



**Feline Conservation Federation**  
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Cover: Nancy Vandermey holds two nine month-old  
North Chinese leopards, Yanna and LiMing, at  
EFBC's Feline Conservation Center, Rosamond,  
CA—Photo by Eric Baralow • Background: Two of  
EFBC's Pallas' cats—Photo by Nancy Vandermey.



**Pallas' cat at EFBC demonstrates  
his low profile head.**



## 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 on exotic feline ownership, husbandry, veterinary care, conservation and legislation are 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 first day of even 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. Dues are \$30 US, \$35.00 Canada, and \$40 international.

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## Letter from the President

My husband Bart is a songwriter and a poet of great talent. He wrote a song many years ago about the frenzied pace of life in the civilized world called Everybody's Got it. I don't remember it all, but the beginning chorus and refrain sure rings true for me today.

*Can't go to sleep;  
Can't get out of bed;  
Got so many problems running through my head;  
Can't concentrate on a single one;  
Got so much to do,  
Nothing's ever getting done;  
Everybody's got it;  
And now I got it;  
Worrying about it 'till my brain begins to fizz;  
I tell you everybody's got it but they don't know what it is.*

So much is going on in our modern life, we have precious little time for enjoyment. It seems it is only getting worse as we invent more modern conveniences that create more modern headaches. It's days like this I need to step away from my computer and the phone and the pile of paperwork on my desk and go visit my cats.

Researchers have established in scientific studies that stroking the fur of a cat soothes the sick and despondent. There is no doubt that connection with the feline spirit is a healing power for modern woes. I wish everyone could take a dose of this medicine.

Accepting the position of president of the FCF was a decision I did not take lightly. I know that this organization must move forward and we must work hard, or we will see the demise of all captive husbandry of wild felines in America.

The first step was for the membership to elect a board of directors which is competent, willing to get the job done, and would keep smiling when the road gets rough. Calling each other names when we disagree or blaming each other when things don't go right is not going to solve anything. But listening to other views and learning from mistakes will.

We got off to a slow start, finding the election process to be terminally flawed and after much consideration the difficult decision to hold another election for five offices brought us a new set of officers and directors, minus a secretary. First Harold Epperson dropped out of the race and then Terri Morast declined as secretary candidate. Now according to our bylaws, the board will appoint a secretary to fill this vacancy. This position needs a hard working, computer competent volunteer with a willingness to participate in board meetings, cast board votes, and help with FCF projects. A candidate does not need to own cats or have even handled cats, but one does need to strongly support the fundamental goals of the FCF. We will try to appoint a secretary by the end of March, so if you are interested, please contact me immediately so the board may consider your offer. Email me at [lynnculver@hughes.net](mailto:lynnculver@hughes.net) or call me at 479-394-5235.

I wish to thank the outgoing FCF board of directors, Marcus Cook, Bobby Bean, Nanette McGann, and Harold Epperson. Each gave a considerable amount of their time and talent to further the FCF and there is no doubt they helped us move forward.

I also wish to thank incoming Conservation Director Mindy Stinner for her commitment to give FCF two years of her time. Already she has been spreading the word of FCF at the Conservation Conference in Houston. To learn what the real scoop on AZA zoo conservation giving is, read Mindy's eye-opening report in this issue.

Kevin Chambers is our new treasurer. The board voted to adopt QuickBooks Online as the official accounting method. I suspect this will greatly improve our reports and accountability and enhance our financial overviews to make them suitable for future grant applications by FCF. This will also stan-

dardize our bookkeeping so that future transitions from one treasurer to another will be easier and streamlined.

Irene Satterfield, our web designer and master is also our new Director of Public Relations. She needs your help. The website is waiting for an FCF reporter, someone who will dig up FCF member news, FCF event news, write stories, gather photos, and keep the home page fresh. Irene is ready to guide you. What are you waiting for?

Robert Turner has been elected as our Life Director. Bob will be available for special projects and has indicated a desire



**Lynn bottle feeding Rosco bobcat**

to spearhead a fund raising effort to gain us some heavy hitter guest speakers for convention. Anyone with any suggestions needs to get with Bob. And speaking of convention: mark your calendar to take vacation time from work July 25-28. With Bob's help there are going to be some great speakers. See you there.

Brain Werner, what a whirlwind of new ideas! If we can just keep up with our new vice president's enthusiasm, there will be no stopping FCF. Brian leaves for Florida this week to represent the FCF in front of the Florida Wildlife Technical Advisory Group meeting. He will discuss the benefits of allowing contact with baby large cats. He will also make suggestions to increase compliance with existing regulations to insure animal welfare and public safety. Brian will be representing the good exhibitors and the knowledgeable conservation educators and will provide compelling reasons not to outlaw all public contact, an agenda being pushed by AR fanatics. Brian will be in good company. I understand that industry representatives will also speak, as will ZAOA who is planning to have Jim Fowler represent them.

Evelyn Shaw has been re-elected as Legislation Director. She will be overseeing the Field Representatives Program. She has been asking for help from you for the past two years and now Brian has proposed a very structured plan that will enable a greater number of FCF members to take responsibility for building alliances concerning legislation and husbandry issues in their regions and states and create a feedback loop to the Legislation Director and the rest of the national FCF directors. This program will enable FCF to increase its presence, effectiveness, and ability to amass information and provide information to city, county, state, and federal officials. Please be sure to read the Field Director's article in this issue of the journal and volunteer to get involved.

Carol Bohning is preparing for the Maryland Husbandry Course scheduled for May 12 at the Catoctin Wildlife Preserve in Thurmont, Maryland. This course location offers a great behind-the-scenes, guided tour of the facility the next day. Richard Hahn, FCF Accreditation Committee member, operates Catoctin. If you live on the east coast and have been waiting for a

chance to take the FCF course, don't miss this one! Register today.

The scheduled husbandry course for Washington was cancelled. In spite of PR Web press releases, internet announcements, advertisements, and articles in *Animal Finder's Guide* and the *FCF Journal*, not enough people signed up for the event. Was it the winter weather, or just apathy on the west coast? Two other courses scheduled in Oregon a few years ago failed to reach minimum registration requirements. The best courses seem to be those hosted by facilities with established reputations and perhaps that name recognition and networking established in the feline community is a necessary component for success. It is a shame, as the husbandry course program needs more diverse locations and more course instructors in training. Had we a licensed instructor on the west coast, FCF could afford to host a smaller class. But with flight costs as high as they are, the FCF is hampered in its ability to provide continuing education in that part of the country.

We have another program being offered to FCF members I wish to touch on. The Registered Handler Program is offered to allow those FCF members with long-term handling experience to be recognized as a handler or advanced handler in the FCF database. The benefits are two-fold. FCF increases its standing in legislation and conservation circles when we can document the husbandry experience of our membership. And you, as a registered handler, can increase your standing by registering with us. The fee for this is only \$30.00 yearly. Registered handlers receive a card and their information is stored in the FCF files for reference. While you may not think you need this now, someday you may move and it may make the difference between getting into a state or community with your cat or not. It will be available for referencing when you apply for USDA or state licensing, or when questioned by media or employers, and registration will assist FCF when we gather statistical analysis of the membership for use in legislative and public relations. The application is included in this issue, the article about this program was in the Jan/Feb issue and we also have this on the FCF web site for future use.

Don't forget to earn your FCF Feline

Facility Accreditation. I am half way done with my application. For larger facilities, I suggest you provide a video or DVD of your cages and layout. This takes time, but this is important enough to do. Cost cannot be your excuse because it is only \$30.00. If you don't think it makes a difference that your facility has been certified as excellent by a knowledgeable board of five, think again. If you cannot see that there is an ever-increasing effort to separate the wheat from the chaff in the animal world, you are not noticing which way the wind is blowing. Take advantage of this opportunity to have your facility declared FCF Accredited. Our forms are on the FCF web site under the husbandry section.

As president, I would like to encourage everyone to become accredited and registered if you qualify. The more documentation of high standards of husbandry FCF can assemble, the more weight our organization carries. If you want FCF to do something for you, you have to do something for FCF. You have to help FCF by participating in the programs it offers.

Many members just prefer to pay their dues and enjoy this journal because they do not own cats anymore, or never will own cats and they just want to live vicariously through us. We welcome you because the more people we can reach with our message, the better. But for the vast majority of members whose dedication to the feline species or to an individual feline or a collection of felines is their life's passion, you must join in the collective efforts of the FCF.

One of the methods we use to communicate is the FCF Yahoo list. This list was recently put on moderation after some members refused to respect the few simple rules on common courtesy and clean language. It seems a few members take great joy in criticizing others and sharing their bad moods. Freedom of speech can easily be abused and it runs off the good people when the complainers dominate discussions. There is a difference between constructive criticism and mean spirited personal attacks. We all know this. The Internet is a double-edged sword. Instant communication that is faceless emboldens the writer. My husband calls it Evil Mail. In some cases he is right. But it is a necessary evil, as is so much of today's technology. I

think what is the most upsetting to me is the tendency for a few FCF members who are not actually pitching in to help with any of the work, are quick to criticize others for their efforts. Let's see if we can curb the impulse to point fingers and instead lend a hand and say, "call on me, and I will help on this project."

The legal climate is hostile. We are facing many battles. So we have to hold onto every victory, however small. I recently I gave an interview to a Louisville reporter on the nature of servals. One of our members had moved into a city that had no ordinances. An effort to prohibit the presence of servals was initiated and the FCF member was able to educate the city council members on the nature of the critter. After this education, they ruled that they did not want to be in the business of policing what pets can be maintained in households. How refreshing. The owner worked to educate them on the species, and her pet in particular, and made a positive impression. The article I was interviewed for was a follow up story.

We are facing new restrictive animal rights backed legislation in Washington, Ohio, Iowa, North Carolina, West Virginia, and Indiana. Members in these states need to be vigilant. Missouri has reintroduced a rather reasonable registration requirement that was crafted in cooperation with the FCF in a non-adversarial mode last year. However it was made unacceptable with an amendment mandating excessive liability insurance. The trend to require something that is financially unaffordable or completely unavailable translates into a ban.

It bothers me that horseback riding stables, commercial businesses that rent horses are often exempted by state statute from any liability based on the established fact that horses are large and dangerous creatures known to cause injury or death. Riders must assume their own liability. And even though horses weigh upwards of 500 times more than some cat species, we are forced by the state to obtain such coverage even when we do not allow anyone to interact with our animals. Exhibitors and sanctuaries that depend upon employees and volunteers to willingly perform husbandry are required to patronize an insurance company. The state of the insurance industry is ruthless. Their new policy of not issuing

any coverage for areas prone to hurricane damage tells you that the concept of "sharing the risks upon the backs of many" is falling by the wayside. Insurance companies instead concentrate on competing for clients in less weather-torn areas to maximize their profits. With this new emphasis on only insuring the sure-bet, you now can't even get coverage for some breeds of dogs. How can we get coverage for our felines that are non-traditional and for which there are no actuarial tables to establish the risk factors for the number-crunchers to use?

In conclusion, I just have to touch on one more subject, the status of cats in the wild. Thinking about our native big cat, the cougar, I can't help but wonder: Literally millions of dollars have been spent by Florida Fish and Game and the Federal Highway Department and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to save this sub-species

from the brink of extinction. Now we have close to 100 of the big cats and they are a "problem." Seems while the panthers tripled to a measly 100 individuals, people poured into the Sunshine State with all their needs and desires and gobbled up more and more of the panther's last stand and they don't like having a panther cross their path.

Can we say that any wild cat is safe in the wild? No, of course not. And that is why we need captive husbandry and that is why we fight for our existence and for the existence of our cats. So we have to do our part. We have to fight to save captive habitat from total destruction through legislative ignorance. We have to fight for the rights of all wild feline species to live safely in our care and for the rights of responsible people to engage in captive breeding and educational exhibiting and personal ownership of these other Earthlings we so dearly love.

—Lynn Culver

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# Razzle Dazzle, Precious, and Norinda

Ten years ago, Bruce and I were living in a very nice double-wide trailer in Alabama. We were busy raising caracals and servals at the time.

