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Feline Conservation Federation



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Members are invited to participate in
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To sign up, contact Tracy Wilson, FCF
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Cover: Maggie margay,
resident at the Exotic Feline
Breeding Compound. Photo
by Nancy Vandermey



Stuart, the geoffroy's cat enjoys his bottle while his domestic friend Bikini poses for the camera. photo by Bart Culver



Feline Conservation Federation

This magazine is published bi-monthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. d/b/a as the Feline Conservation Federation. We are a non-profit (Federal ID# 59-2048618) non-commercial organization with international membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of this publication is to present information about exotic feline conservation, management, and ownership to our members. The material printed 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'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 magazine may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner FCF. We encourage all members to contribute articles. 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. Submission deadline for the next issue is the tenth of odd numbered months. Please submit all photos and articles to the editor. Persons interested in joining FCF should contact the term director in charge of member services.

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The Little White Tiger Who Became a “Cassanova”

By Gloria Johnson

Never did I imagine I would take on owning a tiger. I’ve raised them for up to six months and given them back to the owner, but never kept one as my own. The



Gloria Johnson

cost, the amount of food, the contradiction to the Cougar Ridge philosophy (my non-profit that concentrates on educating about the Florida Panther.) It was all wrong. As it was, I was struggling to budget in another cougar who would show better than Sugar and Lakota, since they were both rehabs and not socialized to people other than me.

But then I met Casanova. The little white tiger who stole my heart away. He was 12 weeks old and had just been returned to his breeder/owner from the neo-natal caregiver. He had no litter mate and was alone in his cage. When I went in with him, much to my surprise I discovered he was unusually docile, especially when considering he didn’t have a litter mate to take his energy out on. I was told that many people wanted to buy this absolutely perfect looking white tiger, but they all had problems with their licenses. There would be delays no doubt and he would be rejected for a tinier baby. As time passed and 12 weeks turned to 14, I knew what would happen to him. Normally babies who don’t sell at this compound become breeders. But this was a compound that was slowly downsizing. In fact he was the last baby. No more breeding was going to occur and the compound was for sale, which meant if he stayed, he would just live alone in a cage. If the compound sold or closed down, there was no telling what

would become of him.

I spent three days visiting with him, just spending the whole day in his cage. Once when he had gotten used to me he fell asleep in my arms. Something woke him and he was startled! Then he looked in my eyes, chuffed and snuggled up even closer and went back to sleep. I knew then he had decided I was mommy. My heart was jello. This was the same way it happened with my first cougar, Sugar. It was even in the same cage!

Then I got on the cell phone. I called everyone I could to raise the money to buy him. He was older than I would prefer (I like 4 weeks), but it only took another week to come up with the payment. Home we went. This little boy had to have the special treatment that my cougars get: love and personal attention all day every day. He would have a huge habi-

tat and be spoiled rotten. I would deal with the cougars’ jealousy and the money for the cage adjustments (bigger den box, stronger platform) later. There was time, but not much. I knew how fast he’d grow.

The first week home he already was spoiled. I had created a monster! If he couldn’t see me, if I left the room, he would scream until I was back. One night, remembering what human parents say “let them cry themselves to sleep or it will never end.” I went in my bedroom and covered my head with a pillow and cried too. I wanted to hold him. He finally exhausted himself and quieted down, but it still is an issue and often I have to stay away so he won’t have me trained!

He sleeps now. I just got up from lying on the kitchen floor holding him while we chuffed at each other and I scratched his ears until he fell asleep, then quietly tiptoed away. Looking at his little face it is hard to believe he’s not a toy, and that his 40 lbs will quickly turn to 400 and then more. But his ice blue eyes look into mine with love and I melt every time. God does exist—He exists in those blue eyes.



Letter from the President

One of the hardest things that we as cat owners have to face is accepting the fact that we may be taking care of more cats than we have room for or can afford. We have to carefully evaluate our capabilities of buying or taking in additional cats. I prefer to see the ones and twos verses the five or more cat ownership.

I have no problem if you choose to have more than the one or two cats as long as you have the health and financial capability to take care of the cats on a long-term basis. It is so easy to overlook your capabilities and get yourself way over your head by taking care of more cats than you should.

Some go the non-profit route thinking they will get donations that will pay for their cat expansion, but most of the time this does not work that way. They get this false hope that they will get all this money and great things will happen. Our facility is non-profit, but I sure do not live in this dream world and think all this money is going to be donated and I can have all the cats I want.

In the past few weeks, two high profile cases have come up here in Indiana. Both

were caused by the owner's lack of ability to properly take care of their cats. One case hit the front page of the Indianapolis Star newspaper, radio, and on prime-time TV news. It was on the TV and radio not just one day, but for several days.

These two Indiana cases involved owners that were way over their capabilities to care for numerous large cats. The Indiana DNR is in the process of removing the cats from these facilities. A couple of months ago, MEFES a branch FCF, sent a small group of volunteers to help one of the owners who was a former MEFES member, and had gotten into financial trouble. The volunteer group worked all day trying to rebuild the owner's fences and gates, but it was almost hopeless.

In both cases, the cats seemed to be well fed up to this point, but the owners were unable to keep their facility in good shape. A disaster was looming and we are lucky that a disaster had not already happened. The one facility that made headlines had small muddy cages and really looked bad on TV. This past week, all I heard at work was how bad a situation the cats were in

and my co-workers wanted to know if I knew the person that had the cats.

Previously I had brought a couple of my cats to General Motors where I work and presented a wildcat educational program during one of our general plant meetings. I showed slides of my facility and everyone got to see a couple of my servals in person and many were impressed with the educational program. But now this one bad image on TV appears to have wiped out the entire positive image of private ownership. Many told me that people should not be allowed to own cats like that because of what they saw on TV.

The excellent facilities, that many of us have, do not get the due respect we deserve because some owners get way over their heads and into bad situations, and the news media loves to cover their story and exploit them.

Lets all think long and hard before we take in another cat, even a cat in need. Because we all know that if properly cared for, cats live a long time.

Bob Turner

Elections are just a month away

By Evelyn Shaw

This is the time of year many hate but we can use to our advantage. Election day is November 8. Don't forget to vote. Many candidates will be going door to door to ask for your vote. Use this chance to introduce yourself and educate them about our furry family members. You have the candidate at your home; you could not have a more perfect opportunity to educate them. This will give you a chance to do some work up front in case a law does come up. As we all know many people misunderstand PETA and HSUS. If they think they save animals,

maybe you will have the chance to give them the facts. I had a candidate come to my door. He advised me that the zoos should breed wild animals. He was not aware that AZA zoos have restrictions on breeding. If the candidates do not come to your door, take the time to contact them. They need your vote and now is the time they will talk to you. It never hurts to volunteer a little time to get the right candidates in office. There are more local laws then we know what to do with. We need to change this attitude. If each of us educates someone it will make a difference.

Are You Prepared?

By Kevin Chambers

"The barn where you're keeping your lion is gone!"

Those aren't exactly the words you want to awake to, but I was a few years ago. Those words instantly propel you from blissful sleep to wide-awake in a heartbeat. In a flash, I was dressed, grabbed a high-powered rifle, and was out the door. I had just imported an adult female lion and had her in quarantine about a mile from my house. She was housed in a huge barn, concrete block construction two stories high, and a double-pitched roof over the haymow that topped 35 feet at the top. She was in a stall near the front of the barn with three concrete sides and the front made of chain link. It was built to last decades. It was a barn that you figured would last forever.

A storm had rolled through during the night and I don't know which raced faster, my mind or the truck as I tried to see what was had happened. As I pulled in the drive, I couldn't believe what I saw. The night's storm had spawned a tornado! That magnificent barn was reduced to three walls about eight feet tall, and those with only about half the footprint they had the night before. Everything else was a jumble of broken concrete, mangled timber, and twisted tin. The round metal silo that had stood sentinel beside the barn had been flattened as if it had been run over by a tank. I jumped out of the truck, rifle at the ready and approached the barn. Cautiously unlocking the door and opening it, I breathed a sigh of relief when I saw the lion contentedly lying in her stall. Thankfully, the end where she was being kept had been spared and she seemed nonchalant and unharmed from the event that had occurred during the night. The back half of the barn was indeed gone.

In fewer than 45 minutes, I had returned with a crate, lured her in with a chicken snack and had her ready to be taken back home to another secure pen when a television crew showed up. Someone had told them a lion was loose. The crew seemed disappointed when I explained to them that everything was under control and showed them the loaded lion. They weren't going to get that juicy story they had hoped for.

The point of this story? Emergency

planning. By having a plan and equipment ready for such a natural disaster, my animal was safe and sound with no one hurt and no fantastic news stories of lions roaming the countryside

In any natural disaster scenario, the safety of the public must come first. When I first went to assess the situation, I had the rifle and was prepared to use it. My policy is that if there is an escape of any dangerous animal, it will be shot if it is outside the secure area or perimeter fence. I know a lot of people will say that a tranquilizer should be used. There are a couple of very important factors that must be thought about. First, if the animal is agitated or excited, many times a tranquilizer will not work. I have personally seen times when an animal has been given many times what should be a lethal dose of tranquilizer, only to have zero effect because of the excited state of the animal. Secondly, a tranquilizer needs time to take effect, usually around ten minutes. An animal can go a long way and never be found if it takes off after being tranquilized. When dealing with potentially dangerous species, a tranquilizer should only be used if the animal is in a secure area or can be contained until the tranquilizer takes effect.

I also had a crate immediately available to place the cat in. The barn was no longer safe for the lioness to be in and I didn't have to waste time trying to locate a strong enough crate or roll cage and risk the structure collapsing on the cat. I feel that it is important to have enough crates of appropriate strength for every animal I own. If time has to be spent tracking down crates, a bad situation might get worse. I also had tranquilizing equipment with me, should the need arise to have to sedate her to get her in the crate. This was a back up if the luring her in with food had failed.

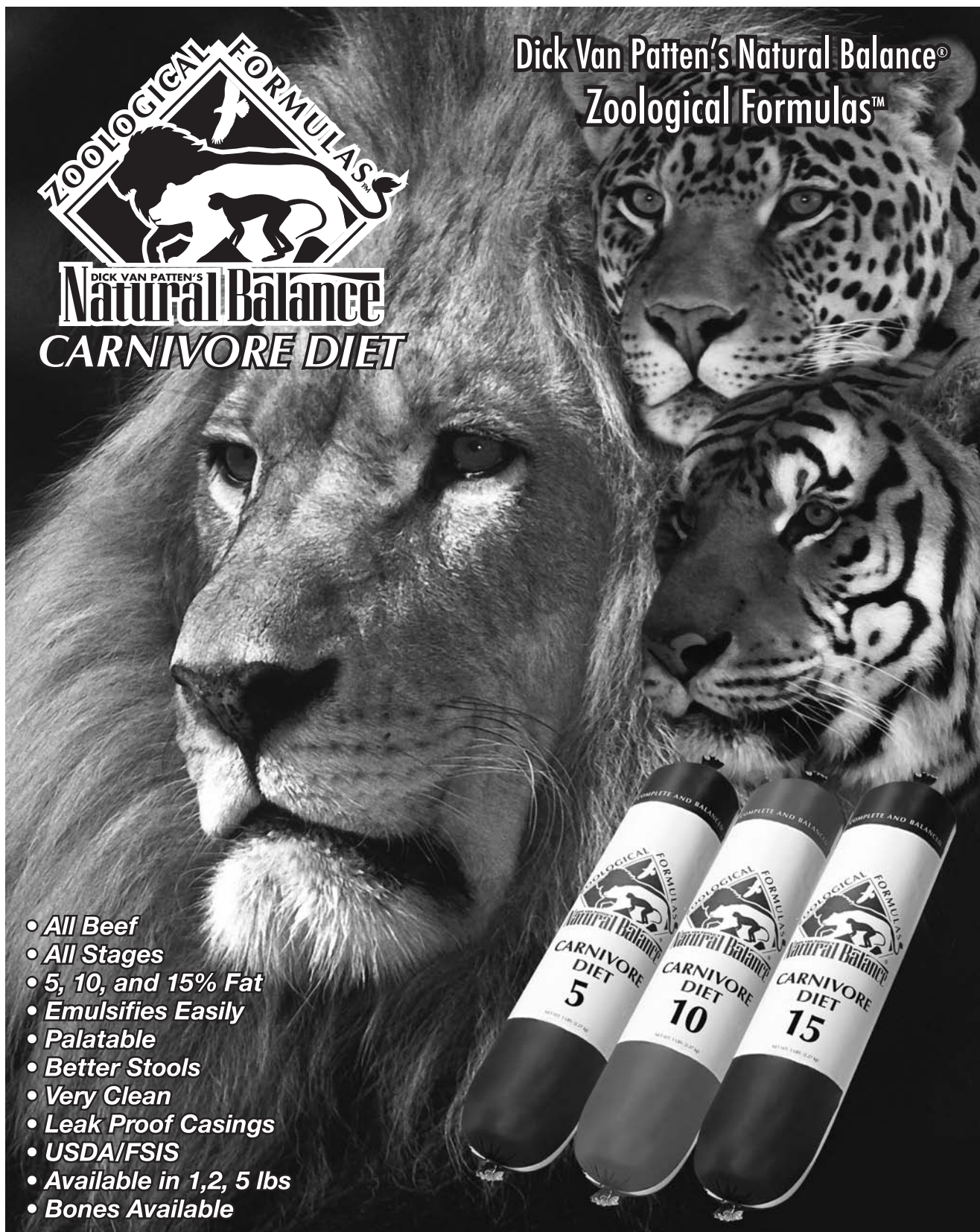
I had my home facilities to put this cat in, so she wasn't relegated to having to live temporarily in the crate until a suitable cage could be arranged. I also have 3 other nearby friends with big cats that would let me use a cage in an emergency. You should always have safe havens planned for in advance. Sometimes, a natural disaster can reach over a vast area, like a hurricane or

