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Feline Conservation Federation





Feline Conservation Federation

This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the Feline 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. FCF, 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 FCF. 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 FCF should contact the Term Director in Charge of Member Services.

Founder: Catherine Cisin

Production Editor: Mindy Stinner
PO Box 882
Mebane, NC 27302
336-421-0065, fax 336-421-0809
e-mail: mstinner@mindspring.com

OFFICERS:

President: George Stowers
PO Box 80
Lycoming, NY 13093-0080
315-342-4997
e-mail: gstowers@twcny.rr.com

Vice President: Bob Turner
4467 E. Dayhuff Rd.
Mooresville, IN 46158
317-831-0817
e-mail: robert.l.turner@gm.com

Secretary/Treasurer: Harold Epperson
3310 Remington Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-889-3922
e-mail: Hpepperson@aol.com

TERM DIRECTORS:

Advertising and Publicity: Robert Bean
Knoxville, TN
865-938-0702
e-mail: WILDCON2B@aol.com

**Education/Conservation:
Tracy Wilson**
PO Box 1382
Searcy, AR 72145
501-368-0399
e-mail: wildcat@ipa.net

Legal Director: Lynn Culver

141 Polk 664
Mena, AR 71953
479-394-5235
e-mail: culvers@voltage.net

Member Services: Leann Montgomery

PO Box 216
Pleasureville, KY 40057-0216
502-878-2567
e-mail: LM4WILDCATS@cs.com

LIFE DIRECTORS:

J.B. Anderson
1825 E. Nashville Church Rd.
Ashland, MO 65010
573-657-4088

John Perry
6684 Central Ave. NE
Fridley, MN 55432
763-571-7918
e-mail: johnperry@worldnet.att.net

Carin Sousa
2960 Bay St.
Gulf Breeze, FL 32563
850-932-6383
e-mail: carin6699@aol.com

BRANCHES:

**ACEF: Alliance for the Conservation
of Exotic Felines-Cascade Branch**
Jeanne Hall
PO Box 103
Green Bank, WA 98253
360-269-1488
e-mail: acef@acef.org
web site: www.acef.org

**MEFES: Midwest Exotic Feline
Educational Society:**

Harold Epperson
3310 Remington Dr.
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-889-3922

Pacific Northwest Exotics:

Steve Belknap
PO Box 205
Gresham, OR 97030
503-658-7376
e-mail: pnwe@effectnet.com

REGIONAL CONTACTS:

Central: J.B. Anderson
1825 E. Nashville Church Rd.
Ashland, MO 65010
573-657-4088

Northeast: George Stowers
PO Box 80
Lycoming, NY 13093-0080
315-342-4997
e-mail: gstowers@twcny.rr.com

Northwest: see Branches

Southeast: Jean Hatfield
1991 SW 136th Ave.
Davie, FL 33325
954-472-7276
e-mail: jeanhatfield@email.msn.com

Southwest: Loreon Vigne
20889 Geyserville Ave.
Geyserville, CA 95411
707-857-4747
e-mail: isis@saber.net

**Cover: Gloria Johnson's new cougar
baby, Lakota. See page 14 for story.**

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Animal Legal and History Web Center

US A comprehensive Web site devoted to animal law, the Animal Legal and History Web Center, has been launched by a professor of law at Michigan State University-Detroit College of Law. Offering users legal information about animals, the Web site (<http://www.animallaw.info>) includes expert explanations and materials, including policies, publications, briefs and historical documents. It also includes navigation through topics, laws, subject areas and species as well as a general search engine for queries relating to animal law. The Animal Legal and History Web Center plans to contain a complete set of legal materials at the statewide, national and international levels. (AnimalNet)

Collected and submitted by Colette Griffiths



REDEDICATION—An Editorial

Reprinted from the July/Aug 1973 Long Island
Ocelot Club Newsletter



Each of our Newsletters over the past two decades has carried the statement: The Long Island Ocelot Club is a non-profit, non-commercial club, international in membership, devoted to the welfare of ocelots and other exotic felines.

While methods and approaches may change, our integral purpose does not change. We attempt in ways large and small to pattern ourselves after the felines to whom we have committed ourselves. We bear no malice.

We unclthe ourselves to the extent operationally possible, of the encumberments of “civilization.” We direct our treatment of every situation which confronts us in absolute truth, unyielding to self-accolades. We have no place for fundamental rivalry. We have no place for exploitation.

Therefore, like our cats, we fail to understand and sometimes to react to the complexities we are faced with. We slink away from effronteries, but at the same time, do not tolerate abuses. Is the passive acceptance of challenging situations indicative of our imminent demise, as it has been in the terminal days of our sick and/or aged cats?

Perhaps if we really try, we will elevate ourselves to the purity of reaction which our cats, so trustingly and helplessly offer us. What greater tribute than imitation can we offer them? What more dignified respect than love?

Catherine Cisin
Founder, Long Island Ocelot Club



No Confusion Where I Sit

Running an Exotic Animal Sanctuary is one of the poorest paid jobs in existance, even when the director accepts a salary (most don't). Volunteering at one is DEFINITELY the poorest paid job in existance (without exception...it usually COSTS money). It's hard work with long hours and high pressure. Sure there are tremendous spiritual and emotional rewards. But it's still not the kind of job that people take out student loans to get their MBA in.

Considering these facts, it's amazing that people learn so much and work so hard to get that permit and open their doors to the world. It's amazing that anyone with any sellable skills whatsoever does it. Amazing, and heartwarming. It means that riches and financial security are not the only goals worth working for.

Sure this volunteer army is not, by and large, the cream of the crop at Tufts or the upper fourth of their class at Harvard Business College. It's amazing that they handle the intricate job of caring for God's wonderful—and often fragile—creatures with as few accidents as they do, and with such attention to detail. They are doing the jobs that people who insist on a big salary to reward a big investment won't do, and they spend their life savings to fight for their right to cling to their animals and their lifestyle.

There is no confusion where I sit. Until society as a whole recognizes the value of peace, comfort and justice for the weak, marginalized, and innocent, the salaries of their advocates will always be rock bottom. And this world is getting far more than it pays for, and probably more than it deserves.

Submitted by John Burkitt

•••••

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Feline Conservation Federation
Fourth Quarter 2002 Meeting of Board of Directors
December 4, 2002

On October 15, 2002, George Stowers called to order the Fourth Quarter 2002 Meeting of the Board of Directors. The following motions were made. They were voted by mail/email on December 4, 2002.

Motion 1: Leann Montgomery Second Tracy Wilson

Move that FCF BOD review and approve the revised Membership Handbook as submitted. (Any small typos or corrections noted can be corrected for the final version.) At least 500 copies of this document be printed and all current FCF members receive a copy.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 2: Leann Montgomery Second Bob Turner

Move that Bobby Bean be appointed chairman of the convention committee.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 3: Lynn Culver Second Carol Bohning

Move that, FCF obtain a non-profit flat rate bulk mailing permit in 2003, and pay a one year permit fee of \$150 to use this permit. The revised Membership Handbooks, the upcoming Membership Directory and the gratis copy of the Basic Cat Care booklet be mailed to the full membership using this permit. At least two issues of an expanded 28-page newsletter are mailed using this flat rate service. Based on membership feedback received on the yahoo list, and through a membership questionnaire, the board will vote at the next upcoming board meeting to either continue this type of mailing for future newsletters, or discontinue it and revert back to first class mailing.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Proposed Amendment -John Perry Second Shirley Wagner

Move that the FCF obtain a non-profit flat rate bulk mailing permit for \$150, and pay a one year permit fee of \$150 FOR 2003 to use this permit. The revised Membership Handbooks, the upcoming Membership Directory and the gratis copy of the Basic Cat Care booklet be mailed to the full membership using this permit with \$40 of the permit and fee costs being charged to the budget of Member Services and \$40 of the permit and fee costs being charged to Education/Conservation. All postage for the Membership Handbook would be charged to the Member Handbook line in the budget and postage for the Basic Cat Care booklet would be charged to the Education/Conservation Budget.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

Nay - C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery

6 Yeas, 4 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 4: Lynn Culver Second Tracy Wilson

Move that the board approve a trial run of the March/April newsletter mailing using two taped tabs to close it, and eliminate the envelope. The back one third of the newsletter will be devoted to a return address and a membership label. The non-profit flat rate mailing permit stamp and number will be pre-printed on the right hand side of that newsletter.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

Nay - J. Perry

9 Yeas, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 5: Tracy Wilson Second Leann Montgomery

Move that the Basic Cat Care booklet be reviewed and approved by the BOD. (Any small typos or corrections noted can be corrected for the final version.) At least 500 copies of this document be printed and all current FCF members receive a copy, and that this booklet be a standard part of any new FCF member package. Multiple copies shall be provided for the cost of postage to branch representatives as needed for them to hand out. Additional copies of this Basic Cat Care booklet can be offered for sale in the newsletter at a minimal price, to encourage breeders to purchase extra copies for their customers, or for any members wanting extra copies for any reason. The expense of this printing should be taken out of the \$3000 we passed at our August meeting for special projects.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 6: John Perry Second Shirley Wagner

Move that the FCF declare the typewriter obtained for the use of Kelly Jean Buckley as surplus and given to Kelly Jean Buckley.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

Nay – L. Culver.

9 Yeas, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 7: Carol Bohning Second Tracy Wilson

Move that President George Stowers file the appropriate paperwork and associated fees with the Florida Secretary of State in order to effect the change of the name of the corporation from LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation to Feline Conservation Federation as mandated by a vote of over 2/3's of the voting membership and ratified by the Board of Directors at their annual meeting held in Wichita, KS.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa.

Nay – S. Wagner

9 Yeas, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 8: Carol Bohning Second Tracy Wilson

Move that the FCF Board of Directors does hereby approve, instruct, and gives affirmative written consent to the appointed trustees (John Perry, J.B. Anderson, Carin Sousa, and Shirley Wagner) of the Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund to amend the Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation of the LIOC ESCF Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund in the following manner:

Bylaws

1. The name shall changed from the LIOC ESCF Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund to the Feline Conservation Federation (FCF) Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund.
2. Article IV, section 4.5- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.
3. Article IV, section 4.15- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.
4. Article VIII, section 8.2- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.

Articles of Incorporation

1. The name shall changed from the LIOC ESCF Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund to the Feline Conservation Federation (FCF) Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund.
2. Article I- delete LIOC ESCF and replace with Feline Conservation Federation (FCF).
3. Article VI- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.
4. Article XI, section 11.2- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.
5. Article XI, section 11.3- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.
6. Article XI, section 11.4- delete LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation and replace with Feline Conservation Federation.

