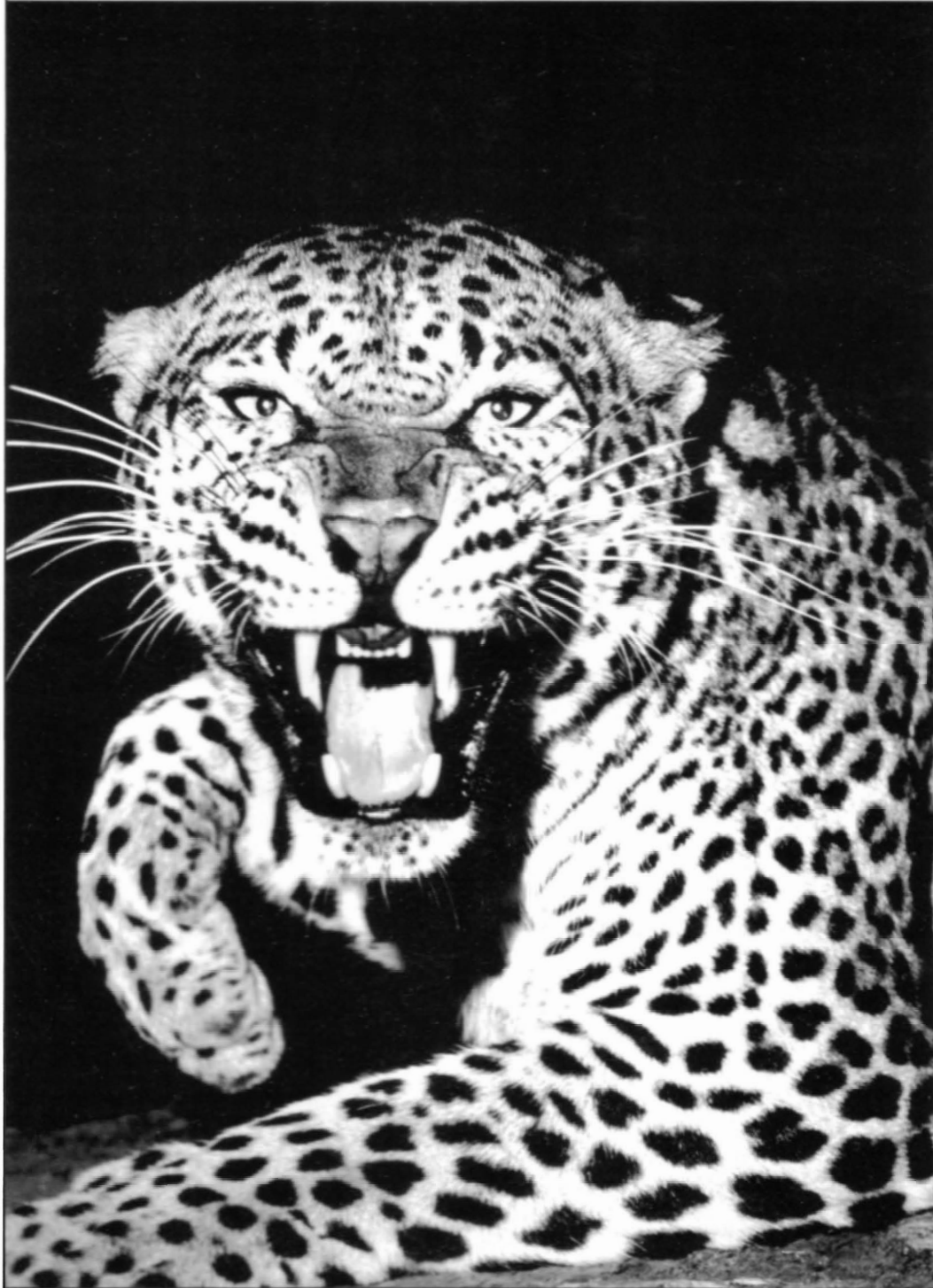


LIOC-  
ENDANGERED SPECIES  
CONSERVATION FEDERATION



**"Defender"**

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LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc.  
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LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation



This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. We are a non-profit (Federal ID# 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 first 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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## LAST ROAR FOR THE SOUTH CHINA TIGER

Campaign kicks off to save the world's rarest subspecies of tiger

by Martin Williams Copyright© BBC Wildlife Magazine, January 2001

submitted by Becky McCane (US Coordinator) and Li Quan

Until recently, the most vaunted tiger conservation efforts have been in India, Sumatra and eastern Russia, leaving a huge gap in the country at the heart of the species' range, China. Now, the situation is changing, with the development of an action plan and the launch of a new charity focused on saving the South China tiger.

The South China tiger *Panthera tigris amoyensis* is the rarest of the five surviving tiger subspecies. It once ranged across southern China, numbering around 4,000 in 1950. But, despite its prominence in Chinese art and literature, it was declared to be vermin and became a victim of the nation's war on pests.

More than 3,000 were said to have

been killed during the 1950s, and though tigers are now officially protected in China, the South China tiger is critically endangered. None have been sighted by biologists in the past two decades, and estimates put the population at between 10 and 50.

Those tigers that do survive are scattered and living in fragmented stands of hillforests. Given the huge strains on China's environment resulting from development and population pressure and the fact that it has largely been ignored by the conservation world, the South China tiger has been regarded as doomed to extinction. Even the few in zoos have been bred haphazardly, resulting in problems from inbreeding.



**"... the South China tiger has been regarded as doomed to extinction."**

But now comes a campaign set up by a newcomer to the scene, Li Quan. As a former head of worldwide licensing for Gucci, Quan may seem an unlikely tiger saviour. But, after speaking with

China's State Forestry Administration, she learned that officials were drafting a plan to protect the South China tiger and that only financing and expert advice were lacking. Quan responded by establishing the charity, Save China's Tigers. Peter Jackson, chairman of the IUCN/SSC Cat Specialist Group, has been providing the expertise and has been impressed with Quan's ability to involve all interested parties and says she can overcome the language barrier that hampered previous efforts.

The action plan that Save China's Tigers will support has echoes of the panda management plan. Projects will include field surveys and expanding existing reserves, along with creation of woodland corridors linking currently isolated forests. As with panda conservation, a byproduct of the plan will be that other species will also benefit. There is also a project to reintroduction of captive-bred tigers into the wild, but Jackson said this was using unproven techniques and was unlikely to succeed.