wildfire. In this case, you need to have some facilities in mind that you can go to that are farther away. You also need to have some way of transporting your cats there.

Because I was prepared, I was able to do all of this by myself. Had I needed help, I had the phone numbers of local people with the knowledge to help. You always need to have more than one or two people that can help because they might not be available when you need them most.

With the recent hurricanes, dealing with natural disasters has been in the news a lot. We should all give thought to, or even better yet write down, emergency plans. Having them written down can be a big aid if you are excited and not thinking clearly. It is also good if you for some reason have to have someone else carry out the emergency plan. Know where you keep it and have it somewhere that it can be available for someone else to access, if they need it. Have emergency plans ready for all kinds of scenarios: animal escapes, tornados, fire, floods, ice storms, blizzards, wild fires, hurricanes, etc. Make sure the emergency plans can answer these questions: Who, when, and how will you notify should an escape occur? What capture equipment do you have? Do you have a list of people who can aid you or bring additional capture equipment? Do you have a weapon available should the animal need to be destroyed to protect the public? Do you have safe lockdown areas or other spots available where the cats can be put to provide protection? Do you have alternative facilities where you can place the animals should your facility be damaged? Do you have enough crates for all your cats? Do you have a means to safely transport the cats?

Whether you have a big cat facility housing 100 animals or one single Geoffroy's cat in the house, you need to think of these things before they happen. It is part of being a responsible owner. That is why emergency plans are an integral part of the FCF Feline Facility Accreditation. Being prepared is the difference between breathing a sigh of relief knowing that your animals and everyone else is safe and secure or having to watch the news about a wildcat terrorizing the neighborhood.



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AMERICAN ZOO AND AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION

Not Just Showing... Sharing

By Robert L. Turner

This article is about Marvin Hierlmeier and his shared life with a very tame, lovable and beautiful male African Serval named “Hush.” Marvin has been a personal friend of mine since the time that my wife and I saw this white haired man with this beautiful cat walking along the Ohio river at Madison, Indiana during a craft and arts festival. I was taken by the beauty of Hush. My wife and I were into wildlife rehab and up to that time knew very little about the small wildcats. It was so fortunate that our paths crossed because seven weeks later we were sharing our lives with a beautiful serval kitten from Donna Amos.

Marvin is a LIOC-ESCF and MEFES member from Madison Indiana and normally is referred to as the “Cat Man” among many thousands of lonely mostly forgotten people who also call Hush their friend. In a world where people continue to enslave one another, where parents beat, abuse, and murder their own children,

where people are slain daily in the name of one religion or another, and finally the disrespect of the wildlife and the natural

world, it is hard to be shocked by what happens to many of us when we get too old to take care of ourselves and the remaining lonely forgotten life that may be remaining for us.



Marvin along with his very special Hush are doing something about it. Marvin travels all through the Midwest and parts of Canada, sharing Hush with lonely people in nursing homes.

Those trips have taken them to nursing homes in Florida; Georgia, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Manitoba Canada, and Ontario Canada. It is touching to witness this sharing of Hush and the personal interaction between Hush and the lonely confined people.

Sharing Hush has been a constant theme of Marvin's everyday life for the past 11 1/2 years. Marvin's late wife Gracie, was in a nursing home on her final days and Marvin saw the loneliness. Marvin is quick to point out that he is not showing Hush but *sharing* Hush. Marvin states that Hush is a very special, docile serval, that, if you are very lucky, comes alone only once in your lifetime. I totally agree with that statement.

I had the pleasure to travel with Marvin and Hush on some of the visits to nursing homes. For three years, I have accompanied Marvin and Hush on trips to the far northern remote areas of Manitoba and Ontario, Canada. The final leg of those trips was by floatplane. You can only imagine the looks on the native people's faces when they open up the side doors of the float plane and see this large spotted cat sitting on top the of duffel bags, eagerly wanting to jump out of a noisy 1930's float plane after a one-hour trip. One time, when a guide opened the side door of the floatplane after it stopped next to the dock, Hush made one of those



leaping exit departures. I suspect there is a native Indian guide is still swimming after he jumped into the lake after seeing this unexpected large spotted cat leaping on the dock next to him.

The first thing Marvin asks when we stop for the night in our travels to and from the floatplane base, “where is a nursing home.” I suspect they first think that Marvin wants to check into the nursing home due to his long white Einstein-style hair. Marvin gets directions and away he goes while all I want to do is take a shower and get a little rest. Marvin says, “first thing first” and if I am lucky he shows up for his shower and some rest four hours later.

I feel so privileged to have had the



opportunity to travel with Marvin and Hush on these far northern trips to remote areas of Canada. I remember the three days, one way, of travel time on these trips with Hush riding up front in the truck with his head laying on my lap for hours at a time. How sore I got for not wanting to move and disturb Hush! Now that is love of a cat.

Our trips have been interesting, like the time after traveling three days arriving late just before midnight at the float plane base in Flin Flon in northern Manitoba where we were told we may have to leave in 30 minutes. Forest fires were burning out of control close to the town and the town mayor was to announce at midnight if they were to have to evacuate the town. After traveling three days to get there, that was not what we wanted to hear. As it turned out, they decided to not evacuate the town.

Marvin and I remember the time while fishing in the boat with Hush, we caught a five-pound northern pike fish. As we were about to release the fish from the landing net, Hush decided we were going to share that fish with him. He grabbed the fish while it was still in the landing net. It took both of us 45 minutes to get the net and fish from Hush. Of course, after we got the fish out of the net, Hush got his share of the fish.

Not all of our trips up north were rosy. Two years ago when we were camped out on the Churchill River between the village of Flin Flon and the town of Churchill on the Hudson Bay, we got trapped near our cabin by forest fires. In all directions you could see forest fire flames. The scene was very haunting at night. The flames got within quarter mile of our remote cabin with no escape. The float plane could not get any closer than 50 miles to us due to the thick smoke in the sky. This went on for five days and lucky for us, we did not get harmed. We said, if we are going to die, we should just as well have fun, so we contin-



Some more amazing facts about Marvin and Hush:

- Marvin has visited and shared Hush with over 735 different nursing homes with over 5000 revisits.
- Hush was born March 1987 and is one of Donna Amos's kittens.
- Marvin and Hush lived alone in Madison Indiana.
- Marvin's age is his secret. He said age has nothing to do with what he and Hush do each day. He hopes that he can continue for many more years as long as Hush is willing.
- Marvin is a LIOC-ESCF and MEFES member.
- Marvin and Hush attended their first LIOC convention in 1997 in Jacksonville Florida and attended many more since then.
- Marvin was awarded the LIOC Lotty in 1999.
- Marvin and Hush have been featured on TV about 54 times.
- Marvin and Hush traveled over 30,000 miles a year and over 400,000 miles in the past 11-1/2 years visiting nursing homes.
- Marvin did not accept money for his time and expenses.
- Marvin visited all these nursing homes even though he is diabetic, has heart problems, problems with vision, stomach problems and back problems.
- Marvin and Hush have been featured in over 400 newspaper articles.
- Marvin and Hush have toured over 225 county courthouses.
- Marvin estimates that over 950,000 people have petted Hush.
- Madison Indiana Ohio river park landmarks are named after Hush.
- Marvin was nominated for a Jefferson award. This award is given to Indiana's top ten volunteers each year.

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Hush continued from page 9

ued to fish with Hush in the front of the boat. At times we could not see past the front of the boat due to the smoke.

Tragically, four fire fighters were trying to help a village of native indians at Leaf Rapids a few miles up the river from us. The fire fighters lost their lives in a helicopter crash into the Churchill River. We did not know about this until a few days later when we got back to the base camp. On our travel back home and while going through Winnipeg, it was an odd feeling to read the Winnipeg newspaper headlines about the loss of life at Leaf Rapids and knowing how close we were to this tragedy.

Almost every day around noon Marvin and Hush head out not knowing where they will end up which could be up to 200 miles away from Madison. One thing for sure is that one or more nursing homes got a visit by this white haired man and a beautiful spotted wildcat.

Many of us attach “hero” to film stars or sport stars (in my case, Indy driver Mario Andretti) but now Marvin and Hush are my heroes. I hope that if I ever have to go live in a nursing home, there will be Marvin and Hush making the rounds saying “hi-hi-hi, how are you doing?”

I know some day that Marvin and Hush will ride into the sunset towards heaven, looking for nursing homes. And God will smile on them for their wonderful sharing.



Marvin and Hush take a hike together.

FCF Special Third Quarter Meeting Minutes

On 08-15-05, President Robert Turner conducted a special meeting via email to address unfinished business from the convention board meeting agenda plus any new business. Voting officers were Robert Turner, Kevin Chambers, Harold Epperson, Evelyn Shaw, JB Anderson, Bobby Bean, Lynn Culver and Tracy Wilson. Marcus Cook did not vote.