In addition, any and all other references to LIOC, LIOC ESCF, LIOC - Endangered Species Conservation Federation, or Long Island Ocelot Club shall be changed to Feline Conservation Federation (FCF) with regards to bank accounts, other legal documents, letterhead and stationary, etc.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, J. Perry, C. Sousa.

Nay – S. Wagner. Abstain – JB Anderson.

8 Yeas, 1 Nay, 1 Abstain Motion Passed

NOTE: John Perry voted Yea to this motion contingent upon Lynn Culver receiving a letter from the Sec. Of State of Florida indicating that the vote of the entire membership on this issue negated the need for a vote at a General Membership meeting as called for in our Articles of Incorporation, otherwise Nay.

Motion 9: Carol Bohning Second Bob Turner

Move that the FCF subscribe to the Friends of the Cat Group of the Cat Specialist Group of the IUCN. The institutional subscription rate is \$80 US.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa.

9 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 10: Bob Turner Second Tracy Wilson

Move that the FCF Trade Mark the name Long Island Ocelot Club (LIOC) to protect FCF's rights to that name.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson.

Nay - J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

7 Yeas, 3 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 11: Tracy Wilson Second Carol Bohning

Move that the new FCF internet chat list, “The_FCF@yahoogroups” is made our official membership internet chat list. The FCF board of directors hereby instructs the owner (Linda Covell) of the LIOC internet chat list “LIOC@yahoogroups.com” list to deactivate/close the list on December 1, 2002. Ownership of the LIOC list is to be transferred over on Dec 1, 2002, to our current Membership Director who will maintain the settings of the LIOC list as closed and refer any inquiries to the FCF list. The LIOC list will immediately cease in accepting new subscriptions to the LIOC list, and refer all subscriptions over to the FCF list upon approval of this motion. No messages will be posted to the LIOC list after Dec. 1, 2002.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa.

Abstain – S. Wagner.

9 Yeas, 0 Nays, 1 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 12: Bob Turner Second Tracy Wilson

Move that FCF Trade Mark the name Feline Conservation Federation (FCF) to protect the FCF’s rights to that name.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

Nay – J. Perry.

9 Yeas, 1 Nay, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 13: Lynn Culver Second Shirley Wagner

Move that FCF Board authorize the expense of \$75.00 to pay for one year’s dues in the National Animal Interest Alliance as an organizational member.

Yea - T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

Abstain – R. Turner.

9 Yeas, 0 Nays, 1 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 14: Tonya Jones Second Carol Bohning

Move that Carin Sousa be immediately requested to tender her resignation from the Feline Conservation Federation’s Board of Directors for reasons of violating the BOD confidentiality policy; violating executive session confidentiality; and defamatory and untrue remarks made about the BOD and individual BOD members in her letter sent to all FCF members in August 2002.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery,

Nay - JB Anderson, J. Perry, S. Wagner.

Abstain – C. Sousa.

6 Yeas, 3 Nays, 1 Abstain Motion Passed

Motion 15: Shirley Wagner Second Tracy Wilson.

Move that FCF appoint Lynn to handle printing and distribution of the newsletter beginning with the Jan/Feb issue.

Yea - R. Turner, T. Jones, C. Bohning, T. Wilson, L. Culver, L. Montgomery, JB Anderson, J. Perry, C. Sousa, S. Wagner.

10 Yeas, 0 Nays, 0 Abstain Motion Passed

All motions Passed.

Submitted By: Tonya Jones
Secretary/Treasurer



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From Our Past: 1959

The Feline Conservation Federation is its past and present members, history, husbandry experiences and the information we have developed and shared. To honor our Federation, we will occasionally reprint articles from our past newsletters. The following reprint is taken from the first decade of our history. The year was 1959. This organization was in its infancy but already widely known as the Long Island Ocelot Club. Its newsletter, edited by Catherine's husband Harry G Cisin, was in its third year of existence. Pet ocelots were wild-born. Newspapers and periodicals published positive articles about our felines, members and club such as "Big Gaudy Ocelot makes a gentle pet," and "Convention Just Purrfect as Ocelots Chew the Rug." The public was charmed by the idea of domesticating jungle cats.



Mixed Emotions

Long Island Ocelot Club, July 1959, by Jayne Murray

Mixed emotions and owning an ocelot seem to go hand in hand. Very often you find yourself extremely sorry for your furry "child" and defending yourself to yourself for keeping one. One of our members expressed the desire to take them all back to their homes and turn them loose in the jungle, but hastened to add: "I don't mean it—couldn't live without them around me."

When my first ocelot was killed, I reprimanded myself for having an animal so unfamiliar with civilization that he did not know enough to be afraid of cars. Life was so empty without one of these affectionate rascals that very shortly we opened our hearts to a new baby. Until recently I had never really experienced the desire to take mine back to her jungle, or wish she had never been taken from it. As she has grown older there have been several such occasions, one of which will be remembered probably because it was the first.

It was a beautiful May evening—that time between twilight and dark when the world almost stops and relaxes. Day noises had ceased and the softer night sounds were beginning. As Mitsu-ko and I walked along the old wagon trail that leads to the far end of the field, a sweet faint order of lilacs and new grass drifted through the night air. A full moon shining between thin clouds washed the world around us in its shimmering silver light. Sometimes as we moved from shadow to shadow, all I could see of her were those two white spots on her ears, for in that moonlight she seemed to melt into the surrounding and become part of them. Having thoroughly investigated the ground we had covered, she began to have a wonderful time leaping into and up out of the high grass that grows on either side of the path, stalking some imaginary prey, pouncing on it, then racing off again.

I enjoyed watching her small lithe body dart into view, then disappear before my eyes as she and the foliage became one. As she became more and more involved in her game the tugs at the end of the long chain became more and more insistent. So did the tugs at my heart. I could picture that small baby tumbling and cavorting, free as the breeze with her mother and brother somewhere else in the world. I longed to free her, to let her run and leap to her heart's desire, but I didn't dare.

For the first time I was truly sorry she had ever been taken from her jungle to live the restricted life of a domesticated animal. Since I can't visualize my life without an ocelot sharing it, I told myself she was really much better off right where she was, even if her play was curtailed. After all she had a nice warm safe house to live in, her own cozy box to sleep in, soft chairs and beds to stretch out on. She never had to hunt for her food, perhaps not finding enough. She was most certainly well loved. If she were in her jungle she might not be playing, but rather running away from her enemies. She might be sick and undernourished.

My thoughts were interrupted by that cute little cry Mitsu-ko makes when she wants to be picked up. As I stooped to get her, she climbed right into her favorite perch in my arms, licked my face and purred loudly. She was right where she belonged as far as she was concerned, and I was so happy. The moment of regret was gone—forever? No, I think not, for it comes back now and then to nag at me. Could this be the price we must pay for loving and wanting these beautiful creatures from the jungle?

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Writing Your Will?


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

From the Board of Directors

The majority of the FCF Board of Directors has instructed me to inform the FCF members that a group of individuals have formed a new organization that we believe has infringed on copyrights and trademarks belonging to the FCF. Our director of legal affairs has been directed to seek appropriate legal council to advise the FCF Board of Directors as to what legal action may be appropriate. The new group appears to be using the name, The Long Island Ocelot Club. It appears that three of the current FCF Life Directors are associated with this new organization. The FCF Board of Directors is considering what action may be appropriate in light of this apparent conflict of interest.

Many of our FCF members have very strong feelings about our group ties to the past and want to keep the Long Island Ocelot Club (LIOC) name as part of FCF's history, and it shouldn't be used by another group.

Cordially,
Robert L. Turner,
Vice President

Results: FCF Fall 2002 Election of Officers

submitted by Shirley Wagner on behalf of JB Anderson

Election results tallied by: Mike Purcell
Certified Public Accountant
P O Box 203
Ashland MO 65010

I have counted the sealed ballots of Feline Conservation Federation for the election of officers for the upcoming year, 2003. Qualified ballots were compared to the membership list from Leann Montgomery, Director of Member Services. All ballots were returned to J.B. Anderson Life Director.

Signed
Mike Purcell CPA

George Stowers	President	78
Robert Turner	Vice President	79
Harold Epperson	Secretary/Treasurer	55
Bobby Bean	Advertising/Publicity	57
Leann Montgomery	Member Services	82
Lynn Culver	Legal Affairs	81
Tracy Wilson	Education/Conservation	84

Welcome to our new directors And Congradulations to the confirmed
Unopposed directors for winning such a high approval rating!

FCF Email Chat List

Feline Conservation Federation has set up an email chat list for members to talk cats with one another and have some fun!

Subscription to this list is open to all current members of FCF. Because the list is only open to our membership, members can feel safe to chat as they please about their cats amongst other cat friends. On this list, a variety of topics are discussed about cats and our organization and it helps members get to know one another, stay in touch with old friends, and just know what's going on with other members and their cats. Members are able to post pictures of their cats, share funny stories about their cat's antics, touching stories, ask other members for advice about any advice for cat care—diet, nutrition, housing, training, behavior problems, legal issues, any nature of subjects that pertain to owning exotic cats. Members also receive important announcements about any upcoming events of FCF news. Members also have the opportunity to chat with board members to find out about current FCF projects, share ideas, ask questions, and just stay in touch with the board of directors in general. It's a great way to get to know other members while learning from each other too!

Some recent topics from the FCF email list:

Safe Capture Course—A member is thinking about hosting a safe capture course and is looking for feedback from other members if they would be interested in attending.

Winter Heating-A member is looking for an alternative method for heating her cats and other animals for winter instead of what she has been doing in past winters.

Feline Husbandry Course Announcement- A husbandry class is being held in December in Arkansas.

Fire Ants-A member is looking for a safe way to get rid of fire ants in their cat's enclosure.

Cats for Sale-Several members posted some cats available for sale. There are also occasional posts looking for homes for cats needing placement.

New Enclosure-A member describes a new big compound for his cougars, complete with an inground cave!

Spaying a Big Cat-A member is considering spaying his Lioness, and asks for advice and opinions about the procedure and the effects it may or may not have on the lion.

It's easy to sign up.

