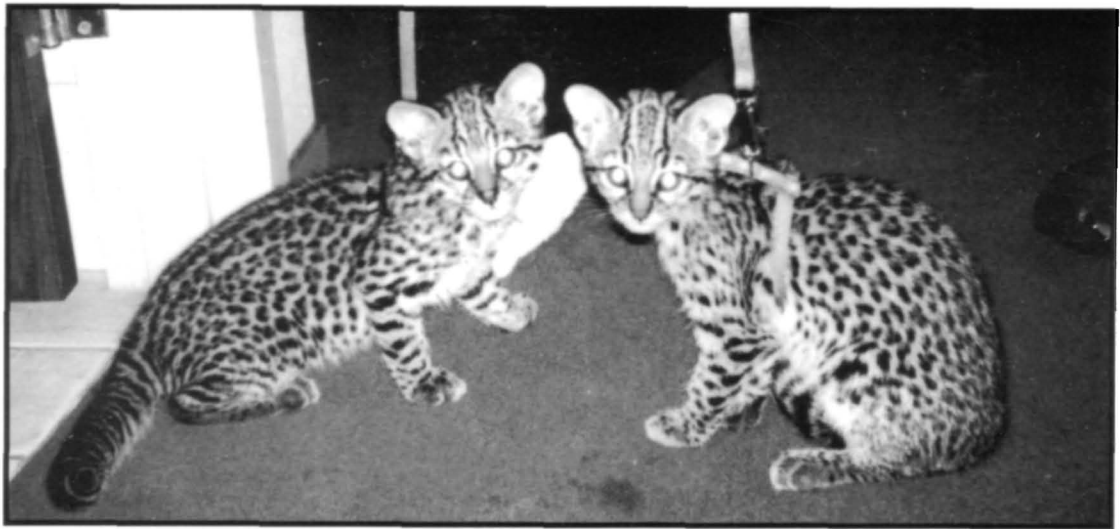


LIOC-ENDANGERED SPECIES  
CONSERVATION FEDERATION

CONVENTION 2001



Geoffroy's cat kittens at the LIOC-ESCF Convention 2001

## 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, photo-

graphs 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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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 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 where no money is involved in the transaction. All ads must contain the name of business or individual advertising. 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



## September 11, 2001

In honor of the victims of the attacks on September 11, their families and loved ones, all the men and women who have been called to service since, and all of those who will step forward to help guide our nation into the future, we ask that the members of LIOC-ESCF continue to support our country in its struggle to be free from acts of terrorism. At this time it is more important than ever before to support our leaders and the families of those in the Armed Forces & National Guard who may be called up or be standing “at ready,” waiting in uncertainty to fight for our way of life. Every person can take actions to assist with these efforts by giving blood, providing emotional and financial support to victims and emergency workers, and securing the welfare of your family and the animals in your household through preventative emergency planning. Teach your children that hate is destructive. Demonstrate tolerance and patience in these tense times. Please remember to add your thoughts for those in pain to your devotions.

When I was little, one of my favorite people was Mohammed. Because he cut off a corner of a very expensive robe rather than disturb a cat that was sleeping on it when he needed to get up.

--Jeanne Hall

# 2001 LIOC-ESFC 30th Annual Convention Portland, Oregon

This year's LIOC convention started off on Wednesday with the Wild Feline Husbandry Course. This course provided students with the basic knowledge required to practice responsible captive husbandry of wild felines. Attendees who previously took the class spent time in the hospitality room visiting with each other and the cats. The young felines in the hospitality room were several spotted Geoffroy's cats, some savannahs and bengal cats, a bobcat and Siberian lynx. The hospitality room was a very nice triple suite, which gave us room to spread out and separate kittens.



Submitted by Kelly Jean Buckley,  
pictured above with young Siberian lynx

On Thursday morning, we were back in the hospitality room, until the afternoon LIOC General Membership meeting. Results of the LIOC General Membership meeting and board meeting will be reported in an upcoming newsletter. In the evening we enjoyed a buffet reception dinner and spent some time getting to know each other. There were three artists who displayed and sold their wonderful feline artwork during the evening. The convention hosting branch, EFES, invited the Sweet Adelines to perform following our dinner. They did a beautiful job singing old favorites.

Friday morning, many of the attendees went on a trip on a Sternwheeler down the Columbia River. This two-hour cruise included lunch and the day was perfect. We could really enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Northwest. Following the cruise we traveled down the historic old highway to Multnomah Falls, Oregon's tallest waterfall. Some of us got ice cream and snow cone snacks and other hiked up to the upper bridge. We then made a stop at Crown Point Vista House. From there we could see spectacular views up and down the river. That evening, following dinner on our own, we opened the hospitality room again for members to spend more time with the cats and each other.

Both Friday and Saturday morning the LIOC board of directors met for their annual board meeting. Saturday's full group agenda started with guest speaker, Dr. Michael Baker, DVM, presenting on the topic "Common Uses of Anesthesia for Felines." Dr. Baker is a local veterinarian experienced in the treatment of exotic felines. Following lunch, member Ron Eldridge BVSc, MS, gave a presentation on Emergency/Critical Care Medicine and CPR for the smaller species of the Felidae. Although Ron taught this course in Maine six years ago, it was really important to have a review. The afternoon ended with a course instructed by member Michelle Eldridge on "Behavior Using Operant Conditioning." Michelle's class was great for members who missed the similar course last year (video tapes are available).

Saturday evening started with a banquet dinner and awards presentation. Wonderful table centerpieces were hand-made by Ethel Hauser. They were ceramic cougar candleholders, and one person at each table received a centerpiece in a raffle drawing. Bob Turner presented the membership drive contest. Each member who referred a new LIOC member during the past year received a ticket for the drawing. Drawings were made for 1st prize of an oil/pencil painting of a cat by artist Khara Geders (a \$250 value). 2nd prize was any \$15 item, cat T-Shirt or mug, donated by artist Collette

Griffiths. Lynn Culver won both the 1st and 2nd prize. The 3rd prize was a mug or small mirror with a cat painted on it by artist Cheri Fecker. July Penland was the winner of this 3rd prize.

Kelly Jean Buckley received a plaque in appreciation for six years service on the LIOC board of directors as Director Member Services. The 2001 Newsletter Reporter of the Year was Tracy Wilson. The annual photo contest winner was Lynn Culver. Shirley Wagner received a clock commemorating her attendance of ALL 30 LIOC conventions.

Due to Ron's absence last year, he spoke to the group in thanks for receiving the Lotty 2000. He then passed on the Lotty 2001 to Bart and Lynn Culver. Lynn has been an active participant in LIOC, serving on the Board as Sec/Treasurer and Legal Affairs Director. Lynn and Bart unselfishly help anyone who asks for feline healthcare, husbandry, and legal information. They went well beyond the bounds of duty in assisting the cats at Riverglen under extreme circumstances at their own expense.

