keep their claws sheathed in your company.

The second alternative, beginning at an early age, accustoms the cat to routine claw trimming. This is best if done when the cat is comfortable. Gently hold the paw (allow it to be pulled away) with your thumb and extend one claw at a time. With an appropriate size nail trimmer, clip the sharp point. Be careful not to trim off too much! Repeat until you are finished, praise your cat and offer rewards.

In conclusion, it is worth mentioning that if you may not have known, cats instinctively and generally do not like their paws touched. This is why the first alternative has worked so well for me. But the second may pose problems and should be based on the individual cat's disposition and/or personality. Personally, I have and do use both, even though I must look quite ridiculous when I trim my tiger's claws.

Also, I would like to add that I began these techniques when my cats were three months old and younger. I have only been scratched once due to my own ignorance. Personally, I feel it is better to take the time, be it days or years, to positively reinforce training to correct "negative" or/and natural instinctive behavior than to put my cats through pain, discomfort, and possible complications following a procedure to have them altered both physically and psychologically.

Rule #1: Do not harm!

Sincerely,
William Olson
(aka Tiger Daddy)

Lesson Twice Learned!

by Shirley Wagner

Although I understand the reasoning that we must (at least in part) accept the unique characteristics and temperaments of the exotic cats we take into our care I must say this acceptance does not extend to the total animal. We do after all attempt to litter train those we choose to share our homes with (rather than allow them their natural "instincts" to spray). I extend this as well to declawing and encourage all owners of anything bigger than a housecat to have their cats declawed for several reasons. The tigrinas & geoffroys I kept for years were never declawed as they could be handled in all circumstances with little chance of serious damage.

I learned much differently on two separate occasions. My first ocelot was an unusually docile cat, totally handleable even by strangers. However, when he became ill, he did not want to be handled and believe me, you cannot handle a 30 pound fully equipped ocelot if he doesn't want it. I did not own a squeeze cage (how many of us do?) nor did my vet. So, we took the "wait and see approach," trying to treat symptoms with antibiotics, etc. Of course, not feeling well he didn't want to eat and as I said about manhandling a fully armed cat, the bottom line, treatment was delayed due to this and I almost lost the cat. Waiting until they are too weak to put up a good defense is too late.

My second attempt was with a margay, only 10 pounds, but look at those paws, they are much bigger than a housecats and much stronger. My then husband, did not notice our female was due to come into heat and he let the male margay out to play. Critter, thinking my husband was

"competition" immediately went for him. Husband, of course, put his arm up to protect his face and found a margay wrapped around it. It is impossible, believe me, to pry 18 claws off all at once! By the time we finally got the cat to release, the cat had cracked the bone in husband's wrist (their jaws are strong, too).

Of course, it is much harder on the animal to declaw when they are adults. You will be much more at ease around your animal if you know it is declawed. Your vet and his staff will be less hesitant and nervous about handling them if they are declawed. These attitudes toward the cat are readily detected by the animal, you will be less likely to "wait and see" what will develop as well, getting treatment sooner. Your cat does not need it's claws, it will never use them for catching game. They can still climb appropriately placed limbs. They do not need them to mate. In fact, removal will take some of the danger out of the introduction problem.

Your neighbors will be less concerned about any danger (real or imagined) your cat poses to them or their children when it is declawed. Also, should, heaven forbid, your cat ever escape, police will be less inclined to consider it a danger and feel the need to defend themselves with a gun to the cat's detriment. The positives far outweigh the negatives if declawing is done at an early age.

Defanging is a totally different subject, DO NOT DO IT! Canine teeth are pressure sensitive and without them the cat does not know precisely how hard it is biting. The worst bites I have received were all from defanged (not by me) cats. Mom cats need their fangs as well to carry kittens without harming them.

Declawing Opinions Continued

Dear Marge Maxwell,

I will introduce myself to you, my name is Ton Veldkamp and I live in Holland and...smile...I am a member of the LIOC. I would like to give my opinion in the case of declawing as you asked in the last issue of our magazine. First of all, I would like to say that all cats are dangerous when you turn your back to them. In my opinion it's not good to keep wild cats in the house and domesticate them to suit the need of the humans.

Animals are always the victim when we people do that to them. I think respect is the best way to handle wild cats. No declawing...no devoicing...no castrating and such kind of things. I think it's cruel to the animal and the question that rises at me is ...do those people really love wild cats? I read in the same magazine an article about 10 poor reasons for wanting an exotic cat...smile.