Not all conservationists believe the plan is worthy of the time and money required, however. One, for instance, told Quan that the South China tiger was "a basket case". But to Jackson, it's worth a try, partly because it will help other wildlife.

If the South China tiger is saved and increases in numbers, some, inevitably, will live close to people. But even that's not impossible. "In Chitwan, they've found tigers rearing their young close to villages, with the villagers not knowing they were there," says Jackson.

Send donations payable to Save China's Tigers and letters to:  
Li Quan, Secretary Save China's Tigers  
66D Royal Mint Street, London E1 8LG  
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## Save China's Tigers Update

submitted by Becky McCane

Yuanyuan, one of the South China tigers that Save China's Tigers has been supporting, has just had babies. This is especially exciting since they are so rare, even in captivity! It is very possible that these babies will one day be reintroduced into the wild since they are part of an experimental reintroduction project.

### Xinhua News Agency

(c) Copyright 2001 Xinhua News Agency  
07/25/2001

A South China tiger recently gave birth to triplets - her first offspring - in a nature reserve in east China's Fujian Province. Zhang Jingzhong, an official with the administration of the Meihuashan National Nature Reserve, said the sex of the baby tigers remains unknown as reserve workers have not yet approached them for fear their presence will upset the new mother.

The mother tiger came from a zoo in Guilin city in South China's Guangxi region last June, together with two other tigers. The reserve also has three other tigers from Suzhou in Zhejiang Province. Zhang said the mother tiger conceived in April and bore the cubs on July 20.

Experts with the reserve said the birth of the cubs marks a breakthrough in their plan to return the huge cats to the wild. In 1998, the local government launched a 146-million-yuan project to protect the rare cats, with the aim of returning them to their natural habitat in the future.

As part of the program, the reserve started to build a tiger park on its grounds in 1998. The 466.67 hectare park is described by experts as an ideal habitat for tigers. It has large stretches of primitive forest and grassland as well as areas of water. Animals such as deer, rabbits, goats and antelope are also kept there to tempt the tigers' natural hunting instincts. Experts said it is impossible for adult tigers that have been raised in an artificial environment since birth to fully regain their wild nature. But they hope the cubs will be able to survive in the wild if they get more exposure to it now.

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Original caption by George Stowers:  
Now I have to ask, is this anyway to run an  
"airlion"?

Response from Herald Maxwell:  
Not only is it a way to run an airlion, but they  
take great pride in it!

Radar Serval--or is that serval  
radar? On alert!  
submitted by Tracy Wilson



## **In-Sync Exotics Hosts the LIOC Husbandry Course in Texas**

by Tracy Wilson, Director of Education & Conservation, LIOC-ESCF

On May 19, 2001, LIOC-ESCF conducted the Wild Feline Basic Husbandry Course in Garland, Texas. The event was hosted by the facility In-Sync Exotics, owned and operated by Vicky Keahey. There were about 15 students present, most of them not LIOC members. We are hoping they enjoyed the class enough to join our organization. Also in attendance was a USDA inspector from the Texas area, and 2 Arkansas Game & Fish Wildlife Officers.

George Stowers and I instructed the course, which was held at a local church as provided by our host, Vicky Keahey. Vicky's mother-in-law cooked a very nice breakfast, and an even better lunch, and provided snacks and refreshments for the students during the day. Most of the students were from the Texas area, but some came from as far away as Maryland and Tennessee. There were many different levels of cat experience within the group, ranging from some people who had not ever owned an exotic cat before, to several who had just one or two exotic pets, to some who had years of hands-on experience and USDA licensed facilities. Having students with all types of experience and backgrounds makes a very interesting class, because students can offer different views and suggestions on many topics.

The students gave us very positive feedback on the course, with the general feeling that they all learned useful information on how to care for wild

felines. The USDA inspector in attendance provided us with very positive feedback, and stated he was very impressed with the course itself, as well as our organization as a whole. He stated it was very encouraging to him that an organization is taking an active role in promoting responsible ownership of exotics. The Arkansas Game & Fish Officers also gave positive feedback. They were interested in the course, because effective July 2001, the state of Arkansas will regulate and license any commercial breeders of both native and non-native wildlife. They felt the course provided useful information for when they inspect facilities that house exotic cats.

George and I arrived in Texas a day early, and were able to tour our host's facility, In-Sync Exotics. In-Sync Exotics is a USDA licensed and nonprofit facility. They currently house 10 adolescent and adult tigers, 3 adult cougars, and 2 tiger cubs. They have really nice secure enclosures, with plenty of safety features. Vicky explained to us that the entire facility was designed and set up so that one person could safely do all the daily chores alone if needed, without ever having to enter a tiger's enclosure. Since In-Sync Exotics provides tours of the facility to the public, they have built their freestanding cages with perimeter fences directly around each cage. This way visitors can get within 4 feet of a tiger, but very safely. Each cage has



large den boxes built of concrete reinforced cinder blocks set into concrete with rebar underneath. The den boxes also served as lockdown areas, which can be opened and closed from outside the cages. One very nice highlight is a large in-ground pool with a waterfall cascading over a rock wall in one of the enclosures. All of the cages are framed up with welded heavy-duty steel pipes and are about 12 feet tall with covered roofs.

All of In-Syncs tigers are rescues, with most of them coming to the facility as young cubs. Most of them arrived in extremely poor health as cubs, but Vicky and her husband, Eddie, have worked very hard to get them in better condition, and they looked very healthy and rambunctious during our visit. The tigers had certainly come a long way since the pictures we saw of when they first arrived at In-Sync. Just recently, Vicky lost her very first tiger rescue, Kenya, to a routine spay procedure. Unknown to them, Kenya had a weak heart, and suffered complications from the anesthesia. Vicky is heartbroken over losing her very special girl, and hosted the husbandry course in her memory and honor. We also had the privilege of meeting two 7 week-old tiger cubs, and of getting to help bottle feed and play with the little guys. These cubs were also both rescues, but Vicky was able to place them soon after our visit with another qualified facility close by.



George Stowers enthusiastically feeds a 7 week-old tiger cub during our visit to In-Sync Exotics



George demonstrates clicker training to Vicky and one of In-Sync's yearling tigers

Since we had some spare time the evening before the class, George demonstrated for Vicky some behavior training with one of her yearling tigers. George taught Vicky how to use the "Clicker Training" methods with the young tiger. With George's assistance, Vicky was able to make some progress training the intelligent tiger in just one evening!