If you are currently an FCF member, and wish to join this list, send an email to: FCF-owner@yahoogroups.com

For fast processing, please include your full name and/or FCF membership number if available. The FCF list is operated by Yahoo Groups. If you are not a member of any Yahoo Groups yet, Yahoo will require you to sign up for a user name and password before you can sign up for the FCF list, but it is at no cost or obligation to you. You can set up your options through Yahoo Groups to receive all the individual emails from the FCF list, or a daily digest which sends all the messages from that day in one email to you, or you can opt for no email and just view the messages on the Yahoo Groups website page. This gives you a variety of options if you have concerns about clogging up your email box with list messages.

For more information, you can visit the chat list home page at: http://groups.yahoo.com/group/The_FCF/ If you need assistance in signing up, email FCF-owner@yahoogroups.com.



NEW MEMBERSHIP DIRECTORY PROVIDES CHANCE FOR ADVERTISEMENT

The new membership directory is due to come out in early 2003, and we are now accepting advertisements for inclusion in the directory. The directory will be sent to all members of the Feline Conservation Federation and this is a great opportunity to get your message out!

Your ad will help us to underwrite the cost of the directory and could be used to advertise kitten sales, sale of cat-related items, your art products, your business and business products or perhaps to publish a memorial for that special cat or cats that you love or miss.

Please show your support and buy an ad today! Costs for the ads are \$10 for a business card size ad, \$25 for a quarter page ad, \$50 for a half page ad or \$100 for a full page ad. The ad and your check should be sent to our Member Services Director: Leann Montgomery, P.O. Box 216, Pleasureville, KY 40057-0216. Her phone is 502-878-2567 and her email is LM4WILDCATS@cs.com.

Also, since we will be updating the directory, if you think we may have old information on you or your cats, please ask Leann for a new member profile form so that your information will be current.



Don't Chew on the Window Sill

By Julie Roper

We got Tazmir when he was five weeks old. We were in the stages of building a new house, one that would give them and us the perfect arrangement. Tazmir, however, grew faster than the house and we began to feel a steady pressure. Where we were living, this yearling cat had no room to run and his abundance of energy was making him more than a handful.



One day he accidentally pounced on the cocker spaniel, who turned and snapped at him. Tazmir, about 35 pounds at the time, whipped back so hard he crashed through the picture window, startling him as much as us. Fortunately, he had always wanted to run to us when he was scared so we didn't end up combing a subdivision asking if they had seen a young cougar. Things later smoothed out with the cocker spaniel and they lived together until she died this year.

I knew that we had to get the new house finished or this wasn't going to work. In that new house we had considered everything. We had ceramic tile floors, a balcony for them to snooze on from up high, and an acre compound that attached to the back of the house. The tops of the sturdily built kitchen cabinets had been left accessible, for them to lounge on. We even put up a wall-length shelf high up on the great-room-wall so that we could decorate slightly with mementos and knick-knacks. I chose overhead lights to preclude troublesome floor lamps. With Tazmir, I thought I had everything covered. And with Tazmir I did have.

Then we got Teela.

With Tazmir, when it came time for declawing, my husband had been ready to bail out of the bargain. When he got over the shock, he said he would *never* inflict that on any other creature on the face of the earth. But I had a plan and we were sticking to it.

Teela, at five weeks, was baby number two — and she was a whole different world. When Tazmir was that age, he didn't want to be put down and only wanted a bottle or Pop's thumb to suck.



Teela at seven weeks yowled for raw meat and never wanted to see a bottle again. She was so alert she noticed things like a ceiling fan going on or off. She knew which side of the refrigerator door opened. And the sound of Wal-mart bags alerted her to the possibility they might hold road-kill treats.

When Taz had his claws done, he lay on his side and bird-whistled for us to comfort him. After time passed and he failed to try to free himself from bandages, we removed them for him. Teela ripped hers off before we got home. She slogged bloody wet feet wherever she felt compelled to go and preferred not to be restrained with the burden of cuddling.

Tazmir was sweet and lulled us into thinking we could have a dozen of these guys. But Teela showed us what a willful female can do and we were glad to have had a little cougar experience before she entered our lives.

Taz never made any mischief in the house to get himself in trouble. He was clumsy though and I worried about him falling off the balcony. One night I heard a calamitous noise like a bowling ball rolling down the stairs and leaped up with thoughts my baby had been damaged. It turned out to be Tazmir making his second attempt to bring a stick of firewood up the stairs to play with. Halfway up he'd drop the log and it would reverberate downwards.

If we wanted to go to the mall or to visit, we could leave Tazmir for hours and hours — and come back to find him sleeping like an innocent and wanting to rub faces.

Once Teela entered the fray, we never knew what to expect when we'd return from an absence. She had done most of her teething on the window sills and that should have been my warning of things to come. However, it would take a few more lessons.

I came home one day to find our angelic little boy cougar looking through the front door at us with peanut brittle stuck to the top of his head, whistling guilelessly at our return. My stomach jerked at the thought of where the rest of that gallon container of candy might be. As we came through the door, Teela paraded past us with much of it stuck to her head, her belly, and even her tail.

We had left the bucket on top of the TV and Teela, being all cat, decided to whack it good — and the game began. She had chased pieces as they scattered over the tile until losing interest, whereupon she lay down in the middle of the pieces. Getting it off the floor and baseboards was a task even with a razor-knife and I occasionally still find bits of it to this day. We laughed at the wads of melted brittle stuck all through their fur. But there was no way to get that out!

Slowly, though, I was wising up. I no longer left things out for her to get into. My smugness didn't last long. The next thing I knew, Teela was about 90 pounds of cougar and I came in one day to find her standing upright on my kitchen table batting my chandelier like a rope toy. When she finished her play, the chandelier dangled from the ceiling like a dehydrated spider — and I was a beaten down onlooker.



“This ain't gonna work,” I thought, depressed that the day was quickly approaching where our inside closeness would have to be replaced with visiting the cats outside, if we were going to have a semi-normal life.



When I recovered my strength, I replaced the chandelier with a more practical fixture and raised it out of cougar reach. To add security, we turned the table on its side. I was determined to give it one last college try. The adjustment was successful. We had won. But, it turned out, not for long.

When Teela discovered she couldn't get to that new light, she turned her attention elsewhere, looking for the next temptation. *Recessed* light fixtures next caught her eye. She began to yank them out of the ceiling at such a rate that I gave up replacing them and totally confused her by covering the vacant holes with white poster board, to at least hide the useless holes the lights once occupied.

Our house took on a barren air. Every decoration I had put up, she destroyed by swatting it with her powerful, talented paws. And her curiosity was endless. We started luring her out into the compound before leaving the house. As gluttonous as she was, that turned out to be easier than expected. But the added calories meant added weight. Teela got fat and things changed.

A fat cougar can't easily get to high places and has less energy to play. Though a welcome relief, we knew we couldn't let her stay fat just because she was manageable that way.

We *all* suffered when she went on a diet. She would pace back and forth in front of the refrigerator and if she couldn't get our attention, she would come over and give us a fish-bite on the butt, hard enough to leave a bruise and bold enough to get attention. It seemed to take forever to get her back to an acceptable weight, but when we did, we were delighted to discover that she had finally grown up and was now much calmer.



Turns out we had grown up together. I had learned that I had to give up on some things, like a kitchen table that was upright like normal people's. And Teela had become almost as civilized as her big brother, as long as temptation wasn't too close. Gradually she sweetened and became as lovable as Tazmir. The grumpy, growling purr she gives when she gets kisses have become as endearing as the sweet purrs and whistles we get from Tazmir.



Through trial and error, we worked out most of the kinks. Recently we even removed the poster board and put back the recessed lights. We put the table back upright, and can even leave place-settings out without Teela seeming to care.

Mellow Taz is still okay to leave inside for a long time but Teela still makes us nervous. But the things I learned may apply to other cougars — and friends may have better luck because of each mistake we made.

DO'S AND DON'TS, SHOULDN'TS AND SHAN'TS



If I were making a list of do's and don'ts, this is what I would recommend:

Start with ceramic tile floors with *dark* grout — those big paws can be like sponges and will ruin anything else. The dark grout will give you less frustration cleaning.

Bring them in daily starting as babies (unless they're staying in full-time already, as ours were) so that they are familiar with the surroundings. They will investigate anything new. Remove your lamps.

Start with a minimum of two cougars so they can bounce off each other instead of you. There is no other way to have cougars for us. As a baby, Tazmir was a biter — the backs of my legs were polka dotted from the bruises where he tried to play. Then we got Teela. Once he had Teela, I never got another bruise from him.

Provide a wide open exercise area for them to go to freely. They will poop outside by preference, if they know they will be able to. They train themselves. Pee is a shocker though. They pee where they lie. I believe it is something they need for skin or fur maintenance and this cannot be trained out of them. We put waterproof mattress pads under their sleeping area and wash the pads regularly. Even so, they pee freely where they stand and that has to be mopped regularly. You can see why you **MUST** have ceramic tile.

Be patient because kittens will do all those kitten things and at 100 pounds they make a lot more noise and do more damage. We went through dozens of Rubbermaid trashcans before finally buying a chrome one. We won but the noise is much louder at one o'clock in the morning when Teela decides she's ready to whack it around the great room a while.

They will get used to regular things like the coffee pot on the counter, the trash can, the phone, and dish drainer. Life can get pretty close to normal except forget any type of furniture with cushions on it. We use indoor/outdoor log furniture and can put cushions on when people come to visit. Otherwise, the cats will chew up the cushions and pee in the scraps of cloth they leave in shreds on the floor. They seem to have an innate need to tear with their teeth that seems best satisfied with pillows and cushions.



For us, males and females have been two different types of cat entirely. Our male is laid back, even a little timid. Since there was no other cougar around, he bonded with us and is uncertain of everything until he sees how we react. The female was alert right out of the box to every shadow or movement. She was willing to jump across any divide and even learned to open closed doors by using her mouth, a hair-raiser. She bonded to Tazmir despite every effort by us to win her over. They can't all be like Tazmir but we love Teela just as much. After six years we've now learned to anticipate her mischief and keep it to a minimum. Her mischievousness, we now see, is her most endearing quality. She's truly all cougar.

My brother summed up what most people think. "If you didn't put all your money into the cats, you could go places and wouldn't have to be fixing things all the time," he said. There is nowhere we want to go that gives us more pleasure than going home to these guys. No things like velvety furniture and plush carpet ever gave me the joy that cougar kisses before work gives me. If you love these animals, that is the reward for the sacrifices you make and the love they give back.