We ended the evening with the annual auction. JB Anderson was our auctioneer, with his assistant Vanna, who later turned into Keith Wilson! Sunday morning we enjoyed breakfast during our final meeting. Reports from the board meeting and the auction were given. It was announced that next year's LIOC convention will be held in Kansas, August 7-11, 2002. It will be hosted by LIOC members Ken and Susan Lockwood.

## **2001 Convention Tapes Available**

**Did you miss this year's convention? Or have so much fun this year that you want to see what past years' conventions were like? Video tapes are now available for Conventions 1996-2001.**

### **2001 Video Tapes include**

#### **TAPE 1: General Meetings**

General Membership Meeting  
Fundraising Auction

#### **TAPE 2: Speakers Only**

Dr. Michael Baker, DVM —Common Uses of Anesthesia for Felines  
Ron Eldridge, Research Scientist at Rhode Island Hospital and Brown University—Emergency and Critical Care Medicine and CPR for the smaller species of Felidae  
Michelle Eldridge—Behavior Modification Using Operant Conditioning  
Session ending with convention attendees and their cats using training learned during class

*Aspen Geoffroy's Cat at the 2001 Convention*



**Tapes are available now for \$10.00 each or both for \$20.00**

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**This year's convention photos are now online. They can be viewed at:  
<http://www.lioc.org/Convention/2001/photoindx.html>**



Vanna sells it all to  
Reva Anderson at the  
2001 Convention

## DO YOU HAVE A PIECE OF LIOC HISTORY?

In preparation for LIOC's upcoming 50th Anniversary, we are attempting to locate photographs of LIOC's past. We have lost many of our founding members, and with them much of our treasured history.

Kate Conner Kahn has offered to scan these photographs and make them available on a CD ROM. This will enable us to preserve them for posterity. Kate spent numerous hours at convention starting this project from the albums folks brought with them. If you have photographs taken at branch meetings or conventions, please share them. Identify the folks and cats in them, note the date they were taken along with any memory they invoke, then send them to Kate. She will guard them with her life and return them to you once they have been scanned.

Don't let LIOC's history vanish! Send photos to: Kate Conner Kahn  
233 Swanton Rd.  
PMB 269  
St. Albans, VT 05478

**The following is an acceptance speech from Bart Culver, who was unable to attend the 2001 Convention to receive his award in person.**

## 2001 Lotty Recipients Bart and Lynn Culver

I thank the Lotty Committee for the distinct honor you bestowed on us. And I thank the steady stream of volunteers that came like a series of small miracles each bringing something we needed in the nick of time. You came at your own expense, aware of the Spartan conditions. You worked hard and gave magnanimously. You asked and received only one reward - the friendship of the tigers. I thank you all. The Lotty is yours also.

You're bound to learn something when you work with such good people for such wonderful tigers. And I learned a lot. Tigers are geniuses among the cats. They genuinely like people. They have a lot to say to people they trust.



Things they said to me ranged from “I hate that crap and I will not eat any more of it,” or “That’s my tarp, I stole it fair and square,” to “I love you and I will never hurt you.” Of course the most unmistakable and irresistible thing they said to me was, “Help me, please don’t go away.”

All who heard these appeals were deeply moved by them and it made us think. We know there will be more cries for help and a need for a swift, knowledgeable, response based on compassion and not confrontation. LIOC-ESCF has demonstrated a unique ability in this regard.

Prior to the Riverglen event there have been many successful interventions by LIOC-ESCF members. These efforts would be more effective if they came from an organized, prepared group of volunteers. Mindy Stinner wrote down a bunch of excellent ideas about forming a crisis management team. I think LIOC-ESCF ought to seriously consider doing this. If we could arrange to be the first on the scene where there is a problem, this would be good news for the cats and a lot less bad news for the press.

Bart Culver



Bart Culver communing with a tiger at the Riverglen facility. Bart stayed on the partially built mountaintop site to protect 25 big cats through two ice storms and the worst weather in the history of Arkansas.





The Culvers with Geoffroy's cat kittens

Sixteen years ago Bart and I made an impetuous purchase of a ten day old male cougar cub we named Mercury. And that day was the turning point in our lives - the time before, I refer to as BC time - Before Cats.

A year later I discovered LIOC. The joy that followed stemmed from feeling I had found my peers, my family, my identity. I looked forward to the newsletter and attended a few national conventions. I have served as secretary/treasurer and managing editor of this organization's newsletter. All the while I was learning more about the cats.

Bart and I have expanded from one pet cougar to over 30 cats of five different species. We have always done our part to help the cats. As professional breeders, we have the opportunity to speak with hundreds of would-be owners. Many times I have answered questions, describing the necessary lifestyle changes wild feline ownership demands and when the would-be owner tells me they have changed their minds, I know I have done my job well. For the good of the cats, we must enter into this interspecies contract with our eyes wide open.

Last fall, we received a desperate call for help from our friend Betty Young. Twenty-three lives, mostly tigers, were threatened with neglect and possible confiscation because they had been moved to a new property and the workers there had quit. Bart volunteered to help out for a few days while the initial chaos

was sorted out. But the power of the tiger took hold of my husband and a few days turned into months and we both found out just how much we love the cats. And not just our cats, but all cats.

Bart endured bitter cold and dangerous ice from November through January. I remained home to care for our 30 cats. We spent Christmas and New Year's apart. Our home was hit with the worst ice storm in a century, devastating our trees and damaging our perimeter fences. It was the most intense time of our lives. The responsibility was back breaking. And I am so proud of Bart for going the extra mile to insure those tigers survived the winter.

We could not have done it without the help and support of this organization. The membership of LIOC-ESCF rose to the challenge when Bart sent out his lonely cry for help across the internet. The solidarity of LIOC-ESCF member response was a feat to be proud of, as one by one, members arrived to lend a hand and pitch in.

When Bart was rushed by ambulance to the hospital for acute pancreatitis, I filled in his position for those tigers as best I could. And more LIOC-ESCF members flew to Arkansas, drove there, sent care packages, organized, coordinated, updating the rest by internet reports. Together we labored to build perimeter fence, wooden houses and to weld cages until truly we made a difference in the lives of those great felines.

Lynn Culver

Recently there has been an ongoing debate on the topic of the “LIOC-ESFC” name. There is considerable support within the membership for a change, but what change, exactly, is still under discussion. An organization is defined by its name, and its name holds its reputation and its history. Life Director Shirley Wagner and Board Member Lynn Culver have agreed to publish their opinions for your consideration. If you have an opinion you’d like to share, please submit it in writing to the newsletter in time for the next issue (deadline November 21).