***MOTION TO ACCEPT THE CONVENTION THIRD QUARTER MINUTES AS PRESENTED BY HAROLD EPPERSON**

Seven (7) Yes Votes, Zero (0) No Votes and One (1) Abstention, Motion Passed

*****MOTION TO ACCEPT THE AFRICAN SAFARI RAFFLE FUND-RAISING PROJECT AS PRESENTED BY KEVIN CHAMBERS**

Eight (8) Yes Votes, Motion Passed

*****MOTION TO ACCEPT ONE PROVISION FOR TICKET DISTRIBUTION AND FOUR INCENTIVES TO ENCOURAGE THE SALE OF AFRICAN SAFARI TICKETS AS PRESENTED BY SEVERAL BOARD MEMBERS**

A. To mail three tickets to each member. Six (6) Yes Votes and Two (2) No Votes, Provision Passed

B. To award one free ticket to the seller

of every ten (10) tickets. Eight (8) Yes Votes, Incentive Passed

C. To award free convention registration and a free hotel room for three (3) nights at the site of a future FCF convention to the seller of the most tickets. Six (6) Yes Votes and Two (2) No Votes, Incentive Passed

D. To award free registration at a future convention to the second and third highest sellers of the most tickets. Two (2) Yes Votes and Six (6) No Votes, Incentive Failed

E. To award \$100 to the seller of the winning ticket. One (1) Yes Vote and Seven (7) No Votes, Incentive Failed

*****Motion by Evelyn Shaw and Second by Kevin Chambers: MOVE TO APPOINT CAROL SIEGLEY TO COMPLETE THE UNFINISHED TERM AS DIRECTOR OF CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION VACATED BY THE RESIGNATION OF LEANN MONTGOMERY. Eight (8) Yes Votes, Motion Passed**

*****Motion by Robert Turner and Second by JB Anderson: MOVE TO ADJOURN THE 2005 THIRD QUARTER MEETING, EFFECTIVE 09-24-05.**

Seven (7) Yes Votes, Tracy Wilson was unavailable to vote, Motion Passed

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Playa de Oro Reserve Update September 2005

By Tracy Wilson

A full tour - We had a full tour group in September for Playa de Oro. Included in our group was a retired zoologist who came to Playa de Oro to study water invertebrates, snails, and similar-type creatures that live in the creeks and pools through the region. Also, Tom Harvey, who owns and operates a private zoo called Safari Park in Kansas, came along and did a lot of filming and photography with plans to develop some educational promotion programs about Playa de Oro and possibly put together a documentary about the reserve. Bart Culver of Arkansas came along on this trip with a mission to figure out how to provide some means of alternative energy to the village of Playa de Oro. The purpose of providing a source of alternative electricity would be a long term prevention plan for any need for a road to be built into this pristine area of jungle for electricity lines to be brought in to the village. I, too, came with plenty of work plans for the reserve including working on camera traps and starting up a conservation patrol program to help the village guard their borders. However, it was not until I arrived in Ecuador that I fully understood the extreme threat Playa de Oro's borders are currently under.

Wildlife and Cat tracks - Our group on this tour was lucky enough to see some great wildlife, and I am very excited to see how Tom's filming turns out. We encountered a sloth high up in a tree, a red brocket deer, various kinds of new snakes I had not seen before, different frogs, and tons and tons of birds. The river was very low and often we had to get out of the boat and walk along the shoreline when the river was too shallow. On one of these instances where we had to get out of the boat, we walked along a sandy area of the shore, and found a set of *fresh* cat prints. It was very exciting. You see, we knew they were fresh tracks because it had rained very hard that night and through the early morning hours, and it was just mid-morning when we found the tracks. A decent rain will soften or even wash away tracks in loose sand. These were a perfect set of tracks leading from the waters edge up into the forest. I wonder if

this cat heard us coming down the river and he ran away to hide from us, and we missed sighting him by just a few seconds? It looked to be the print of a large ocelot. The



**Large cat paw print
found by Bart**

print was pretty big, but not big enough to be a big cat. We could also tell from the stride length between paw prints that it had to be a medium sized cat. The reserve staff that were with us told me that this very beach is where they released one of the two male ocelots last year that we helped rescue, the one they named "Macho Uno." The staff was curious if this print was Macho Uno's tracks. It would be great if it were, to know he survived a year here. (Oh how I wish we had radio telemetry equipment here in cases like this so we could get a definitive answer!) It is always exciting to see fresh signs of cats at the reserve, because the likelihood of actually seeing one wild in the jungle is probably a million in one chance, and they have proved to be elusive to our camera traps thus far. So a fresh track is the next best thing to actually getting to see a cat in the jungle.

Squatters - When I was in Quito on this trip, I met with an internationally known bird scientist, Olaf Jahn, of Germany. He has been living in Ecuador for the past 11 years, primarily to study bird species around the country. He has traveled to Playa de Oro some 24 times since 1995. He knows a lot of what is going on in Playa de Oro and in other villages in the region. He informed me that on the north side of Playa de Oro's property, another village has allowed a road to be built, which is only five to eight kilometers from Playa de Oro's boundaries. This is a real threat to Playa de

Oro, because this is close enough that people can easily come into their territory by foot now. In Ecuador, often trespassers will come onto someone else's property or even government owned property and become what is known as "squatters." They simply move in and set up a household. They slash and burn areas out of the forest, build themselves a little hut to live in, bring in free ranging chickens, and kill all wildlife on sight to either eat or sell. Those free ranging chickens are dangerous to the wild cat population because the chickens will attract the wild cats close enough to the humans to get themselves killed. Ocelots and margays are simply viewed as \$40 pelts to these people that live hand to mouth. Olaf informed me that Ecuador's federal law allows squatters to keep property they have squatted on illegally after five years if the rightful property owner does not take any action to remove them from their land during those five years. So it is very important to keep squatters from moving into Playa de Oro's territory first of all to protect the wildlife and habitat from being destroyed or disrupted, and secondly to not allow them to sit up homes and stay long term. The only way to do this successfully is to stop it before it starts and keep a close eye on Playa de Oro's property boundaries.

Film Documentary - Tom Harvey and I also had the opportunity on this trip to speak with Karen Levy who is doing a health study in the region through Berkley University. We met by chance in the Playa de Oro village one afternoon and were able to talk for a long time. Tom and I asked her a lot of questions while Tom also filmed us the whole time. Her study is comparing the quality of health of the people in various different villages in the region, including Playa de Oro. She's been working on this study for the past two years. She informed us that the Playa de Oro village had better overall health and quality of life than other villages in the region. She says that her study compares what is different in one village to another to try to figure out why people in one village have better health than in others. She stated that people in Playa de Oro are generally healthier than in villages

where their primary forest has been cut down and in villages where roads have been brought in. Her data shows that Playa de Oro's isolation and their being the highest village upstream on the river directly contribute to their higher quality of health. They are exposed to less contamination via the river and they still have their primary forest intact. All of these factors are the major contributor in other villages that have a poorer quality of health.

Since Karen has had to opportunity to travel to various villages in this region for the past two years, we asked her what were some of the main reasons that other villages did decide to log their forests or to allow roads to be built. The reasons she stated to have heard often in many different villages, were that in many cases the villages were unable to keep squatters off their property, or unable to keep illegal logging from happening, so they felt that one way or another, their land was going to be logged or stolen from them, with or without their permission. So instead, they figure, let's just go ahead and log it and we'll make the money off of the timber, rather than letting someone else make money off our timber. We might as well reap the benefit from it instead of letting someone else take it from us, which is a pretty sad situation or frame of mind to be put in. In most cases they truly did not want to cut down their forest but just felt that it would happen regardless of how they felt about it. Other reasons were simply that they wanted electricity. With logging comes a road, and with a road comes electricity. Typically, when a village agrees with a timber company to log their land, the timber company pays the village so much money per month for however long it takes to cut the forest down, plus usually some extras such as putting the road and electricity in, building a schoolhouse or a church, providing healthcare, and various other community benefits on a temporary basis. Things like health care and school are hard to turn down in these extremely remote areas, some villages may feel this is their only opportunity for these needed community benefits. And in many cases, the villagers are also not educated so they are unable to manage the large amounts of money that are paid to them from the timber companies. The money is not well spent and best future of the community is not planned for. Before you know it, the forest

is gone and so is the money, so is the school and health care, and now the people are left without a forest to support them, no money for electricity, no education, no skills to farm anything or find jobs. They are worse off after logging than they were to start with.

However, Karen informed us things are different in Playa de Oro from what she has witnessed. The Playa de Orans had discussed with Karen that they truly want to protect the "forests of their ancestors." They are trying to maintain their ecotourism as a means of income instead of logging their forest. They are very concerned about the new road built so near to their property line. Karen told us that she was aware that the Playa de Oro village has been trying to watch their borders as much as they could for the past year, but they were limited in how much time they could do this because the men have to hunt and farm to provide for their own families, so without outside help they just simply can't watch their boundaries as closely as they would like. Karen confided in me that

the only way to help conserve the habitat and wildlife anywhere, was to beat the timber companies to the punch, by working with and providing the community which lives inside the land or owns title to the land needed benefits to the community. That's a theme I kept hearing on this trip from many sources including Olaf the bird scientist. He made the same exact statement to me: you have to work with the community that owns the land by providing them with communal benefits in order to conserve the habitat and wildlife, which in turn helps the community stand strong against the timber companies and other outside pressures. Knowing all the various projects that FCF members have donated to support the Playa de Oro community with over the past couple of years such as a school teacher and medical supplies, it sounds to me like we are right on track to help this community to protect their land and still get some much needed benefits to their community. Not to mention, we did not walk into Playa de Oro and tell them they need to protect their borders.

The Playa de Oro village council came to Rosa Jordan in January of this year and asked her for help to assist them to protect their borders. This is a project they want to take on. She passed that info on to me, and I felt this was definitely worth seeing if FCF members would be interested in supporting. It is a sound investment in protecting this land long term. I was very pleased at our FCF convention in July that the membership present was extremely supportive of this type of project.

This dialog with someone who has been working in the region and had seen the contrast between communities that had allowed logging versus those that had not was really enlightening to us. So it was time to get



Tom Harvey

down to business and work out a plan with the village council and reserve director to start a "conservation patrol" in order to protect Playa de Oro's territory. I would say this project came just in time. Playa de Oro might have been in real trouble trying to keep people out if we waited much longer because of that new road. Not to mention how the logging we have witnessed getting closer and closer to Playa de Oro's boundaries with every tour we take there. So the FCF board voted in July to approve enough funds for one year's worth of salaries for four men. It only costs just \$3600 a year to hire four men to protect their land; or \$75 a man per month, or \$37.50 a man per week. However, since the board was not really sure how this would work out, they just sent six months of salaries with me in September, \$1800 to start the project. We will monitor the progress and decide if this is something truly needed and if FCF wants to continue to support this project in the future.

Conservation/Border Patrol - Mauro, the reserve director, sat down with me one

day at the reserve, and we hammered out the details of how this conservation patrol is going to work. I explained that FCF wanted to try this project on an experimental basis for right now until we could learn more. I originally requested that they hire four men, to work in pairs, one pair patrol for two weeks, then the next pair patrol the follow-

benefit from this new source of work and income. The village has an elected president and village council. Each month the president will assign the four men to work the conservation patrol. Each month he will chose different men as “conservation officers,” so everyone willing and able will have a chance in the rotation to work. The

conservation officers are to report any findings of trespassing, logging, wildlife, and anything out of the ordinary to the village president and council, who in turn will provide a written report of all findings to Mauro. Mauro will oversee the entire project as well as handle all salaries. If any trespassers or violations are found by the conservation officers, the village president and council will report it to the proper authorities to resolve the mat-

ter as quickly as possible to best protect their territory. The conservation officers are simply to be the “eyes and ears” of the entire village to preserve and protect their land. Mauro will be contacting me once a month via fax or email to report the progress and status of the conservation patrol, of which I will report back to the FCF membership.

Through donations from several FCF members, I was able to provide the conservation officers a little bit of gear to get set up for their patrols such as a two man tent, mess kits for cooking and eating, flashlights, compasses, first aid kits, backpacks,

and assorted similar gear. I also equipped them with a camera, film, and batteries and asked them to take photos of any signs of trespassers, illegal logging, and any wildlife or wildlife signs they might see, anything they think we would be interested in seeing, and to mail this film to me at least once a month, or send the film out via tourists to me, so that we might be able to see a little bit of what the patrolmen see on their patrols.

I think most of us will find that this conservation patrol is desperately needed to help this community protect its forest and wildlife. While FCF will decide later on whether or not to continue supporting the conservation patrol with FCF organizational money, if you personally feel this is worth supporting, you can make a tax deductible donation to FCF or Earthways towards this project simply by notating on your check your donation is for “Playa de Oro Conservation Patrol.” Every penny will be sent to Playa de Oro for that express purpose. Heck, you can sponsor one conservation officer a month for just \$75 as a way to help protect and preserve this pristine habitat and the wildlife within. If just four FCF members sponsor a conservation officer each month for \$75 a month, we could really support this project for a long time through sponsorships like this.