On January 31, 1996 we were given the privilege and opportunity to raise three young fishing cats for “someone else” on breeder loan. I cannot express how privileged we felt. Several years before we had met the son of these “someone elses.” We spent many good times together and hours of sharing animals stories with his son but had never met his parents. We spoke to them on the phone a few times but never thought we would be given the chance and trust to care for their unique animals.

Razzle Dazzle was the most handsome five-month-old cub. He just dazzled us, hence the name. The two females, Precious and Norinda, were just too cute. They were about two and a half months old.

The three cubs were fully intact; our first experience with claws. The girls were small and not intimidating. I made a playpen up with blankets and bottle-fed them like I had done so many times throughout the years with caracal, serval, Canada lynx, Siberian lynx, and cougar cubs.

Razzy was too big for a playpen so he was given one of our extra bedrooms. Bruce ripped out the carpet and tiled the floor. He made shelves and climbing areas for him.

But those claws! Have you ever seen fishing cat claws? They are like a fishhook. They get stuck in your skin like a fishhook in a fish. Ouch.

So we started out socializing with Razzy



by wearing gloves until he and we became acquainted and trusted one another. Thanks goodness the trust came quickly so we could feel his unusual fur with bare hands.

These three cubs were the most entertaining comedians. They were so different than any other exotic cats we had raised, with their short legs strutting beneath their stout bodies and the sound of their barking. Yes, these cats bark! Not your usual exotic cat sounds.

We were so mesmerized by these three.

They couldn't do anything wrong (even if they had) and the barking sound was so amazing to us.

They loved the water! Sure we still get a kick out of serval and other exotic cats that enjoy playing in the water. But a fishing cat doesn't just play in the water. There was no way to take a relaxing bubble bath with these three cuties.

Next we dedicated our extra bathroom to Raz, Precious, and Norinda. The tub had to stay filled with water to keep them happy. They spent hours jumping in and out of the tub or dunking for toys. The real joy was when one of them would run out of the bathroom bringing us a soaking wet stuffed animal to drop in our lap. What a mess. Needless to say, all stuffed animals had to be put away.

The zoo in Alabama learned of these three fishing cats living in our home with us. They called us in disbelief and we invited them to come see the cats. The three zoo personnel came and were pleasantly surprised and delighted to see it was true. They spent hours in our home interacting with Raz, Precious, and Norinda.

Eventually as maturity hit and the very strong pungent odor began, we had to move



Norinda and Precious and domestic Mortikia nap it up.



these special cats outdoors, but not far. Their enclosure was built in front of our living room windows so they could see us and we could still enjoy watching them.

We gave them a big galvanized tub that was always filled with clean water and their toys. Every once in awhile we added a few bubbles since they seemed to enjoy popping them so much.

One day Razzzy scared me so bad I thought I was going to have a heart attack. Shortly after being outside with the tub I saw him at the bottom of the tub *not* moving. I called his name over and over but he still didn't move. As I was ready to pull him out of the tub and start CPR he slowly drifted up just to the surface of the water with his eyes open and ears folded staring at me. He looked at me as if saying, "What? Is something wrong?" He was just doing his fishing cat thing! Fishing cats can stay under water for a long period of time. Their eyes have a special membrane so they can see while hunting under water. Their ears fold and seal while they are under water.

They even have webbed front feet for fishing and swimming.

Even as the years went by and they became adults, they continued to stay friendly and trusted us. We were so glad to still be able to pet and interact with them.

Then the day came when two cubs were born. We so much enjoyed raising the parents but bottle feeding and raising younger ones was even more enjoyable with new experiences.

To this day Bruce and I will always be thankful to that son and his parents who put their faith and trust in us and gave us the opportunity to raise, love, and be a part of such a rare exotic cat species/ Fishing cats are so special and unique. It was an experience we will never forget and will always cherish in our hearts.

As you read this... thank you so much. You know who you are. •

*Bruce and Denise Little  
Little Animal Kingdom & Preserve  
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# Beyond Extinction, Tiger DNA

By Brian Werner, Executive Director  
*Tiger Missing Link Foundation*

Are you wondering about the breeding and management of captive tigers? There certainly are a lot of opinions being quoted in the media these days. Well this is the real truth behind captive tigers.

Just a century ago, there were over 100,000 of the felines roaming the earth. In the 1930s, 1950s, and 1980s the Caspian, Javan, and Bali species of tiger became extinct. In the 1950s Mao Se Tung declared the tiger in China a pest and a national eradication program was implemented. Chairman Mao further declared that all trees were to be cut down to provide fuel for steel mills and during a short, 5-year period the South China tiger population was reduced from 4,000 to only 500 individuals. Today, this sub-specie is nearly extinct.

In 1995 the scientific community began to express concern about the accuracy of the current division or classification of the eight identified subspecies of tiger. At this same time, I embarked on a plan to sort out the genetic pedigrees of private tigers through genetic testing. It appears that I was at least ten years ahead of our zoological colleagues. Recently the scientific community embarked on some genetic testing of tigers. From this testing came the conclusion that there is a sixth subspecies of tigers found among the Indochinese tigers.

Indochinese tiger (*Panthera tigris corbetti*), also called Corbett's tiger, is found in Cambodia, China, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam. Estimates of its population vary between 1,200 to 1,800, but it seems likely that the number is in the lower part of the range. The largest current population is in Malaysia, where illegal poaching is strictly controlled, but all existing populations are at extreme risk from habitat fragmentation and inbreeding. In Vietnam, almost three-quarters of the tigers killed provide stock for Chinese pharmacies. Indochinese tigers are smaller and darker than Bengal tigers, and about the size of African lions. Males weigh from 150-190 kg on average while females are smaller at 110-140 kg.

The Malayan tiger (*Panthera tigris jacksoni*), exclusively found in the southern (Malaysian) part of the Malay Peninsula, was not considered a subspecies in its own right until 2004. The new classification came about after a study by Luo et al from the Laboratory



of Genomic Diversity Study, part of the National Cancer Institute of the United States. Recent counts showed there are

600-800 tigers in the wild, making it the third largest tiger population behind the Bengal tiger and the Indochinese tiger.



In 1982 the AZA created the Tiger Species Survival Plan. It was assumed by this plan that all tigers that were traced back to the country of origin and the wild were unrelated to each other. But with tigers, you can't assume anything.

Here is another projection that I'll make: I believe that the TSSP was flawed from the beginning in that different species of captive tigers being used in breeding programs were not properly identified. If my theory is correct, the SSPs may have allowed inbreeding and fostered generic tigers to occur. I believe that assessment through DNA testing is needed for these tigers.

This would answer whether the right breeding choices have been made, and if they have not, aid in correcting past management mistakes for the betterment of the tiger.

Tiger Missing Link Foundation (Tiger Link), the parent company of Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge, was founded in 1995 by me with its mission to help prevent the tiger from becoming extinct by conserving genetic diversity and eliminating inbreeding of captive tigers. This same year Exxon and the National Wildlife Foundation formed the Save the Tiger Fund (STF). Three years later Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge was started, expanding our mission to include rescuing tigers and other big cats and educating the public about them. Presently our mission is three-fold: tiger conservation, big cat rescue, and environmental education.

Tiger Missing Link participated in the very first DNA testing of tigers. The blood sample we submitted to this study was identified as an Indo-Chinese tiger, a very rare tiger in captivity. And perhaps even more importantly, two genetic markers showed up in our tiger that were not present in any of the other tigers within the study, including those samples from the wild that were used for subspecies comparisons. What this means is that captive tigers are more genetically diverse than what is being presented to the general public and we have scientific evidence to prove of this.

Tiger Missing Link proposes that DNA testing be used to correctly identify the subspecies and relationships among the managed population as well as introduced new blood

lines from tigers outside of the nation's zoological community. This project works with Dr. Christian Zwiab of the University of Texas Health Research Center in Tyler through their genetics lab and with Will Gergits of Therion Corporation, an AZA accredited commercial entity that specializes in genetic testing of exotics and wild animals.

The reasons tigers are in danger of becoming extinct in the wild include poaching, habitat destruction, isolation effects, and encroachment of their habitat. Because

their survival in nature is not assured, we must take extreme precautions to insure their captive survival. I have communicated concerns about flaws in the 1982 TSSP to some of the country's leading experts in the field including Sr.

Steven J. O'Brian at the National Cancer Institute and Dr. Ron Tilson of the AZA. I don't

think that they like it. Politics' seem to be abounding where tiger populations fall off.

Most American tigers are descendants of either Siberian or Bengal. These two subspecies are the largest in appearance making them the most popular to bring into captivity for zoos and circuses. But in the past century other sub-species have been imported and these tigers produced offspring that can be found in today's private sector population.

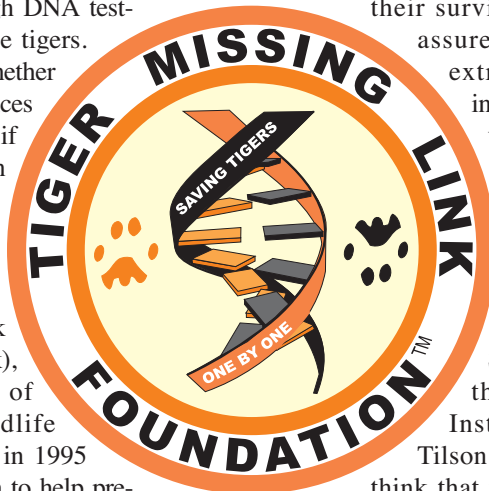
Until we obtain a complete genetic snap-

shot of captive tigers, we do not know what we hold in captivity. Tiger Missing Link will be working with anyone and everyone who has a tiger by sampling blood or tissue to evaluate each tiger. During routine physicals tiger managers can take a blood sample or a small tissue sample and send it to TMLF for comparison. Sampled tigers will be entered into the TMLF tiger registry.

We are currently assessing the possibility of sending a medical support team to each potential site for basic medical care and sample collections under the direction of a specialized veterinarian. This would provide free medical and dental exam services to the private sector tigers as well as serving to facilitate the sample collection process and insure sample contamination does not occur.

There is still a lot of research to be done about tiger genetics. Through DNA testing we can perform two types of tests, subspecies identification and a mean kinship/inbreeding analysis. The mean kinship/inbreeding analysis allows us to see who is related to whom. Once we have these answers, we have the knowledge to create genetic diversity.

Perhaps if we are lucky, we will even find that some of these tigers hold some DNA from one of the three sub-species of tigers that are now extinct (Bali, Javan, and Caspian). DNA can also show us if the tiger is changing genetically in captivity compared to those in the wild and it can even show changes between private sector and zoos. Hopefully we can learn more about tigers before it's too late. I plan to keep FCF updated on DNA testing of tigers and the registration process for sampled tigers, once the software programming is completed. •



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# Marvin F. Hierlmeier 1922-2007

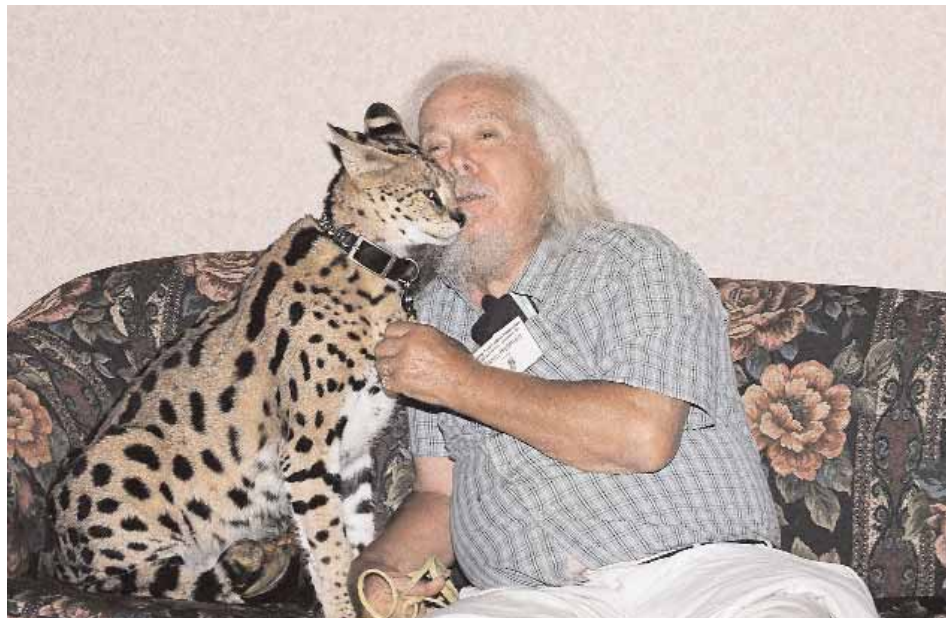
## Marvin, Thanks For Sharing Hush

By Bob Turner

Many of the MEFES and FCF members have met Marvin Hierlmeier and his serval named Hush at MEFES meetings or at FCF national conventions. Marvin and Hush received the LIOC-ESCF (now FCF) Lotty Award during the 2002 national convention for all their sharing. Marvin, age 84 of Madison Indiana, passed away on Friday, February 9, 2007 at the Hanover Nursing Center near Madison. Sadly, Marvin and Hush will not be attending another FCF national convention together and we all will miss them.