## A Rose by any other name....

In 1972, when our previous change from Long Island Ocelot Club to LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. came about, it was recognized that we were no longer a club centered around Long Island nor exclusively for ocelots. We did want to build on a history that at that time stretched almost twenty years. Today, a segment of our membership wishes to again change our name, totally dropping the LIOC.

It is thought that our image is somehow tarnished. That we’re thought of as solely a “pet owner’s” club. They want a name that reflects a new “professionalism.” That tells who we are!

There are several organizations out there you can join related to professional animal husbandry - or zookeeping. This is not what we are about. Yes, some of our members are breeders, some are sanctuary operators and even a few maintain private zoos. However, we are unique because we strive to educate the individual owner, whether it’s a single or multiple cat home, on the best way to care for their cat(s). As long as we do not condemn the keeping of single (pet) cats, there are those that will always look down on us.

There are numerous organizations that have names that have no bearing on what they do.....

The Toastmasters.....(do they drink a lot?)  
The Lions Club..... (Another branch of the ocelot club?)  
The Rotary Club.....(do these folks run in circles?)  
The Shriners ..... (a fundamentalist eastern religion?)

You get the idea. I do not think changing our name will get us any more respect. What gets respect is the work we do. Our organization, no matter its name, is a volunteer organization. Sadly, a large proportion of our members want nothing more than to have their cats. Those of us who donate our time to LIOC know that there is so much more that we can do, but as a member for 30+ years, I see no practical reason to try to become something we’re not, nor ever will be if we’re to retain our original purpose. Professionals have the resources and money to care for the cats in their care. The “one cat” owner needs us to help them and ultimately it is the cat that is the beneficiary of our efforts. Changing our name will not enhance this effort, and a “more professional” name or image may in fact hurt, as it could discourage a newbie from joining to find out about the special creature in their care. There was a need in the 1950’s for information on “pet” cats, and that need exists to this day.

We have a 50 year tradition that evidently has stood the test of time. Those that wish to see no cats in private hands will not be impressed by a new name. As long as we maintain that we can further conservation efforts by maintaining captive gene pools, they will oppose us. That is unless you maintain a breeding program, you shouldn’t have a cat..... but who’s to keep all these cats if they cannot place them in a pet home?

Not everyone is suited to keeping an exotic. They do require special care and the large ones can be dangerous; educating a person to these facts should also be our mission and is.

Our limited efforts, funds and resources should be devoted and focused upon our purpose and not diverted into building a new image, just for the sake of change.

submitted by Shirley Wagner, Life Director

# A Proposal for Change

We presently have two names in one: LIOC, which is outdated but has some recognition, and Endangered Species Conservation Federation, which has never really caught on. These four words were added to our name in the early 70's to separate the non-incorporated years of the club's existence from the point where it became a federally tax-exempt organization.

When this change occurred, the Endangered Species Act hadn't yet passed and the small South American cats were still the predominate species held in private hands. There was a continued need to identify with ocelots and it was fitting to use the LIOC initials as the main name. But those days are over. This organization consists of mostly Native American, African and European cats. Ocelots are in the minority, margay, Geoffroy's and oncilla are just about gone.

Many professional caregivers are turned off by the image LIOC has of being "a pet owner's club," a beginner's group. This pigeon hole we are boxed into repels some of the private sector's most experienced and influential people from joining us. It limits our diversity and that seriously hampers this organization's ability to grow in numbers. That in turn, limits our ability to speak for and defend the private sector in state and local arenas.

Nowhere in the history of LIOC does it say that this organization is just for and just about pets. It is for and about the conservation of the cats and the education of the keepers. LIOC founding members pioneered the successful captive reproduction of many wild cat species. But helping the novice get off to a good start is what this organization is best recognized for.

There has been a flood of legislation over the past two decades, making novice ownership of wild felines increasingly difficult. While a few high profile states have gained all the news spotlight, creating the image that lions and tigers and cougars are in everyone's back yard, the stark reality is that most states not only forbid non-commercial ownership of not only the large cats, but also seriously restrict possession of small cats. Pet ownership is under serious attack.

The members of LIOC-ESCF need to consist of all types of caregivers including pet owners, breeders, researchers, sanctuaries, exhibitors, private zoos, etc. This allows members the opportunity to meet those involved in the different areas of feline ownership and conservation. It may convince some people to become involved with one of these different areas and actually gives them the opportunity to do so.


Some people might voice the opinion, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." The perspective of whether or not it is broken is different depending upon what you look at. I have no doubt that in spite of the plethora of new regulations, there are more cats and more cat owners now than in previous decades. This organization should have experienced a steady growth in membership numbers and yet it has not.

Since our name forms a first and lasting impression, I think the name of the organization needs to appeal to the beginning pet owner as well as the experienced commercial owner so that both want to join. As far as I am concerned the name change is simply that, a name change. I would not foresee a change in the values or beliefs of the members of this organization. There is no reason why pet owners and professionals alike cannot all work together for the common goal of helping felines. I do see a name change giving us more credibility in other realms of conservation. And this change might attract those who would otherwise pass us by.

I propose that we revise this organization's name to something simpler. The Feline Conservation Federation, FCF is my first choice. Easy to say, easy to remember, and descriptive of what we are. If not that, then perhaps members have another suggestion?

Our roots will always stay with Catherine Cisin, whose passion for her pet ocelot inspired her to form a club so owners could learn about and share their love of wild cat species. That desire for knowledge and sharing has not changed. Whether the feline is kept as a beloved pet, breeder, educator or ambassador, our organization name should invite every type of keeper to join.

submitted by Lynn Culver, Director of Legal Affairs



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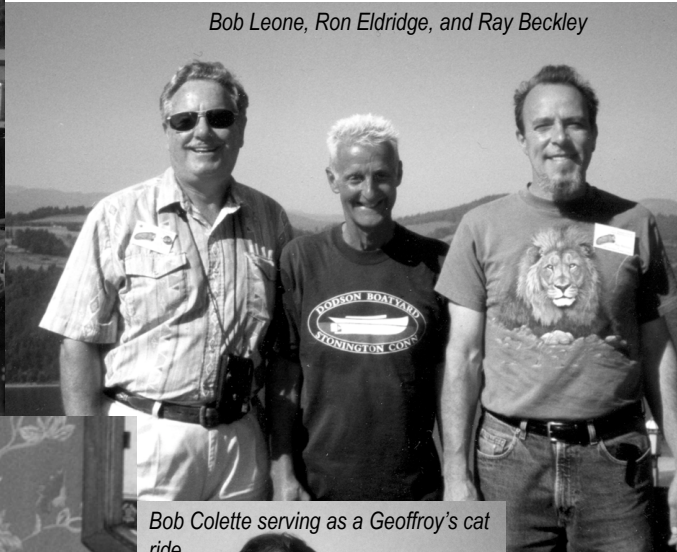
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# Convention 2001