Education is the Key - On this trip I was also happy to bring in enough donations from several FCF members to cover teacher salaries for another year. We have been supporting two full time teachers in the village for the past year, mostly in



Tom Harvey

ing two weeks. However, Mauro informed me that this is very dangerous work right now. There are no cut pathways on their borders, so these men will have very hard work cutting through pure raw thick jungle on very treacherous terrain, not to mention the venomous creatures they are very likely to encounter in the process. They may find places along the way where they may have to build small bridges to cross certain areas or things like that, so they need as many people to work together right now as possible to get everything set up for continued safe passage along the borders over time. They also have to sleep outside in the elements and have to hunt and gather for their food while working. (Believe it to not, McDonald's has not penetrated this area of jungle yet, so there is no fast food they can grab!) So Mauro recommended at this time, until better trails were established, that all four men go out at once together for two weeks at a time, and work on cutting good trails and for the safety of all men. They will all four work two weeks on, then two weeks off. Since Mauro grew up and lived all his life in this jungle habitat, I figured he knows better than I do about how hard of work it will be or how dangerous it will be.

The work will be done in a manner that will allow as many men as possible in the village the opportunity to work on the patrols, so as many families as possible can



Vincent Enriquez

School building in Playa de Oro

thanks to Grace Lush's ongoing fundraising efforts for this particular cause. Our tour group happened to bring some basic school supplies that were much needed also. This was the first chance that I have had to meet the new teachers in person, and I was very impressed with their professionalism and organizational skills. I was amazed at the progress they have made at the school in just a year. The first time I came to this village, the "school" was held in a small bamboo hut where the children sat on the floor and they had no real school supplies. The school was just held whenever they felt like it without a regular schedule. It seemed more like they just "played school" back then like some kinds "play house" rather than have a real educational school. I guess since they didn't have a regular full time teacher available, then why have school on a regular schedule, right? Everything is much improved now for the school. Now they have made an old concrete building in the village into a two classroom school complete with desks and chairs, and even a little bit of school supplies. The students and teachers made a special gift that they presented to myself and Grace as a thank you for supporting their school. They gave us cardboard Winnie the Pooh bears that the children had painted. On one side the teachers wrote notes of thanks and appreciation for supporting the school and the children's education. They told us this was a small gift, but made "with much love." Anyone that is interested in supporting the school teachers or donating towards the needed school supplies can get in touch with me, Tracy Wilson 501-368-0399 or tracy@touchthejungle.org or Grace Lush grace@bundascattery.com to find out what the current needs of the school are and how you can best assist supporting the school and teachers at Playa de Oro.

More Camera Problems - The cameras traps were once again not working when I arrived. But after intensive repair sessions at the lodge, I seemed to have got them operational again, so I left put them out again in the jungle to see if we can capture photos of any wildlife. Electronic equipment just seems to have a real problem operating very long in this environment at the reserve. Within just a few days at the reserve, several people's personal cameras were acting up, and one even quit working all together. It's a mystery why no one can

seem to keep electronics running here, not even so called "weather proof" equipment. It really does not seem any more humid to me at Playa de Oro than it is in my hometown in Arkansas, yet cameras and electronics work fine for me at home with the same or even more humidity. Maybe Playa de Oro has a weird magnetic field or some other weird natural occurrence that is to cameras and electronics like the Bermuda Triangle is to ships and planes! We really need to get a researcher experienced with camera trapping to volunteer to stay with our cameras at Playa de Oro for a few months and provide the cameras with day-to-day maintenance. After two years of doing the camera trapping here, I think that is what it is going to take to get any real results out of camera trapping at Playa de Oro.

Little Chief of the Jungle - You're probably wondering how Little Chief ocelot is doing. Well, he would be just around two years old now. This past late spring and early summer, Little Chief started spending a night here and there by himself in the jungle. Gradually he started stay-

ing gone for longer and longer periods of time, still coming back to the lodge occasionally to check in and maybe grab a quick meal. If he was having trouble with his hunting skills, he always knew he could come back to the lodge for a meal. The fact that he slowly and gradually left the lodge shows that he was honing his hunting skills



Tom Harvey

and learning to survive on his own without help. This summer he finally left and he has not been seen since. But do not fret for him, it was always the intent to try to raise him and release him into the jungle as a free wild ocelot. Little Chief is an adult now, and it is time for him to find his own way in the jungle and hopefully find a mate. As you are probably aware, mother ocelots do



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not necessarily teach their male kitten offspring how to fight other males as adults over territory disputes. This is something they have to learn on their own anyway; it's instinct and experience. So just because he was raised by humans, it does not mean he will not be able to figure out how to fight and earn his own territory. Usually territorial disputes with small cat species are mostly a macho show, not a fight to the death. We already are certain the reserve lodge is in the territory of another male ocelot; we have captured photos of him on the camera traps snooping around the lodge at nighttime. So we're not surprised that Little Chief probably had to wander a little farther out from the lodge to find his own territory. And as long as he stays in the reserve and we help keep intruders out of the reserve, he will be safe to live out his life as a normal ocelot and hopefully be successful enough to have offspring. And just think,

whether he survives a long time or not from this point, he has been provided a much better life thus far than he would have had if we had left him where we found him at 3 weeks old. He would have certainly been killed right away just for his pelt. So at this point, we can say that the reserve staff was successful in learning how to care for a neonate ocelot, raised him into a healthy adult, and provided a successful slow release for him to acclimate to life in the wild. We should be very proud of their success and proud to have taken part in it with them. Saving one cat at a time is better than not trying to save any at all, right?

Check out the new Playa de Oro web site! - The Playa de Oro Reserve now has an official website. Please visit www.touchthejungle.org for information about anything and everything to do with the reserve, the village, their culture, conservation projects, tour dates, and how to

visit Playa de Oro. Everything you need to know about the reserve and more can be found on this new website. It is still in mid-construction, so you may find some pages not completed for a short time. Please bookmark it and visit often. Be sure to pass the website address on to others to learn about this reserve and how they can help support any of the various needs of the reserve and community or even go on a tour there! Anyone who wishes to donate to any particular project or cause at Playa de Oro can make tax-deductible donations to either FCF or Earthways and just notate how you want your donation used at Playa de Oro. All funds will go to the reserve. The next tour date is in November, followed by another tour in late January. If you are interested in visiting Playa de Oro, please contact me, Tracy Wilson, at 501-368-0399, email tracy@touchthejungle.org, or visit the website for tour info!

MINUTES—2005 CONVENTION MEMBERSHIP MEETING

By Harold Epperson—On July 29, 2005, the FCF General Membership meeting was conducted in the ballroom on the grounds of Parrot Jungle with opening remarks by FCF President Bob Turner. He announced that the meeting would follow a different format than in years past and it would become the members' meeting instead of being monopolized by the FCF Board. He then introduced Bobby Bean, the chairman of the 2005 convention, who expressed his appreciation for his staff. He named the members of the convention committee who were asked to stand and be recognized by the attendees. Bobby relinquished the podium to the president who asked for input from the members. Tim Stoffel stressed the importance of supporting conservation of the cats in the wild. Gloria Johnson mentioned the need for cat owners to become more involved in the legal issues concerning ban laws introduced by animal rights groups. JB Anderson suggested that the members need to present their views to legislators on proposed legislation in affected states. JB presented a history of the Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund and introduced Jean Hatfield whose husband founded KHMSF. Harold Epperson reported the KHMSF balance of \$11,923.54 for the period ending 06-30-05. Richard Hahn suggested that the KHMSF funds be placed in an endowment and only a percentage of the total to be used for projects. Harold reported the FCF monetary assets of \$42,290.34 for the period ending 06-30-05 as compared to the total of \$35,483.50 on 06-30-04, an increase of \$6806.84. Lynn Culver presented an update on the FCF website and asked for a volunteer graphic artist to help. Also, Lynn asked how many have checked the new www.thefcf.com website and the old www.felineconservation.org website. Richard Hahn suggested that FCF add the data from the old site to the new one. Finally, Kevin Chambers announced that the 2006 Convention would be held in Cincinnati, Ohio.

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What Is the Humane Society of the United States?

By Christopher Aust

I was rather amazed at the number of people who wrote to me about my opinions regarding the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) when I did my last few articles. Then again, maybe I shouldn't be. Before about two weeks ago, I myself was rather ignorant as to the real goals of HSUS, and where their, (actually your) money goes. As I always do though, I decided to educate myself about them.

I also conducted a poll of 100 average people, just average Joes on the street. 94% of the people thought HSUS ran the local shelters in their community. 4% knew about their other programs and the remaining 2% had no idea who they were. Of the 94% all said they would donate to HSUS based on what they knew about them. I'm betting HSUS is banking, literally, on these types of individuals.

I also went online and found some rather interesting, and at times quite scary, information on several web sites. I would have interviewed a HSUS representative, but after last week's newsletter, I got an email from one that was little more than hate mail and very offensive!

Founders

Coleman Burke, then president of the American Bible Society, Cleveland Amory, and Helen Jones, founded HSUS in 1954. As far as I have been able to tell, Mr. Burke served as their president until 1970 when John Hoyt, a Presbyterian minister, took over as president and CEO until 1996.

Until just a few months ago, the president and CEO was Paul Irwin, a Methodist minister. The current CEO and president is Wayne Pacelle who admittedly has had ties with some radical—and I do mean radical—animal rights groups in the past.

Now, is it important I mention the religious background? Maybe and maybe not. What I noticed though is the organization, at least to me, has an evangelical feel. Is this a bad thing? No. I don't see why unless you are running the finances in a manner similar to Jim and Tammie Faye Baker! That sure is the way it looks to me.

Officers and Directors

HSUS is an organization with their pri-

mary focus being animals. As I reviewed the names and titles of the board officers and directors, I found it curious they had no DVM's (veterinarians) on either. They have three MDs, three PhDs and six attorneys. Am I the only one that finds this odd? Plenty of lawyers, but not a single vet. Hmmm. Maybe it's just a typo.

Comparative Financial Operations Report

When I conducted my interview with Kathy Bauch a few weeks ago, she refused to answer any questions regarding HSUS' finances for a "newsletter." She did offer to send me their 2003 financials though. This is what they send whenever some one has questions about their finances. As I mentioned last week, if it was similar to what they have online, it would be vague and difficult to decipher. What I got was much more.

What I received is their 2003 Annual Report. It is a 21 page "report" that was obviously very expensive to print. Tucked way in the back is exactly what I expected: a vague and difficult to read one page financial report. The rest appears to me to be a very expensive sales letter and nothing more, complete with a postage paid envelope to send in your donation.

Now you might say, "So what? They have to promote themselves." I agree. However, this publication has six pages of calendar quality photos of nothing but animals. Two and a half pages of self-glorifying articles from HSUS staff, none of which was necessary.

How much donor money could have been saved by deleting this junk from the thousands and thousands of these reports they printed?

According to the Comparative Financial Operations Report for 2003, the HSUS has \$116,205,882.00 in total liability and net assets. Over \$5,000,000 of that is in cash and cash equivalents, and another nearly five and a half million in receivables. They also have nearly \$93,000,000 in market value investments. Not too bad.

In 2003, in revenue, additions and transfers, HSUS made \$76,923,670. Of that amount, sheltering programs received

\$10,551,527 and it was shared with animal habitat and wildlife programs. Now, assuming it was an even split, sheltering programs received \$3,517,175.66.

Now that's a lot of money, but not when you consider a good sized shelter can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars a year to run. Three million is really a drop in the bucket. They spent \$21,145,769 in fundraising and membership development, six times what they put into their shelter programs, which is what most people I talked to think HSUS does with the money donated to them.

Providing Help or Selling It

I'm not sure what they spent the money on for their shelter programs, but I will assure you they didn't fund any shelters. In fact, they charge shelters and animal control offices for their assistance and instructional material. I have been able to find little and or nothing HSUS doesn't charge for when it comes to helping a shelter and their educational programs.