FCF member, Leann Montgomery, loved Marvin and Hush and she has taken in Hush and will take care of Hush for the rest of his life. Marvin and all who knew and loved Hush are so lucky to have a wonderful caring person like Leann to give Hush the best possible care. Hush is over 19 years old and we hope he gets to live many more years, as he deserves all the best for what he has done for so many lonely people. Thanks Marvin and Hush for the lovely memories.

Marvin was a very special 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 in



October 1993. After listening to the group of people who were standing around Marvin asking questions about the cat, I learned that the cat was an African serval. I was so 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 of the world. It was so fortunate that Marvin, Hush, and our paths crossed because seven weeks later we were sharing our lives with a beautiful serval kitten named Kyra from Donna Amos who

lives in Oregon. Hush also came from Donna Amos and is an older brother by six years to Kyra. Kyra still lives with us.

Marvin was a FCF and MEFES member and normally is referred to as the “Cat Man” among many thousands of lonely mostly forgotten people in nursing homes who also call Hush their friend. Marvin along with his very special Hush did something about this loneliness.

Marvin traveled all throughout the mid-west and parts of Canada, sharing Hush with lonely people in nursing homes. Those trips have taken them to nursing homes in Florida, Georgia, Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Manitoba Canada, and Ontario Canada. It was touching to witness this sharing of Hush and the personal interaction between Hush and the lonely confined people.

Sharing Hush had been a constant theme of Marvin’s everyday life for over 17 years. Marvin’s late wife Gracie, was in a nursing home on her final days and Marvin saw the loneliness. Marvin took Hush in the nursing home to visit Gracie and found his and Hush’s calling—sharing Hush with all. Marvin is quick to point out that he is not showing Hush but sharing Hush.

I had the pleasure to have traveled over 25,000 miles with Marvin and Hush on some of the visits to nursing homes in sev-





eral states. I have also accompanied Marvin and Hush on trips to the far northern remote areas of Manitoba and Ontario Canada.

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 himself 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 gets a little rest. Marvin says first thing and if I am lucky he shows up for his shower and some rest four hours later.

I also remember holding up border crossing traffic into Canada at International Falls Minnesota. The two Canadian customs inspection officers were more interested in looking at and petting Hush than they were about their jobs. For 30 minutes no traffic crossed into Canada. I told the officers we were holding up traffic and one said, “They just can wait—it’s not every

day I get to see and touch something like this.” The amazing thing about all this was the custom inspectors never asked to see the paperwork that took Marvin six months to get in order to take Hush into Canada.

Marvin has visited and shared Hush with almost 800 different nursing homes with over 5000 revisits. Marvin estimated that 900,000 people petted Hush. Marvin and Hush were featured in 400 newspapers and on TV 54 times.

Almost every day around noon the two would head out looking for a nursing home not knowing where they will end up. One thing for sure: one or more nursing homes for that day would get a visit by this white haired man and a beautiful spotted wildcat named Hush.

I know some day when Hush meets up with Marvin in heaven, they will make the rounds with Marvin saying “Hi – Hi – Hi – how are you doing?”

Marvin, may God smile on you for sharing the beautiful boy with us. My buddy and friend, many will miss you here on earth. •



**His final assignment: Hush visits Marvin in a convalescent hospital.**



**Hush celebrating Christmas 2006 at his new home with Leann Montgomery.**

# Kansas State University Offers Rabies Titer Testing

Did you know that there is a lab in Kansas that can serum test blood samples for rabies titers upon request? The Kansas State Laboratory offers this service. It is usually requested for animals being exported, but can also be requested for diagnostic purposes as well.

Many times laws are passed that prohibit the “pet” ownership of wildlife on the grounds that there is no proven efficacy of rabies vaccinations in wild animals. This is because laboratory tests require 100 or more of a species being tested, with half having been vaccinated, and half not, and then all are exposed to rabies virus to be sacrificed to prove the vaccine works. All the vaccinated animals must not contract the disease and all of the non-vaccinated animals must become rabid in order for the experiment to be a success.

So it is easy to see, this sort of testing is never going to happen with tigers or pumas,

or any other rare zoological specimen. Instead, AZA zoos vaccinate anyway, knowing that a killed vaccine offers no threat and probably a lot of protection. And zoos have taken titers to document the antibody response to the vaccine. Titers are a strong indication of immunity being developed.

A titer of 0.5 I.U./mL is required for animals exported to most rabies-free areas. Please note there is not an established “protective” titer in animals. Individual interpretation is the responsibility of the submitting veterinarian.

How can exotic cat owners get past this unavoidable truth that our felines will never be used in experimentation required to gain “legal” protection from rabies vaccination?

Gathering blood samples of our cats, before and after rabies vaccinations, would go a long way towards building a factual database that documents the rise in titers in

our various cat species post-vaccination, and also document how long this protection lasts.

When your feline is at the vet to be sedated anyway, such as when it is being declawed as a kitten, take a blood sample and send it off to Kansas State University. It could help save your cat’s life or the life of another feline someday.

A comprehensive FCF database of blood sample reports needs both the sample before vaccination and after. If your vet will administer a rabies vaccination (some will, some won’t) then send in the blood samples and share the results with the FCF. We will collect such info and compile it for others. After vaccination—two weeks later or six months later—draw some blood. When we amass an indication of titer levels at many different times and taken together, we can get a picture of what kind of protection our cats gain from vaccinations.

Lab-tested blood sample results of the various feline species kept in captivity that show high titer levels are a strong piece of evidence in support of immunity to rabies.

The procedure: Have your vet collect 2 ml of serum, minimum amount 500  $\mu$ l of serum. All specimen tubes must be labeled with the animal’s name/identification number. All samples must have an accompanying KSU RFFIT submission form. Serum should be removed from the clot and packed in a leak proof container with absorbent material. This package should be placed inside of a second container with gel packs or dry ice. Individuals responsible for payment should include a \$30.00 per sample fee by check, money order, or credit card form. Please make checks payable to Kansas State University-RFFIT. Overnight service is recommended. Shipping charges are the responsibility of the shipper. Results will be mailed within 7-10 days of the set up date. Results will be faxed or phoned upon request.

If you have additional questions or wish for a rabies antibody testing form by the RFFIT method, please call 785-532-4483 or email [rabies@vet.k-state.edu](mailto:rabies@vet.k-state.edu) or download forms and information at their web site: <http://www.vet.k-state.edu/rabies> •

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# FCF's Presentation to the Florida Fish and Wildlife TAG

By Brian Werner

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission technical advisory group makes suggestions to the commission. This TAG consists of 11 representatives of the captive animal industry.

Contact with baby large cats was covered in the February 22-23 meeting. Dr. Terri Perrot, chair of the TAG invited FCF to speak on the value of allowing public contact with baby large cats. I was interested in this assignment and the board voted to appoint me as the new vice-president to represent FCF. I flew to Orlando, Florida.

My presentation was three fold: 1. Explain the need for private sector gene pools and the need for controlled and managed breeding of tigers. 2. Enumerate the value of controlled public contact with baby felines. 3. Provide suggestions for improved compliance with existing regulations.

I introduced the technical advisory committee to the FCF, sharing with each a copy of our latest journal. I spoke on the Tiger Missing Link project to track tiger genetics and the need for large gene pools and proper management of tigers. And I cited the direct benefits from public contact. The examples I gave on the benefits were as follows:

1. Encourages the building of cage space—Hand raised cubs creates friendly cats and this behavior trait encourages people to build captive habitat for these felines because people are more satisfied with the animals.
2. Increases genetic diversity—Direct public contact promotes genetic diversity though increased breeding. Success of long-term captive management is dependent upon the retention of as many genomes as possible. A large population increases the variety of tiger genetics.
3. Improves captive management—Handling of young cubs acclimates the animals to life in captivity. Handling reduces fear and stress and improves general health.
4. Helps fund captive habitat—Public opportunities to interact safely with a baby large cat are extremely rare and valuable to the public.

These experiences or a photo keepsake for a donation or fee can make a huge difference in generating the funds needed for cage building and daily care of the large cat. 5. Engages the next generation—Public contact engages people in the industry to get involved in the future. These young cats make great ambassadors for their species and 'turn-on' the next generation of keepers and educators.

To illustrate this last point I asked for a show of hands from those who didn't attribute direct contact as a motivating force for their involvement in the animal industry — no hands went up.

I then focused on Disney's Wild Animal Park to illustrate the life-long benefits of early public contact. The park has six tigers that are target trained and Disney produced an educational video of this process that has been shown at the USDA Big Cat Symposia. These cats are turned out into the

**Disney had paid  
Bridgeport Nature  
Center to deliver six  
tigers that had been  
touched by thousands  
of people in the first six  
months of their life.**

various habitats by Disney keepers and are trained to stand on points. They are also trained to return at the call of a whistle so that they can be quickly and safely locked up should weather or other emergencies require such. They are trained to allow protected handling so that veterinary procedures such as taking blood, giving shots, or examination of body parts can be performed.

These tigers are clearly tractable and well mannered. I knew they were born at a private facility and hand reared and bottle-fed. I pointed out to the committee members that the Disney tigers were the perfect example of the management advantages of hand rearing and public contact. Mr. Chrisman, the Disney representative on the committee, challenged me on this fact, denying his tigers were ever involved in public contact. As I questioned him on whether his tigers were bottle-fed, Mr. Chrisman did not answer but stated the Disney tigers were from a sanctuary in North Texas. At this point I let the entire committee know that I was well aware of this facility and it

was not a 'sanctuary' in the normal use of the word but was a breeding facility that specialized in educational outreach and public photo opportunities with cubs. Disney had paid Bridgeport Nature Center to deliver six tigers that had been touched by thousands of people in the first six months of their life.

My recommendations for improvements in enforcement of the existing regulations were from a conservationist stance that factored in both animal welfare and the safe keeping of big cats with an ultimate goal of allowing big cats and people to coexist by addressing any and all public safety concerns. Suggestions were:

- 1)Require continuing education or training courses similar to the FCF husbandry course.
- 2)Restrict public direct contact activity to Florida licensees only.
- 3)Set in a height or age requirement that limits contact with Class I animals to anyone over "certain specific height" or age.
- 4)Require birth registrations of all big cats along with AVID microchips.
- 5)Provide public direct contact "Activity Permits" so that inspectors can perform surprise site inspections.
- 6)List all employees or volunteers on applications.
- 7)Increase fines and punishments for violations.

After the 90-minute presentation, Captain West drove me back to the hotel and revealed the real reason for the proposal to prohibit direct contact in Florida. It is, as we all suspect, not a public safety issue but an Animal Rights driven desire to end captive husbandry. Direct public contact is seen as a means to fund cage space and encourages the next generation of keepers. Further, some of the AR sanctuary spokespersons are claiming that public contact venues are a major reason for the high number of tigers in sanctuaries.

Because FCF was not asked to address the real reason for the proposed ban, an opportunity to discuss these issues was potentially lost. Ironically though, my presentation refuted these claims perfectly when I engaged Mr. Chrisman about his Disney tigers that were examples of well adjusted, former public photo cats who filled a need in the zoological community and found themselves in a good home. •

## Margay Ecology in Atlantic Forest Remnants, Southwestern Brazil



Left to right: Alcides, Jim with Phoenix and Anne-Sophie.