There are still things to work out as our lives change and new things become a problem. I still want to have both worlds and I still try to take a quick overnight vacation now and then. They are a challenge every day and the time may come (seven years now and counting) when they have to stay in their compound full-time. But we are as familiar with each other as any family and the joys of growing with them for seven years has been immense. I hope for another wonderful seven years ... and another—except a little calmer.

Tazmir relaxes near the cave in their fenced-in habitat.



A New Life Together

On September 6th, my boyfriend Gary and I traveled 6 hours up to C.W. Wathen's Chestatee Wildlife Preserve in Daholonega, Georgia to meet my new baby Lakota. I had named him before he was born. Two of my favorite babies that I had raised for Robert Baudy were two cougar babies named Cherokee and Lakota. Lakota was the most affectionate and I always regretted giving her back, but at that time I didn't know I would be able to keep a second cougar. The Lakota Indians are a member of the Sioux Tribe. Lakota means to "Walk in Beauty." This occurs when the earth and sky are in harmony.

The anticipation on the drive was electric. When I walked into the nursery that held Lakota, his sister, and a baby lion I could not speak. I knew which one he was before Charlotte, CW's manager, showed me. Although male, he was smaller than his sister. He seemed so fragile I was almost afraid to pick him up. It was as if I'd never done this before (and continues to be). We spent the morning there and I fed Lakota for the first time. Gary wanted to do some antiquing, so we took care of



the transaction paperwork and made plans to pick Lakota up first thing the next morning before heading back. All day sightseeing, I was walking in a cloud. I have raised so many babies for Robert Baudy and not realized that subconsciously I held back some emotions so as to ease the separation when they were to be returned. And of course, Sugar, who may have become mine at 12 weeks did not go through this important stage with me.

This was going to be different. This was *my* baby and I would not be giving him back. This baby I would feed a bottle and watch him barely able to walk – just wobble and crawl. I have also never had a single baby (without a sibling). From the first night home, I would see that this fact was probably the strongest driving force that is bonding us. He looks to me for everything.

Of course I fell into a paranoid "new mom" syndrome that had me stressed at every hiccup. Fortunately I have friends from the Feline Conservation Federation, like Bobbie and Jessica Bean, Mindy Stinner, Lynn Culver, and Tracy Wilson who are always there to take my call and advise and reassure me.

Lakota II seems to be developing faster



than Lakota I and sister Cherokee. I could watch in just a few days how he became aware of his surroundings and how the sound of my voice has an effect on him like no one else's. I was clearly "Mommy" by day two.

By the second week, after struggling through getting him to take a bottle without fighting it, he became very interactive with me. He knows his name and even when I try to tiptoe into the nursery when he's sleeping he wakes up and, shaky from sleepiness, runs in his wobbly fashion to catch up to me and trill in my ear when I pick him up. He is a happy baby, playful and energetic and very affectionate. This week (at 6 weeks of age) I gave him his first vaccination (which he took very well). I'm anxious for the next two to be over with. I never knew I had such an obsession with gems!! Bobbie tells me that although he's raised hundreds of babies, he always feels the same worry. That's been comforting because I was beginning to feel inadequate noticing all of my own paranoia.

We are already scheduled to go into several elementary schools to teach the children about the plight of the Florida Panther. I'm very excited about this because at this point I think education of people might be the only chance our "Eastern Cougar" has.

Well, wish us luck. My little "Ambassador to the Panther World" is ready for his meal and I'm having a very hard time staying in the next room, as I have been 24 hours a day since he joined our home.

We love you all -

Gloria Johnson and Lakota



A cat is a cat and very pleased to be a cat. The cat knows he is a special and superior creation. To those persons who also know that the cat is not just another animal the cat grants the privilege of feeding and sheltering him. The cat will also give those privileged persons some affection- often at the most inconvenient time, except for the cat. Living with the cat requires some adjustment - much as in a marriage. The cat expects full consideration of his dignity. The cat expects to be admired. The cat expects to be left alone when cat problems have to be pondered over - and also when he just wants to be left alone. Meals must be appetizing, varied, and on time. The darling who purred so contentedly may jump off your lap and a moment later turn on you a stare asking if introductions were ever made.

By John Becroft, 1958



Happy Holidays!

Eat Your Prey! (Sung to the tune of Jingle Bells)

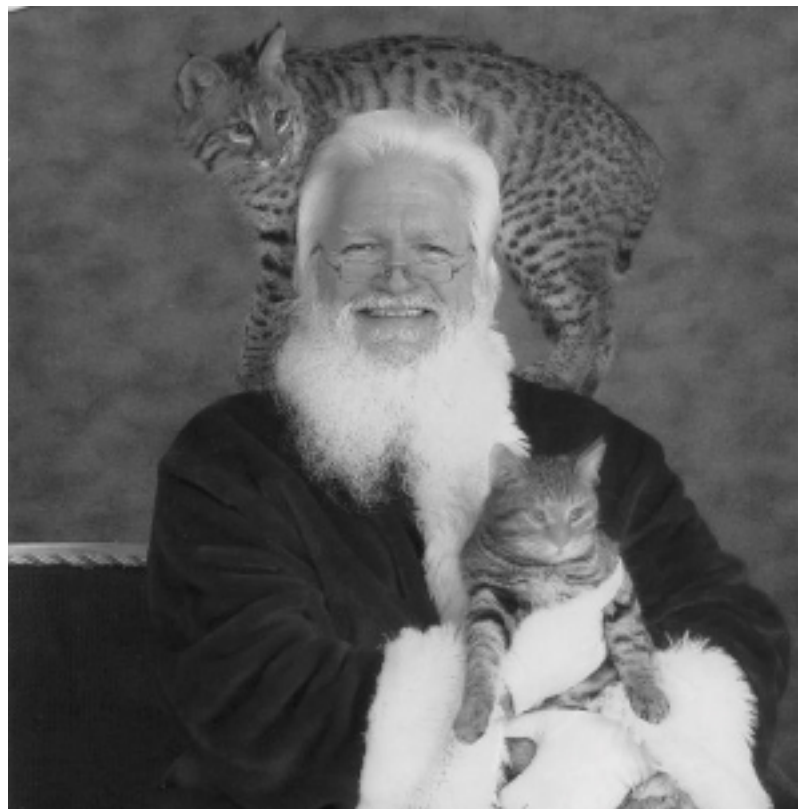
Dashing after prey, through the trees we go!
Over leaves and grass, pouncing to and fro!
Trap them near the pond, grab them on the head,
drag them backwards up a tree and eat them till
they're dead!

Chorus:
Oh, eat your prey, eat your prey, eat it till you're fed!
Oh what fun it is to eat your prey until they're dead,
oh!
Eat your prey! Eat your prey! Eat it till you're fed!
Oh what fun it is to eat your prey until they're dead!

When you're feeling bored, looking for a bite,
Climb down from your tree, get your prey in sight,
Sneak up right behind, pounce upon their head,
Snap their neck and bite their throat and eat them till
they're dead!

Copyright Paladin Spottycat, and all that.
Contact info: Mark Paladin leopard@bigpond.net.au
submitted by James Godsmark

Santa taking gift demands from Shelena Bobcat and Ludwig pixie bob



THE POLITICS OF EXOTIC ANIMAL OWNERSHIP

By Zuzana Kukol, VP of Phoenix Exotics

Growing up as an animal lover in the former communist Czechoslovakia, I often dreamed about the day I would get free and live my life to the fullest with very little or no government intervention.

To realize my dreams I left my home, friends and family at the age of 20 and after spending 1 year in a refugee camp in Italy I came to the USA ready to turn my dream into a reality.

Speaking no English, I used my dictionary to learn new words and phrases. This was in 1986. A lot has changed since then. Some words and terms no longer have the same meaning and some have become “politically incorrect”.

One of these politically incorrect terms is “exotic pet.”

Growing up in a heavily political climate of a communist Czechoslovakia, I saw becoming a US citizen and getting exotic pets as a way to escape politics and just relax and live a peaceful life in a free country with my beloved pets. Little did I know that having exotic pets would be one of the most political journeys of my life.

Pets are now supposed to be referred to as “companion animals” and simply being a private owner of exotics is considered a form of animal abuse.

Media and animal rights (AR) groups throw emotionally charged and often one sided articles at the uneducated public, asking for more unnecessary regulations or bans, and describing exotic pet owners as complete idiots unable to learn basic husbandry and threatening our children. Nobody is asking for proof of these claims (or that these false statistics be verified).

Why? How did we get here? Where is “innocent until proven guilty”?

As if this wasn't enough, The American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), blind to the threat they themselves face from the political AR machine, join the bandwagon of attacking private exotic pet owners and turning them into scapegoats.

The article in May 2001 Communiqué by Vicki L. Duckett, Program assistant of AZA titled “Call of the Wild” describes in its first paragraph mauling incidents by exotics in the private sector, and then goes directly to whining about how some zoos are asked by irresponsible owners to place their unwanted animals.

The same claims can be made by the private non AZA sector against zoos: people do get injured and killed in zoo settings, and zoos themselves produce “unwanted” animals, that they either euthanize or place in the hated non AZA private sector. It is time AZA zoos STOPPED this ‘us against them’ hypocritical mentality that is echoed in the statement made by San Antonio Zoo director Steve McCusker who says (as quoted from the Communiqué) that “he wouldn't be in the business now if he didn't own wild animals as a child. He notes it would be hypocritical of him to reprimand others for doing the same.”

We can never know which child or exotic pet owner will be our next conservationist, Zoo director or biologist. Only thru close personal contact can we really understand and appreciate these wonderful creatures.

As reported in Communiqué, Mr. McCusker points out that: “...his individual relationships with these animals are what motivated him to pursue a life-long career caring for and protecting both native and exotic wildlife”.

We need more people like Mr. McCusker who are not afraid to acknowledge their roots.

Many of us are finally joining forces, spreading information thru email lists. One of these is the Phoenix Exotics group with its informative free email list promoting legal and responsible ownership of exotic animals. To be a full voting member all you have to do is send \$10.00 to the address above.

Our group is open to anyone with interest in exotics, be it a sanctuary, zoo, breeder, hunter, pet owner or simply enthusiasts.

It is time we all ignored our differences and concentrated on what brings us together, love for wildlife and desire to protect it for the future generations.

Zuzana Kukol lives with an assortment of exotic pets which includes large and small exotic cats, turtles, lizards, dogs and wolves. She can be reached at the Phoenix main office or thru e-mail at: general@phoenixexotics.org

Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc. is a group of private owners from all across America that includes individuals, sanctuaries and breeders.