For instance, lets say you or your town runs an animal shelter that is struggling for one reason or another, which most are. HSUS is ready to come in and help. For between \$4,000 and \$20,000 they will send their experts to your shelter through their Animal Services Consultation Program. The fee depends on the size of the agency and the complexity of its programs, charged on a sliding scale based on your agency's resources. In other words, the more you have, the more they'll take.

Youth Programs

Now, lets go back to our youth. You're in middle or high school and want to start a club to promote rescue and do things to help companion animals. HSUS can help you with that, too. Just go to humaneteen.org. There you can buy a package full of all kinds of propaganda and learn to be a full-fledged animal activist. They will sell your child a club starter kit for \$22 and then give activity suggestions like their "Fight Fur" program.

Here they encourage kids to make flyers and hand them out in front of businesses to protest against shoppers buying fur. HSUS will also give your child cards to distribute

at such events. They'll show your child pictures of dead animals in traps and direct them to other sites where they can see pictures of hunters beating seals over the head.

They will also promote vegan/vegetarian lifestyles to your child. Just go to the message board for kids and you can read how many of the kids are distressed, after reading the material HSUS sold them, because their parents will not let them go vegan.

You will also see posts promoting PeTA!

Now I want to be fair here. They do have some decent material that is age appropriate and educational in nature. I think it's overpriced. For instance, your child can rent a video to show their class for \$25, but some of it is good material. However, there is little promoting appropriate training, grooming, or responsible ownership of companion animals. It seems to me the whole focus is turning our children into activists, vegans, and extremists.

Now if I want my child to be a vegan or an activist, I will make that decision and not HSUS. Our kids have enough on their plate without having to be weighed down with this information or agenda. Additionally, kids are kids and don't always make appropriate decisions. When dealing with complex issues like activism and protesting, it would be easy for them to get into trouble or hurt. Doesn't PeTA target children too?

Ethical Financial Practices

Let's get back to the money: Former President John Hoyt once instructed his members on becoming more humane: "We begin, I suggest, by living more simply, more sparingly." Let's see how he did.

He made around \$200,000.00 in the late 1980's running HSUS. In 1986, HSUS bought his house in Maryland for \$310,000 and allowed him and his family to live there, free of rent, until 1992. When he retired as CEO, HSUS gave him a \$1,000,000 bonus.

Paul Irwin, another former president, while making \$300,000 from HSUS, was given an \$85,000 interest free loan to renovate his cabin in Maine. The cabin was held in trust by HSUS, however his family continued to use it until he died. This is just the tip of the iceberg. Makes me wonder.

Let's look at some of HSUS' associations:

In April of 2000 HSUS sent J.P. Goodwin as its emissary on an anti-fur mission to China. Goodwin is not just any animal rights zealot; he was an avowed member of Animal Liberation Front (ALF), a group once called one of the biggest domestic terrorist organizations by the FBI. He had been convicted for vandalism of several fur retailers and their property. Less than a year later, he was formerly identified as a HSUS legislative staff member.

If you don't know about ALF you should check them out. They truly scare the heck out of me. They are, in my opinion, every bit as much a threat to people as Al Qaeda. I cannot believe HSUS would hire such a person. When asked questions about an arson fire at a slaughter house in Petaluma, California, and a Utah feed co-op that nearly killed a family, Goodwin stated, "We're ecstatic!"

Then, there is the PeTA connection ...

HSUS has repeatedly hired PeTA employees in their organization. Their head of investigations, several investigators, a computer programmer, just to name a few. Sorry folks, my opinion is, once a terrorist, always a terrorist. When HSUS hires these people, they appear to support the crimes these individuals may have been involved in.

In 2003, HSUS VP Martin Stephens was asked to recommend three people to serve on an EPA "pollution prevention and toxics" panel. Two of his three choices were PeTA employees.

All Talk and No Action

While HSUS will admit they don't run or fund any shelters, you usually find it at the bottom of the page or tucked away somewhere near the end of a statement. As I mentioned before, they don't put their money where their mouth is. Get this:

In 1995, when the Washington DC animal shelter was going to have to close due to a budget shortfall, HSUS (based in DC) offered to build and operate a DC shelter at its own expense to serve as a national model. There were, of course, conditions.

HSUS wanted the city to give it 3-5 acres of land and tax exempt status for all of its real estate holdings in the District of Columbia. (Remember, they buy some executives homes to live in among other

property holdings.)

The DC government offered a long-term lease but HSUS refused to proceed unless it would "own absolutely" the land. The district declined, and the only HSUS funded animal shelter never materialized.

HSUS, who makes and has enough money to fund a shelter in every state, as well as subsidize spay/neuter programs, declined to help the dogs in its own back yard. Why? Money is all I can think of. Perhaps they were afraid they would soil their Armani suits by actually working with a dog.

The New CEO

Rather than go on a tirade about the new president and CEO of HSUS, I have put some quotes from him below. Read them, and you decide.

"I think they wanted the aggressive approach," he says. "They wanted someone who was going to think things up. And they got him." June 2004, Washington Post when asked about his selection as CEO.

"We have no problem with the extinction of domestic animals. They are creations of human selective breeding." Quoted in Animal People, May 1993

Overview

I could go on for days about HSUS, but I will stop here. In my opinion, they are little more than an organization whose main agenda is filling their coffers and pushing an extremist agenda through misinformation and exploitation. Again, my opinion, they have done nothing but profit from the contributions of people who don't know any better. I have tried to see it otherwise; I simply can't.

I highly recommend you go to activist-cash.com and see what they have there about HSUS and their connection with PeTA. There are several other sites I found interesting, as well as many stories about HSUS in the archive of the Washington Post.

Would I give anything to the Humane Society of the United States? Yes I would. A pooper-scooper they can use to go clean my yard. At least then we would know they actually have done something for a dog this year.

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A conservation strategy for small wild cats

*Jim Sanderson, PhD
Conservation International
IUCN Cat Specialist Group
Wildlife Conservation Network*

Unlike the large cats that have organizations dedicated to their conservation needs, the conservation needs of many of the small cats have been largely neglected. For instance, several organizations are dedicated solely to cheetah conservation, snow leopard conservation, and tiger conserva-



Bay Cat

tion. Mountain lion, lion, and jaguar also enjoy the sole attention of several organizations. My task is to change this situation but I can't just snap my fingers and "do it." I must follow the rules.

The IUCN Red List is maintained and updated regularly by voting members of the Cat Specialist Group (CSG). Voting members of the CSG are responsible for assessing as accurately as possible the conservation needs of all species of cats. Kristin Nowell, Cat Action Treasury, is the Red List authority for the CSG and does an extraordinary job of maintaining the cat species Red List.



The categories used by the IUCN are Extinct, Extinct in the Wild, three threatened rankings: Critically Endangered, Endangered, Vulnerable, and additional rankings of Near Threatened, and Least Concern. There is also a Data Deficient category for species lacking any information whatsoever (no species of cats are Data Deficient). Within each category are subcategories dealing with specific reasons for the ranking. There is also a Not Evaluated category where all species start the evaluation process.

The Red List should not be confused with CITES, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. While it is true that all cats are listed in CITES, all cats are not endangered. The unfortunate use of the word endangered frequently causes some confusion. Most species of cats are listed in Appendix I of CITES that prohibits trade in skins and body parts. However, the Bay cat is Endangered according to the IUCN Red List but remains Appendix II on CITES. Ocelots are listed in Appendix I of CITES but are Least Concern in the Red List. I use the Red List to prioritize conservation actions. I wish everyone would because that's what the list is for.

The Iberian lynx is the only Critically Endangered cat. The European Union is taking decisive action to prevent the lynx's extinction by allocating adequate financial

and other resources to conservation efforts largely in Spain where the last Iberian lynx remain.

There are four Endangered Species of cats: snow leopard, tiger, Andean mountain cat, and Bay cat. There are two organizations dedicated to snow leopard conservation, and millions of dollars are pouring into global tiger conservation as most of you appreciate. Most tiger subspecies are under the umbrella of one of more dedicated conservation organizations. Similar efforts are just beginning to address the conservation needs of small cats. This is also where FCF can have the greatest impact.

When I did the first study of the guigna (*Oncifelis guigna*) in 1996 I had but a single picture of a wild individual and a few dusty skins from the Smithsonian Museum to help me. The guigna was thought to be nocturnal (since no one saw them during the day), and so was presumed to eat mostly rodents. Each "new" description came from the previous one and most information turned out only partly true.

Two years later in 1998 I used a photograph of an Andean mountain cat (*Oreailurus jacobita*) to find and photograph a live individual in northern Chile. One of my photographs appeared in the February 2000



Chinese Mountain Cat, Beijing

Photos by Jim Sanderson



Bay Cat

issue of National Geographic and four years later in 2004 with the help of extraordinary efforts by Wildlife Conservation Network www.WildNet.org a full conservation effort was launched in the four range countries of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. Fully six years had passed before anything was begun for the western hemisphere's only Endangered cat. We cannot wait that long again and it is my task to see that conservation efforts begin soon on several other small cats.

The bay cat, an endemic species of Borneo, is Endangered. There is presently one person in Sarawak (Malaysian Borneo) carrying out a part time camera trapping effort with a budget of less than \$3000. I visited this year and we have made future plans in Sarawak. There are other camera trapping efforts on other species in Sabah (Malaysian Borneo) and I plan to establish an effort on small cats in Sabah as well.

Other small cats that are Near Threatened on the Red List I believe need immediate attention. With some species for which we have a good understanding the Near Threatened category seems appropriate. For other species, some authorities such as me believe more information is required. Thus, being an authority on small cats and being familiar with who is doing what and where, I recognize an immediate need for more information on the Chinese mountain cat, bay cat, flat-headed cat, and marbled cat.

In future articles I will write much more on these interesting small cats. Suffice it to say that I am pursuing these cats just as I did the guinea and the Andean mountain cat. I am seeking and enlisting all the help I can get including leveraging Conserva-

tion International's global offices to help me. Already, we are getting more timely information than ever in the past. In a few weeks I will be in Sabah looking at a site where the bay cat, flat-headed cat, and marbled cat are thought to co-occur.

On a final note, I have previously spoken of the need for a Small Cat Conservation Endowment Fund that would provide much needed funds for the conservation of small cats. Only the interest generated on endowment funds can be spent so that contributions will continue to give in perpetuity. I very much like the fact that my own contribution to this fund will never be spent and yet will provide for small cats long after I am gone. I know you all agree that such a fund is long overdue. I recently requested and received legal advice on the establishment of the fund. I promise all FCF members that such a fund will change the course of small cat conservation forever and energize global efforts. A little will go a long, long way.



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Expect the Unexpected

A Playa de Oro Trip Report

Bart Culver

I guess every time you go to Playa de Oro something new is revealed. Something always unexpected happens. Firstly, Playa de Oro is in Ecuador, where surreal landscapes and cultures provide plenty of excitement. As a non-equestrian, I found it more than exciting to ride with a group of experienced horse people at 14,000 feet so we could get close to an active volcano at 17,000 feet.



Tracy Wilson

I tried to be friends with my horse, like I would a cat. I brushed the flies off his neck, I let him eat grass. I didn't show him who was boss. This, I soon learned, was wrong. By default, the horse

took charge.

Yes, charge. My horse hated the other horses. He tried to bite and kick them, and when I contested the matter, he tried to bite me, his friend, who gave him a banana. He lagged behind and then ran to catch up. He's doing this on an old Incan trail worn 15 feet into the volcanic ash soil, on the edge of a cliff overlooking the town of Banos, which is 4,000 feet straight down. He's running in muddy ruts so deep the stirrups drag on the ground, teaching me a very important lesson. Doc Martins are the worst possible footwear for riding horses. They become inextricably locked in the stirrups if they ever drag on the ground. Having rapidly progressed to novice, I am very aware of the danger. And yet, I have the reins in one hand and a camera in the other because Banos and the river and the glaciers and volcano and the rainbows and clouds and wild hyacinths are beyond belief and I need proof. It beat all hell out of Disney World and I would gladly do it again.