We got to meet a few of In-Sync's regular volunteers, who also attended the husbandry course. We had a lot of fun giving 8 yearling tigers their evening bottles, under Vicky's supervision and help from her regular volunteers. I am not sure who was more excited about bottle time, the tigers or us!

Our hostess, Vicky, was kind enough to provide both George and me with places to stay, and transport us everywhere for the weekend. Vicky's vet even helped out, and invited George to stay with her family for the weekend. We went out to eat several times with our host, her vet, and friends and family, and they were really nice people to get to know. If any of you ever find yourselves near the Garland area, you'll be missing out if you don't stop by and visit In-Sync Exotics! We want to give a special thank you to In-Sync Exotics for doing a wonderful job with getting everything organized for the course, and taking care of the instructors for the weekend!



The Husbandry course can be tough, as it covers a lot of information all in one day. It's a lot of information to absorb at once, however, we are very proud that all of our students at this course in Texas passed the course!

It should be noted that most new legislation being introduced around the country requires that owners have some verifiable experience and training in order to get permitted to own exotic cats. Taking this course will help show that you are educating yourself and taking positive steps towards responsible ownership. The course includes an instructor lead, multi-media presentation, a 60-page student text, workshops, and final exam.

LIOC would like to be able to provide the husbandry course in a variety of locations throughout the year, outside of the normally scheduled course during convention each year. If you as an individual, if or your local branch would be interested in hosting the husbandry course in your area, please contact me for details. (email: [tracy@lioc.org](mailto:tracy@lioc.org))



Instructor George Stowers asks some thought-provoking questions during class.

Husbandry course agenda topics include:

Natural History of Wild Felines  
Regulatory Agencies & Permits  
Facility Design  
Nutrition  
Health Care Basics  
Handling & Behavior Training  
Contingency Planning



Students in the husbandry course discuss and pose their own questions as well.



The In-Sync Exotics Rescue Center was founded in 1997 by Vicky Keahy. In July of 1991, a young male mountain lion named Tahoe was brought into the veterinary hospital where Vicky worked. Several weeks earlier his owner had had his teeth removed so he wouldn't bite anyone or damage anything indoors. When he quit eating due to the pain his owner brought him into the vet hospital and never came back. Nobody would accept him and he would be put to sleep soon (by the SPCA) if they couldn't find him a home.

Vicky took him home and spent countless hours teaching him how to eat without teeth. Vicky had a need to learn about Tahoe's cougar breed and his specific needs and care. Vicky turned to her vet and gathered information from various sources including the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for help in learning about how to give proper care to Tahoe. Over time Vicky and Tahoe built a bond of love and trust, and learned to respect each other. Because of the quality of her care of Tahoe, Vicky had earned the respect of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to the degree that in 1994 an officer brought Vicky another cougar in need of help.

Vicky was also learning that private ownership of large cats is an enormous responsibility, and one that some people simply cannot carry out well, despite the

best of intentions. The cats required very expensive food, shelter, medical treatment, and a tremendous time commitment.

Soon thereafter, Vicky met Kenya the tiger and began to recognize the plight of many of these great cats. The In-Sync Exotics Rescue center was born of Vicky Keahey's love for exotic cats, her concern over Texas' lack of laws that govern exotic cat breeding practices and her distaste for people who abuse and mistreat animals. In-Sync Exotics was established as a non-profit wildlife rescue and education center. In-Sync Exotics exists to educate and heighten public awareness about the importance of research and conservation. The organization also participates in rescuing exotic cats in trouble. In-Sync supports controlled and professionally-overseen breeding practices, however the In-Sync facility does not breed its animals.

Appreciating and respecting the tiger as God created it is the only way to ensure their destiny on our planet. Even today, tigers are still sought out by poachers and are endangered by loss of natural habitat. Currently, there are more tigers in captivity than there are in the wild.

In-Sync Exotics is operated by Vicky and Eddie Keahy along with a handful of close friends and regular volunteers.

### **Mission:**

The In-Sync Exotics Rescue Center mission is to give the cats we rescue a permanent home. They are not our pets. They are not sold, transferred, made to perform tricks. We do not allow them to breed. We provide them with the best care and comfort we can. To the best of our abilities we balance what resources we have between caring for our current cats and having the necessary resources to rescue other great cats.

# Kenya

by Vicky Keahey of In-Sync Exotics

Kenya was born in Texas on April 28, 1998 and I rescued her on June 3, 1998. Kenya returned to live with God on February 13, 2001 when she experienced heart complications during a routine spay surgery. The impact of the tragic loss of my beloved tiger will be felt forever in my heart. Kenya brightened the lives of all that met her during her short life, and her spirit and legacy live on as the inspiration of In-Sync Exotics.

Kenya first entered the world at a drive-through zoo park. When I first saw Kenya, at 3 weeks of age, Kenya constantly screamed in distress and had begun to lose her hair. For two weeks I looked for ways in which I might be able to help this baby tiger. The second time I saw Kenya she was 5 weeks old, was still losing her hair and had received no vet care. Her owners were displeased because she was useless to them as a sale or for generating photo revenue. Seeing the beauty in Kenya and feeling empathy for her, I drove home with Kenya on June 3, 1998 determined to nurse her back to health.

I took Kenya to the vet immediately for diagnosis and treatment. At 5 weeks, Kenya already had stomach and immune system problems and was infested with fleas. After aggressive medical treatment, proper diet, and a lot of love and pampering, Kenya

regained perfect health at around 4 months of age.

A strong, immeasurable bond formed between us during the time I nursed her back to health, a bond that would never be broken. It was a loving and special relationship. Kenya was, and still is the love of my life.

Every morning, I went to Kenya's cage. It was easy to lock her in her den so I could clean. Once the cage was clean, the fun began. Hugs through the cracked-open cage door ensued. Kenya was beautiful, sweet, playful, and yet gentle with me. All throughout the day and night Kenya and I talked to one another. We played hide and seek, tiger style, and I would sing to Kenya, or sometimes just sit with her, admiring her beauty. Kenya would play chase with me and splash me from the swimming pool. She would entertain me by playing with the toys in her cage. Kenya had a funny way of hugging her tree, and turning somersaults when she wanted to show off. At night, I would sit with Kenya while she ate, and most times fed her by hand because she hated to eat alone.