We are an organization of active members working to protect and maintain the rights of private ownership through responsible behavior.

Several Phoenix Exotics members were recently interviewed for MSNBC's National Geographic Explorer.

On August 18, 2002, the show devoted its first hour to big cat ownership. The show's crew also taped Phoenix's annual meeting in February 2002 near Las Vegas, in rural Pahrump, Nevada. National Geographic Explorer termed Phoenix "one of the largest exotic animal owner groups in the nation."

When National Geographic television crew contacted Phoenix officers, their project had been underway for a year and was nearly completed. They had already gathered anti-ownership propaganda footage from anti-private ownership sanctuaries like Carol Asvestas' Wild Animal Orphanage (WAO). At that time, WAO was a member of Tippi Hedren's American Sanctuary Association, ASA and Carol was on the board. WAO is no longer listed on the website as an ASA member, nor is Carol on the board.

We decided to open our doors and show the public our side of the story as good, ethical, and legal private owners.

Much of the program focused on owners of big cats who had problems with their neighbors and on Carol Asvestas's WAO sanctuary and its activities, which had been followed by the National Geographic crew for almost 2 years. The Pahrump segment, however, showed problem-free big-cat owners in a more positive light after only few hours worth of interviews.

Our next annual meeting will be in Pahrump again, on February 22 and 23, 2003. Admission is free but advance registration is required due to space limitations. Details are posted at www.phoenixexotics.org.

For more information about joining Phoenix: 1-360-767-0746 www.phoenixexotics.org There is no charge to join the electronic mailing list. Send an e-mail to: membership@phoenixexotics.org.

TV show on lions, tigers features locals **Program looks at private ownership of big cats**

By MARK WAITE , VIEW STAFF WRITER
Fri August 23, 2002, Las Vegas View

Pahrump made national television last Sunday night as part of a program on the MSNBC network show "National Geographic Explorer," which aired a program titled, "Big Cat Crisis." It focused on ownership of tigers and lions as pets.

"Is there a tiger in your back yard?" the TV special began.

In the first few minutes, alert viewers could catch a quick shot of Brian Turner, who owns cougars in the north end of the Pahrump Valley, as well as brief comments from Pahrump residents Jeanie Stevenson and Zuzana, who own big cats in the valley. Zuzana, who wants to be identified by her first name, says briefly on TV that she would only live where she can keep her animals.

Turner remarks, "Bonding moments with the power of nature, it's almost impossible to describe."

There was a shot of the blue Pahrump sign, with the announcer saying, "Welcome to Pahrump, Nevada, meeting place for one of the largest exotic animal owner groups in the nation."

There was a quick scene of members of the Phoenix Exotic Animal Owners Association meeting last February at the Pahrump Community Library.

The commentator remarked, more and more Americans are buying tigers and lions as pets. Much of the program focused on owners of big cats who had problems with their neighbors. The Pahrump segment, however, showed big-cat owners in a more positive light. Stevenson, a Pahrump resident for 23 years, was shown riding a lion. In the show it was mentioned Stevenson has owned tigers and lions for 25 years. The production crew described her home as a "mini-museum."

"We love these animals like they're our children, and I don't see anything wrong with that," Stevenson tells the TV interviewer. "I think it's providing a good home for my animals and they need that."

Stevenson said the film crew was invited back after the taping of the Phoenix Exotic Animal Owners meeting in February. The camera crew made a special trip to Pahrump to film Turner, Zuzana and herself, she said. Stevenson said they filmed at her place for a couple of hours at the end of May.

"It was pretty much what we thought it was going to be. It had basically been filmed about a rescue," Stevenson said when asked her thoughts of the show. "We asked them to film us because we wanted to show a positive side of ownership."

"They did a really good job of portraying it all," Stevenson said. "They didn't portray us badly. We can't complain about that."

"We were a little nervous about it, knowing the subject matter was negative," Stevenson said. But she said, they consented to the filming because they had nothing to hide.

The television show may be rebroadcast, but Stevenson said the brief clip of her riding the lion won't be on the next transmission, that scene had been sold to the show "Real TV."

Remote Sensor-Activated Cameras Critical to Conservation



An elusive jaguar has been caught on film south of Tucson, offering fresh evidence that the endangered cat visits - and maybe resides - in Southern Arizona. The Arizona Game and Fish Department isn't revealing the location of the December sighting to protect the jaguar - the biggest cat in the Western Hemisphere, and the only one that roars. Jaguars were last documented in Arizona in 1996. They have been known to travel 500 miles in search of food or a mate.

"It is great to know that jaguars are roaming our borderlands, at least occasionally," said Brad Van Pelt of the Arizona Game and Fish Department. "We will continue to monitor the area to see if the animal is a transient or attempting to establish a territory."

The photograph was taken in early December by a remote, motion-activated camera that was set out to monitor potential jaguar corridors near the border. Such cameras have been in place since 1997, but until now none had recorded a jaguar. The last known photographs of a jaguar in Arizona were taken in 1996, one in the Baboquivari Mountains west of Tucson and one in the Peloncillo Mountains, along the New Mexico border near San Simon. Biologists believe the two 1996 photos and the one shot in December 2002 captured three separate cats. The most recent photo shows a young male jaguar weighing around 175 pounds. It was taken at about 5,000 feet in elevation in an oak woodland.

A team of biologists hopes more photos like the December one will help pinpoint the location of a jaguar. The plan is to capture one, attach a collar with a radio transmitter, then return the jaguar to the wild and monitor its movement. Arizona is believed to be at the northern end of the jaguar's historic range, which once covered nearly all of Latin America. Now, the closest known population to Tucson is 135 miles south, deep in the Sierra Madre of Mexico, according to Arizona Game and Fish.

Conservation groups that want to see the jaguar repopulate the American Southwest were delighted by the new photographic evidence. "The fact that jaguars are still making it as individuals back to their old habitat means there's hope for eventual recovery," said Michael Robinson of the Center for Biological Diversity's Silver City, N.M., office.

Robinson said his group's first priority is to stabilize the remaining jaguar populations in Mexico - which are threatened by habitat loss - and to assess what land on both sides of the border is suitable for jaguars. "We're not pushing reintroduction at this time," Robinson said, "but everything should be on the table."

Reintroduction of another of the Southwest's top predators - the Mexican gray wolf - has been fought tooth-and-nail by some ranchers and other residents along the New Mexico-Arizona border, where about 30 wolves now roam. Ranchers' livestock would be one potential food source for jaguars. Biologists believe the cats photographed in Arizona have mostly eaten deer and javelina.

David Hodges, executive director of the Tucson-based Sky Island Alliance, said the jaguar was photographed in a large, roadless area with abundant deer that was previously identified as prime habitat or reintroduction of wolves. "This points to the importance of large roadless areas if we're going to have species like jaguars and wolves as permanent residents," Hodges said.

Hodges said there's evidence the jaguar filmed in December has taken up residence in the area because several campers have sighted "a large spotted cat" in the past few months. Game and Fish officials say they routinely field calls about possible jaguar sightings, but many people misidentify a bobcat or mountain lion.

The stealthy, muscular jaguar is a formidable beast. Its sharp claws sink into fish, lizards, monkeys, cattle and dozens of other species in habitat that ranges from swampy savannas to pine forests. In Latin America, where the jaguars' numbers are greater, the creature is still considered a threat by some, while its spotted form was a powerful icon for the Mayans, Incas and Aztecs.

Arizona biologists say the shy cat poses virtually no risk to humans since it prefers unpopulated areas and avoids contact with people. "If you're not cornering the animal, there's no indication they would be a harm to people," said Tim Snow of the Game and Fish Department's Tucson office. "Personally, I'd like to see one myself. I think it's fascinating that a large animal like this can still occur here."

The photo of a jaguar was taken in December by a remote, motion-activated camera set out to monitor potential jaguar corridors near the border: <http://www.azstarnet.com/star/tue/sp020526.jpg>

By Mitch Tobin
ARIZONA DAILY STAR
Tuesday, 5 February 2002

SOURCE: <http://www.azstarnet.com/star/tue/20205JAGUAR.html>

Feline Reflections

By Lynn Culver

It's another day at the N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center, home to 43 adult cats of six different species. It's Wednesday, July 3, and I am still recovering emotionally from yet another airline shipping snafu that happened the day before. I shipped on the last flight of the day - against my better judgment. I hung around the city of Little Rock for nearly 90 minutes, calling cargo to make sure the cat left on the plane before I headed home. I got incorrect info though, it had been removed from the jet when the flight was delayed further and it risked missing its connecting flight, and this fact was not forwarded to the main cargo center. Fortunately, the feline guardian angel was watching over this little bobcat. Someone who used to live in my town, who knew me and my cats, was a friend of the airline manager. When I returned home after a 2 hour drive, I received a call from her for permission to take the kitten home and care for it overnight so that it could be shipped early the next morning. Seems I can never think of everything, and no matter how prepared I am, there is always another curveball coming out of nowhere. Someday I will have to write an article for LIOC on all the experiences I have had shipping felines so that others do not have to suffer as I have.

This type of experience is not only stressful for the kitten, it is extremely hard on me also. Just when I am ready to say "bag it", and give up my USDA license to produce and disperse offspring, I get a call from a happy customer who just wants to share with me how much joy their serval brings to them. I remind myself, all professions have headaches, and this too will pass. And then the phone rings again. It is Liz, who purchased one of our serval offspring last year and a one of our caracal kittens this year. She also wants to check in with me. And I realize I am blessed, for what I do for a profession not only helps the felines, it makes people happy, and these people become my friends for life.



I guess it was written in the stars that my life should end up like this, even though I was born and raised in Maryland, a state that is completely closed to private ownership of wild cats. I remember as a youngster watching Born Free at a local matinee. I fell in love with Elsa lioness and I longed to experience that interspecies connection that the Adamson's had with her. I remember reading "The Basic Book of the Cat", which had a chapter on exotic cats as pets. There was a quote in the book about how owning an exotic required "The heart of a lion, the fleetness of foot of an antelope and the forgiveness of a saint". I read about ocelots and bobcats and cougars and it mentioned Catherine Cissin in Long Island. And I wished to one day experience such a magical relationship with a wild feline.

Bart took me out on a date for my 16th birthday and by the time I was 21 we were married and living in Arkansas. In my late twenties, I awoke from an unforgettable dream; Bart and I were at a hospital where I had just given birth to a beautiful, white Angora kitten. As it lay on my belly and we were both filled with love and admiration of her beauty and soft fur, and neither of us thought there was anything strange about giving birth to a kitten.