*Anne-Sophie Bertrand &  
Alcides Ricieri Rinaldi*

Little is known about the margay (*Leopardus wiedii*). This little spotted cat inhabits tropical rain forests and morphological features suggest arboreal habits.

In November 2006, a young dispersing male (1.0 – 1.5 years old; Halloween) was spotted in a tree in an expanding suburb of Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil, where the waters delimit a three-country frontier between Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil. Two months later, another young male margay (1.5 – 2.0 years old; Phoenix) appeared in an office, even closer from downtown. Researchers from the Brazilian NGO called Reserval Brasil, Anne-Sophie Bertrand and Alcides Rinaldi took these cases very seriously. The fact that margays appear in urban sprawls may certainly alarm local wildlife biologists. Indeed, the Atlantic forest solely remains locally as a series of fragments of varying size, and which are not necessarily connected.

Before we release Halloween in a forest

remnant close to the area he had been caught, he remained five days in a clean and isolated enclosure at the ITAIPU Binacional Wildlife Refuge. Halloween's collar battery stopped working nine days after release. However, within this short monitoring period, we could see where the mar-

gay was roaming (less than 10 km). Recapture efforts will be intensified with lure and chicken-baited live traps. Phoenix was also rescued and taken to the ITAIPU Binacional facilities. It is worth noting that both cats were in excellent condition when they were captured, but they apparently had a







hard time finding habitat left when they tried to disperse.

Thanks to the support of Dr. Sanderson, Phoenix is now equipped with a radio collar and will be released very soon in the 800-ha protected forested area near by the refuge. In addition, more cats are to be captured in the nearest future.

Daily monitoring of margays will allow understanding (1) their relationship with habitats and humans, (2) their activity pattern, and (3) their diet. This study will finally provide information that we all long to discover about the margays as we will be monitoring several individuals for one year. As part of this project, captive animals held at the ITAIPU wildlife refuge, including margays, oncillas, jaguarundis, and ocelots, should also head back to nature after having successfully passed sanitary exams (see check-up session report on our NGO's official website. Data on the ecology of these small to medium-sized cats are lacking and this work will shed light on important behavioral aspects that could allow us thinking about preserving these magnificent animals. •

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Tree in which Halloween was found in  
a suburb of Foz do Iguaçu.

# A Story of Faith

I have a story that I believe should be told in order to help others avoid the pain and suffering our precious cats and our family has endured.

In September of 2005 my husband got a job offer that for our family was a godsend, we thought at the time. Our family is rather large and my husband works like a dog to take care of us all. We lived in Oklahoma about seventy miles from Tulsa. My husband Jeff is a welder who drove 140 miles a day to work an average of 12 hours a day, six days a week. This was not an ideal situation and we had tried diligently to find a place to live closer to work but with exotic animal regulations and laws in the Tulsa area, it was virtually impossible. So when we got an offer for a job with incredible benefits and triple the pay in Arizona for half the hours, it was hard to say no.

I got very excited and the first thing I did was call Fish and Game in Arizona and try and get things started for permits for our three bobcats. The first man I spoke with in the Phoenix office was very kind and helpful but told me he was sad to say he could not help me as the place we were going to be moving to was out of his jurisdiction and I had to call the Sholo office and speak with Dan Diamond. I called and as soon as I used the "P" word, doors got slammed in my face! I was then told that I had to talk with Jim Hinkle who told me in exact words, "No way in hell will we issue a permit for damn bobcats as pets, no matter what you do or build."

So we turned down the job in Arizona. The company then came back with an even better offer, we still said, "no we can't," and told them why. Once again they contacted us and then told us they would help us get the permits and not to worry because they owned the town and it would not be a problem for them. To reassure us, they wanted to fly my husband out to come see for himself. He agreed. They flew him to Arizona. He came back and said he believed them so I hesitantly agreed and we packed up our family, two and four legged members, and a U-Haul trailer and off we went.

We arrived in Morenci, a small mining town in the mountains close to the New Mexico border and found all the promises they made were false. We got no help with



the permits and found ourselves stuck alone and had to hide our precious fuzzy kids in the house. Thinking we might be able to move a short distance and Jeff commute to work I contacted New Mexico Fish and Game and talked to them about permits and got worse news!

I am a person with, let's say, too big of a heart and I took in a girl who was on the streets to try and help her get back on her feet. I have been in recovery thirteen years now and I have some hard rules about drugs and drinking in my home. To me these rules are very important! I made the mistake of letting her borrow my truck to

get to work one night. She went out and got drunk and high and wrecked my truck then called me from jail and wanted me to come get her. When I told her she had made her choice to break my rules and now had to suffer the consequences, she decided to tell the police about the three bobcats in our house.

My husband and I went to go get our truck out of impound the next morning and when we got home, the sheriff was at our house with a search warrant for the cats. In order to try and help make things less stressful for my fuzzy kids, I loaded them into their crates and went with animal con-



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trol to the dog pound and placed them in kennels. I also went and spent every minute they would let me with my fuzzy kids, I went morning and afternoon daily I fed and cleaned and cuddled them daily and tried to let them know I was doing everything I could to fix the problem and get them home where they belonged.

We hired an attorney. The search and seizure was illegal because the search warrant was based upon the testimony of an unstable witness. The more I fought however, the harder the authorities made it on the cats and on us. After almost a month they decided to have the cats moved to a sanctuary in Mesa, Arizona where I was not allowed to have any contact with the cats or to even call and see how they were doing.

During all this time Lynn Culver was doing her darndest to help me get the cats back to Oklahoma safely. She put me in touch with Paul and Janelle Gorley of Rebel Oaks Exotics who agreed to help. Meanwhile my attorney pressured the city attorney and the Arizona F & G to allow the cats to be released to a licensed Oklahoma facility. My attorney negotiated on my behalf for over a month before everything was settled and the bobcats could be moved to Rebel Oaks.

Volunteers from the Mesa Sanctuary spent two days driving my bobcats and a fox to Rebel Oaks. I had left Arizona a month previously with my children and found a place to rent and began building a cage to get my Oklahoma license back again.

By the time the bobcats made it to Rebel Oaks they had been so stressed from being held at the Mesa sanctuary that our male had lost over twenty pounds. All three were skin and bones and their soft sleek coats

were now wirey and they were losing handfuls of hair. They were emotionally traumatized and my sweet Tonka was not the same cat. They spent a month at Rebel Oaks while I finished building their enclosure and was finally issued my OK license.

After I got my F & G inspection, I drove to Oklahoma City with my paperwork to the Fish and Game headquarters and got a hell of a lecture while I waited for them to print out my license. Once issued, I took off for Noble, Oklahoma to pick up the cats.

The reunion was very heart wrenching. Turbo and Boomer happily jumped into the crate, Tonka however, was so paranoid of the crate after everything she had been through that we had to use catch pole to force her into the crate. Once we were home, Boomer and Turbo were literally wrapped around my neck, not wanting to let go. Turbo was licking me and licking me, and Boomer was obsessed with her mommy. But Tonka refused to let me near her for almost two weeks. Then she slowly came around.

I had built them a fully enclosed breezeway from the house to the two enclosures. It attached to a 12 foot by 12 foot shed. Inside the shed the bobcats had carpeted cat posts and ramps and shelves and dogaloos. The bobcats could come in the house to visit whenever they wanted.

The three younger kids and myself and our three bobcats lived in Oklahoma while my husband stayed in Arizona working to support us all. While we were in Oklahoma, Jeff did without everything. The expense of maintaining two households was draining him dry. Our family spent 5½ months apart.

The home I rented turned out to be in a not so nice neighborhood. It was not an ideal situation to raise my kids or my bobcats. So once again I had a decision to make. It was heart wrenching to call Paul and Janelle and make arrangements to board our fuzzy kids so the two-legged kids and I could come back to Morenci, Arizona and live with Jeff and better our future, all the while not knowing if we would ever return or ever see our bobcats again.

We have been here for a couple of months now and not a day goes by that I don't cry my eyes out missing my fuzzy kids. It has gotten so bad at one point I found myself in my bathroom curled up on the floor trying to weigh out whether life



was worth continuing or not. I am now seeing a therapist to deal with my pain and am so grateful that the cats have Janelle and Paul, who are such wonderful people. But it is not the same as being home with the family they so dearly love!

I am checking Kansas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma and Missouri, four states that would permit us to live as a complete family. To earn a living wage one must gain employment in a big city and most big cities or surrounding counties have passed ban laws that force long commutes to work. I have endured many hardships in my life, but this one is tearing my heart out.

So we don't know what the future holds for us. My beloved Tonka who was so trusting and loving, now has little trust left and no longer jumps into her crate when asked. She is now leery of strangers while before all this, she loved everyone. Nothing I can do will ever fix this for her and I feel so sorry that I ever left Oklahoma in the first place. I now have to live with the guilt of what I have put my poor helpless babies through.

The moral to this story is this: don't believe anything that is not in writing. Don't try to get around the law, you won't win! Last but not least, "You remain forever responsible for what you have tamed."

This story is written for Tonka, Turbo, and Boomer the three loves of my life, may we be together again soon and never separated again. I love you guys!

—Faith Clement





## A visit with the cheetah of the Savannah Cheetah Foundation, South Africa

By Bala Crockett

Red dust blew in through the open window of the bus and collected in my hair, already travel worn after a day and a night in transit. I was sitting in the rear of the vehicle, looking at the backs of the heads of my nine travel companions, co-workers at T.I.G.E.R.S. (The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species.) All were looking a bit bedraggled and anxious for a good washing. Enduring the eighteen hour flight to South Africa in a seat that wouldn't properly accommodate a small dog let alone a full sized human is always a trying experience, but having done it twice before, I knew it would end up being worth the discomfort. You see, there is something about the country of South Africa that hooks you in and makes you crave it. I don't know what it is exactly, all I know is that as I sat there getting covered in dust, I was also breathing in the aroma that is completely unique to the bushveld. It's kind of a mixture of sweet grass, diesel, warm earth, and I don't know what else, but it reminds me of walking into my childhood home and hugging my mother after a long absence. It is a scent that nourishes.

We had recently met our guide Pieter at the airport, (a stoic and sun browned example of manliness), and been loaded along with all of our bags and fancy camera equipment into a cheetah spotted van. We then drove away from the bustle of barbed wire and steel that is Johannesburg, past the fancy houses with glass shard studded stone fences, past the squatter towns or "impermanent settlements" as we were instructed to call them, and we were heading up into the hills. We came to film and train cheetahs in a place with no name that is a mere ninety minutes drive from the airport, but is as far removed from anything resembling a city as somewhere can be, and is the home of the Savannah Cheetah Foundation (SCF).

We wound our way along the dirt road and through layers of fencing, and finally came within view of the main building where we would be spending most of our down time. There we met Pieter's wife Estelle, an elegant and friendly woman who welcomed us warmly and immediately began a whirlwind tour of the grounds. The main building was a one level red house full of comfy couches and books on African

wildlife, with open French doors and windows. There were also several well-appointed bedrooms in there, but after a short walk past the cozy pool area and down a winding wooden pathway the more attractive option (to me anyway) were the raised tents arranged in a curving line around a little pond. My friend and coworker China York and I decided to share one of these, as did most of the other travelers.

The Foundation was created as a breeding facility for cheetahs, and also as a place for people of all kinds to come and learn about the plight of cheetahs in the wild. Most of the visitors to the preserve are local students. Many have been raised with the idea that cheetahs are nuisance animals that need to be eradicated in order to protect livestock. It is to these children of Africa that the message of conservation is most essential. This is why Dr. Bhagavan Antle and eight exotic animal trainers from T.I.G.E.R.S along with their veterinarian Dr. Sherri Duncan, decided to go and teach the staff of SCF how to train cheetahs to our lure system and make a video and photo documentary of this amazing event. Some of the T.I.G.E.R.S. staff have over





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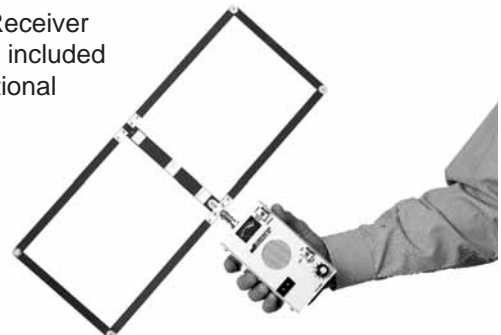
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twenty years experience working as professional videographers and photographers. It is our hope that the sight of a beautiful cheetah pelting across the grass up close and personal both live and on DVD would help inspire their visitors and those who view the video and pictures, towards a more ecologically friendly way of life.