Kenya was, and will forever be, the hallmark of In-Sync Exotics. She was every visitor's favorite tiger, and her magnificence and beauty was an awe-inspiring site. Kenya's spirit will live within us all forever.

## For Kenya

I just can't adjust  
The void is so real  
I wonder how long  
This wound takes to heal.

Her sensitive nature was a comfort to me,  
She knew of my sadness, she knew of my glee.  
Her eyes said it all as they looked into mine  
And the bond that we had  
Was one of a kind.

What ever she did she did with a flair,  
Proud and stately, with a magnificent air,  
Her majestic appearance spoke clearly and loud,  
Bold and commanding, beautiful and proud.

My memories of Her  
Are quite set apart.  
A place for Kenya  
Will stay in my heart.



If you have any questions or comments regarding volunteering, donations, sponsorship, etc. you may contact us via mail at P.O. Box 968 Wiley, TX 75098 or via e-mail at [InsyncExotics@aol.com](mailto:InsyncExotics@aol.com). Our telephone number is 469-964-8944. You can find out more about us on our web site at <http://www.c1139495-a.dals1.tx.home.com/insync/intro.htm>

## Grief and the Caretaker

by Ray Rooney

If more than one person is caring for your cats you need to be prepared.

As relatively long-lived creatures we are often faced with the mortality of other species and in particular those we choose to keep around us. We can expect to outlive most of them and thus have to deal with their loss. So too will those who help us care for them.

For some people this is loss taken in stride. They go on as we expect them to and that is that. They may miss the animal they loved, but life goes on.

But for some the attachment is stronger than perhaps even they realized. It may be a general sense of caring for animals, or it may be just a special animal that burrows its way into their heart that causes such unexpected grief. Often this will be an especially engaging individual or one that has triumphed over a horrible past. Maybe it will be a young one that held so much promise but is suddenly gone or a victim of human hate.

In these cases the death can be a terrible shock for the humans left behind. As in the case of the death of a human friend, feelings of not having done enough, of thinking it could have been prevented, or just helplessness can come down like a blanket.

It is easy to say, "Get over it," or "Snap out of it," but it is not that easy. Just think of how many people there are who have yet to cope with the loss of even a person they did not personally know, like Princess Diana, and you may get an idea.

As individuals we hope we know our capabilities and are ready to deal with anything we expect but the situation gets harder to predict when the number of people involved in an activity increases.

Many of us hire helpers or accept volunteers to help with the day-to-day workload with the cats and other animals

we may have. That means we are no longer dealing with just our own limitations, judgements, and reactions but those of other humans as well. The trend today is to find and take on the most involved and interested individuals, those who have a deep interest and liking for lions, tigers, servals, etc. and can be expected to provide the most dedicated and best care for them.

But with that interest and involvement comes the problem of possible attachment to one or more of the animals as they and the humans get familiar with one another. We have all seen the chemistry that develops between individuals, the one handler that can get the one cat to do or accept things nobody else can. That is the good side. The bad side can come when that partnership is broken by tragedy.

The result can be a human in shock, distracted and going through the daily routine in a fog. This is bad enough in no-contact situations, meaning jobs are done slowly or haphazardly, but in full-contact situations or performances this can have deadly consequences.

Felines are probably the most intuitive species and they respond to our moods. In depressed moods some are comforting but more often they will be disturbed if the human around them is "off." They can attack out of an automatic fear or aggression reaction. Or, if the "off" person is a backup to the trainer or performer, it may be the other person who suffers because their backup does not see trouble in time because they are preoccupied.

We try to decide who is more and who is less likely to take a loss to heart when we hire, train, and assign duties to our people but sometimes extreme grief hits anyway, even in people who we thought would take it better or who have been through the loss of other animals without problems before.

Sometimes people who were strong have bad things pile up on them and they become vulnerable. Some just wear down. Timing can play a big role in these situations as well.

Knowing that we may not be able to prevent grief and depression over the loss of an animal we should be prepared to deal with it if it does rear its head. This policy is increasingly being adopted in far less constantly-critical situations today. Office workers, school employees and children, government employees, police officers, etc. are all getting used to having crisis and grief counselors available when hard times strike. Even something as everyday as debt can cause stress and depression that can disable or burn out a person, or cause them to emotionally explode. While it is beyond the means of most of us to have someone on retainer or contracted for this grief counseling service, we can have a plan in place should the problem rear its head.

Sometimes the answer is simple, such as letting the people get together and remember the good and blow off the bad feelings or having a good-bye ceremony for the lost one. Building a memorial or dedicating something to the special one can give people a focus for the energies involved. Making the resting place of the loved one a garden or a solitude or rest area carries on their memory and can help vent sadness. Each situation may have its own solution. Bringing "closure" (as they say in psychobabble) is important. It provides a break-off point and allows a fresh start.

In a few rare cases someone will have lost the spark that gave them satisfaction in their work and lent meaning to their day. The empty cage or its new occupant will haunt them. In these extreme cases special steps are needed. If the person can not cope they may need outside help. This may come from counseling. Most places in this country have a mental health organization that can be contacted for help. It may cost

something and the employer should consider whether it is better to get a previously good person back on track or cut their losses and look for a replacement, keeping in mind that the rejection of that employee may make things worse for them.

The answers are not simple and they vary from person to person. It is likely that the depressed person has not recognized that they have let such a thing affect them so deeply. It may be subconscious. A mental health professional may be able to tell whether they will respond to therapy with a session or two and it could be a good, cost-effective investment. Just think what it costs to train replacements when you calculate possible mistakes and time lost by other employees in training a newcomer.

Will it happen again? Who knows? Possibly the person involved will never again have such a deep attachment to another cat. The heart can grow callouses too. Or at least get philosophical. Maybe comfort can be found in the thought that our favorites are on the other shore awaiting our arrival. The answer can be different in each case. It just needs to be found.

There are books and organizations that deal with coping with such situations. A day at the bookstore or library or an evening on the internet/web can be very rewarding in terms of helping you to formulate a plan for dealing with the saddened human. Now is the time to do it, not when life turns into a crisis and disaster can strike at any time.

Who knows, maybe you can find a counselor who wants to volunteer. The lure of the furred ones is strong.

- And then there are the cats that get attached to individual humans who one day go...

But that's an article for another day.