In the hospitality room with Jenny Quincey, Steve Belknap (and Geoffroy's cat), Bob Colette, and Susan Beckley



Bob Leone, Ron Eldridge, and Ray Beckley



Debbie Walding with Savannah



Colette Griffith feeds Tucker Geoffroy's cat while Steve Belknap enjoys a break



Bob Colette serving as a Geoffroy's cat ride



Jack Harris and Pat Spears



Loreon Vigne and Paul Ramses enjoy a riverboat ride



General membership meeting



AFTER: JB is transformed into an auctioneer



John Solina with Siberian Lynx Simba



Tom Clark, JB Anderson and Steve Belknap relax before JB's big night



This year's convention photos are now online.  
They can be viewed at:  
<http://www.lioc.org/Convention/2001/photoindx.html>

Wild cats leave paw prints on their hearts: friends Ethel Hauser, Barbara Wilton, Mary Parker, Herb Wilton, and Pat Parker love conventions!



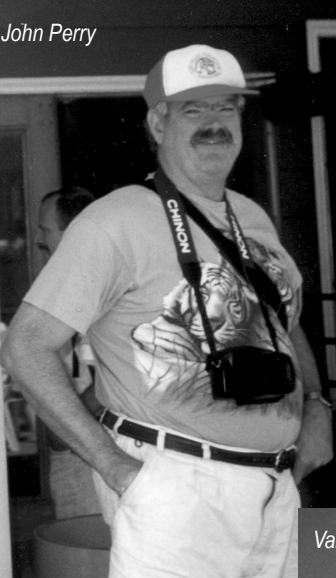
# Photo Album



Jeremy Kahn with  
Geoffroy's Cat



Tracy Wilson with Cheryl  
Tuller's bobcat



John Perry



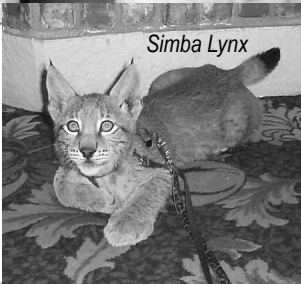
The Wilsons with acutioneer JB Anderson



Susan Beckley  
with Siberian  
lynx



John Solina and Simba  
Siberian Lynx



Simba Lynx



Vanna works the auction floor



Geoffroy's cat litter



Keith Wilson and Jeanne Hall with Siberian lynxes

# ISIS Oasis

submitted by volunteer Deborah Ash

When I turn onto the dirt road entrance to the Isis Oasis retreat center, the mood immediately changes. Suddenly, the pressures of corporate life and structure are replaced by nature. The lush vegetation is as natural and untamed as the feline residents. The welcoming sounds include birds, peacocks and the mating calls of ocelots. There's never a dull moment when caring for the 20 cats at Isis Oasis. For instance, on a warm California summer day, when I was cleaning Sheba Ocelot's cage, Pharaoh Ocelot was watching intensely from the neighboring cage. A portion of Pharaoh's enclosure gave him access to about 14 inches of water. Pharaoh was playing in the water and deliberately splashing me. I then decided to slide my broom bristles into his cage. I couldn't tell whether Pharaoh was more entertained by splashing in the water or attacking my broom.

Although the task of cleaning cages may seem mundane to some, it can be quite rewarding. For instance, it is quite gratifying when an extremely fearful adult male bobcat gets the courage to take meat from my hand. The longer I volunteer at Isis Oasis, the more I get to know the resident felines as individuals, with unique personalities. Right now the feline population include ocelots, servals, bobcats, and a visiting jungle cat. Right now there are a pair of newborn ocelot kittens, as well as the facility's first serval/jungle cat hybrid.



A jungle cat/serval hybrid (above),  
with ocelot kittens (right)

**Isis Oasis is hosting the next LIOC Wild Feline Husbandry Course! This 8-hour course will focus on responsible captive husbandry of wild felines, and is suitable for both novices and “old hands” who want to improve their level of knowledge.**

## Husbandry Manual

It has been quite a few years since that LIOC first produced a wild feline husbandry manual. A lot of new information about husbandry has been learned since then, so we felt it was time to write a new, updated manual. I have been working on this in my spare time in the last year, but it has been moving pretty slowly. I would really like this manual to be completed by convention 2002 for our Board of Directors to review and approve. In order to reach that goal, I need to form a committee of members who are interested in helping me write this manual.

The manual will cover everything about caring for wild felines, from housing indoors or outdoors, to diet and nutrition, health care, handling techniques, kitten care, first aid, and managing contacts with regulatory agencies. Everything you can think of in the day to day care of living with wild felines will be included.

Interested parties need to have access to e-mail to speed our communications, have Microsoft Word (preferably), have some husbandry knowledge and experience with any type of wild felines, and an interest in sharing your husbandry knowledge. I hope to enlist a small group of members with a variety of feline experience to best enhance our manual. If you are interested, please contact me by email at [wildcat@ipa.net](mailto:wildcat@ipa.net).

submitted by Tracy Wilson,  
Director of Education and Conservation

## Wild Feline Husbandry Course

**Date:** December 1-2, 2001

**Location:** Geyserville, CA

**Registration:** \$75 per student

**Hosted By:** Loreon Vigne, an exotic feline expert and founder of the ISIS Oasis retreat center.

Loreon will be offering a special addition to the course on Sunday Morning, Dec 2. She will offer a hands-on training and handling experience session with ocelots and servals. Also, if time permits, we will try to do an extra demonstration with ocelots on Behavior Conditioning and Operative Training. These are both special additions that are not normally available with our course, so don't miss out on this wonderful and rare opportunity at no extra charge!

**Details about how to register and more info about this course is at this website:**

**<http://webpage.pace.edu/dash/catclass>**

Or call Loreon Vigne at 1-800-679-7387 to register or ask any questions.

This course was professionally developed in accordance with a nationally recognized standard for technical training known as the Systematic Approach to Training (SAT). The course includes an instructor lead, multi-media presentation, a 60-page student text, workshop, and final exam. Students who pass the exam will receive a decorative certificate denoting successful completion of the course.

### Topics Covered Include:

- **Natural History of Wild Felines**
- **Regulatory Agencies Permits**
- **Facility Design**
- **Handling Equipment**
- **Diet & Nutrition**
- **Health Care Basics**
- **Disposition & Handling**
- **Behavior Conditioning**
- **Contingency Planning**

### Accommodations:

Rooms are available on the ISIS Oasis premises. Students will get a group rate on lodging. This is a private retreat, bed and breakfast type facility, with a rustic feel. Private rooms are \$80 per night, or 2 people to a room for \$40 each.