The staff of T.I.G.E.R.S. have dramatically shortened the learning curve for teaching the cheetahs having trained many other animals including: many tigers, pumas, wolves, and birds of prey previously on the high speed lure.

Sleeping in the tents was one of the best parts of the whole trip for me. They all contained two real beds as well as a full shower, toilet, and sink so we weren't really roughing it all that much. It was wonderful to sleep with nothing between the African night and me but a thin screen window. I fell asleep each night to the sounds of frogs from the pond, as well as the occasional crash of some type of hoofed animal or another trundling through the grass to drink. And every night as we lay down we heard the tiny howls of the black backed jackals calling to one another over the miles of freedom that surrounded us.

We all seemed to wake with the sun in the morning, at around 5 a.m. Shortly after we loaded into the Land Rover and headed over to where the cheetah stayed which was a very short distance from our camp. We brought along the lure system that we had built back in the US, which is essentially a two foot by two foot wooden box with a battery powered reel system inside it, controlled by a hand held button outside the box. The cord, with a rope toy, a bit of cloth, or a ball attached to the end is manually pulled out as far as you want it, and then when you are ready you can start and stop the reeling mechanism at will. When the lure reaches the box, someone has to close it inside quickly by pulling the open side shut with a string pull and locking it with a metal lock. The reel can travel at about 60 miles an hour, so we hoped the cheetah would as well.

The cheetah camp was surrounded by a chain link fence. Towards the rear there were several large cheetah enclosures and a meat preparation station. Walking in through the secondary, we saw three full-grown cheetahs right there in the front yard.



Sheri Durcan

After a brief introduction to the two girls, Jemima and Nala, and Nikita, the male, we started to set up. We decided to try it in the front yard with a run of about fifty feet. Estelle grabbed some bowls and a bucket of horse meat for rewarding them after the run and for getting them all to the starting line, and we began. Pieter and Estelle called them down to the end of the yard with some of the meat. China showed them the lure and dropped it just as Doc pushed the button to start the reel. They spooked for a moment, but were interested, so they slowly followed it back to the box. Rajani Ferrante and Kheira, Assistant Directors at T.I.G.E.R.S., attempted to reward them with meat in the bowls but they didn't quite get that concept at first. By the second run they actually trotted after the lure a bit that time. By the third run they had the whole thing pretty much down and we actually got a good run out of Nala, who we could see was the dominant character in the trio. From that point it was all just fun. The cheetahs were having a ball pelting after that bit of rope at top speed, and we were all having the time of our lives watching them do so. We were filming and taking

pictures the whole time, and getting some pretty amazing shots. When they started to tire, we packed it in for the day and sat around the yard with the panting cats.

We were then introduced to a younger group of six, four girls and two boys, who acted much more like the type of animal I'm used to. They were a bit hissy and they didn't trust us very well, which I believe must be mainly due to the fact that it was a larger litter. After a few days we would get the chance to see them run also, although they didn't take to it as well as the other three but we did get to see some great action and fun out of the six younger cheetahs.

Over the next twelve days, our crew ran the cheetahs in the yard watching them progress into a much more unified force in chasing after the lure. We also worked through a few problems that arose like the cats trying to shorten the distance they had to run by attempting to stop at half the course length waiting at that point to catch the lure instead of going all the way back to the beginning. The only other problem was getting the lure to go fast enough to not be caught! We are now hoping to continue the





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lure training concept to help train the cheetahs to hunt, since CSP has a plan to release cheetahs into the wild in the relatively near future.

At the end of our stay we got some amazing high quality video and some unbelievable photos, but we were excited the most by the potential of this project. This was one of the most significant experiences I've ever had. I have been living in close quarters with all manner of exotic creatures for most of my adult life, but being there with these exceptional cats in their native land, watching them running loose a few feet in front of me, working towards something so positive; it was a feeling that I will never forget. Hopefully the future visitors to The Savannah Cheetah Project will get that same kind of feeling and a true change for the better will begin blowing in that sweet African breeze.

My associates and I are proud to be part of this meaningful project to save the Cheetah from extinction.

Numbers vary and are speculative as to how many Cheetah roam freely in the wild, some estimates are as high as 12,000 but some experts disagree believing that number to be less than half that.

In his recent book on large predators, *Monster of God* (Norton 2003), naturalist David Quammen says, "the last viable free ranging population of big flesh eaters (big cats) will disappear sometime around the middle of the [21<sup>st</sup> century.]"

In his book "*Cheetahs of the Serengeti Plains*", (1994 University of Chicago,) Tim Caro says, "If the goal of captive breeding programs is to reintroduce cheetahs into the wild, as is often claimed, it is extraordinary that so few attempts have been made in this direction."

The Savannah Cheetah Foundation is "making an attempt in this direction" that is, reintroducing captive bred cheetah into the wild.

In order for the SCF program to succeed, a vital link in the chain is the continuing education both here, in the USA, and in Africa. Captive bred cheetahs are one of the main components in this process. We have seen that a first-hand experience with a cheetah is the quickest way to gain a connection with, and a deeper appreciation for, these magnificent animals. Nothing like the beauty, power, and grace of a running cheetah can create a feeling in the hearts and

minds of people around the world.

The cheetah run at the Savannah Cheetah Foundation is the essential component to make this educational process exciting and meaningful. We hope to soon recreate this experience in the USA with SCF cheetah. The success of this program will depend on co-operation on many levels and between many institutions.

The cheetah deserve it.

You can order a DVD of the full length (SCF) video and the fantastic photos captured during the T.I.G.E.R.S.' adventure to S.C.F. for \$29.00 plus 6.95 S&H. To order send payment to Preservation Station, PO Box 31210, Myrtle Beach, SC 29588 All proceeds go to (SCF) and the fantastic work they are doing in Africa. A 11" x 14" print of the picture on the back cover of this journal is also available.

*Bala Crockett is a Senior Animal Trainer at T.I.G.E.R.S. and has worked there for the past seven years. She works with all kinds of animals, but primarily with tigers and other big cats.*



Sheri Duncan

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## FCF Field Representative Program Opens Doors to Volunteers for Regional Director Positions

The program starts with the FCF Executive Board and the contact for the program is the Legislative Director. The Legislative Director will oversee the program directly.

The first segment of the program we are ready to implement is appointment of Regional Directors. Regional Directors must develop professionalism to interact with legislators and media persons on three fronts. Those fronts are the local, state, and federal levels. Additionally the Regional Directors may also engage animal rights groups as needed.

The FCF Executive Board will appoint six Regional Directors for a two-year term. The board is accepting volunteers for the six Regional Director positions. Contact Evelyn Shaw, Legislation Director if you are interested in volunteering. Once appointed, the FCF board can either reconfirm each director for another 2-year term, or a new nominee chosen by the board will be voted on. The territories for Regional Directors are the same as those identified by the US Fish and Wildlife Service and can be seen in this map below.

The State Representatives are in turn nominated by the Regional Directors and voted on by the Regional Directors. State Representatives remain in place unless the Regional directors decide they need to replace them and they may do so in the same prescribed manner as the Regional Directors are placed, only the State Representatives would be voted on by the Regional Directors and not the FCF Board of Directors. This gives the Regional Directors authority and responsibility by delegating such authority to them concerning appointees/nominees at state levels.

How will this program help cats and FCF members facing legislative issues on the state or local level?

Most states have existing regulations or prohibitions concerning possession of exotic cats. For some states the actual number of licensed owners may be extremely low due to prohibitions and FCF may not have a State Representative. But for the states where there are FCF members, Regional Representatives will solicit our members for

volunteers to be State Representatives.

Each legislative season is another opportunity for bills to be introduced that might restrict or change the permit requirements or ownership rights of residents. State representatives are charged with the duty to stay informed on proposed and pending state legislation and to inform and involve others in their state of such legislation and to be willing to represent the FCF on a state level with comments and positions on such proposed legislation. FCF members can contact their state representative for help when needed. While the national FCF does write letters and make calls to legislators on behalf of our members, having a trained, educated and knowledgeable State Representative to also meet and talk with, or write letters to local legislators will increase the effectiveness of the FCF.

Having done this, an FCF State Representative has now built a relationship with the state legislators and acquired valuable knowledge that can be recorded and passed on for future reference by other Representatives and the Regional Directors.

If federal legislation is an issue, then the State Representative will coordinate with Regional Directors and the national FCF Legislation Director and supplement the FCF position on such legislation by meeting with or otherwise communicating with their state's federal senators and congressmen when they are home in their state.

The value of having FCF State Representatives will be apparent in local issues as well. There is an increasing need for assistance, advice and representation concerning community-level ordinances and prohibitions against private ownership of exotic felines.

The state representative's greatest value is in building a library of county laws as well as keeping track of the various animal owners and operators and animal incidents and community responses to these situations within their state. They will also keep track of the animal rights power base in their state, AR groups, and AR key people. FCF State Representatives become experts as they develop an understanding of the feline community and legal climate in their home state and local

communities. They can provide valuable counseling and advice for members who must address proposed legislation and FCF members will be encouraged to contact their state representative to keep them informed or to ask for assistance.

An FCF State Representative should assemble a digital library of information, i.e., newspaper articles, county ordinances, key people, license requirements, G & F contacts, etc.) This digital resource can then be passed on to other representatives and future representatives. The FCF State Representatives need to report their findings, trends, and summary of the year's events to the Regional Representatives for the regional databases.

An FCF State Representative can provide guidance to FCF members, or assist sheriff's departments or animal control or community leaders about a loose animal, a sub-standard facility, a problem owner or collector, or a questionable proposed ordinance. The goal of any involvement in a community level is to encourage answers that support the ability for good owners to continue to care for their felines and future owners to be allowed to exist in a manner that is consistent with the specific community environment.

Having State Representatives lends support to FCF members and their felines by designating members to take responsibility for their state and to be a point of contact and a source of information and to represent the organizational views in live appearances or media interviews.

When there is a need for FCF representation in a state matter, the State Representative should consult with the Regional Director on the matter and gain as much insight from the Regional Director and the national FCF Legislation Director as possible before giving interviews so that thoughtful and accurate and useful advice can be developed.

This program will augment outside resources and partnerships for current lobbying. FCF State Representatives will not be expected to engage irresponsible owners with unsolicited advice, but when an FCF member is dealing with a problem owner in his immediate community, he can call upon a State Representative for assistance or advice. In turn, a State Representative may con-

**Continued on 50**



Region 1 – California, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Hawaii, Alaska

Region 2 Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico

Region 3 Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota

Region 4 Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky

Region 5 Maine, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia

Region 6 Colorado, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas

## *Blast from the Past. . . .*

### *Seth*

**Long Island Ocelot Club**

**November/December 1979—Volume 23, Issue 6**

As you might have heard, we've been kind of snowed in here in Chicago. That hasn't fazed Seth at all. To begin with, she's strictly an indoor cat—so whether it rained or snowed, was cloudy or sunny, she always viewed weather sort of “third hand.” Yet, with the inclement weather, we have had more time to stay home and enjoy her presence. This is not to say, of course, that Seth doesn't like snow. Oh, by no means no. I scoop a bit off our windowsill, crunch it down to a ball and toss it to Seth. She finds nothing more enjoyable than to punch and nibble a piece off, cuff it and jump on it, until nothing is left but a moist area where once existed a junior size snowball.