Author Ray Rooney can be reached via e-mail at [rune.raion@worldnet.att.net](mailto:rune.raion@worldnet.att.net)

## ≡ Cat's Whiskers ≡

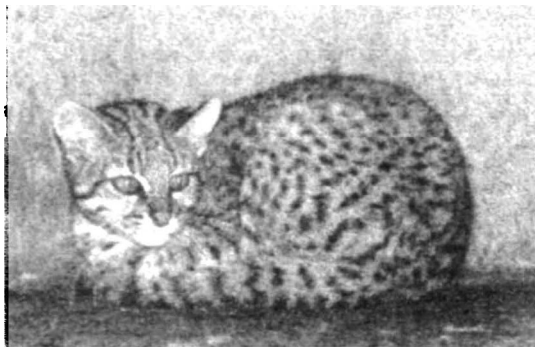
by Colette Griffiths of Cocoa's Pride

Whiskers are enlarged and stiffened hairs more than twice the thickness of ordinary hair. The technical term for whiskers is vibrissae. Whiskers are embedded into the cat three times deeper than other hair.

The whiskers on the cat are specialized sensory hairs grouped in three specific locations on the cat's head. The Superciliary whiskers are positioned above the eyes, the Genal whiskers to the rear of the cat's cheek area and the Mystacial whiskers, which are the longest and most prominent are carried either side of the cat's muzzle in four rows. There are also whiskers on the backsides of the front legs. These whiskers help sense movement and distance.



F1 Amur Leopard Cat



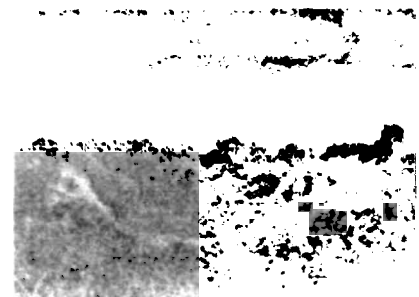
Geoffroy's Cat

The Mystacial whiskers are primarily used as an alternative sensing device when the cat is moving around in the dark. Each object the cat approaches causes minute disturbances in the air movement, and the cat's whiskers are sensitive enough to pick up on these movements. Some researchers believed that there is a link between sensory and visual input in the cat and that a degree of parallel processing takes place within the brain.

The extreme sensitivity of the hairs can register very small changes in air pressure which enabling the cat to avoid objects while moving around in the dark. It is thought that the whiskers may also be used to establish the position of prey.

Cats are able to change the position of their whiskers depending on what they are doing – at rest the whiskers are elongated, at 90° to the head. When walking, they are tilted forward to aid their sensing ability.

Studies of whiskers on various cat species has shown that cats who mainly hunt by day, such as the Cheetah, have fewer developed whiskers than many other 'night hunting' cats like the Geoffroy.



Cheetah family

It is believed that through the whiskers, cats can detect the onset of an earthquake and storms.

This information has been gathered from Feline Encyclopedia, Cat Fancy, and The Encyclopedia of Wild Animals.

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## How I spent my summer vacation

By George Stein

From my earliest childhood, I have always loved the big cats. When we went to the circus, I went to see the tigers. I cared little for the rides or sideshows. But, tigers were mythical animals to me. Something to be seen from a distance, untouchable. So, I have always had plain old domestic cats. In my later years, I became re-infatuated with the big cats. The World Wide Web became my link. I also began volunteering at my local zoo as a keeper helper. I made the diets for many different animals and occasionally got to feed them. It was mostly "scoopin da poop." But I was finally able to get close to my mythical tigers. Our zoo is AZA accredited and has a "no touch" policy for the most part. On one occasion, I was able to touch our tiger through the cage. It was only just a brief touch, but one I will never forget. I was now forever under the spell of the feline race. I have also been volunteering at a facility down in North Carolina, Conservators' Center, Inc. There, I even get to feed the tiger. But I am still very much a novice and wanted more.

While searching the web, I came across a place called Wildlife on Easy Street. This is a sanctuary located in Tampa, Florida. I spent considerable time on their web site, learning about them. Reading about all the different cats that they have there set the hook deeply in me. I decided that I was going to go there and see for myself. I made my plans, reserved my cabins and counted the days.



June 5 finally arrived, and after a pleasant flight and cab ride, found myself at Wildlife on Easy Street. I was greeted at the gate with a small sign telling me I was here. My sense of smell had already told me that, though. I know the smell of tiger and cougar, lynx, bobcat and a few others. But there was another, over riding smell that overpowered everything else. I soon learned that it was the ocelot.

A volunteer greeted me then and I signed all the obligatory paperwork. I was then given a reasonable set of rules I was expected to abide

by while I was here. I was then given my private tour of the main areas of the facility, and then shown to my cabin. There are about a half a dozen cabins scattered around the sanctuary. The newest ones were quite nice and more like a condo than a cabin. The smaller cabins were nothing fancy, but quite comfortable. Each had nice bed or two and a bathroom with toilet and shower. There was also a refrigerator and cooking range as well as the all-important coffee maker. I dropped all my baggage just inside the door.

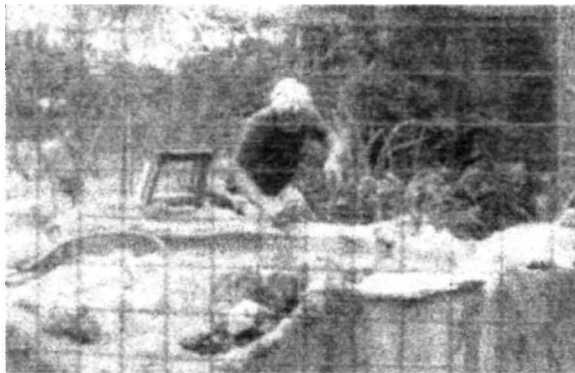
From then on, I was on my own, to explore as I wished. I was given almost free reign to roam anywhere on the 40 acre facility. I'm sure that I walked several hundred miles in the next few days. I visited every single animal, most of them several times. I thought I knew what to expect of the animals caging design. Having read about the horrible conditions in some places, I was overjoyed by what I found here. Even the smallest Jungle Cat had a huge enclosure. There was much enrichment in each enclosure and fresh water at all times. And there were no poor, starving animals here either. I was allowed to help feed each night, and no one went hungry. Many of the cats even looked a little fat. Have you ever seen an 850-pound Tiger??