As I reflect on how I got here, I can never forget my first, close encounter of the wild feline kind. It was 17 years ago when Bart and I first stroked the soft fur of tame, wild felines. We visited Arkansas exotic animal breeders Floyd and Barbara Jones, and their kittens and cubs. A bobcat kitten and a cougar and a jaguar cub were living in their home at that time. Pepe the jaguar sat in my lap and I thought, "Now I have died and gone to Heaven". I relive that feeling every time a cat lover comes to visit and marvels when they get to pet one of our tame bobcat, cougar, lynx, serval, caracal or Geoffroy's cat. I never forget how lucky Bart and I are to live in harmony among such wondrous creatures.

We had placed an order for a bobcat kitten that day at the Jones', but two weeks later returned, making an impetuous purchase of a cougar kitten instead. One cat, one surrogate child. Our white Angora kitten turned out to be a 10 day old, fuzzy, spotted cougar kitten. The absolute cutest feline on earth. And as it lay on my belly that night, my heart full of love for him, I felt a slight twinge of fear of the unknown, and I wondered, "What am I doing? Will I regret this decision? Will this tiny creature grow up to hurt me someday?"

Little Mercury cougar filled my life with new meaning. I began to see the world through the eyes of a cougar, as we went for leash walks across our 30 acre property. And the bond between feline child and human mother was intense. I can remember many a night that I went outside to sit under the moonlight with Mercury, serenaded by his purring while he lovingly sucked my hand and kneaded me with his paws. To him, I was his mother and he worshipped me like a goddess. To me, he was my child and I was his guardian, I would protect him and love him and devote my life to him and his kind.

When he reached the age of 14 months, a life changing event occurred. During a walk on our property with Mercury and our two dogs, I temporarily let go of his leash and he followed the dogs out of my view. When I called for their return, only the dogs obeyed. What followed was several hours of anguish as Bart and I intensively explored our neighbor's cattle fields and walked the banks of our creek searching for him. But we saw and heard nothing out of the ordinary. He had vanished. When we failed to locate him and he failed to turn up voluntarily, we were left with no other choice but to return home and wait by the phone for that dreaded call we were sure would follow. And it did - Mercury had been chasing the upstream neighbor's cows and he had been shot, but not fatally. We jumped into the truck and arrived to find his 20 foot long leash now tangled around a tree, and my little boy chirping a friendly hello.

Yes, that was the day that changed everything. At that time another cage had been under construction for Tara, a lovely 7 month old female cougar we had arranged to purchase to keep our spoiled "little boy" company. But now it lay empty, mocking our efforts to fill Mercury's life with meaning. Fortunately our prayers were answered that night. The X-ray examination performed at our vet's office revealed that there was no bullet in Mercury. It had bounced off his ribs, and he was going to live. Never again, I vowed, would I take such a chance with his life. We began fencing in a quarter acre exercise area immediately. And several weeks later Tara, our female sweetheart came home to live with us.

Two years later this pair produced their first litter, three boys, Cinnabar, Arjan and Sharu. These very special cougars were born while Bart and I lay beside Tara in her house. Tara, 90 pounds of natural born killer, predator supreme in North America, was a serene and loving mother. Gentle, patient and wise, she watched over her offspring as we co-raised these kittens with her and kept a daily written and video log of their growth and behavior for our cougar behavior study. By this time, Bart had erected enough fence to enclose 5 acres, which contained woods, meadow, hillsides and wet weather swamp. This area became the focus of our natural behavior research. Cinnabar, Arjan and Sharu are the three sweetest, most loving creatures we have ever known. We took them and their mother Tara for walks in their woods daily, stopping frequently for hugs and purrs and rubs and hand sucking. Those were the happiest years of my life.

And about this time, we starting getting calls asking us to provide homes for adult cougars needing relocation, and that is how Max and Patches came into our life. Max was, without a doubt, the most mild mannered, domestic cougar I have ever known. He spent time with Patches in their large enclosure and he spent time in our 2 acres of fenced-in yard. Bart tied a rope to the latch of front porch door and Max learned to open it and let himself in. He had his own bed on the porch. He got along with Mercury and Tara through their fence. And most remarkably, he befriended the three boys. You see, Cougar Country, the 5 acre fenced-in habitat was theirs, and Max wanted it too, so he initiated his offer of friendship. And these male cougars didn't feel the need to exclude others from their territory like their cousins in the wild do. Max and the yearling boys became Dartanion and the three Musketeers. And while their natural mother Tara had rejected them when they turned 8 months of age, Max formed a lasting friendship bond with them. We would walk together in Cougar Country with 4 adult male cougars beside us and it was wonderful world we lived in.



At just a couple months over one year of age, and only three months after arriving here, Max developed life threatening heart problems from cardiomyopathy. By the grace of God and our wonderful vet, Dr. Adney, he was cured with massive supplemental doses of the essential amino acid Taurine. That experience cost Max a few of his nine lives for sure. And after conquering this devastating condition, only three years later at the extremely young age of 4, Max developed cirrhosis of the liver. The first sign presented itself on my birthday, December 5th. He had a fever of 106 degrees. I drove him 70 miles to Dr. Adney with no other symptoms apparent yet. Over the next three weeks, he developed persistent diarrhea and anorexia. Two weeks later at the second visit to the vet, we discovered he was in toxic shock from liver failure which had allowed dangerous poisons to build up in his blood. X-ray examination confirmed the worst - his liver was one forth the size of normal. Dr. Adney held out little hope for Max because even though the liver is an amazing organ capable of regenerating itself, cougars are obligate carnivores and digested meat turns into uremia poisoning in the blood without a properly functioning liver. Max was sent home with an IV shunt in his arm and I had a case of lactated ringers solution to administer over the next week. But maintaining metabolic equilibrium for Max was a balancing act we could not accomplish. On Christmas Day 1993, I knew my prayers were not going to be answered this time. I was not going to be granted another miracle from God. Max's time on Earth was coming to an end and because I loved him so much, I did what you can do for an animal, but can't for a human. As he lay on my bedroom floor, weak and unmoving, gasping for each breath because of the fluid build-up around his lungs that had not subsided after administering diuretics, I did what I felt was best for him. With all the love a mother has in her heart, I injected Phenobarbital into his IV line to release him from his suffering. And a part of me died with Max that day.

Sammy was born at our place and sold as a kitten. When he was just 8 months old, his owner purchased Sampson, a very old, massively large, gentle, neutered Canadian cougar. This unlikely pair lived in harmony. When Sammy was just a few months over a year old, his owner asked us to board the pair for a few months while he was away. He never returned. Six years later we discovered the lifeless body of our dear friend Sampson, laying under the shade of a large cedar tree in the middle of his exercise yard. We presume he died of a heart attack. We guess his age to have been close to 18 years. Sammy is with us still.

Bobby and Dot, an adult pair of bobcats that needed a home arrived here in the early 90's. This pair produced a trio of kittens, but after Dot gave birth and cleaned them up, she carried them outside her house and dropped them on the ground. I am not sure why, as every litter since she has been a model mother. We brought the tiny fur balls into our home and I bottle fed them from birth, without the benefit of their mother's colostrums to give them antibody protection. And I learned the hard lessons about aspiration pneumonia. One female kitten died of this when she was only 9 days old. I felt so helpless and sad to witness her young life over before she had even opened her eyes. Her sister perished also. At the age of 17 days, she spent the night at the hospital under treatment for pneumonia, and we elected to give her an experimental injection of spun serum into her peritoneal cavity for antibody protection. I believe she had a reaction to this injection, being older than a newborn, as she began to seizure as we drove her home. I spent the next seven hours fighting for her life, but it was not to be. She rests in peace forever.



That left Wimpy, the male kitten, as the lone survivor of Dot's litter. He earned his name because he was so limp after he accidentally overheated and dehydrated from the heating pad. I awoke to find him a limp dishrag, hovering near death. Sub-q fluids brought him back to life, but he was too weak to suck the bottle. I learned how to tube feed a neonatal kitten, which is a nerve-racking experience that leaves no room for mistakes. After five days of tube feeding him his every meal, he recovered enough strength to suck the bottle. And that is how Wimpy got his name and became the pet bobcat we had always wanted. We paired him up with Missy Woo, a female kitten we purchased from a petting zoo in Wisconsin and raised them together in our home. And from this pair we learned about "bobcatty" ways and the pure joy of bobcat love.

Our feline collection continued to grow. We purchased bobcats Buzz and his ladies Baby and Bobette, from Oklahoma, and Dolly arrived from Florida. Later we gave Bella, an 8 month old female bobcat from Texas that was rejected as a pet, a new home. I will always wonder what went wrong to make her so unwilling to be handled, but Bella loved the other bobcats and that is what mattered - she was happy to be here.

We purchased Prometheus and Pandora, a bonded breeding pair of adult servals in the early 90's. While both felines were hand-raised by the same person, Pandora adjusted to her new home here as a pleasant and mild mannered lady. Prometheus however, was a defensive, hissy male. My husbandry experience and feline knowledge increased as I raised their beautifully spotted kittens, which took after their mother's mellow ways. Prometheus is now buried beside Max and Sampson and our other departed feline friends in our garden cemetery. We chose to have Dr. Adney put him to sleep this past spring, after he was diagnosed with lymphosarcoma. He had lost significant weight and his activity level was clearly diminished, the cancer had settled into his kidneys. His best years were behind him, and I felt it unnecessary to attempt prolong the inevitable.

We experienced Canadian lynx, another wonderful feline personality. In 1998 we hand reared a pair of our bobcat kittens we planned to keep, with a trio of Canadian lynx we purchased, and a serval kitten of ours and another from a friend, together in a mixed species group. One of the lynx was being raised for a friend and was supposed to be picked up shortly after she arrived, but fate had other plans for us. It was time to learn new lessons in kitten rearing. Fluffy Canadian lynx arrived with the campylobacter protozoan living her intestines. It took three trips to three different veterinarians before Dr. Adney identified this culprit in her stool samples and prescribed flagyl to cure the infestation.