They also offer dorm type rooms available for \$30 a night per person. All meals will be available on site at \$30 a day.

Please see the website for all detailed information.

**Class space is limited,  
so register today!**



### 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, PO Box 80, Lycoming, NY 13093--0080

## **2001 American Zoological Association Felid TAG Meeting Report**

There's nothing like a good American Zoological Association Felid Taxon Advisory Group meeting to get me thinking about how LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation could better serve its members and better help captive felines. And that's exactly how I felt walking away from the September 6<sup>th</sup>, day-long presentations of the Felid Taxon Advisory Group and the Felid Species Survival Plans held in St. Louis, MO. I learned a lot about public relations and what can be achieved through cooperative committees that work together to identify and address captive husbandry issues. I think LIOC-ESCF would do well to borrow from these organizations their framework of captive species management and adjust it for species held by the private sector in our free market and private owner driven system.

I was genuinely impressed with the dedication and energy of this group. I also couldn't help but notice a four part theme that, while not vocalized in these words exactly, seemed to sum up their methods to achieve their goal to link the in-situ projects with the ex-situ projects. 1. Improve public relations 2. Raise money 3. Spend money on research and conservation 4. Bring in new founder stock.

There was a desire to unify the zoos' public relation's educational messages so that a better informed public will contribute more money to conservation causes. Some of this money is spent on ex-situ research. The publishing of that research on the internet enables captive managers to practice better husbandry of their animals.

The balance raised goes for in-situ projects and reinforces the equation "Zoos=Conservation of Wildlife." To me, this was the most consistent desire expressed. They want to remake the image that "Zoos result in a net loss to wildlife through the removal of animals for captivity." There was a very organized effort to build international relationships and court the favor of range counties by a variety of methods, most of them financial in nature.

While each SSP report had it's species specific concerns which had to be addressed, most of the SSP reports contained an ironic need to obtain more wild caught founder stock. It was eye opening to me to see that in the 20 years since the concept of SSP's was proposed by Ulysses Seal, the AZA zoo community is just now proposing many species for unified management, and is still working to correct their historically poor bloodline tracking. One consequence has been to abandon cage space allotments for species commonly held in captivity in previous decades which are now dwindling in numbers. Siberian lynx, European lynx, jungle cat, leopard cat, Geoffroy cat, margay, and oncilla will be managed to extinction, now referred to as POP - meaning "phase out population". These species are being replaced with the AZA's latest species d' jour: Pallas Cat, Fishing Cat, Black-Footed Cat and Sand Cat. When they choose to keep old favorites, such as clouded leopard, ocelot, cheetah or jaguar, they declare a pressing need to infuse the captive populations with new wild blood or even start over from scratch.

### **Felid Taxon Advisory Group Report**

Active items on the TAG agenda were the creation of new mammal standards for both the large and small cats. Once finalized and approved, these documents will be utilized by the AZA accreditation committee when reviewing member institutions for approval.

TAG also reported on the dispersal of a \$35,000 grant from Iams cat food. \$2,000 will be budgeted to AZA cat keepers to help them attend TAG's. \$3,000 will go to range country visitors to help them attend the Felid TAGs. And \$30,000 will be divided to help fund three research projects. Funds are earmarked for a clouded leopard fecal corticoid study to aid in the identification of captivity-induced stress in this species. A genome research bank and improvements of artificial insemina-



tion (AI) for tigers was also chosen. The third grant will be awarded to Susanne Kennedy at the University of North Carolina to help improve captive husbandry of Pallas Cats.

The need for Regional Collection Plans (RCP) and Species Management Planning (SMP) for small cats is a real concern. It was noted that without Species Survival Plans (SSP) and Population Management Plans (PMP) species will go extinct in captivity in as little as 10 years. Of course, they were referring to AZA captivity, which is a deliberately closed habitat system that offers no option for dispersal outside of its borders, making the long-term survival of the species much more problematic.

The Felid TAG depends upon accurate information from its member institutions to properly recommend cage spacing allotments. A survey was sent out to all participating institutions and they are still awaiting about 20% of the members to respond. What they can report at this point is that AZA institutions have been very successful in reducing generic stock. But surprisingly, they are receiving more requests than anticipated for native species such as cougar and bobcat for the regional collections. They recommend against any self-sustaining breeding policy for these two species; instead their answer to this dilemma was to develop better networking with the Game and Fish departments of each state so they may gather these species from the wild when they come into captivity as orphans or problem animals.

Various research topics were discussed such as the project to compile all husbandry guidelines for all species. They are working on website links on the TAG website. They are updating their nutrition manual and their reproductive assessment manual. They want to create an international research database that will enable researchers and managers to locate data and sources all in one place. Their felid bibliography is being updated.

Future research topics they will pursue are ways to reduce stress in captive management, determination of what needs to be done in taxonomic research, characterize reproductive traits of the various species, address emerging disease and contraceptive issues.

The TAG initiated a Diet Survey to the AZA member institutions and it was found that five commercial products were utilized. By far, the most common diet was Nebraska Feline Diet, followed by Nebraska Canine Diet, the Nebraska Beef diet, then Dallas Crown, Milkin, AFS and Breeder's Choice. The most significant finding of their survey was that 27% of the institutions were thawing their food at room temperature or in water. The TAG recommended a keeper training session to educate them on the need to thaw this frozen ground product under refrigeration.

This was all good food for thought and I wondered if LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation could better serve its members and their felines through the creation of its own husbandry guidelines which reflect the special needs and considerations of our felines, since captive life in private hands often has its own set of husbandry issues related to the "pet" type nature of our inter-species relationship. Further, I do believe an LIOC diet survey is in order, to better understand how well the nutritional needs of our felines are being addressed when we feed our homemade preparations. Many of these diets are poultry-based, which is completely different from the proprietary products universally used by the AZA zoo community. Private breeders would benefit from better understanding of feline breeding characteristics, and would profit also from hand-rearing guidelines customized for the raising of wild felines in a home situation, which is different than a zoological institution. If these types of topics were explored, the research findings could be published to benefit all private owners on our web site.

submitted by Lynn Culver

**MORE Next issue on SSP development**

## Do You Need Liability Insurance?

I am working on a project that I am very excited about, and I hope our members will be excited as well. I have been researching to find a national insurance company that could provide LIOC with a group liability policy on the exotic cats that we can offer to our members, hopefully at an affordable rate. I am looking for any members who would be interested in helping me with this project. Anyone who is interested in working on this committee, please contact me by email at [wildcat@ipa.net](mailto:wildcat@ipa.net), or by phone 501-368-0399.