The approach to Playa de Oro is difficult. The river very low and we have to walk half a dozen times. I am disappointed that the waterfalls that fall straight into the river have dried up completely. To my disgust, I see dozens of places where loggers have been pushed into the river. At the last village I see the logging road itself and the

bulldozer that made it. On the way home, we see something that wasn't there five days ago, a large capacity diesel pump, pushing river water uphill through a 6-inch pipe. Gold mining again. Progress is coming hard and fast. You can definitely see why we are trying to help Playa de Oro more than ever at this critical time. This part of the trip for me is truly depressing. The serenity that enveloped me at Salva Allegra had to wait until we crossed into Playa de Oro territory. But then it came, and the lodge was the same haven it was before. In many ways it was better thanks to Tom Harvey. Tom worked very professionally at producing an informative documentary and wringing every pixel and decibel out of that amazing camera.

Tom was able to keep us quiet on the trail, which resulted in our seeing and hearing much more wildlife, and Tom, with patience and persistence, got some great stuff on tape. Brocks deer, sloth, a big snake striking the camera lens, lots of birds and butterflies and the simultaneous chatter of insects, tree frogs, birds and monkeys. He got some great interviews, which I think I'll let him tell you about, but there was one he missed only because he had already gone home. The night before the last four of us



Tom Harvey

left, we had dinner with Olaf Jahn, PhD., in ornithology. Olaf is German, and he is fluent in Spanish and English. He is a member of a bird group that supports Playa de Oro (much as we do.) He estimates there are a total of 400 species of birds there, some unknown to science. He describes the area as an extremely rich habitat.

Their project is sustainable agriculture, probably cacao trees. Olaf's group will be a strong ally and his perspective was very enlightening. He has lived in Quito for ten years and visited Playa de Oro dozens of times. He was very supportive of our efforts to provide hydroelectric power to the village and refrigeration to the lodge. He also considered the border patrol program to be essential. He explained that the loggers approaching from the downstream are the largest logging company in Ecuador and are determined to log Playa de Oro. And the squatters who come down the road can lay legal claim to the land simply by living on it unopposed for four years.

He gave an example of a project downstream from Selva Allegra where conservationists bought 10,000 hectares for \$4,000,000. And then it was logged totally. "They can be stopped," Olaf said emphatically, "but not with only money. It takes people. Playa de Oro has 300 people." He went on to agree with us that Playa de Oro is the best place and the time is now, to draw the line.

I'd like to end this on a happy note—so back to Playa de Oro.

I have been trying out for a leading part as buffoon in Tom's documentary, by bringing an inflated truck inner tube with me, along with a bottom of a plastic oil drum with a number of holes drilled around the edge and some rope.

They stopped smirking behind my back when Mauro helped me lash the tube to the "butt protector." We took this new watercraft upriver to the cathedral. After Arturo gave it a thorough testing, it was pronounced safe and I was permitted to shoot the rapids all the way home. Big fun! Later on, grown men in their 30's were playing with the thing. We tried towing the prototype behind the boat, but there was too

much drag. Future tubos de Barts will be constructed with saucer sleds for hydroplaning.

FCF has a good friend in Ecuador. He name is Ramiro. He's been driving for us very reliably for longer than I know and we stopped at his hotel and we enjoyed his good cooking in Otavalo. But this was his first time to come with us to the lodge. Because he is able to translate for us, several mysteries are solved for me.

We hiked to the waterworks in the jungle, and heard the incredible story of the second, even bigger, gold rip-off these people have experienced. In 1945, a British mining company bribed their way into the jungle and built an iron pipeway four feet in diameter and six kilometers long to transport a slurry of gold ore to a point down river where it would be loaded into boats and taken to the village. There, the villagers panned thousands of kilograms of pure gold. They were paid for this, not in gold, but in pieces of wood. Wooden money, good only at the company store. A deal not much better than slavery.

Hearing this, Ramiero and I look at each other. He shakes his head. "Incredible," he says, "Incredible." I'm starting to really like this guy.

With Ramiero's help, I keep pecking away in search of the lost waterfall. "Show me a waterfall. The nearest, biggest, tallest waterfall from which water is actually falling. A waterfall please, they used to be everywhere. Show me all the waterfalls you got." Ramiro says they don't really speak Spanish. It's some kind of dialect. He doesn't understand their answer but the next morning at breakfast, Ramiro says "Mauro says it is a good time for you to go see water for hydroelectricity."

In a flash Tom and I are on the boat. With this light load we don't have to walk. We surf down the river. Clemente leads us to the back of the village where a young man who is the president of Playa de Oro meets us. They lead us up a small creek. Maybe one mile and suddenly we were in an arroyo, a miniature Glen Canyon carved out of solid rock. It twists and turns narrows into four-foot halls and widens into rooms. It's 20 to 30 feet tall. We wade in water

waist deep, and then we come to a place that is very narrow and the water is eight feet deep. A huge floating log blocks the passage. There's no way Tom's camera is going any farther and Tom is grafted to his camera. After having a good laugh trying to walk on the log, the president and I swim under it. We swim a while with boots on, and in a short while there it is: La Cascada, a waterfall 30 feet high dropping 300+ gallon/minute at the driest time in a long time. What a sweet magical sound that water makes, echoing in the twisted canyon.

The final morning we leave early for home and make another unscheduled stop in the village. The president comes out to greet us with a manila folder "for Bart." It's another layer of the onion. It is a feasibility study for electrification of Playa de Oro by

25 twelve volt batteries with inverters. This had to be the canyon I saw. The idea that popped into my head was to dam this little



Bart Culver

canyon at its narrowest point and store potential energy, piping it almost to the village to increase both water head and flow, possibly enough to keep up with peak demand. Also, this could provide a much better water supply than they have now.



Vincent Enriquez

Arturo takes a spin on the tube

an Ecuadorian firm. It assesses their needs at 21 KWA/D with a peak usage of 7 KW. It compares hydroelectric with a motor generator and hydroelectric is the hands down favorite. Then they talk about an arroyo. And using a 350-meter long pipe to drive a Pelton wheel with a water head of 30 m to produce 1.6 KW of continuous DC power. To supply the peak demand, they proposed

There's lots of information to gather, and I am working at it. But the potential is there for energy independence for refrigeration so that subsistence level people can have the free time they need to defend their forest from a technological assault.

What I saw made me want to be in this struggle even more. If we don't do this, let it be only because it really can't be done.



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Lobbying is a Strange and Confusing Game!

Gloria Johnson

Probably the most difficult task I've been asked to do is write about lobbying. It is generally understood amongst lobbyists that even their own husbands and wives just can't quite understand what we've been through when we come home. Only another lobbyist can understand the stress, excitement, frustration, confusion, feelings of being used by one you trusted, burning on adrenaline 'cause you're so tired when you get in the car to go home at bizarre hours you feel sick, been "on" (smiling, etc) when you want to "deck" someone. I could go on and on about the control one needs to manage and how unnatural it is for the psyche (yes!) Needless to say it is something you have to do to understand but I will try to touch on some of the points that you might not have thought about and approach this article as if you have some basic "grass roots" knowledge of lobbying. (This discussion is based on experience at the state level only.)

With new laws that have passed limiting the number of years legislators may hold office (Fla. – 8) it is more important than ever to become very good friends with their staffers and committee staffers. Some of those folks have been in their jobs for over 25 years. *They know their stuff!* In fact a new legislator is like a babe in the woods. He/she can't be expected to understand every technical issue from growth management to taxation to farming. He depends on staff to explain it to him. He then depends on the lobbyists to explain the effect a proposal will have on the industry they represent. Even if he's new and doesn't know a lobbyist very well, there is an unwritten golden rule: "Give him wrong information once, you are ruined—kaput—out of the business." My best example: I had a controversial insurance bill that was about to come up in the insurance committee meeting. The meeting was to start in just a minute when I found an amendment that had gotten the approval to waive the 2-hour time period and get handed out to the members of the commit-

tee. This amendment effectively gutted and killed my bill. I was shocked! Everyone was already getting seated and I ran up to the dais and asked the senator why she had agreed to sponsor this for my enemy. She looked at me puzzled and said the lobbyist told her I had agreed with it! He had flat out lied. She was so mad that not only did she withdraw the amendment, that fellow was told he was never allowed into any legislator's office again and his lobbying career was over.

On getting to know legislators I must add this. There is this misconception out there—much like the ones you deal with because you have exotic cats—that a "lobbyist" is necessarily a "well-heeled" money-maker who wines and dines his way into the legislator's heart. This is a small fraction of lobbyists and in fact why it is so competitive for the rest of us. In 22 years I have never so much as bought a drink for a legislator. We may sit and talk, but if he or she wants to go on to dinner, they pay when with me. The kind of clients I have always had has hurt me—they are not the big campaign donors, which means I have to work twice as hard to get in the door and make friends. And money! Hah! I won't tell, but what I am paid is, I'm sure, much, much less than you think.

There is an unwritten golden rule: Give him wrong information once, you are ruined – kaput – out of the business.

Okay, back on track. Many "grass roots" lobbyists (meaning not professionals, but people who get together because they have an issue like exotic ownership) can go to all of the legislators and talk their speech and maybe get someone to sponsor a bill or if on the defense, to promise to vote no. But you are so far from done, it isn't even funny. That "issue" (whether proactive or reactive) has to be babysat for the remainder of session. That means every day. Here we work closely with 'bill drafting.' I'm a paralegal so if I submit something it usually passes their scrutiny because I have a good

grasp on legalese; however, if not, it is their job to make the wording technically correct. You have to stay right on top of them because they could easily misunderstand what you were trying to do and totally botch up your bill (or amendment.) The bill comes out of bill drafting and goes to bill filing. You don't just sit and wait. You stay in constant contact with the aid of your sponsor, but you must find a way to do this without bugging your sponsor to make sure this is done because they have so much they are keeping track of. Believe me they want you to remind them, but there is that fine line between a reminder and being a bother.

To shorten this article, I will jump to once the legislation is out and numbered. Yes, someone unfriendly to your issue can amend something ugly on to it. It is your responsibility to check amendments every day. If you find something, you go to your sponsor and point out that it will seriously hurt your cause. Your sponsor will usually go to whomever your enemy got to sponsor it and have it removed. Sometimes the bigger bills which are considered priorities (i.e. affect everyone in the state, not just a small

In 22 years I have never so much as bought a drink for a legislator. We may sit and talk, but if he or she wants to go on to dinner, they pay when with me.

group) have the word put out by the Speaker of the House or President of the Senate that there will be no amendments. Here comes your need to get friendly with those offices. If you have an "inside" in these offices the trading can begin. For example even if your issue only affects a small group, if you can help on another issue the speaker/president wants promises can get traded. An issue can be amended to death, but if the speaker/president decides, it will never see the light of day. Also, you can get your sponsor to put the word out from the beginning that this bill will take no amendments. He can do this simply by saying if it gets amended he will withdraw it. His brethren have no desire to anger him so it's unlikely anyone can find a way to amend. And, again, he'll just withdraw it, so you may not get what you wanted but at least you didn't get something totally harmful to your cause. To make you even more com-

fortable with this scenario, let's say the amendment somehow slips through the cracks and still finds its way on to the bill. Well, that bill still has to go through other committees and then has to be heard on the floor, so you see there are numerous opportunities to strip the bad language back off. You just have to be on your toes. Your enemy has other issues too most likely. Find out what they are and start putting the pressure on there for him to back off.

This is such a convoluted process I don't

know where to stop so I don't take up the whole magazine. Maybe as ideas come to mind I can do some addendums. In the meantime, realize that this process is very detail oriented and much is behind the scenes. This is why when hundreds of letters or emails get sent, they usually are thrown away or put in a stack on the floor. In fact, if you jam up their phone or fax lines they get angry and succeeded in making an enemy. When dealing with the legislature be careful!