Campylobacter is a nasty parasitic organism, causing diarrhea, weight loss, reduced appetite, lethargy and dehydration. If not treated, it can kill the host animal. In Fluffy's case, it had a good head start before we knew what it was. But she was a fighter and even though her skinny body was being starved she refused to give up. It was her will to live that bought us valuable time to save her life. Campylobacter is also extremely contagious. Before the summer was over, all 7 of the kittens had contracted the



organism, suffering ill effects to varying degrees, with the bobcats being the most resistant and the Canadian lynx the most susceptible. It was the summer of diarrhea everywhere - kitten paw prints in it before I could get it wiped up, re-infecting each other before I could break the cycle. It gave new meaning to the old expression - "Just another shitty day in paradise." Finally though, they reached an age where their immune systems kicked in enough to help me overcome this battle and we turned the tide on the situation. In August Fluffy, the Canadian lynx that brought this nightmare into my home, finally left for her real mommy in California. The remaining 3 pair of kittens moved outdoors that November into a large enclosure where they lived in harmony for the next year before they were separated by species into three separate enclosures.

Latest to arrive at N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center is the geoffroy's cats, little South American predators, both spotted and black. A breeding trio on loan produced a single litter the summer of 2001. It was a surprise, having never witnessed the breeding and only suspected the pregnancy a week beforehand when I observed the unmistakable kicking an rolling motions of kittens inside Terra's belly. This was Terra's first litter and this made us both nervous, but after 10 days of letting her nurse I removed the pair for hand rearing. They were tiny, and hissy and spitty - just like I had imagined. But they mellowed out in a couple of days into loving personalities.

We traded them for Molly, an unrelated spotted female geoffroy's cat. Molly has shown us the world of the geoffroy's--agile climbers and fearless investigators. Molly is happiest when she has my finger held gently between her teeth and her paws kneading the air and her purr box humming. She can remain in this trance-like state for 30 minutes or more. She is being raised with Mariah, a beautiful female bobcat born to Bella and Buzz. Mariah is the pick of last year's litter; stunningly spotted, amazingly friendly, she never stops purring. This pair still lives in our home. They have seen several bobcat and serval and caracal kitten litters come and go this past year and have been gentle and loving to them all.

We now care for 43 cats, including 13 Geoffroy's cats, three African caracals, 4 African servals, 3 Canadian lynx, 13 bobcats and 7 cougars. Mercury and Tara are 17 years old. Mercury is no longer "my little boy". He is a mature and territorial male cougar. This past spring Mercury and Tara and Sammy and Atika all fell ill from an intestinal virus. Mercury was the most seriously affected, he was lethargic and anorexic for weeks. He fasted for nearly 21 days and we wondered if we would ever again hear him scream, which was his way of informing us that dinner was late. Tara was never far from him. She gave him constant comfort, grooming him and laying at his side. Our medical intervention and efforts to help him caused him to resent us. We had to sedate him and administer sub-q lactated ringers solution twice before he finally recovered enough to resume eating.

He escaped the grim reaper this time, but I know that Mercury and Tara will not live forever. Someday this feline pair that started it all for us, will leave us with nothing but memories. It seems like yesterday and it seems like forever ago, that I stared into tiny Mercury's deep blue eyes and promised him I would always be there for him.



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Goodbye to Grumpy



Reprinted from an August 2001 e-mail by Leann Montgomery

I apologize upfront to all of you who didn't need a tearjerker today, but I feel I must say a public goodbye to my Grumpy who went to sleep last night and didn't wake up. Grumpy was one of those special cats who makes a lasting impression on you. I took him in two years ago and honestly didn't expect him to live another 6 months. His former owner claimed that he was at least 17 years old. He looked 100. He was frail and thin and it hurt him to move. I soon realized that he had no sight at all and a very poor sense of smell. I thought his days were numbered even back then but I decided to do everything possible to make him happy and comfortable. Thus started our feeding ritual.

I put Grumpy on glucosamine and some other supplements and would talk to him and touch his food to his nose, otherwise, he couldn't find it and wouldn't eat. I wondered if his previous owner had ever noticed and made accommodations for his handicaps. He began to eat vigorously and his joints improved some too. One morning I went out and one whole side of face was swollen up as big as a softball. Now mind you, Grumpy didn't get the name for no apparent reason. He was really kind of a shithead. My first guess was that it was his teeth since he was so old and we had avoided knocking him down and doing a complete physical on him since he seemed so frail. I was sure that anesthetic would kill him but now I didn't have a choice. If it was an infection it could easily kill him quickly so I knocked him out and took him in to see my vet. To be as old as he was, his teeth looked great and he grumbled at us the whole time he was under. We were unable to find the cause of the swelling but we did a complete blood panel and physical on him while we had him under. To my surprise, he checked out pretty well. And my vet gave him several injections for infection and swelling.

I was sure that Grumpy wasn't going to recover from all this but much to my surprise, by the next morning all the swelling was gone and he was eating good. From that point on we lovingly called him old rickety or the cat that wouldn't die. This all happened over a year and a half ago. And while I knew that Grumpy would not be a member of this family for years to come, I never expected to lose him now. I knew the damage had already been done to him. Improper nutrition had caused a lot of his problems, but I still hoped that he would continue to hold his own. He gave me every indication that he would. This spring he actually tried to mount Tess, his old female counterpart. Of course, he realized that it was way too much trouble on his old joints and gave up, but the fact that he showed interest had amazed me. He seemed happy this year and I'd hoped that everything we'd been doing for him was working. He

seemed more comfortable and moved around more. I opened some cans with the cats in the early evening last night. Grumpy met me at the door blowing drool bubbles and bobbing his head around, thinking I had food. This was business as usual since he'd learned to associate my voice with good food and feeling better. He seemed fine. A few hours later I went out to actually feed and I knew something was wrong, when he didn't meet me at the door pushing Taz out of the way for his food. Tess was also not there. It was dark and probably not very smart (since these three are rescue cats and not very handlable) but I went in to see what was wrong. I found Grumpy curled up in his favorite spot with Tess watching over him. He just went to sleep and didn't wake up.

I cried all night last night and most of today until a 4 year old set me straight. My niece, Hannah, wiped the tears from my face and said, "Don't cry, Aunt Lan, It won't hurt Grumpy to walk no more now cause he has wings" I hope she's right. I hope my old man is somewhere where he can run and jump and see and smell and doesn't hurt anymore, but that won't keep me from crying every time I go out to feed and old rickety isn't there blowing drool bubbles and biting the air. Things will not be the same around here. We've lost a very special cat.

Farewell

Do not stand at my grave and weep;
I am not there. I do not sleep.

I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn's rain.

When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush of quiet birds
in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.

Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there, I did not die.

...Author unknown

Trends in Opposing Private Ownership of Exotic Felines

Banning Exotic and Dangerous Wildlife for the Animals' Sake, this was the headline of article in the September *Animal People* news magazine. It illustrates the latest development in strategies opposing private ownership - to ally oneself with the animals themselves and to claim to be the spokesperson for them.

This article mentions federal bill H.R. 5226, which would have modified the Lacey Act to halt the interstate pet trade in dangerous large felines. It failed to reach the floor for a vote before Congress recessed in October and thankfully, is now defunct. This bill could however be reintroduced anytime next year so close scrutiny of all proposed bills must be maintained.

Texas is currently implementing its state-legislature mandated, county regulation of exotic cats. Many counties seem to be opting for the seemingly easy way out; that is to ban, rather than regulate these animals. And over the next few years the repercussions of such short-sighted actions will be felt by owners, sanctuaries, humane societies and the animals themselves. A case in point, FCF members Charles and Rita Ehrhardt, who provide sanctuary for tigers and lion were served with a warrant for possession of large cats in defiance of the county law. Adding additional financial strain to an already stretched-tight charitable budget, the Ehrhardt's had to hire legal assistance, do extensive research and appeal the actions of the county officials and gain a USDA license to continue the operation of their refuge. Others Texas residents, faced with large fines and unaffordable legal fees have opted to give up their felines. Locating placement options is becoming increasingly problematic as existing refuges reach capacity and new refuges cannot be started due to prohibitive new legislation being enacted across the country.

Otherwise law abiding citizens of this once exotic-friendly state of Texas are now faced with either parting with felines they have no desire to lose, or going underground and risking confiscation at any time. Hardly a comforting thought, a ticking time bomb ready to explode. Confusion and ambiguity add to the problems. One USDA licensed, large cat owning FCF member told me her sheriff recently said to her as he was standing on her property, that his sheriff's department has a "We don't look" policy.

In addition to the Texas state legislature mandating county regulation of exotic felines, many other parts of the country are tightening control or prohibiting ownership as well. **Missouri** in August 2001 required exotic animal owners to register their animals with local law enforcement agencies. **Washington County, AR** in August 2001 required owners of exotic animals to post warnings of the animals' presence and asked owners to register their animals. **South Whitehall Township, PA** in October 2001 banned possession of any animal which is wild, fierce, dangerous, obnoxious, or naturally inclined to do harm and this list included bobcats. **Southwest Ranches, FL** in January 2002 prohibited public display of exotic wildlife other than animals kept by non-profit organizations. **Racine, WI**, January 2002 banned private possession of any wild, vicious or hybrid animals. **Cleveland, OH** in June 2002 banned big cats, dangerous reptiles and other pets deemed dangerous. **Austintown, OH** in August 2002 banned private possession of endangered species, non-native wildlife and predators not indigenous to Ohio.

Every day there is a new challenge, accident or episode which is highlighted by our opposition to threaten our cherished way of life. In September, three incidents which happened within a two week period were reported by national news: A yearling tiger exhibited by U.S.D.A. licensed, A Zoo For You Exotics, jumped over the first row of seats at a California school yard and grabbed a kindergartener by the head. The child was airlifted to a nearby hospital.

In Arkansas, four lions roamed loose in the yard and surrounding neighbors' properties of a USDA licensed facility before the last feline was shot dead, 48 hours after the first was discovered loose. Formerly a USDA licensed lion and tiger exhibitor, Steve Henning first discovered the animals in his yard. He states they are not his and speculates they were dropped off by someone who had contacted him earlier trying to donate the animals to him. After this incident neighbors raised concerns about the safety of living next to such a facility and the county passed a new ordinance forbidding the keeping of wild felines. Even though the owner had displayed his collection and operated a private zoo in another Arkansas county for many years and he insisted the loose lions were not even his, he was pressured to give up his collection. Arrangements have been made for the nearly 4 dozen big cats to be divided between Turpentine Creek Sanctuary in Eureka Springs, AR and Tiger Haven in Knoxville, TN, two large sanctuaries that both already house over 100 wild felines each.