Basically all that would be involved is hunting down insurance companies that are willing to provide private owners with basic liability coverage, and then gathering all the info from them. I will present it to our Board of Directors. If you do not want to work on the committee, but have a good lead on an insurance contact, please forward the information to me.

submitted by Tracy Wilson  
Director of Education and Conservation

The LIOC-ESCF web site has recently been updated with statistics on the 1999 survey of Risk Assessment conducted with the help of the LIOC membership. See the sites at [www.lioc.org](http://www.lioc.org).

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## Before you make plans to travel or ship for the holidays...

There is a summary of state laws that govern the possession or ownership of wild felines now available for viewing on the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation website. <http://www.lioc.org/Legal/States.html>

This information is provided as a service to our members and others. Breeders and potential owners are encouraged to view this document before they commit to any transaction. Some of these laws may even affect individuals travelling through these areas.

I have included phone numbers and mailing addresses so that individuals may request the full documents from the state agencies in writing. Our webmaster, Kate Connor Kahn, has located website hyperlinks to the various state agencies, making this resource document even more useful.

We hope that this is just the beginning to a new trend in member services. There are plans underway right now to update our website and make more useful husbandry information and resource materials available for everyone.

2001 Convention attendees  
Carole Stiles and Baby Savannah

Make plans now  
to attend  
Convention 2002  
in Kansas  
August 7-11



## Do you have something to be thankful for?

The events of September 11 have made us all reflect on how grateful we are to be alive, and to have the freedom to pursue happiness in the form of our four-legged furry friends. What are you grateful for? Submit articles and photos via mail or e-mail. Selected items will be printed in the upcoming holiday newsletter.



### “Friendship”

To stand Beside \* To believe in \* To forgive

Animal  
People  
Spotlight



### “The Survivor”

To adapt to habitat \* To overcome threat  
\*To endure pain \* To withstand resistance

## Wildlife Photographer Mark Kostich

Photographer Mark Kostich has only been working as a professional in the field for about seven years. In that short time, he has amassed an amazing variety of international accolades, including publishing four calendars, two fine art prints, making the cover of five magazines, winning both “Photographer of the Year” and “Photograph of the Year,” and having more than 1000 pictures published. Images he has captured are gracing the covers of national magazines and are featured in several reference books, including the upcoming edition of David Macdonald’s prestigious *Encyclopedia of Mammals*.

He has traveled to areas of SE Asia accessible only by foot to photograph rare mammals such as Owsten’s Palm Civets, spotted linsangs, a melanistic Asian Golden Cat, and previously undocumented species of deer living in the rainforests of Laos. He has been on safari in Africa, where he roamed the plains alongside lion prides, elephant herds and whole families of cheetah. Recently he returned from an expedition to Guatemala and Belize in South America, where he spent time developing his underwater photography techniques and exploring a rainforest with very different inhabitants from the forests in Asia.

People often ask Mark about how to start a career as a wildlife photographer. Mark is honest about both the rewards and the trials of working with wildlife in often unfriendly environments. “Seeing people appreciate my work and having my work published has been great! But it hasn’t been easy. In Africa, riots broke out in Nairobi. We were forced to retreat to the shelter of our hotel until we could be escorted out of the hotel during a break in the action. In Laos, unexploded Vietnam War-era American cluster bombs were a constant threat. In the thirty days that I spent there, eight children were killed by these bombs, more than thirty years after they were dropped.”

Sometimes the wildlife itself presents the challenges. “In 1998 I was severely attacked by a cougar while working at a local preserve. All in all, throughout my journeys I have been bitten, chased, charged, swarmed, detained and questioned. I have had equipment stolen, broken, examined and lost. By the way, if anyone sees a baboon in Tanzania carrying some camera equipment...it’s mine. I have taken showers with scorpions, slept with Barking Lizards, and stepped on more snakes than I care to remember...” Mark believes the reward outweighs the challenge of the adventure, but cautions anyone in working with big animals to control the risks. No picture is worth risking injury.

Two posters featuring his art have recently been printed (featuring the images above). Mark has generously agreed to make a contribution to LIOC-ESCF for every poster he sells to someone who visits his web site or places an order based on this article. If you decide to contact Mark about purchasing these great holiday gifts, be sure to let him know you heard about him from this newsletter!

Mark Kostich Photography can be found on-line at [www.kostich.com](http://www.kostich.com), or you can contact Mark via mail at 6196 Brackenmere Trace, Mebane, NC 27302-9242.



# SPARKS

submitted by Tracy Wilson

I would like to clarify some misconceptions about the SPARKS Registry program. I am hearing from some members that they do not fully understand what this registry program is for, and why they should participate in it, especially if they only have one spayed or neutered cat.

The whole purpose of this program, it is much like what the registry that we use to register our pure bred dogs, the AKC. Would you pay top dollar for a pure bred dog with no registry papers? No. And the same should be with your exotic cats. We all pay a lot of money for our cats, and this is a registry system much like the AKC, that will help us know that when before we buy a cat, the background and genetics this cat has come from.

This information is not given out to anyone or authorities outside LIOC, it is a database of bloodlines, in order to register cats and track bloodlines/genetics. Only the studbook keeper can access who owns which cats. When information is provided for scientific and research purposes, it is only by data numbers, not names of owners, or specific details. The benefit is that once we have a sound base of data, the program will be able to identify cats that have the best genetic match for that species. If you were wanting to try and breed an endangered species for example, you would contact the studbook keeper if your cat is registered, and she can run the program to get the best match for your cat. It would help you to not unknowingly inbreed your cat. And even if you do not plan to breed your cats, you should register them as well. The data helps to show that cats held in private hands live longer, and are better cared for.

Another benefit is that when your cats dies, you report to the registry the information on the cat, such as the age it died and if you know what the cause of death was. In this aspect the registry program could track genetic problems in certain bloodlines, and in the future a potential buyer could get this information before they purchase a cat from that bloodline, as well as helping the breeder track what has happened to their offspring, and making them aware of genetic problems.

Many times a breeder sells their offspring, and never hears from the owners again. If several of their offspring from the same parents were to die of the same genetic problem a few years later, the breeder may never know if the cats aren't registered or information isn't reported.

This will give the breeder valuable information about their offspring, so they know their breeding stock if producing healthy cats or not.

If your cats has been spayed or neutered, you should still register it. The information gathered on them is still valuable. We are in the beginning stages of building the database of cats, and we need all the cats we can to start if off, no matter if they are altered or not. We have to start with something. If you know who the parents of your cats are, that is great, but you do not have to know in order to register your cats. If this program had started 20 years ago, we would all know today who the grandparents, great grandparents, etc. were of our current cats. This is a foundation we are building right now for a tool we will be able to depend on in the future.