But going back to the enclosures. The design was very simple, using 6 ga. "cattle panels" constructed in a peanut or kidney shape. The maximum width was about 20 ft. But the length could be what ever was needed. And the designs were free standing, no posts. They were almost all covered with the same material as the sides. These things were as solid as a rock. And



as I said previously, each animal had lots of room. Most were over 1000 sq. ft. with heights of 12 to over 20 Ft. If an enclosure had two animals in it, there were two appropriately sized, detachable cages attached to the main enclosure with drop gates. There was a large slab of smooth concrete that the animal was fed on. This was easily cleaned and scrubbed each day. There was also a water bowl in these feeding cages. It was located at the appropriate height for each type of animal to allow easy access for drinking, but did not allow them to urinate in it. Lots of shrubs and trees were in most enclosures. There were Boomer Balls and other playthings for the cats. The cats that enjoyed water had a pool to splash in. Many enclosures had logs for scratching on and climbing. High perches were everywhere. A considerable amount of thought went into the design of these enclosures. Carols father, Vernon Stairs, is to be commended on his designs. He and the rest of the staff have built some incredible enclosures.



Vernon Stairs at work

Then there was the staff. Most of the folks there were volunteers, with just a few paid staff. I was made to feel much at home while I was there. Everyone was very friendly and answered all my dumb questions. They knew the history of each animal there, how much they ate, how old they were. I asked about changes in enrichment, why did this one "talk" so much. You know, the same old questions that everybody asks. I watched them through out the day as I wandered among the cats. I could tell that they loved what they were doing. They talked to each cat as they passed, watching and observing for anything unusual.

One morning, as I left my cabin, I quietly observed Anissa, one of the keepers, taking care of a young lioness they had recently received. This poor lioness had probably been fought over by several of the females in her pride when she was very young. She was blind in one eye, and one side of her body was partially paralyzed by a stroke and seizures caused by trauma. Anissa talked with the lioness and played with her through the fence, carefully administering a wash to her bad eye. She also fed her a little food when she would take it. Since she had arrived at WOES, this lioness has gone from many seizures a day to none in many months. She was playful and had regained much of her coordination despite her disabilities. Her possibilities for a happy life are good, thanks to Jamie. I found myself in tears watching her that morning and went back into my cabin to have breakfast. As I left the cabin a little later, Anissa was gone and the lioness was sleeping peacefully in the shade of a tree.

An animal hospital was also built there recently, complete with operating room and x-ray machine. A full time medical staff is in the plans for the near future.

In the days that followed, the hair never lowered on the back of my neck. To many folk that are privileged to work with exotic cats everyday, this experience is probably old hat. To me, it was my dream come true. I was never able to hug a tiger, but I can still dream about it. I was able to enter the enclosures of Bobcat, Siberian Lynx and Servals and interact with them. I neglected to mention that in order to get to your cabin, you have to enter the enclosure of the particular cat or cats there. There was one fence wall between you and the cats. Opening the adjoining gate, and you were in with a "wild beast". Fortunately, the wildest any of the critters got were the incredible "head butts" from Esmeralda, the Serval. She was a real sweetie.



The Siberian Lynx were the largest cats I interacted with. They would come and say howdy and allow you to rub them, but were usually too busy playing with each other, chasing insects or sleeping. One enclosure had 5 or 6 bobcats in it. I only went in there once. I am still new to this type of interaction, and the 6 to 1 odds were a little high. I had no trouble with any of the cats during interactions and left there without any scratches or bites. Again, to those that own or work with these cats everyday, this is old hat. To me, it was the experience of a lifetime.



I was extremely pleased with my stay at WOES. All the money I spent there on cabin rental, t-shirts, books and other stuff goes directly to the cats. I even adopted a cat while I was there. While making my rounds each day, I became quite taken by a South American cougar named Callie. I am a sucker for beautiful women, and

Callie was quite a pretty cat. I think she batted her big eyes at me and lured me in. She became the one I visited first each morning and the last each night. One the night before I left, I was making my final rounds of the evening and stopped by to see Callie. I made a quick glance around her enclosure and didn't see her. I called and chirped, thinking she was hiding in the bushes. Still no answer. I walked out to the area where most of the keepers gathered in the evening after feeding to ask where Callie was. I found her there, sitting on a table with the keepers. It seems that Callie is one of the education cats that they take around to schools and such. I then got to sit next to Callie and pet her. I'll never wash that hand again.... Just kidding ( sort of ). It was quite a thrill and was a great ending to my vacation.

In summary, I will always remember my stay at WOES. I care little for politics, and pay little attention to those who talk trash about sanctuaries and other such places. I make my own judgments about these places from my own experiences. My experiences at Wildlife on Easy St. were very pleasant. The animals were very well cared for, they are well fed, and they have varied enrichment and plenty of room to be cats. I'll go back again, soon. Maybe in the winter when it is a little cooler.



## Mainely Felids

Wild Feline Husbandry Manual

Comprehensive introduction to responsible captive husbandry of wild felines for the novice. Information on: permits, caging, nutrition, handling and much more! 42 pages. Send \$15 to: Mainely Felids, Dept. D, P.O. Box 80, Lycoming, NY 13093-0080


### Cat Haiku

You must scratch me there!  
Yes, above my tail! Behold,  
Elevator butt.

### Writing Your Will?



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## EXOTIC PEOPLE

by Jeanne Hall



We very much enjoy discussing and adoring our exotics. In the LIOC-ESCF “exotics” generally means cats – one or many, large or small.

Some of us also have a mix of other animals ranging from chickens and rabbits to llamas and alligators.

We are exotic people.

We can be found in the bowels of corporate America, glittering showplaces like Las Vegas, at the end of dirt roads or on top of the mountain. We are rich and poor, young and old, sweet, friendly, smart and dumb.

But one thing that will probably never be said of an exotic person – “He is so wonderfully NORMAL”.

At one time in the history of this country, there were a whole lot of exotic people. They dumped tea in the ocean, headed up radical revolts against oppressive monarchs, held outlandish viewpoints, conducted strange experiments with electricity and politics or generally did strange, stupid, brilliant and outlandish things.

Some of them also loved animals.

It is a fascinating experiment to consider WHO first cuddled a baby bobcat, or snuggled up to a half-grown cougar purring like a motorboat...

We owe a great debt to our forefathers who did outlandish things like writing a constitution and loving a bobcat. Imagine yearning to hug a slinky ghost of the Rockies as a young impressionable child, then making that dream a reality. That first person to hug his beloved cougar was also one of those forefathers we owe a great debt.