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Minutes of the 2005 Convention Membership Meeting

By Harold Epperson

On July 29, 2005, the FCF General Membership meeting was conducted in the ballroom on the grounds of Parrot Jungle with opening remarks by FCF President Bob Turner. He announced that the meeting would follow a different format than in years past and it would become the members' meeting instead of being monopolized by the FCF Board. He then introduced Bobby Bean, the chairman of the 2005 convention, who expressed his appreciation for his staff. He named the members of the convention committee who were asked to stand and be recognized by the attendees. Bobby relinquished the podium to the president who asked for input from the members. Tim Stoffel stressed the importance of supporting conservation of the cats in the wild. Gloria Johnson mentioned the need for cat owners to become more involved in the legal issues concerning ban laws introduced by animal rights groups. JB Anderson suggested that the members need to present their views to legislators on proposed legislation in affected states. JB presented a history of the Ken Hatfield Memorial Scholarship Fund and introduced Jean Hatfield whose husband founded KHMSF. Harold Epperson reported the KHMSF balance of \$11,923.54 for the period ending 06-30-05. Richard Hahn suggested that the KHMSF funds be placed in an endowment and only a percentage of the total to be used for projects. Harold reported the FCF monetary assets of \$42,290.34 for the period ending 06-30-05 as compared to the total of \$35,483.50 on 06-30-04, an increase of \$6806.84. Lynn Culver presented an update on the FCF website and asked for a volunteer graphic artist to help. Also, Lynn asked how many have checked the new www.the-fcf.com website and the old www.felineconservation.org website. Richard Hahn suggested that FCF add the data from the old site to the new one. Finally, Kevin Chambers announced that the 2006 Convention would be held in Cincinnati, Ohio.

South Africa sounds loud call of wild

Long excluded from parks, blacks are being wooed in drive to educate new conservationists

Laurie Goering - Tribune foreign correspondent - Published November 28, 2004 - DENNILTON, South Africa

With trepidation evident in his face, Josiah Phalane reached a wavering hand out and touched the spotted tail in front of him, then jumped back as Byron, a tame cheetah, turned around to take a look at him as well. "I have never even heard about animals like this," Phalane said in wonderment, once out of range of Byron's claws. "It's very exciting." Phalane, a small-town kid with dreadlocks, always dreamed of being an airline pilot. But after meeting Byron during a program to expose South African youth to wildlife conservation efforts, the 19-year-old was rethinking his plans. "I would never have even thought about it," he said when asked whether he had considered a career in conservation. But now, "I would be very interested," he said, "I like this."

Conservation in South Africa, like in many African countries, long has been dominated by whites. Most game reserves were created during colonial rule, often by displacing black people. In South Africa, blacks were barred from visiting the country's parks during 40 years of apartheid rule. The result is that many black Africans have little experience with and feel little connection to wildlife. Conservation is widely seen as an elitist pursuit. White-run campaigns to save species have alienated legions of poor people who feel they matter less than the animals.

In South Africa, a nation with one of Africa's best systems of game parks, most children have never seen a wild animal, except on television. "People think of reserves as places where you remove the black man, put in a fence, put in animals and then people come and appreciate them," said Mantlako Sebaka, a marketing manager with South Africa's national parks service. "Black people don't appreciate that." That reality presents an enormous

risk for the future of conservation in Africa. Millions of poverty-stricken people look across game park fences and see land ripe for farming, while African leaders struggle to defend conservation spending when faced with so many other pressing social needs, environmental officials say. Mandela sounds alarm. Many people see parks as "meaningless or even costly," warned former South African President Nelson Mandela in a speech at the World Parks Congress meeting in Durban last year. "In South Africa, it is time to break with this legacy."

That is now slowly happening as government conservation officials, teachers, private safari operators, and international wildlife officials begin leading a broad campaign to boost black involvement with and support for conservation. In South Africa, the national parks system in conjunction with the country's tourism agency is looking at ways to lure more blacks to game reserves. Wilderness Safaris, a private tourism operator, now plays host to local children for a week each year at several of

In South Africa, blacks were barred from visiting the country's parks during 40 years of apartheid rule.

its camps in Botswana, Namibia, Malawi, and South Africa, and is opening a full-time wilderness camp for children on South Africa's southeast coast. International conservation organizations such as the African Wildlife Foundation and the World Wildlife Fund provide scholarships and other funding to help educate a new generation of black conservationists. And wildlife protection groups, such as the De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Center near Pretoria, have begun taking wild cats into black schools in an effort to convince kids that animals are worth protecting. "It's critical to do this," said Marilyn Hull, the manager of educational programs at De Wildt and handler for goodwill ambassador cheetah Byron, who visits several black schools a week. "We need to reach these children and get them involved." Changing ideas about the importance of conservation isn't easy. For most of the last century, conserva-

tion in South Africa has "appealed almost exclusively to the affluent, educated, mainly white minority," noted Faried a Khan, a University of Cape Town doctoral candidate.

But environmental officials are trying some creative ideas. Marketers at South Africa's national parks service have persuaded "Isidingo," one of South Africa's more popular soap operas, to film episodes in the country's national parks, with leading black characters ruing what they had missed by not visiting earlier. The parks service also is working with schools to include conservation education as part of the core curriculum.

A divergent career path.: "Conservation is not a traditional career for blacks, who aspire to be lawyers, doctors, politicians," said Patrick Bergin, president and CEO of the African Wildlife Foundation, based in Washington. But his organization and others, he said, are funding master's and doctoral work by promising black conservationists and "are looking for the next black Jane Goodall or Richard Leakey." Leading international conservation groups also have acknowledged in recent years that conservation can no longer simply be about fencing endangered areas. Sustainable conservation, most say, involves ensuring that neighbors of protected areas get some economic benefit from parks, such as jobs. There are already plenty of signs of progress.

Communities neighboring some of the country's top game reserves are being offered the opportunity to run lodges and other accommodation in or near the parks. Hector Magome, a black PhD, is head of conservation services for the South African national parks service. And Byron the cheetah and his handlers receive letters from a growing number of young big-cat fans. "When I was growing up, people told me that animals like cheetahs should die, that they have no use," wrote one student. "But when they chose me to go and learn about cheetahs, I was happy. Thank you for coming to teach us about cheetahs. Now I know better than most people."

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Ann Amadon's Koko

We're counting on YOU to make the FCF African Safari Raffle fundraiser a big success!

We put together the package, now it is up to dedicated FCF members to spread the word. Six days of African safaris for only \$10.00! This includes international airfare and all meals.

These African Safari Raffle tickets make great stocking stuffers and Christmas presents, birthday presents, thank-you gifts and more. Bring them to your educational programs and community events and give everyone you meet a chance to win this African safari.

This is a \$7,000 value, and the goal is to sell at least 1,000 tickets before February 1, 2006 to pay for this adventure and generate funds for felid conservation. All net profits after expenses are paid will be earmarked for the FCF Conservation Grants Program.

More Important Raffle Information

You may make photocopies of these raffle tickets and sell them to friends and associates, or fill them out for yourself. Additional raffle tickets can be requested by mailing to: FCF Raffle, 3310 Remington Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46227 or by logging onto our FCF Members-Only section of our web site at www.thefcf.org. and downloading the raffle tickets Word document and printing it out.

The tickets are in two parts: the left side is to be mailed to FCF and the right side is for the donor.

Tickets have a place for FCF members to write their name as the person who referred the donor to the raffle so that you get credit for the number of tickets you sell and a complimentary ticket will be entered in your name for each 10 tickets sold by you.

The FCF member selling the most raffle tickets will receive a gift certificate for the 2006 FCF convention registration fee and 3 nights stay in the Convention hotel in Cincinnati, Ohio!

Ticket entries must be post marked on or before February 1, 2006. The drawing for the winner will be held February 12, 2006. The winner has one year from the drawing to select a date for the Safari. The Safari is transferable; the winner may sell or donate the grand prize to another person if they wish.

Don't miss out on this great chance to experience Africa - for as little as a \$10.00 donation to the FCF Conservation Fund

Two lucky winners will have their choice of accommodations and enjoy two guided photo safaris daily and dine on the finest African cuisine.

African Safari Raffle Tickets can be purchased using PayPal online at our web site at www.the-fcf.org. FCF members can also print extra tickets to buy for gifts to friends and family or to sell at community events by logging on at the FCF web site Members-Only section. There is a 4-tickets-to-a-page layout you can download for printing. Don't forget to have your name entered in the 'referred by' line. For every 10 tickets you sell, a free ticket will be entered in this raffle in your name.



Choose the Zulu Nyala facility to suit your fancy.



Heritage Safari Lodge, Kwa-Zulu Natal was originally built in the 1940's at a famous watering hole along the Lourenco Marques (Maputo) route. In 1996 restoration began to renew the lodge to its former colonial grandeur, but enhanced with a delightful colonial ambience and new accommodation facilities, themed to highlight Zululand's own cultural development.

The estate adjoins the Zulu Nyala Game Reserve and games drives, riverboat cruises and clay pigeon shooting. Tours to neighboring game reserves can also be arranged.

Nyati & Ndlovu Lodge is situated within the Zulu Nyala privately owned game reserve, overlooking the Nyati Dam and

plains of the reserve. The lodge is nestled in Southern Maputaland, Kwa-Zulu Natal, one of the largest and most diverse conservation areas in Southern Africa.

Nyati Lodge offers guests an easy and quick access to many of the conservation, wildlife, and cultural attractions in the newly formed Elephant Coast, including Hluhluwe/Umfolozu Game Reserve, the World Heritage Site - Greater St. Lucia Wetland Park, Sodwana Bay, Lake Jozini & Tembe Elephant Park.

The Natural stone and thatch lodge is extremely comfortable with modern features, offering guests complete exclusivity of their African



gaming experience.



Zulu Nyala Game Lodge, Kwa-Zulu Natal provides a unique and authentic taste of the African bush in the heart of South Africa's most diverse conservation regions. Zulu Nyala is highly regarded for its excellent cuisine, bush venues, and amphitheater. The stunning stone and thatch hilltop lodge offers comfort and hospitality with tastefully decorated rooms and suites that pay tribute to the region's magnificent ethnic heritage. Guests can seek out the unexpected on day or night game drives in an open Land Rover, follow in the footprints of the elephants along ancient riverbeds during guided walks, or relax with a sundowner. Nestled between Mkuze, Hluhluwe, and St. Lucia reserves, this section of paradise is home to a wide variety of game from majestic elephant, rhino, buffalo and stealthy predators to abundant plains game and a wealth of bird life.

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Lynn Culver

An unhappy Fishing Cat

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Blast from the Past. . . In Memory of Sakhi

Long Island Ocelot Club

Volume 23 Number 5—September/October 1979

Elfriede Vickering

March two years ago, my Sakhi ocelot died of a massive kidney infection. She had been my baby for five years and five months. I will never forget her and would like to tell you her story.

I found her in a “Wild & Exotic Animals” roadside show in New Mexico. She was sitting in a box, not much larger than a shoebox. She was dirty, scruffy a little bag of fur with big, sad eyes. As soon as I saw those eyes looking at me, I knew I had to take her away from there. I only hoped I had enough money in my purse to buy her right away. Luckily, the owner of that dubious “animal show” was glad that somebody was dumb enough to take that animal off his hands before it died.

I drove straight to my vet—a good friend of mine. It was about 10am as I called telling him I was on my way. After he had a look at the poor animal he said: “That’s a poor looking critter and we can’t spare a minute to start making an ocelot of her.”

The examination showed that her weight was four pounds. She had two rows of teeth and fangs, which placed her at roughly at seven months of age. Her neck creaked every time she moved her head, the x-ray showed that one of her vertebrae had almost been severed. We guessed that she had been caught in a snare. Her tail tip had been broken and mended crookedly. She had four types of internal parasites and a bad cough. She was matted and crawling with fleas.