This SPARKS registry program is a viable part of responsible captive husbandry, and will be invaluable to us a few years down the road, and as more species of cats continue to decline in the wild, we will be building our database of cats in captivity, to help us help them in the future. Also a benefit of registering your cats, is that you will receive the normal blood values for that species to keep on file for yourself and your vet. This can truly be a lifesafer in an emergency for your cat and your vet. If you are interested in registering your cats, you can download the form from our website ( [www.lioc.org](http://www.lioc.org)), fill it out, then mail it in to the address listed at no cost to you. Or you can obtain a form by requesting it from Members Services (see page 2 of this issue).

It should be noted that if you are already a member of LIOC-ESCF that the "cat census" you fill out on your membership renewal each year is separate from the SPARKS registry. When you join as a new member, and each year that you renew, there is space on your membership form to list what cats you own and which cats you have experience with. This is completely separate, and designed to keep a count of how many cats are within our membership that we represent as a whole organization. So do not be confused, the SPARKS registry is a separate form that is downloaded from the website and mailed in separately from your membership renewals.

Be sure to register your cats, for the good of all our cats!

# Hatfield Recipient Report

Submitted by Carin Sousa

Sonya Whiteley, DVM,CVA, was our Ken Hatfield Fund awardee this year. Dr. Whiteley practices in Laurel, Mt. and is the veterinarian for ZooMontana in Billings. She has sent the following report on her experience:

I would like to sincerely thank everyone who is involved with the LIOC-ESCF Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund from which I received a scholarship to attend the Zoo Medicine Short Course on Captive Wildlife Medicine. This class is put on by the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine, and the primary instructors this year (June 11 - 15, 2001) were Dr. Ed Ramsay and Dr. Juergen Schumacher. They are also affiliated with the Knoxville Zoo.

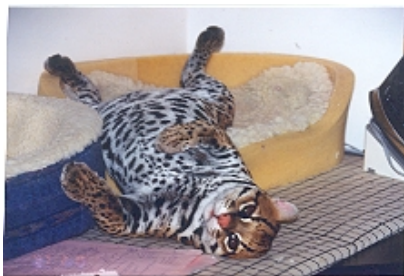
The entire course is phenomenal, and I highly recommend it to anyone who is going into any kind of exotics medicine. The students at the course were both veterinarians and veterinary students. At one point it was attempted to have separate courses, one for veterinarians and one for veterinary students, but currently they are combined. There was more practical information packed into one week here than any other type of continuing education I have ever attended.

Each student received a binder with an outline of the classes. The course included classroom information, field trips to the zoo backside with demonstrations and lectures, and hands on labs. Every day was filled with information, and at mealtimes and breaks, we had discussions and question and answer sessions. All faculty and zoo personnel were helpful and receptive to our endless questioning. Because of the large variety of species that was covered, all the lecture sessions were like whirlwinds, and everyone had a bit of a dazed look afterwards, but we were able to get all pertinent information written down (a lot of it was already printed out in the outline) and we were able to follow up on areas that we needed to.

One of my favorite lectures was on parasitology, because it is so important in all species, and differs between species as well as in different climates. A significant factor that I have found in my practice with many exotic species is stress. A parasite that may live in harmony with an animal in the wild, may become a serious problem if that animal is stressed and the immune system is not maximally functional. Part of the problem is defining stress. Even with domestic cats, the introduction of a new animal to the household may be stressful to an individual, but maybe not perceptible to the humans. You can imagine the intensification of that with more sensitive exotics. There was a discussion on heartworms in felids. Apparently a Siberian Tiger at one time died and post-mortem exam revealed a large load of heartworms, which may or may not have been the cause of death. The parasitologist ascertained from this one case that all felids should be heartworm tested and on preventative. Another veterinarian's input was that this was only one case, 20 years ago, and some other cause or stress may have been more significant as a cause of death, if not more apparent. I have talked with several veterinarians who deal with exotic felids in different climates, with widely varying input.

I got what information I could on heartworm prevention for exotics. First of all, all felines are harder to test for heartworms than dogs, in that they tend to have very little antigen in their blood. Therefore it is recommended that when testing, you test for both antigen and antibody, although false negatives still do occur.

Then for preventative, Ivermectin is widely used. It tastes very bad, which will cause some cats to salivate profusely or even vomit. As with any drug, there is always a potential for adverse effects, but this drug has been used extensively in many species with very few problems. I think that using the Merial feline Heartgard would be a good way to go for heartworm prevention in small exotic felines. The bottom line is that more information is necessary, but if you live or travel in a heartworm endemic area, doing the heartworm test and preventative treatment, erring on the side of safety, might be wise.



Carmie Ocelot relaxes after a great dinner provided by mom, Jackie Sinnott. Jackie's first ocelot, SamElita, was featured in the March 1973 LIOC newsletter.

## **Writing Your Will?**



**Remember the Ken Hatfield  
Memorial Scholarship Fund!**



## **2002 MEFES Exotic Cat Calendars**

### **Available for the Holiday Season**

The 2002 MEFES (Midwest Exotic Feline Educational Society) Exotic Cat calendar is now available for sale. This is the first time MEFES has attempted this type of fundraiser, and the group is very excited about the potential of such projects. MEFES member and newsletter editor Cheri Fecker recruited sales on-line and from the organization's members so there would be enough pre-print orders to go to press. If you are interested in purchasing a calendar, contact Cheri Fecker (see page 2 for contact information, or go to the web site at: <http://hometown.aol.com/pretyziba/myhomepage/business.html>).

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## **Upcoming Opportunities: Continuing Education and Conferences**

### **LIOC-ESFC Feline Husbandry Course**

December 1-2, 2001

Location: Geyserville, CA

For further information see page 15, this issue

### **5th International Conference on Environmental Enrichment**

Taronga Zoo, Australia

4 - 9 November 2001

For further info contact: [Mhawkins@zoo.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Mhawkins@zoo.nsw.gov.au)

Or visit <http://www.zoo.nsw.gov.au>

### **Animal Behavior Management Alliance (ABMA) 2nd Annual Conference**

"Enhancing Animal Welfare through Positive Reinforcement"

February 26 - March 2, 2002

San Diego, CA.

For further information contact:

Gary Priest at [gpriest@sandiegozoo.org](mailto:gpriest@sandiegozoo.org) or at (619) 231-1515.

### **Committing to Conservation Conference**

28th November - 2nd December 2001

Brevard Zoo

Melbourne, Florida, USA

For further info contact: [Elynn57@aol.com](mailto:Elynn57@aol.com)

### **First AZA Animal Enrichment and Husbandry Training Course**

Developed and taught by members of the AZA Behavior & Husbandry Advisory Group, this four-day holistic training program will provide managers and supervisors with the foundation to develop, maintain, and assess husbandry training and animal enrichment programs. The course will be held in Orlando, FL from January 9-12, 2002. Priority registration will be given to AZA members. Tuition for this course is \$550 for AZA members and \$600 for non-members. Registration Forms can be found on the AZA website ([www.aza.org](http://www.aza.org)) or obtained from the AZA Training Administrator at [ereinhard@aza.org](mailto:ereinhard@aza.org) or (301) 562-0777 x238.