Today, I have a cougar I can hug and kiss and sleep with. He is a North American boy descended from a number of captive-bred parents. He came to me when he was displaced as a 7-month-old cub. His family had to move to follow the work. The work moved to a location where this boy was illegal to own.

Once it was possible to drive down the road with your leopard in the front seat of your car, or let your tiger outside to go potty in the yard. Posting a sign to bring back your errant lion cub out for an unauthorized neighborhood stroll might bring comments and complaints, but not jail time or death for the wanderer.

As we have progressed into a more civilized society, we have become more domesticated as a people. Tolerance for a wandering lion or a dangerous electrical experiment are both found in short supply in many areas of the country.

In some areas, your fence best not be over the regulation limit or be composed of non-standard materials. Your pet best not vary from the accepted norm or attract too much attention in the neighborhood.

In some areas, there are even a large number of domesticated individuals that have moved into positions of power. Some of them are a bit too far away from their wild roots to appreciate a strange fence in someone's backyard or an alligator sunning on a front porch.

Around the country we see a blossoming of laws and regulations banning or severely restricting lots and lots of things. There is one very common denominator. Compared to the norm, these things are exotic.

Exotic dogs, and cats and birds and fences. Strange activities, lifestyles, music and schedules. Loud music and pink porches and funny furry spiders. Over 3 cats in a house or a boat in the driveway. You're out of your MIND if you don't do it MY way!

For those of us with our treasured whatever, dodging law changes, intolerance and misunderstandings,

society can seem like a pretty oppressive thing. Maybe we are the only one in the town with a \_\_\_\_\_. And maybe we are the only one on the "against" sign-up sheet at a hearing on a new law.

We are not normal. We are exotic.

We have all heard the story of the leniency of the laws in days gone by and the woeful state of the oppressive laws being passed today, so I won't repeat all that historical information. Suffice it to say things are changing.

Things will always change.

Historically, exotic animals deal with this sort of change by pulling back into the wilder areas of the land and accepting a smaller and smaller restricted area.

But, if I am reading our history books correctly, exotic people band together, regardless of their differently oriented interests and respectfully change conditions.

Sometimes they open frontiers, sometimes they write constitutions.

And sometimes they just have a tea party.

This exotic author is President of the ACEF LIOC-ESCF branch. She also serves as President of Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, an organization of active private exotics owners working to protect and maintain the rights of private ownership through responsible behavior. The Phoenix web site can be found on-line at [www.phoenixexotics.org](http://www.phoenixexotics.org).

Sign seen in a veterinarian's waiting room:  
**"Be back in 5 minutes. Sit! Stay!"**



### Jeanne Hall

This picture is from 1997 with Baby at almost a year old. Looks sweet doesn't it?

Baby is fully clawed and wild. He was hit by a car when only a few months old and was considerably damaged. Notice my hand cupping his paw, my hand on his neck to keep his head straight and my approach is from the back for safety.

He adores his pets, but will swipe and bite. He is showing the "trick" he learned to perform so I would be willing to pet and love on him. He is a handsome gentleman of 4 years old now and still knows to get "up" on his house and "turn around" with his back to me for big double handed pets. He asks for more pets and purrs louder for them than my domestic cougars!

Author Jeanne Hall with Baby, one of her cougars

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## Director of Member Services Resigns to Serve in New Capacity New Director Appointed

Dear LIOC-ESCF members,

I, Kelly Jean Buckley, have resigned my board position of Director Member Services as of October 1, 2001. On my recommendation to the LIOC board of directors, they appointed LIOC member Leann Montgomery to complete my term.

I do plan to continue working for LIOC-ESCF by way of serving on the convention committee, stuffing and mailing the newsletters, doing some research on overseas feline conservation programs that the LIOC may choose to support, and assisting the board members with various projects. It has really been an honor to serve the LIOC membership as Director of Member Services. I'll continue to be a strong supporter of the organization, responsible private ownership, and conservation programs. I can be contacted at anytime at [kjbuck@uswest.net](mailto:kjbuck@uswest.net)

Leann Montgomery and her husband Brett live in Kentucky and are currently caring for exotic cats, including 3 bobcats, 2 caracals, 2 cougars, 2 Canada lynx, 3 Euro lynx, and 2 servals. Leann is serving in the LIOC's position of Rescue and Placement Coordinator. She is available to assist in finding homes for animals that may be in need of relocation. She has a cell phone (502-682-7752), which is strictly for placement and wildlife rehab needs. Leann has the current software to operate the membership data and I'm confident she will be a wonderful Membership Director for the LIOC. If you need to reach Leann, she can be reached via email at [LM4wildcats@cs.com](mailto:LM4wildcats@cs.com) or at 502-878-2567. In accepting the appointment to serve as the Membership Director, Leann stated, "The LIOC has been more worthwhile and fulfilling than I could have imagined when I joined 3 years ago and I would be honored to serve our membership."

Submitted by Kelly Jean Buckley

## ***The Policies and Politics of Captive Animals***

submitted by Lynn Culver

The 14th annual International Society of Zooculturists Conference will be held October 24 through 27, 2001 at The ZOO in Gulf Breeze, Florida. The theme of the conference will be "Policies and Politics of Captive Animals." You do not need to be a member of ISZ to attend this conference.

As a member of ISZ, I wanted to make LIOC-ESCF members aware of this event. I encourage professional feline breeders and exhibitors to join ISZ and attend this conference. This year's theme is so timely and important to us all. Since I am the Legal Affairs Director of LIOC-ESCF and also a member of ISZ, the LIOC board requested that I present a paper at this ISZ Conference about our organization, LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation.

The International Society of Zooculturists is an organization dedicated to the professional care of captive wildlife and domestic animals. Members are both public and private zoos, breeders, hobbyists and commercial businesses. Their quarterly newsletter, The Zooculturist, features member written articles.

ISZ is an "all species" animal organization. Even though I only own wild felines, I want to learn about other creatures, so I enjoy attending their conferences. Pat Quinn, director of The ZOO, is hosting this year's conference. At a previous ISZ conference, he presented a video of enrichment ideas utilized at The Zoo, and there were a lot of happy felines enjoying the stimulation his staff provided. It looks like a really neat zoo.

I find ISZ members friendly and great fun to be around. The "Policies and Politics of Captive Animals" theme will generate interesting speakers with insight and perspective to the legislative challenges and hostile assaults we all face from the AZA, PETA and the HSUS.