Our domestic cat, Ezekial (Zeke) looks on at these shenanigans with a degree of circumspection and I often want to put human thoughts into his mind as he watch-

es her endless energy; such as: “you silly little thing, don't you know that snow is *cold* and worse still it's *wet*?” Well, if this is what Zeke was thinking and Seth could understand, she'd probably reply: “So what you big, lazy thing? This is the best wet sport I have had since she took away the litter tray which used to be filled with water. Ah, yes, those were the days—when excrement was tossed from the tray to the kitchen floor.” We decided it would be best if Seth learned to use litter. She did.

Seth doesn't like people. I don't expect I would either, if I were jungle-born. We've enjoyed her for more than seven years, but it's obvious that during the first two months of her life, enroute from Thailand, she was fiercely abused. Thus, she only responds to my wife, Sulie, and myself. Yet, where food is involved she has shown a real sense of

sportsmanship or compromise. Whenever we travel, our neighbors take care of our cats. They live across the hall from us and are over quite often. We have heard many amusing stories from them about how friendly Seth is when we are away. She will follow them about, likes to tease their children by nipping their toes. Of course I might mention Seth gets more treats while we are away, so I think this a case of one slick cat who knows what it takes to get what she wants and where a feeding hand comes from.

As I am sure you know the antics of leopard cats, I won't relate what you already know, except that indicative of her sport, we have gone through 14 telephone cords—on a wall-mounted extension, a full six feet above the floor! Illinois Bell Telephone Company is becoming a little curi-



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ous as to why we have averaged better than two cords a year. Excuses like: we have a child teething, our cat thought it was a snake, or the rubberized sheathing just seems to break all the time are beginning to wear a little thin with them.

We recently moved from an apartment to our first house with an effective area of about three or four times of our former abode. It was not only a major change for us but also a traumatic shift of environment for Seth.

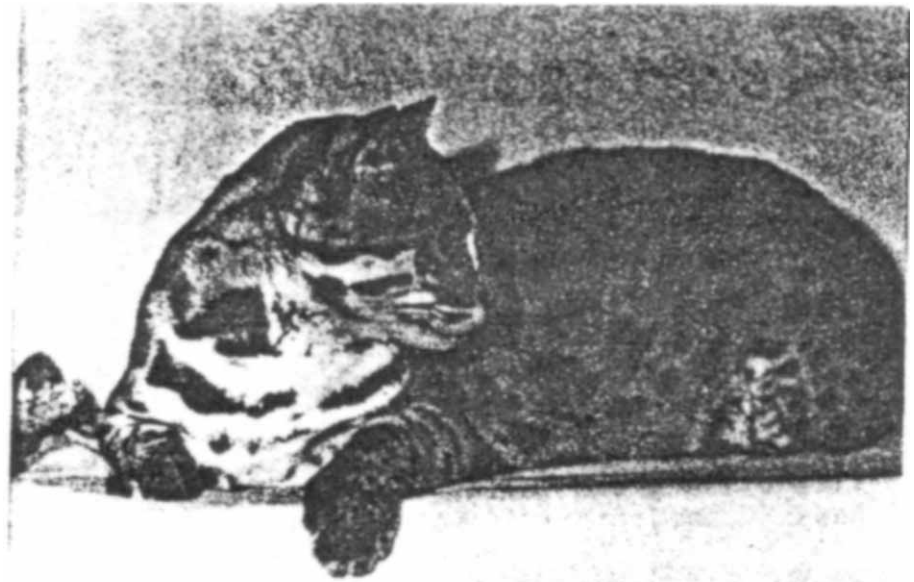
Realize that Seth, as well as our domestic, Zeke, are indoor felines. Especially Seth, since she has never gone outside except in a carrier to get to the veterinarian or from one of the other of the successive apartments in which we have resided.

We had grave forebodings of psychological trauma to Seth and made all sorts of preparations to alleviate or at least ameliorate the shock of the move. We planned on keeping Seth in her cage (which she normally uses only for dining) for a week prior to moving and thereafter keeping her confined until she acclimated to *each* and every room in our new house. We'd keep her away from Zeke who just loved to irritate her when she was "freaked" anyway. Regardless of these plans and preparations, and many other things, it just didn't go that way.

To begin with, Seth doesn't much enjoy confinement. No cat does, especially a jungle born. So the idea of confining her for a week prior to moving never got off the ground, even though my wife, Sulie, insisted that that was the correct thing to do. I didn't have the heart to cage her, so that every day up to the day before we actually moved, Seth was running around, oft times getting into mischief, with her cohort in crime, Zeke.

Finally, she did end up in her cage, but not before acquiring a feel for the fact that something was definitely up and that she wasn't just sure she liked what was coming down. Cats, as you know, like a fixed environment. Change the position of just one piece of furniture and they'll know it. Seth, especially so. With boxes and boxes of books (from my law practice) down on the floor and not up on the shelves where she could sit upon them—something just wasn't right.

After we placed her in her cage (rather she placed herself—she walked in to eat



and we locked the door on her) she pouted, and why not? If Zeke could be out, roaming around, knocking things over, well then, why couldn't she?

We moved. Seth went by cage in the back seat of our car. We placed her in an upstairs bedroom. She accepted this without too much excitement, much to our surprise. And believe it or not, she maintained our respect and ongoing relief when she maintained decorum, without a doubt unexcelled by any wild-born feline in a new environment.

We kept her confined for about two or three days, then released her. Immediately, Zeke went to work on her: teasing her, cajoling her, and all but scaring the wits out of her to the point where she would not come out of that one bedroom, at least for 30 minutes or so. As soon as we settled ourselves into a different part of the house, she began her investigations. And the very first which she had to deal with, was the *stairs*.

The stairs. What were stairs? We'd never had stairs before. Thailand (from where she hails) had no stairs. *What are stairs?* I guess in a choice between going up or going down a cat is going to go up, regardless of whether the cat has

any idea of how to get down. She went up. Obviously, she negotiated that set, because a little later that evening we found her in the master bedroom, which is at the far top of the house.

Coming down was another matter.

I hope that I have not bored you with detail. But in dealing with this animal, every movement, every breath, the slightest shudder, twitch or flick elicits a response. I can do no less when I write of her. •



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# In Search of Pallas' Cat



Kim Blaquera

## A visit to the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound/Feline Conservation Center

By Raven Simons

My husband adores Pallas' cats. He's seen their funny faces in photos and something about them has captured his heart and imagination. Of all the different exotic cats, Pallas' cats seem to pique his interest the most. His one request of my exotic felid involvement is for me to obtain some nice photos of Pallas' cats to hang in our studio so that he can be inspired when working there. My husband is very supportive of my feline activities. He even takes care of our own companions whenever I decide to go off on a "catcentric" (I made that up) adventure.

His interest in Pallas' cats is really quite amazing. Individuals in our culture are generally familiar with the charismatic fauna like tigers and lions. Few people know about the smaller and less familiar feline species and are actually amazed to find out how many felid species are out there. When sharing information about cats in the wild, I have had people respond, "No way! Are you are really serious when you say that there are 37 species of wild cats?"

My sweetie first learned about Pallas' cats through my exotic feline interests. I'd get him to look at websites, read articles, and listen to my ramblings of all things cat. It's funny that if you asked my husband to

list any scientific animal researchers in the field, Jim Sanderson would probably top the list. He's listened to me go on and on about small cats and what Jim is up to in the field. He's been willing to "come see" whenever I turn up some new informational tidbit or picture on the computer. This is how he discovered the Pallas' cat.

Pallas' cats, also known as manuls, are grumpy looking small cats from Asia. Their hair stands out from the sides of their faces and they look out at the world from a flattened position. They have an almost comical dubious look of irritation on their faces. The only time I have seen one look less than grumpy is in a few of Nancy Vandermeij's photos and it just happens that Nancy's photos of Pallas' Cats are some of my husband's favorites.

Nancy Vandermeij is a member of the FCF and a long time volunteer for the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound/Feline Conservation Center (EFBC/FCC) in Rosamond, California. I had the pleasure of meeting her at the last Feline Conservation Federation annual meeting and conference. Nancy is a fabulous photographer and her many photos of the EFBC/FCC cats are amazing. I have a photo she took of Maggie the Margay hanging over my bed. I won this great picture at the FCF's silent

auction last July.

My adventure to the wilds of Southern California and another "cat trip" began with a request to re-home an adult F1 Savannah. I worked for months on this placement and it resulted in a request from the F1's owner to fly down and be present at the placement.

I'm a nervous traveler and given my reluctance to travel, I'm always looking for ways to maximize any experiences and adventures when I'm out and about. I especially look for places I want to visit that might also be in the vicinity where my journey takes me, as I can never know when I might work up the courage to attempt another trip. One of the places that I have always wanted to visit is the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound. I was heading in this general direction for the F1 placement and felt that I could work in a visit and also visit some friends.

One of the reasons that I so desired a visit to the EFBC is their Pallas' cat breeding program and perhaps to get some photos for my husband. The compound, as their name suggests, breeds rare and endangered cats. They have successfully bred and reared three Pallas' cats. They also provide a forever home for felines that are not used for breeding. Another big job that is



done at the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound is education. I was to see many fascinated visitors looking with wonderment at all the cats when I visited.

I was able to arrange my visit to include a day out at the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound and also a date to have dinner with Nancy and her husband, Eric. I was accompanied by Mike Friese and Nancy De Fusco, Mike's lucky companion on his FCF Africa adventure.

On the day of our visit, Nancy Vander-mey had arranged for Kim Blaquera, one of the volunteers, to meet us. Our timing, unfortunately, coincided with a visit from EFBC's veterinary team. Cats are similar to children and even some adults, which means a visit from the good doctors is not a cause for celebration. It had been hoped that the vets would be finished with all of their business, but it turned out to be a long day for them. They were still actively examining and treating felines the entire day, finally coming off duty at about the time we were finishing up our tour.

Kim is a sweetheart and absolutely loves her volunteer job at the EFBC/FCC. She has been volunteering for the Feline Conservation Center for about three years and is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the cats she cares for. She knows every feline's name and history. She can tell you

about their special needs, issues, likes, and dislikes. Her love for the cats is demonstrated with every word and gesture. She is also generous in sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm with others. The Feline Conservation Center thrives with the help of its volunteers. The volunteers are hard-working and full of love for the cats, EFBC/FCC, and the work done there. I sure wish I lived in the neighborhood. If I did, you can bet that I'd become a volunteer, too.

Our tour started with looking at some beautiful enclosures which housed some of the smaller cats. The felines were nervous and kept a wary eye out for the veterinarians. Some of the cats were pacing and some of the larger felines seemed like they'd like a bite of vet for a snack. We had brought cameras, but I don't think that the lighting conditions and cat agitation made for optimal photo opportunities with the first few small feline enclosures.

Our next visit was to two 11 month old, Chinese leopard girls, born and reared at EFBC. The girls, LiMing and Yanna, are extremely loving and pressed themselves up against the chain link for Kim to pet. We later learned that the Chinese leopard is one of the species being managed to extinction by the AZA's SSP (Species Survival Plan). It turns out that there are only about 30

members of this species left. AZA feels that the Chinese leopard is not salvageable, thus space, time, and money will not be spent to save it or work on a breeding program. One has to wonder what would have happened to the whooping crane if this same attitude had been taken, considering that the whooping crane was down to far less than 30 individuals.

Yanna and Li-ming sadly have no prospective mate. The only available male is too closely related to them. It is also very difficult to import any new blood, if any is available, to the United States because of all of the tight restrictions. This is a tragedy as the private sector could step in and try and save this beautiful cat. In fact, this is exactly how these two Chinese leopard girls have come into existence, through the efforts of a non-AZA breeding program and facility.

Chinese leopards are happier and more easily managed in captivity than Amur leopards. Amur leopards are on AZA's SSP list of breeds that AZA chooses to try and save, yet in AZA's collective minds, there is not enough money or space to save both. Another sad irony is that AZA wants to outlaw all responsible private sector breeding and keeping of any exotic animals. Even though responsible private owners and breeders could be an invaluable asset to species survival by providing space, funding, knowledge, and many of the things that AZA doesn't have enough of, the AZA finds the private sector an unacceptable solution.