## MEFES meeting of July 21, 2001

Held at the home of Bryan and Ana Studor in Tell City, Indiana.

After a very nice pitch-in dinner with hamburgers and hot dogs cooked on the grill by our host, we took a tour of their facility, home and shop.

They have a lion, a tiger, a black leopard, and a cougar. The cats have a swimming pool of their own and a unique set-up where they can come upstairs through large pet doors and they are in their own section of the house. They are hand fed Zupreem and turkey legs and look very contented and loved.

President Bill Johnson started the meeting by thanking everyone for attending. There were 28 members and guests present.

Vice President Harold Epperson read the minutes of the last April 2001 meeting.

We have three new members, David J. Harris Jr., David J. Harris Sr., and Michael Kuntz.

Bob Turner talked about the Sparks Program, and how important it is to participate in it to keep a history on our cats to prevent in-breeding. The husbandry course we offer and the Sparks program help to give us credibility with the zoos.

It was mentioned that between the Sparks Program and Micro Chipping, we could keep track of the age, sex and location of cats. We already have cats living longer than the zoos. With a good breeding program and records, we can have healthier and friendlier cats.

Harold Epperson read the 8 recent by-laws changes. Everyone present voted on them, and all 8 passed with no rejection. Monte Francis motioned to amend all 8 at one time, and Bob Turner seconded it.

Liability insurance of one million dollars was mentioned. Michigan has recently enacted that as a requirement for exotic pet owners.

Bob Turner explained the reason for having the newsletter reviewed by the officers before copies are made and mailed out. LIOC had to reprint their newsletter to avoid a lawsuit by one of the members because a slanderous article was printed in the newsletter.

It was brought up that we might host another husbandry course. So far there are 8 or 9 people wanting to take it and we need 15 or 16 to break even. The course is available to non-members as well. For DNR etc. we offer it free of charge. Monte suggested LIOC might want to offer the course on their web site. Harold mentioned that even as a non-cat owner, he plans to take it.

The cat calendars to raise money was discussed. If we cannot meet the cost by selling enough calendars, we might possibly make them on our own. We will put a note in the newsletter which way we are going.

Several members pledged to buy several.

A work weekend at Mike and Tonya Jones to be set up later. Possibly one for Leann and Brett Montgomery.

Member Trent Parrot mentioned that he is looking for a young intact male cougar.

Steve Hahn said he knows of a 3-year-old cinnamon bear that needs a home.

Leann Montgomery said to E-Mail information on any rescue cats to her, as well as the name of anyone that might have space available and are willing to take an animal in. She said it really helps to have people lined up ahead of time.

It was suggested by Steve Hahn that when we make up our new membership list, that we include our picture along with our information.

The next meeting will be at the home of Bob and Patty Turner, Mooresville, Ind., on Oct. 20, 2001. See inside the back cover of the newsletter for further details.

Mike Cote motioned to adjourn, Leann Montgomery seconded it.

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## ACEF Meeting Minutes from August 2001

This meeting was held on August 12th at Maggie Bogart's. Attendance was rather low this time, probably due to the early date, and some members hadn't recovered from the LIOC class and convention yet. We had a convention report from Jeanne and Christi, and general discussions of what's going on in LIOC. It was generally a pleasant time for all, even though we didn't have any feline members in attendance.

—  
John Lussmyer Secretary/Treasurer <mailto:ACEF@ACEF.org>

Alliance for the Conservation of Exotic Felines, Cascade branch of the LIOC.

see <http://www.ACEF.org/>

## News Report 9-19-01

# FFA Revises Cargo Shipment Rules

In an effort to increase security and public confidence in air travel, the Federal Aviation Administration has enacted strict new guidelines for the shipment of cargo, and this includes live animal shipments. Airlines will no longer accept any live animal shipments from unknown shippers. This means that breeders and brokers used to shipping offspring and adult animals need to apply with the various airlines they do business with to gain a “known shipper” status.

The requirements and application forms for such a status vary among the airlines, but a common component of each seems to be a requirement that shippers have used the airline for a minimum of three cargo shipments in the preceding 6 months.

Phone the cargo department of the airlines you wish to use and request an application to become a “known shipper.” Some airlines will e-mail the form -- Continental, for instance, if you write them at [cocargo@coair.com](mailto:cocargo@coair.com) or call them at 713-324-1939 to request the form by fax. I filled out the form and faxed in three airway bills with it and I was approved and assigned a number in a matter of hours.

Other airlines will fax the form when you submit a request by phone -- call Northwest at 800-345-9987 and a computer recording will ask you for your fax number to receive an application for credit, which is the same form used to obtain a known shipper status.

For Delta, I was directed to my local airport cargo department. I spoke with the cargo department manager and was asked to fax in three airway bills, dated in the past 6 months, not on the same day or consecutive days. I called several hours later and was assured I am now a known shipper, and can ship what I want, but an official number will be assigned me by Atlanta later this week.

American Airlines Cargo at 800-227-4622 should be able to fax you a copy of the “known shipper” application, though the person I spoke with was unaware of this. She referred me to a cargo representative in Dallas at 972-425-3598. He informed me that in compliance with the new FAA rules, American will require that a form be filled out and that at least three shipments on non-consecutive days have been made using American Airlines in the past 6 months. Considering that American has had a live animal flight embargo for the past 5 months, I suspect not many breeders will qualify for this “known shipper” status.

Pet Air at 1-877-FLY PETS is a shipping company with a service contract with American Airlines that allowed many people to ship live animals during the heat embargo using their service. They already require that all clients be “known shippers” with them. I filled out one of these forms a few years ago paying a \$25.00 processing fee to obtain it. It did not require any previous use of their service, but it did ask numerous questions about my location, finances, and business dealings and it required several references.

Plan ahead. Kittens can be a seasonal item. And should you not apply for this “known shipper” status until next spring, you may find that you have not shipped enough in the past 6 months are unable to qualify and completely out of luck. It is possible that this ban on new shippers will be lifted in the future, but it is unlikely to ever be easy to ship animals aboard any airline again.

I advise anyone planning to ship live animals to bring three airway bills with you to the airport, dated in the past 6 months so should there be any question of whether or not you are a “known shipper,” you have proof with you. Also have your known shipper number written down, along with the reference number issued when you pre-booked your animal flight by phone. Planning ahead can save you time and spare you frustration.

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