Associate membership in ISZ is \$25.00 per year, payable to: ISZ P.O. Box 828, Sonoita, AZ 85637. Conference registration fee is \$175 before September 30, 2001 and \$200 after. Fee includes icebreaker reception, 1 breakfast, 1 lunch, 1 dinner, closing banquet, NAS, IMAX and a tour of the ZOO. For more information call 850-932-2229. Conference Registration checks should be made out to: The ZOO 5701 Gulf Breeze Parkway, Gulf Breeze, FL 32561. Conference Hotel is the Comfort Inn in Navarre, FL - 1-800-868-1761. Ask for ISZ rates - \$59.95 double. For more information, go to [www.zooculturist.com](http://www.zooculturist.com).

## **ACEF Minutes**

This meeting was held at Jill Rose's place. She has a bunch of wonderful cats, many of which are very friendly. Due to this and the great weather, not a lot of business was covered in the meeting. (I can tell I was distracted, my notes are more disjointed than normal!) We would like people to tell us about any special events or shows that involve exotics so we can put notices in the newsletter. People have expressed interest in attending these events, but they often don't know they're happening. We are also going to be adding a "Join the LIOC" notice to the newsletter to remind more members to join the national club. I'm going to be just adding all current club members to our Email list. Everybody will receive a message telling them about it, and they can just reply if they don't want to be on the list.

We are thinking of having some public meetings, and if they work out we would probably go quarterly with them. Dave Coleburn is looking into some possible locations for these meetings. The September meeting will be a work party at Jill's place to help set up new cages. Remember that the July 21st meeting is the summer picnic! Come and have fun! Cats are welcome and food is being provided.

--

John Lussmyer Secretary/Treasurer <mailto:ACEF@ACEF.org>  
Alliance for the Conservation of Exotic Felines, Cascade branch of the LIOC-ESCF see <http://www.ACEF.org/>

## A New "Edition" to a Long Tradition

Hello fellow exotics lovers,

I have the honor of being chosen to serve as production editor of the LIOC-ESCF newsletter. In spite of having been handicapped by a college degree in English Education, I have managed to find my way to the world of exotic animals and have found my inner peace working amongst them for almost ten years now. I volunteered and worked in several facilities in the NC area prior to founding the Conservators' Center, Inc. (if you are interested in reading more, please see our web site at [www.conservatorscenter.org](http://www.conservatorscenter.org)). My favorite animals include all cats, viverrids (civets especially), and wolves.

I am excited about the direction this newsletter has been taking for the last year or two, with more in-depth reporting of world conservation events and feline research studies. The overall trend of the LIOC-ESCF toward supporting responsible husbandry and professional standards of conduct in its members is what attracted me to the organization. This newsletter will, of course, continue to serve our founding member population of pet owners, as well as the larger facilities now being attracted to this organization. One of my goals as editor is to help bridge any perceived gap between these two groups. After all, we are all private owners dealing with the same issues: conservation, management and ownership of these cats.

I have a firm belief in the importance of the private sector in the future maintenance of healthy populations of captive animals, via responsible breeding, husbandry and risk management. I participate in many national conferences and events even though we are a small private facility--the only way for the private sector to become known is to participate and be heard!

I am also looking forward to learning more about LIOC-ESCF members through interviews and spotlights on all of you who are owned by cats. Do you have a volunteer who might want to write an article about your facility? Do you know someone who needs to be recognized for outstanding work? Can you give advice you wish you'd gotten before you got your first cat, or first of a species, or first of an odd veterinary problem? Come be a guest columnist. We'd all love to hear from you!

Mindy Stinner  
mstinner@mindspring.com

### *A Special Thanks...*

*to all the people who dropped everything to write articles and send in pictures for this issue of the newsletter!*

## 2002 Convention

Submitted by Kelly Jean Buckley

The Board of Directors approved the convention committee's recommendation to hold the LIOC-ESCF convention for 2002 in Wichita, Kansas. The dates are August 7-11, 2002.

LIOC members Ken and Susan Lockwood, who are Wildlife Center Managers/Rehabilitators, have offered to host the LIOC on a visit to their facility, Tanganyika Wildlife Park, located in Goddard, Kansas, which is 10 minutes from the Wichita airport.

Ken and Susan have been LIOC members since 1998, and the Tanganyika Wildlife Park is owned by Jim and Sherri Fouts. The Fouts have spent 25 years traveling the world collecting animals to set up captive breeding programs for rare animals. They consider themselves in the private sector and work with placing animals in both the private sector and zoos all around the world. They are working on projects that include habitat conservation in Southeast Asia. They have ongoing breeding programs with their clouded and snow leopards and white tigers, as well as many other animals.

The animals in the park include clouded leopards, snow leopards, tigers, African leopards, giraffes, zebras, kangaroos, bongos (large antelope), colobus monkeys, lemurs, and raptors/hawks. They have offered during our visit to entertain the group with a free flight raptor program, surely something most of us have never seen.

This will be this first LIOC convention held in Kansas. The central location may help attendees with their travel.

If you have any questions for Ken or Susan about the Wildlife Park, they can be reached at [raptortig@aol.com](mailto:raptortig@aol.com). If you have any questions regarding the registration, hotel, bringing cats, etc, please contact me at [kjbuck@uswest.net](mailto:kjbuck@uswest.net).



All ads in this publication are void where prohibited by law. All transactions are between buyer and seller. All buyers and sellers must have proper licenses and permits for all animals offered for sale or sold. LIOC-ESCF, Inc. does not necessarily endorse or guarantee the honesty of any advertiser. LIOC-ESCF, Inc. reserves the right to edit or reject any subscription or ad. No blind animal ads will be accepted. Only LIOC members may place ads listing cats for sale. Adoption ads are free of charge for cats that need good homes and no money is involved in the transaction. All ads must contain the name of business or individual. Ads must state whether the individual is a private owner or broker. Full current address with a phone number must be stated in the ad.

Ad rates for submitted photo ready ads:

1 column inch \$10.00

### Are you on the Internet?

If so, be sure to join the LIOC list for discussion of ownership issues. We want everyone to feel comfortable on the list whether you are new to the world of exotic felines, a breeder, educator, pet owner, conservationist, veterinarian, feline rescue worker or basically anyone interested in promoting the well-being of our feline friends. We welcome newcomers with open ears; but we expect them to adapt to our rules, not the other way around. Please feel free to send an email to: [LIOC-owner@yahoo.com](mailto:LIOC-owner@yahoo.com)