Number 3 of those 10 was: SO YOU CAN TAME A WILD BEAST. Well I think this tells enough. I have wild cats here...and when I go into the cages I look how they react and when it's possible I go in without fear, but with respect, and I keep distance so that I don't approach them too close. The moment they put down and back their ears or bend to the ground I do some steps back...because that's the near moment they will attack me. I went into cages with lynxes, Canadian lynxes, snow leopards and all with respect. And I have no scars or bites...never. I think a wild cat needs to stay wild, because in case of destroying their natural habitat, those cats are easier to place back in nature. And besides all this, a wild cat needs to stay in a surrounding where he/she can climb,

run, hunt and so on. When people are not able to give a wild cat what they need, then don't buy one.

Oh, Marge, I can write a book about all this...smile. Anyway, I hope you have something of what I wrote here...forgive me my English...I am Dutch....smile. Further, I hope to visit the next conference of the LIOC next year and perhaps we can meet then.

With kind regards,

Ton Veldkamp

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/9034/>

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The Netherlands



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Informational contributions may be sent to George Stowers, Vice President, Email: gstowers@aiusa.com Please send computer readable text files (email is fine or ASCII text files on disc.)

Dear LIOC friends,

We want to share with everyone our recent experience with a new vitamin/mineral super supplement we have been using for our exotic cats. The product is called MISSING LINK-Feline Formula, made by Designing Health in California. Though this product is designed for domestic cats, we have had tremendous results using it with our exotics. We began using it seven months ago. Within two weeks we noticed dramatic improvements in our cats' coats. We also noticed increased appetite for our finicky eaters, as well as bulkier stool (from increased fiber, very important!!). Our cats, two cougars, one bobcat, one serval, one clouded leopard, have continued to do fabulous on this product. At one point we were unable to get this product as the place we were buying it stopped carrying it. We were two weeks without using it, and in that time the coats on our cats became dull and dry, and their stool not as well formed. We are now distributors of all the MISSING LINK products to insure we will not be without it again. We give our cougars 2 tsp./day, Clouded leopard 1.5 tsp./day, and bobcat & serval 1 tsp./day. For more information contact Designing Health at 1-800-774-7387 or www.designinghealth.com. We also welcome any questions you may have for us at Ph# 1-207-474-8586 or email timann@wworx.net

Take care and God Bless,
Tim & Anne Amadon

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**Nubbins
with her
favorite
toy, a
Michael
Jordan
basketball**



Dear Marge,

I am one of the guilty parties for not contributing to the LIOC newsletter very often. I think the last time I wrote was over four years ago when I had to have my beloved Rambo (cougar) put down for extensive kidney and liver problems. I had him for seven and one-half years and he was my life. So it was very hard to do.

Well, I also have a very feisty, but fairly friendly, female cougar, named Nubbins, who was given to me about ten years ago. About six years ago we had a very close call with her and almost lost her also to liver and kidney problems. But with the help of the people that gave her to me, (Gary and Lucy McClain) and their wonderful vet (Dr. Zeitlin), she pulled through. I have had no problems with her since. She did go through a long depression and grieving period after Rambo died, but with lots of love and attention, she came around.

Well now, the last year and half, I've had serious back problems and been out of work, which in turn has caused serious financial problems. I have held on as long as I could, but now I need to find a good loving home for my precious Nubbins. I never thought it would really come down to this but it has.

If there is anyone out there that could give Nubbins a good home (preferably in Florida), I surely would appreciate hearing from them. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Toni Gattie
260 Mansion Blvd.
Debarry, FL 32713
407-668-7674



1999 Convention Attendees

Left to right from bottom to top:

Bob Turner, Carin Sousa, Craig Bohning, Carol Siegley, Lisa Padula, Zach Eldrige, Paul Richardson, Shirley Wagner, Harold Epperson, Noel Maxwell, Brittany Londre, Steve Hahn, Jim Morrow

Bus driver, Patricia Turner, Ron Eldridge, Ethel Hauser, Peggy Epperson, Murray Rakowski, Vivienne Rakowski, Jana Londre, Diana Dannheiser, Maybellyne Tackett, Walter Tackett, Bob Stern, Karen Jusseaume, Debbie Walding, Reva Anderson

Linda Covell, Tonya Jones, Leesa Dannheiser, Loretta Rowe, Arleen Goffena, Barbara Wilton, Kelly Jean Buckley

Marge Maxwell, Harold Maxwell, Cheryl Malone, George Stowers, Tom Buckley

Don Covell, JB Anderson, Mark Griffin, Stephen Pierce, John Perry, Alex Kurtz, Susan Beckley, Tracy Wilson, Ray Beckley, Loreon Vigne, people hiding in back