To see Kim interacting with Li-ming and Yanna, and the mutual joy that was so obvious from their body language, quickly dispels any myths about animals hating their relationships with humans. Mutual respect is a foundation to any happy healthy relationship and I was to see this demonstrated over and over as Kim shared her relationships with all of the cats with us.

Kim demonstrates the behavior of a true animal lover with the heart of a conservationist. Kim speaks very respectfully about the very large male cougar, Teddy, which she introduced us to. He was once a movie star and came to live out the end of his days here. He has a lovely enclosure and was pacing with all of his magnificence as he dreamed of a nibble on one of the doctors. Whatever his dreams might be, he was definitely tracking where the veterinarians were as they were out and about their duties. All



Kim Blaquera

Sand Cat

of the cats were busy doing the same.

Kim told us that Teddy is quite his own person and he decides when he is going to accept any affection. Some days he enjoys a scratch through the chain link and other days he does not. She also explained that he was quite unpredictable and that this was not one of the cats that could safely be interacted with inside of his enclosure. When it becomes time to clean his habitat, he goes into his lockout area.

Visiting the leopards and jaguars, we learned how to tell the difference between these cats. When asked about differences, a member of our group mentioned a difference in head shape. Jaguars seem to have a square shape head and be larger in size. We were all amazed to learn that one of the ways to differentiate between leopards and jaguars is by their spots. Jaguars have a particular spotting pattern with smaller spots within the bigger black spot. Kim shared a legend told by the native South Americans about how the jaguar got his spots by dabbing himself with mud. This left little kitty looking paw print marks within the larger black spots. [I also won-

der if Kim was mixing up that story with the tale by Rudyard Kipling, *How the Leopard Got His Spots*. —Ed.]

Our next lesson in comparisons was between margays and ocelots. I was very surprised to learn that the way to differentiate between the two species is by the tail. I had thought that perhaps one could tell by the ocelot's pink nose and larger size. The tail is actually the key. Margays have a long tail that drags on the ground. I would have never guessed that one.

Another of Kim's charges is an ancient Siberian lynx. If I recall correctly, this old fellow is 18 years old. He pushed up against the chain link for Kim to rub and scratch. He so enjoys attention and petting from the EFBC volunteers and staff. 18 years old is a respectable age for a Siberian lynx. If he lived in the wild, he would have long ago succumbed to his age. This guy is quite happy to be alive and it is obvious in his behavior. He would have loved nothing better than for Kim to pet him all day long. He didn't get to have his way, as there were so many more kitties to visit and learn about.



Mike Friese

**Chinese leopards, Yanna and LiMing greet Kim Blaquera**

I could go on and on about each and every cat that we visited. We learned so many things about these wonderful feline



## Lions, Leopards and Lynx

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ambassadors. We saw multiple demonstrations of the magical and loving human/animal bond. We became more educated and witnessed others being educated about animals and the value of each and every species. Before I speak about the close of our EFBC/FCC adventure, I'd like to encourage each and every FCF member to make a visit to the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound. I can honestly say that you won't regret your time and money spent. Be sure to buy some items in the gift shop because this helps to directly support the cats.

The weary veterinarians are finally coming off duty and we get the pleasure of meeting them and the EFBC founder, Joe Maynard. Almost as an afterthought Kim asks us, "Would you like to see the Pallas' cats?" "I do, I do!" This is a special treat, as the Pallas' cats, sand cats and other small breeding cats are not exhibited to the public.

Kim leads us to an enclosure where she asks us to look in the corner and see one of the grumpys. Yes, it is a Pallas' cat. He's out of his box and looking as irritable as only a real Pallas' cat can look. Is the look of irritability a survival mechanism? The cameras come out. Oh, I did forget to mention another of the wonderful services that Kim, our Ambassador Extraordinaire, volunteered to do. She would take our cameras and safely put the lenses through the chain link and snap photos while we stayed the safe three feet away from enclosures. What a gal!

We are back in small cat heaven. We'd



**Jaguarundi youngster**

already visited with some fishing cats, margays, ocelots, bobcats, lynxes, and a serval. Here we were with more small exotic felines. Fishing cats live here. The EFBC has quite a nice fishing cat breeding program and they are working on other species' breeding programs, too. We are glad to be in a place where the small cats might have some hope of survival through responsible private conservation breeding.

Next to the Pallas' cats are a very tiny shy breed called the sand cat. If you've ever seen an exotic that you might feel compelled to say "Here kitty, kitty" to, this is it. Sand cats are the poster child of "cute" as the Pallas' cat might look like the poster child of grumpy. A tiny, wee cat, the sand cat likes to hide, similar in behavior to the Pallas' cat. sand cats just don't look as grumpy.

Along with Sand cats and Pallas' cats, we had the pleasure of seeing the facility's jaguarundis. Jaguarundis look more like an otter than a small feline. Kim took our cameras into their enclosure to try and get some good photos. It was great to be able to see them in close proximity. The jaguarundis were the end of our behind-the-scenes tour. We had one last stop before we left: the gift shop.

The EFBC's gift shop had lots of tempting items to buy. If you like stuffed animals, they have lots of cats. I even found a stuffed toy Pallas' cat, which I bought. They also have some of Nancy Vandermey's photography to purchase. I totally scored with a nice framed photo of two Pallas' cats in a tube. [See inside front cover —Ed] I knew who was going to be the lucky recipient of the stuffed toy Pallas' cat and already framed picture. I also bought my sweetie a nice T-shirt and long sleeved shirt, as this is his preferred garb. I felt very happy with my purchases, knowing that my money is going to a great cause.

Going off into the sunset to meet up with Nancy and Eric for dinner left me both happy and sad. I felt happy to have had the experience of visiting the EFBC/FCC and sad to leave all of the cats and cat lovers behind. I sure wished that there were a facility like this in my own neighborhood. •

## SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman



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# LIOC/FCF Journal Searchable Archive DVD FAQ

## *Or what you can do with that coaster we sent with the last journal*

**Q:** Why is the LIOC/FCF Journal archive on a DVD instead of two CDs?

**A:** So the full text search would function without installing all the files on your computer.

**Q:** How can I do a full text search in ten seconds or less?

**A:** Open the *0SEARCH.pdx* file. Acrobat will open with the location of the search selected as "...in the index named 0SEARCH .pdx" Type in your search string and hit enter.

**Q:** How can I view a list of all journals on this DVD?

**A:** Open the *tableofcontents.html* file with your web browser. Double clicking on it should open it.

**Q:** What is this "pbonus" folder?

**A:** It is a high resolution bonus photo archive from the 2005 and 2006 conventions. We had some extra room on the DVD and were able to include these pictures.

**Q:** What is this "magazines" folder?

**A:** It is all the underlying PDF files arranged in year order. If you wish, you may open any of these PDF files.

**Q:** What is this "thumbnails" folder?

**A:** Dorothy, ignore the man behind the curtain! These files are used by *tableofcontents.html* to display the table of contents. Otherwise you won't find them useful.

**Q:** What is the "0SEARCH" folder?

**A:** Acrobat uses this information to speed up full text searches. You will find no direct use for them.

**Q:** What is this "Acrobat installers" folder?

**A:** Ahem, they are Acrobat installers. There is a wide variety of installers available for the following platforms:

Linux (Intel), Windows, Macintosh.

All these readers are licensed by Adobe to be distributed on this DVD. Even more Acrobat readers can be found here: <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

**Q:** How can I install the archive on my computer so I don't have to use the DVD?

**A:** Make a new directory and copy these items from the DVD:

*tableofcontents.html*, *0SEARCH*, *0SEARCH.pdx*, *thumbnail*, *magazines*

**Q:** How are text searches possible when most of these PDFs appear to be just bitmap scans?

**A:** Each word appears in these PDF files in two formats. There are bitmaps which you can see and there is invisible character text behind it.

**Q:** Is there a way to copy the text behind the bitmap?

**A:** Pick the "text selection" tool and drag the cursor across the text you want to copy.

**Q:** Can I copy the DVD onto two CDs?

**A:** The archive will fit but the table of contents and full text search will be broken. If you copy these CDs to your hard drive in the same hierarchy as the DVD, search and table of contents should still work.

**Q:** Can I play the LIOC/FCF Journal DVD on my TV?

**A:** No. It is not a Video DVD.

**Q:** Who is that gorgeous cat on the cover and disc?

**A:** Mace Loftus' caracal named Chip.

### PROBLEM SOLVING:

**Q:** I can't see the contents of the DVD or I get an error message.

**A:** Perhaps you do not have a DVD reader. They are currently less than \$40.

**Q:** I have an older computer and the PDF files are getting errors.

**A:** You need Acrobat Reader 4 or newer.

**Q:** I can display PDF files properly but the text search does not work at all.

**A:** Perhaps your copy of Acrobat Reader is too old?

**Q:** Text searches take forever. What gives?

**A:** You need to use *0SEARCH.dcx*. More info in the second question of the FAQ. •



Photo by Mace Loftus

# Cougar Development, The Book

By Lynn Culver

## *Excerpts of: TARA'S PREGNANCY AND BIRTH OF THREE BOYS*

Today is May 28, 1988. Tara, our cougar, is six weeks and two days pregnant. She will carry for another seven weeks, for a total of 93 days. Tara conceived at an age of 30 months. She cycled nine times last year starting at an age of 18 months and continued for almost five months. Her first heats were only about three days long and about twelve days apart. Towards the end of her five-month heat period she cycled for closer to nine days and averaged about three weeks apart. Her last heat was in the end of August of 1987. She started cycling again the end of January of 1988. She cycled five times, averaging a heat length of six days with about two weeks in between each heat, for an average cycle length of 20 days.

Her last heat was the longest and most sexual of all. Mercury and Tara copulated seven times in two hours on numerous evenings. Their sexual activity continued throughout the day but peaked in the evening hours. Usually when Tara went out of heat she would reject Mercury's close contact, growling if he approached her. There was never any violence, just growling to let him know not to lie near her or approach her if she was lying down. After her last heat I observed the opposite behavior in these cougars. Tara was very friendly to Mercury, approaching to lick his ears and neck but being rebuffed with growls by Mercury. This behavior, I had never before observed. After about a week of this their relationship returned to normal, non-heat and friendly coexistence.

The second significant behavior change within Tara occurred about one week after her last heat cycle. She is Bart's cougar, preferring his company to mine. She loves me but is reserved in her affection and attention towards me. She began to initiate affectionate contact with me. She made a point of greeting me, purring, displaying affection, and what I call "sisterhood" between us. I noticed this behavior change and began to wonder if it meant she was indeed finally pregnant. She seemed more attracted to me as a female and more



reserved to Bart, formerly her favorite person. When the two of us were visiting the cougars, Tara used to greet Bart first always, now it was I. After six weeks of pregnancy. Tara seems to have returned to favoring Bart over me but she is more affectionate to me than ever.

At only three weeks pregnant Tara's nipples were enlarged and quite pink in color. She also was already showing a slight bulge. The last two times I have weighed her, six months and a year ago, she weighed 72 and 73 pounds respectively. Upon weighing her at four weeks pregnant, she weighed 78 pounds, a five or six pound increase.

Today, at over six weeks pregnant, Tara has a significant rib cage bulge. She doesn't have belly fat, but her lower ribs are extended and her belly is firm and distended. She allows me to touch her nipples if I approach it the "right way", which I am still not sure of, so sometimes this attention is greeted with purring, sometimes growling and an attempted bite.

Tara no longer sleeps in Mercury's house but always uses hers. Formerly she would use both depending upon her mood. She spends mornings and evenings in her compound, which is connected to Mercury's enclosure but is inaccessible to him because the opening is too small for him to pass through. They still take afternoon naps together on their tower; they chase and play together, but sleep separately. Their relationship seems to be friendly, without

growls when either approaches the other. Tara does seem to occupy herself quite nicely, whereas Mercury seems lost much of the time, crying as if lonely. Tara seems very happy with herself, purring often, and quite contentedly. Mercury is requiring more attention than ever. He has taken to crying in the middle of the night, first thing in the morning, and frequently throughout the day. He seems to need frequent reassurances from his people (Bart and I) that we love him.