We started with flea treatment, shots, vitamins and medication for her cough and lots of chicken and Zupreem. I set the alarm for 4 am to feed her; she ate every four hours for a month. She was shy, timid, and cried every time a person lifted a hand. As it was in the summer and I was living in Amarillo, Texas, I had Sakhi sleep in bed with me wrapped in a wool blanket. It took almost six months to get rid of all the parasites, as we had to go slowly.

A year later, Sakhi was a beautiful, sleek ocelot; she wore a wide velvet and leather collar as a neckbrace that I took off when she slept.

Then she lost a lot of weight, she had to be spayed as we discovered several large tumors. After surgery she recovered quickly and put on weight again. She acted like a happy little child, had a box full of junk, loved stuffed animals, and stuck her nose into everything; she was my shadow.

She was also a skilled burglar and could open any door. I had a hook and eye on top of every door. Her teddy bear, pillow, blanket and sandbox had to come along whenever I took her in the car for a drive. Half a block away from the house she had to go to the sandbox. Her sandbox was a plastic dishpan full of kitty litter which I placed on the floor on the passenger side. She sat with

her hind legs in the box and steadied herself with her front paws on the seat and really squeezed out two drops: Then she was ready for the trip. She loved riding in the car. One time we took her on a ten-day trip through the Colorado

She loved riding in the car. One time we took her on a 10-day trip through the Colorado Mountains.

Mountains.

She enjoyed every mile, sitting in the back seat looking out. In the motels she had her sandbox in the bathroom and slept in bed with her own pillow and blanket. We left her sitting on the bed watching TV when we went to eat.

In her prime, Sakhi’s weight was a grand 42 pounds, far from the little bag of bones she had been as I found her.

I married and sold my house to move to my new husband’s home. Sakhi had a nice, sunny room with all her favorite toys and sandbox. She had a single size bed to sleep on and a large yard to play in and the run of the house during the day. But, she stopped eating. I called the vet who thought she was throwing a tantrum, as I didn’t let her sleep in bed with me anymore. When I fed her live minnows—her favorite. She ate them so the vet said, “See, just a tantrum. She’ll get over it.”

Then she started to vomit. The vet sent over some medication as I had moved 50 miles down the road.

She started to eat a little again, then stopped and started to vomit water. In the slime on the floor was one eye from a stuffed animal. I called the vet and asked if he thought she could have a blockage from eating a stuffed animal. I had policed the house, nothing was missing and all the stuffed toys were in place and not gnawed on. But she kept throwing up a clear liquid. Now the vet got concerned and asked me if we should do an exploratory to see what was the matter.

We had two vets do the surgery and a medical lab doing the analysis, just to make sure. As they opened her, they saw that Sakhi’s body fat had a very odd, yellow coloring. That’s when they started the kidney tests. The vet did everything they could to save her. They back-flushed the kidneys, they bathed the inside of her body cavity, they shot her with everything they could think of but it was too late.

The vet thought that as soon as she had stopped eating it had been too late already. We will never know. But there is always the thought in my head that maybe we could have saved her. What bothers me the most is I had noticed about six months before that Sakhi’s ears had a funny color. I remember noticing that but it slipped my mind. That’s when we could have saved her, at the beginning of her illness. So please, all you cat people, take notice of your cat’s color. The ears should be pink inside. If they are white, there is anemia. If yellow, there is likely a kidney or liver ailment.

We brought Sakhi home to die. I put a Perry Como tape on softly; she always seemed to like a soft-voiced male singer.

Sunday afternoon I read a book while laying next to her, she was mostly sleeping. Suddenly she crawled over to me, and laid her head on my chest. She was saying “Good-bye.” She crawled back and a few moments later went into a coma. She never regained full consciousness. She died in my arms Wednesday morning.

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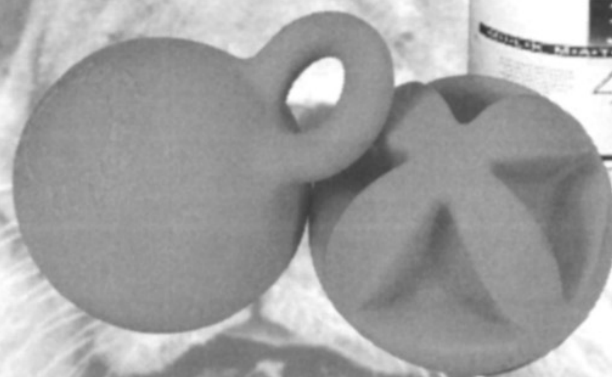
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Fishing Cat *Prionailurus viverrinus*

The Fishing cat is a Southeast Asian cat found from northern India, Sri Lanka, Burma, the Malaysian Peninsula, to Sumatra and Java weighing in at 12-20 pounds. They have a stocky build, standing 20 inches at the shoulder with a head and body length of about 31 inches. The tail is only about a foot long. Males are generally about a quarter larger than the female. The coloration is a gray base with solid black spots. There are distinctive dark lines running from the top of the eyes up over the forehead, breaking into more irregular stripes along the spine.

The fishing cat is commonly found in areas near water and its primary prey is fish. They will also take rodents, deer fawns, young wild pigs, and domestic animals. Birds are seldom taken, but there have been reports of fishing cats swimming up, fully submerged, to waterfowl and attacking them from beneath, grabbing the bird's legs. They will also sometimes scavenge from tiger kills or from livestock carcasses.

Fishing cats prefer to hunt wetlands rather than moving watercourses. They are



excellent swimmers and will dive in after fish. They also will lie in wait and attempt to scoop fish out of the water from the water's edge with their paws. Hunting has been observed at all times of the day.

Fishing cats can breed throughout the year, but births peak in April and October. The gestation period is 63 days and a litter of 1-4 kittens results. They mature at two years of age and can live to be twelve years old.

In the wild, fishing cats tend to be locally concentrated around areas of water and are not common in all areas of their range.



They are listed on Appendix II of CITES and are protected nationally throughout most of their range.

The outlook in captivity is fairly bright. While there is not a huge captive population, there is a fairly good genetic base to work with and breeding is not that difficult to achieve. There is an SSP that has begun to oversee the maintenance of keeping the genetic viability for fishing cats.

The main problem facing fishing cats in the wild is the destruction of wetlands. A recent survey found that over 50% of Asian wetlands faced threat of draining, pollution, and human encroachment.



Serval siblings

Mace Loftus

Conservation and Education Update

Carol Bohning, Director of C/E

Greetings, cat lovers! I would like to thank the FCF Board of Directors for their confidence in me to complete the term for the directorship of Conservation and Education. As some of you know, I have been teaching the basic wild feline captive husbandry course for several years now. I love it and not a course goes by that I don't learn things from my students! That's the great part about this job, and of being in the wildcat world! There are always new things to learn! I own the Butternut Farm Wildcat Sanctuary along with my husband Craig, and two kids, Bret and Leyna. We are the (mostly) willing slaves of 3 cougars, 4 bobcats, 1 Siberian lynx, an F1 bengal cat, 3 foxes, about 40 domestic cat rescues and 3 dogs.

I am planning on updating the husbandry course very soon to include new information, and I would like to ask for *your* help in doing so. We have sections in the course for which I need your ideas and photos. For example, in the natural history section, I would like to use member photos of as many of the wild cats as possible. Could anyone with good photos of some of the rarer cat species please send them to me either by mail or by email? If sent by mail, make sure they are labeled with your name and address. They will be scanned and

immediately sent back to you. I would also like photos or info on different types of caging and equipment, especially if it is something that you have come up with that is out of the ordinary. For nutrition, I would like to know what you feed and why, what your supplements are, if any, and how often you feed and why. For health care, please let me know what vaccines you use and any specific issues you have had with your cats and how you have dealt with them. Photos of vet visits or surgeries are welcome! Any ideas or unique situations regarding making contingency plans would be great, and your ideas on handling and behavior training along with photos would be very welcome. You can send emails to me at lynxrufus@voyager.net or by mail to the address on the inside of the cover of this newsletter. You can also phone me at the number listed. Please indicate with your photos or info whether you would like to have credit given, or if you would prefer to remain anonymous.

I will also be working on a course for first responders such as police, firefighters, animal control folks, etc. in conjunction with Evelyn Shaw, FCF's legal director, who started Hunter and Lea's Project. Hunter and Lea's project consists of a num-

ber of exotic animal people in Ohio who have been working with local law enforcement people with escapes of all types of animals.

I would like to announce at this time that Dr. Jim Sanderson, a research scientist at Conservation International and a favorite speaker at two of our past annual conventions has accepted becoming our conservation advisor! Jim travels the world and is involved with conservation and research projects for many of the rare and endangered wildcat species. After speaking at the convention this year, he was off to Japan to Iriomote Island to attend a meeting about a research project on two subspecies of the leopard cat. His is a job that I truly envy, except for when he talks about going into the back country and getting covered with leeches! I'm sure he has other very interesting stories also! Jim will be helping us to expand our support of conservation projects here and abroad.

I hope to be able to include a conservation and education update in each newsletter from this point on to keep everyone informed of our work. You are welcome to send along any info or suggestions to me for consideration. So many cats, so little time!



Lynn Culver

Jim and Birdie Broaddus of Bearcreek Cattery have embarked on a jaguarundi breeding program. Jim writes, the nature of these Jaguarundis is entirely different than that of my Servals, Bobcats and Lynx. As we know, each species can have unique habits. I have learned that these little guys possess one that I have not seen yet. They like to huddle in a pile in the dry house, pretty much as they probably do in the wild in their dens. I have also learned that photographing a total Lunar eclipse is easier than shooting one of these guys. Thanks for sharing Jim, we certainly enjoy seeing such a rare cat.



Mark Schoebel demonstrates how to carry an adolescent lion cub. This white lion named Shazzam owned by Kevin Chambers certainly looks like he is enjoying the ride!



Klya and Tadi, two gorgeous cougars owned by Tim and Anne Amadon pose for the camera.

FCF Website Update



Tip: Clicking on the FCF logo on any page will take you back to FCF's home page.

Irene Satterfield

As promised, the Members' Only section of our website is up and running. User Ids and passwords were emailed on Tuesday, October 11th and hopefully you received yours. If you did not, please contact webmaster@thefcf.com. After logging in, you should see the Members Only hyperlink - as shown in the image below - in place of [Request Account].

You will have the ability to manage data from your member listing, your address, phone and email addresses as well as URLs for two personal websites. This data feeds directly into our Membership database so it is important that you modify the data with the greatest of care.

Some of the photos featured on the FCF home page Photo of the Week. Submit your favorite photo for the next PotW today!



The Members' Only section has a copy of the Raffle Tickets for you to download in Word document format as well as the Members Directory. There are many other features displayed but not yet hyperlinked. As each item becomes available, the link will be hooked up with the proper web page.

To use the Members Directory, click the link to access the listing then view members' profiles containing auto-biographies and photos.

To access your profile and settings, find your name in the Directory and click View. You will then see Edit My Profile near the top of the page as shown below. This link will only be available when viewing your own page.

Clicking Edit My Profile load a form in your browser. Use the space provided there to introduce yourself, express a point of view, or however you like. The form is robust and easy-to-use.

Two settings of interest might answer why your name or other fellow members' names are not displayed in the directory. When checked, the Do Not Publish setting prevents a member from being listed in the Directory. Another option allows a member's name, biography information and other data to be listed while withholding address and phone number information. This is the List Address setting. Leave this box unchecked to keep contact information private (default setting).

Email addresses are particularly important. Be sure and enter them accurately, i.e. no spaces or invalid characters. Email addresses are used to disseminate information and expedite communications between the Board of Directors and members while keeping costs efficient.

To complete your profile, upload some pictures of yourself with your cats or whatever you choose to share.

If you have any suggestions, issues or questions, please do not hesitate to contact the webmaster at webmaster@thefcf.com.