CNN News covered the story of Tigger the tiger, owned by Mary Jeanne Williams, who escaped from his transport enclosure at a Bloomington, IL truck stop in the early morning hours of September 28th. Loose for nearly seven hours, several attempts by Mary and her son to coax Tigger back into his enclosure were unsuccessful. Efforts to tranquilize him by G & F, zoo officials, and law enforcement agents also failed. He was shot dead around 2:00p.m. when it appeared he was going to leave the area. Mary Jeanne Williams had just appeared in Putnam County Court the day previously to face charges of child endangerment brought about when Tigger bit a 7-year old child who was petting the tiger. Mary was fined and ordered on probation for the incident, then the court gave her permission to transport Tigger back to her home in Texas. Mary had originally transported Tigger from her residence in Texas to stay in Illinois when her county passed an ordinance restricting big cat ownership to USDA licensed facilities only and she lacked the necessary license.

These accidents and escapes provide new fuel for an existing public-hysteria fire being built by anti-private ownership forces, who's membership consists of such diverse and politically powerful factions such as PETA and HSUS as well as recognized animal care givers of the AZA (American Zoo Association) and the two nationally accredited sanctuary associations, TAOS (The Association of Sanctuaries) and ASA (American Sanctuary Association).

Former ASA Board of Director member Carol Asvestos, CEO of Wild Animal Orphanage, in San Antonio, TX has publicly stated in both paid ads in Animal People magazine and on the Phoenix internet discussion board that she is on a personal campaign to **end all private ownership of wild felines and to forbid captive breeding and sale of offspring to individuals**. Carol is no longer a member of the ASA anymore.

Last August, National Geographic Explorer television crews highlighted the issues surrounding Big Cat ownership and devoted much of an hour long program to her facility, giving her anti-private ownership viewpoints a national TV audience. A short reprieve from the criticism was gained when the National Geographic crew attended an annual convention of Phoenix members at Parumph, NV. National Geographic devoted a few minutes of airtime near the end of their program to the positive side of private ownership.

In New Jersey, Tigers Only Preservation Society owner and director, Joan Byran Meresk has been engaged in a four-year legal battle to regain her state permit and her right to maintain ownership of her 23 tigers. Her problems began when a free-roaming tiger was shot by officials outside the area of her facility. Joan has maintained that the animal shot was not her tiger and the New Jersey officials have not been able to prove otherwise. However, Joan's neighborhood has grown up in the two decades since the Meresk's first obtained a state permit and pressure by residents has fueled the G & F efforts to force them to remove their tigers from their preserve. She has appealed all decisions so far, and is expected to appeal the latest court decision once again. New Jersey G & F have set aside approximately \$80,000 to send Joan's tigers to Carol Asvestos' facility.

Another large sanctuary facility, The Wildlife Waystation in California, run by Martine Colette was just down in November after a three year history of USDA inspections amassed nearly 300 violations of animal care regulations. Martine, another director of the ASA, is a vocal opponent of private ownership. Her facility is one of the largest in California and she estimates that to come into compliance with the various state and federal infractions will cost approximately \$5,000,000.

Many issues are on the horizon, from accidents to escapes to confiscations and court battles. There is also evidence of in-fighting among members of the two national sanctuary associations as they vie for special privileges and exemptions in the state laws they are proposing.

The responsible private owners must take the time to speak out in local, state and federal arenas. We must contact our legislators and let them know this is an issue dear to our hearts. We must devote the time it takes to get our message out or **we** will become an endangered species on the brink of extirpation in the United States.

One promising project in the works is a series of short stories being edited by the Phoenix organization in a book to highlight the positive side of private ownership. This will gain us national positive press, and help educate legislators as well. I urge all FCF members to take the time to write up a true experience and forward it to Jeanne Hall for submission into this book project. Her address can be found on page 2 of the newsletter under ACEF branch.

by Lynn Culver/ FCF Legal Affairs Director



ACEF Minutes from October

This meeting was held at the home of Frank Bodenmiller. The major attractions here are the Tiger, Cougar, and 2 bear cubs! Many pictures were taken. Eventually we settled down to have the business part of the meeting.

We've only received data from 3 people for the club directory. The directory committee will be looking into better ways to gather submissions. We aren't going to be running the form in the newsletter again until the committee reviews the process.

The treasurer's report was given, and next years budget is being set.

The club had a booth at the Puyallup Exotic Animal fair, and we gained 3 new members, and a bunch of flyers were handed out. Mike and Jennifer were able to attend some of the Skagit county meetings, and after talking with the commissioners, it looks like the exotic animal ordinance will be modified to be sensible.

The Bylaw modifications for new voting rules were presented, and will be voted on at the November meeting. These changes will allow proxy votes, as well as absentee ballots. There is a new email list on Yahoo for ACEF business discussions only. Jeanne will join everybody to this list, and those who don't want to be on it will be removed when they ask to be.

Our bid to do the FCF newsletter lost out to another group who found a much lower price from a printer. So we won't be doing the FCF newsletter. I will be contacting people to see who wants to start receiving the newsletter only via Email, and not via Postal delivery.

Jeanne presented the outline of the new "Long Island Ocelot Club" project, which seems to be going along quite well.

We are getting together a bulk cat food purchase for the club. This would be 40lb bags of the Healthy Pet Net cat food "Life's Abundance" that the club is selling for about \$65 each, which is a big discount from the normal price. We also have a great price on the dog food at 29.95 for 40 lbs when purchased in bulk. Contact Christi or Jeanne if you are interested.

We have received some nice signs that say (paraphrased) "It may be a Federal Offence to mess with this animal..." to place on and around the cat's cages from our members in Idaho, Glenda and Chuck, to use for promotions and rewards. Teresa Albert will be assisting Christi Hall with doing promotions.

We are looking into getting club Sweatshirts as well as another order of Jackets, again, contact Jeanne or John Lussmyer if you are interested. Since we aren't sure if the Woodland Park Zoo event is going to happen, we may have the January meeting here at Franks. We voted to give a congratulations card and 1 year memberships to Peter Kukol and his new wife.

--submitted by John G. Lussmyer <mailto:Cougar@CasaDelGato.Com>

Its all routineAround here

Osiris, our serval, always got his own piece of turkey which he ate on the counter. It was the only way you could actually make a sandwich. I got so tired of having the meat slapped out of my hand that it became ritual for me just to give him the damn turkey and then make the sandwich. Another of our little rituals was to wait until my husband Brett was almost asleep and then I'd pat his stomach and Osiris would pounce. (Okay it was cute when he was small.)

Anyway for some reason or another, Brett was left to make his own lunch. I guess I should have told him about the ritual. I came home to a note that read...

DEAR MOM,

APPARANTLY THE BIG GOOFY GUY DOES NOT REALIZE THAT I'M SUPPOSED TO GET A PIECE OF TURKEY WHEN HE MAKES A SANDWICH. I KEPT TRYING TO TELL HIM BUT HE WOULDN'T LISTEN. I FINALLY HAD TO JUST TAKE IT AWAY FROM HIM. I HOPE YOU WILL HAVE A TALK WITH HIM AND RECTIFY THIS SITUATION. OTHERWISE I'LL BE FORCED TO JUMP ON HIS NUTS WHILE HE'S TRYING TO SLEEP. I LOVE YOU.

OSIRIS

PS IT'S MUCH BETTER WHEN MY MOMMY IS HERE TO MAKE THE SANDWICHES. THE BIG GOOFY GUY THINKS SO TOO.

by Leann Montgomery, Director Members Services

Neonate Felid Care-A Beginner's Overview

Submitted by Bobby Bean

This is a compilation from contributors at the EFBC-Feline Conservation Center in Rosamond, California, Hexagon Farm, Wild Feline Breeding Facility in San Juan Bautista, California Mountain View Breeding & Conservation Center in Langley B.C., Canada, and Robert Bean of the International Zoological Research and Exchange in Knoxville, Tennessee, done for the AZA felid TAG. This is intended as an overview, not a detailed guide to hand rearing kittens. This group of authors advocates for allowing kittens to remain on the dam for rearing when possible.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT FORMULAS

All data prior to 1995 regarding formulas using KMR[®] and Esbilac[®] are based on a different ingredient content than currently in use. Butterfat replaced coconut oil (listed on the label as vegetable oil), and, while this works well for domestic dogs and cats for whom the products were intended, in a number of non-domestic species, including felids, sudden constipation resulting in death have been attributed to blockages caused by undigested butterfat found in the stomach during necropsy.

This does not appear to be species specific and occurs randomly, but concerns have prompted most institutions to switch to a new Borden/Pet-Ag line of products, available only in powder form. Called Zoologic Milk Matrix[®], the original (and safe) KMR[®] and Esbilac[®] are now marketed under the names Milk Matrix[®] 42/25 and 33/40 respectively.

There have been a wide variety of different formulas used for felines. Some of the most common formulas used for felines had been KMR[®] feline milk substitute by Borden/Pet-Ag, and, Esbilac[®] canine milk substitute also from Borden/Pet-Ag, and the new Milk Matrix[®] 33-40 from Borden/Pet-Ag. Other formulas include goat's milk and dairy milk.

Goat's milk and dairy milk by themselves are not very good formulas for normal hand raising purposes. The addition of supplements is necessary for adequate nutrition. There may be times when specific incidences require a formula comprised of these products, but always check with your veterinarian first.

KMR[®] had been widely used as a milk replacement for felines but in our opinion incidences of quality control and constant reformulation made this a questionable choice. The formula most widely used is the old Esbilac[®] formula (now called Milk Matrix[®] 33-40) liquid milk replacement. Esbilac[®] was available in two forms, a liquid form and a powder form that has to be mixed with water. The old powder form was not recommended for small felids unless mixed with an electric blender because it had a tendency to clump and settle at the bottom of the bottle. It has also been known to separate in the kittens stomach and cause a blockage. We recommended the liquid formula available in 8 and 12 oz cans.

NOTE: The newer Milk Matrix[®] blends much easier and does not clump. Although 33-40 (Esbilac[®]) is somewhat lower in fat content than natural feline milk, the short time that the animals are on this formula and the ease of supplementing it makes this formula a good choice.

FEEDING POSITION

This is extremely important! There is a tendency to want to hold the kitten in your arms when feeding and, unfortunately, it usually means the kitten is not in the correct position to feed. Holding the kitten in your arms usually causes the kitten to end up in an upright or head back position thereby increasing the chances of aspiration. It is best to immediately start feeding the kitten on a table with the animal in a sternal position, that is laying on its stomach. At first it will tend to peddle forward, but in time it will become adjusted to this routine.