When the cougars are taken to Cougar Country, seven acres of woods with a hillside, a wet weather swamp, and small clearings that is completely fenced, Mercury requires that we be present and that we walk with him or lay down with him. Mercury and Tara usually play together, chasing each other until tired. Then Tara wonders off, occupying herself with whatever she finds. Mercury at this point usually returns to the gate and cries for our company or to be let out and returned to Cougarama, which is their ½-acre fenced-in hillside habitat that is connected to their cage. If Tara isn't returned with him he will usually protest her absence crying for either our constant attention or until she is returned. He may settle down and take a short nap on his tower but will awaken and cry periodically until someone fulfills his need. Mercury has always been somewhat like this but I believe this insecurity, or whatever it is, has increased since Tara's pregnancy. Maybe not because of a change in him so



much as Tara being more satisfied with herself than ever. She enjoys staying in Cougar Country alone and doesn't ask to be moved until dinnertime or after an extended stay.

Jump to the July 7 – July 14 entries in this log:

*Thursday July 7, 1988*

Today is the day 93 following the first day of Tara's last heat. Today begins the countdown to delivery day.

Yesterday was not a good day. I let Tara out of her compartment in the morning. It was cool out and the cougars had a lot of energy. They were playing in the Cougarama hillside exercise area, taking turns chasing each other. Then things got a little too rough in my opinion. I was inside the enclosure with them, using a briar to cut overhanging branches that could touch the hot wire in a stiff breeze. When I heard Tara screaming for Mercury to get off, I decided to intervene. I walked over and commanded Mercury to cease fighting with her. He did but then he lay on his back and pawed my hand. He pulled my hand into his mouth. He didn't bite it, but I am familiar with this behavior. It is designed as an intimidation and a protest. Then he sort of squirmed on his back down the hill to my legs but I moved away. At that point I turned my back to walk away. Mercury suddenly jumped me and bit my neck. He did not leave any puncture wounds but my skin rose to welts where his shark-type back teeth held me. It was emotionally devastating to me. He was on the ground and I had his collar and I could have choked him. But I knew that I didn't have the strength to impress him and I was a little afraid to antagonize him.

After that I locked them both up in their separate compounds. I realize that I should not have interfered, as my safety is the ultimate importance, not the babies. Mercury was mad and he took it out on me. He hasn't bit me like that in years. I honestly feel that Tara is putting out some sort of hormone smell that is getting these cougars worked up and combined with the cooler weather they got wild.

After I locked them up, Mercury couldn't even look me in the eye. Every time I walked by I told him, "You bit your mom. Don't ever bite your mom. Bad Mercury." He kept looking away. Later he had some serious screaming sessions. He did not enjoy being disciplined at all. We left



for town and when I returned I finally forgave him and entered his compound. He was very friendly, rubbing his body all over mine.

Today Bart let Tara out of her compound again. It is very cool, which is fortunate for her but will make the cougars more active. So we will watch carefully. Mercury was very friendly to me, purring, rubbing me but also a little disrespectful of my body. He seems mischievous and we will not trust him like this. I believe it has to do with Tara's hormones.

*Friday, July 8, 1988*

Mercury got me out of bed at 7:45 a.m. this morning with his screaming. I visited them for a while. Both were friendly. I threw the ball around in their exercise area and Mercury chased it. Later on around 3:00 p.m. Mercury asked to go to Cougar Country so Bart and I leashed them both up and took them there. They traveled around together and didn't chase each other. They both ate a lot of grass and Mercury threw up. I returned Mercury around 4:00 p.m. after he asked and Bart returned Tara around 5:00 p.m.

Locally beavers are a nuisance and trappers are paid to cull them. The beavers are pelted and sometimes we buy the beaver meat. We'll give a partial beaver to the cats. On this day, Tara ate Mercury's beaver instead of the one in her compartment.

We returned from town around 9:00 p.m. and I entered to visit them. Tara was crowd-

ing Mercury; he couldn't get an inch away from her. He walked over to the other side of his compartment and lay down. Tara proceeded to lick his neck and back and purr loudly. She wouldn't stop and Mercury began to get annoyed at her. He growled but she persisted. He grabbed her head and mouthed her but she answered with a very friendly quack sound and purred and licked some more. Mercury was getting more upset but she wouldn't quit. It was very funny. She is getting neurotic about licking. Mercury was growling a lot and Tara was licking away. I called for Bart to enter, as I knew his presence would distract her. In the meantime I grabbed her collar but when I let go she returned to lick Mercury. Bart entered and Tara ran over to him, quacked, and then returned to Mercury to lick. Bart called her over again and she then returned to Bart but then returned to Mercury to lick. Bart and I decided to lock up Tara away from Mercury. I then cut up her beaver in half and shared it with Mercury. Now Mercury is calling again. I think I will invite him into the house. I have no doubt that Tara is ready to be a mother. She will probably lick her babies bald!

*July 12, 1988: Tara starts phase one of labor.*

This morning I checked on Tara early. It had rained all night and she was asleep in her house. It was dry around her house because we had hung the blue tarp over the roof of the cage. Tara was friendly. She hadn't eaten all of her chicken and none of her horsemeat. I threw it to Mercury and he ate it. I decided not to let her out since it was cool and I figured it might give them enough energy to play rough.

Bart checked on her later and decided to let her out. She raced over to Mercury on the tower and proceeded to lick him all over the head and neck, something she has been doing every morning for the past three days. She wouldn't quit and it began to bother Mercury. Bart had stern words with Mercury about his growling and decided to bring Tara in the house for a visit. I was on the phone to Elaine Burke talking about birth preparations. Tara was very talkative and super affectionate, licking and purring and panting nonstop. We suspected something. We returned her to her compartment and locked her up. I brought Mercury in the house to visit but he didn't want to stay. He lay down on his tower and spent most of

the day there not complaining or asking for anything. It has rained on and off all day, a lot of water for July.

I left for town and returned several hours later. I checked on Tara who was in her house. She had a small amount of gooey, pink secretion on her vagina. She was very purry and panting and licking to the point of causing a rash. I stayed in her house for a while; she was cuddling up to me. After a half hour of attention Bart and I left. I checked an hour later and caught her asleep in her house. Two hours later she was asleep on top of her house.

We visited her with our friend Doreen, who explained birth phases to us. Tara was in the first stage of labor. She was very talky and affectionate to Bart who was

ring of wetness when she breaks her water.

*Wednesday, July 13*

Today *must* is the day! I checked Tara at 7:00 a.m. She was outside her house. I lay in her house and she joined me. She purred and rubbed very affectionately. She settled in beside me, but kept changing positions. I did not observe any contractions. She purred happily, then quit and panted for a while without noticeable contractions. Her bloodstains are still there without any additional stains. I did observe the babies kicking in her so I know that they are definitely alive! I stayed in her house from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.

Tara hadn't eaten any of her dinner and I figured she wouldn't so I offered it to Mercury. He ate the entire chicken. He has been

lying on his tower all morning, not demanding anything. That is very unusual for Mercury. He is a very self-centered cougar, always an attention-hog. His personality is one of an observer today. Tara had scraped up dirt and leaves to cover her dinner, scraped a big pile to cover her feces and she has checked the fecal pile several times. Last night she pulled



inside her compartment. She stood up several times to kiss Bart. Mercury came down and checked out the entrance of her compound. Tara ran up and quacked at Mercury several times. Mercury answered with submissive calls. He hasn't demanded anything today. Tara seemed to be explaining to Mercury what was happening. Tara has made quite a point of scraping all the leaf litter and straw that is on her enclosure floor into one big pile. She even left imprints in the ground even though she is declawed. I gave her a whole chicken for dinner and instead of eating it, she buried it.

I checked on Tara several times through the evening. She was always outside her house and she greeted me with calls and purrs. I checked her at 8:00pm, 10:30 p.m., 12:30 a.m., 3:30am and 5:00 a.m.. She had bloodstains on her white fur around her vagina but no great water stains or moisture, which I feel certain, will leave quite a

the chicken wire I had recently added to her cage walls off her door so that she could stick her head through the fence. I should never have used something so wimpy as chicken wire. Right now, at 9:15 a.m. she is laying on top of her tower.

At 9:40 a.m. I returned to Tara's compartment and lay down in her house with her. She was very purry and she nuzzled as close as she could to me. She had a little more blood on her white fur near her vagina since early this morning. She changed positions frequently, but always laid very close to me with her head tucked in my arms and her motor running. At 10:00am she had her first contraction. She had two more in a few seconds and then the next series after three minutes. She averaged two or three in a group and those were about two to four minutes apart. She changed positions to lying on my stomach with her head rubbing against mine or she would

lick my neck and face. She contracted hard and actually squeaked in my face. She had started to break her water. She had her 40th to her 45th contraction lying on my stomach with our pelvises together. I could feel her shove and strain. Then she got off and had her last five contractions, crying two more times and ending with a birth while she was sort of standing up. She gave birth at 11:25 a.m. She immediately started licking and stimulating the baby, cleaning its face and then eating the afterbirth. She was very deliberate with her moves. She had it completely cleaned up and it was starting to suckle by about 45 minutes. She also ate the afterbirth and chewed the umbilical cord. After only ten more contractions, at 12:25 p.m. she birthed her second kitten. It was a breech, but still fine. The second birth was in two contractions, one that caused the back half to show, then a pause, and then another contraction to expel it. Baby number one was moving, squeaking and suckling and clean by 12:25 p.m.

Tara moved around, careful not to step on her babies. One time she came close to stepping on it and we both told her, "Be careful Momma," just as it squeaked and I feel she understood. She stepped gingerly ever after. She cleaned it up and began suckling the second baby. I cut the umbilical cord and she ate the afterbirth. Tara had herself completely in order when she began contractions for the third birth. She changed positions often, and sat up a lot. She grunted and panted often. Finally at 1:20 p.m. the third baby squirted out in one great whoosh. Tara was busy licking the other two babies so I took them from her and directed her attention to the newborn, whereupon she began licking its behind. I showed her its head and encouraged her to lick that. I decided to cut its umbilical cord also. Then she took over, although I did help a little with a clean towel, drying it off. Baby one and two were nursing and number three was being cleaned up. She waited a long while before eating the third afterbirth.

Finally they were all nursing and purring and happy. We offered her some water and she drank about a pint. She was exhausted. We weighed the babies and the weights were number one was 589 grams, number two was 553 grams and number three was 536 grams. We still can't tell the sexes. It is



5:30 p.m. now and she has suckled them till they fell asleep. We offered her more water and she drank about a half a cup at 5:00 p.m. She is doing fine.

For the first two births, my friend Alicia was outside her compound walls watching. Tara didn't seem to mind since I was inside her house with her. I was in the house with her for the first birth, but moved to outside for the others to give her some more room. We shot the events with video and some still photos. Tara didn't seem to mind.

*Thursday July 14, 1988*

Tara took good care of her babies through the night. I got up about 1:00 a.m. to check on them. They were asleep; Tara was outside and greeted me. Then she lay down outside her house and stood guard. I checked on her at 7:00 a.m. She was inside nursing them. We checked on them throughout the day. It's hard to stay away from them; they are so cute. We finally let Mercury use the half-acre of Cougarama. He walked around, paused at Tara's enclosure and they greeted each other. Later we locked him up and let Tara out. Since he was locked up we left Tara's door to the exercise area open. She took the opportunity to walk around. I stayed in Mercury's compartment to visit him. Suddenly I heard one of Tara's babies crying at the bottom of the hill! Tara was carrying it upside down and pacing around the fence. She was trying to move the babies! I called Bart and together we managed to catch her, cause her to drop the baby, scoop it up and return it to her house. She raced up the hill and joined us. She settled down in her house and began nursing the babies. We will not let her exercise with her door open again!

Mercury finally got his vaccinations today. Bart blow-darted him while I distracted him. It was totally uneventful. We were very pleased. Later he began his usual activity of calling us. We leashed him up and worked on acclimating him to his blue squeeze cage in the back of the pickup. We tied him to it and he hung around it for about ten minutes. Then we took him to Cougar Country for a walk. He was very interested in the smells. He marked his usual spots, pawed at some trees and sniffed the ground a lot. He is still there and it is dark. That is very unusual for him. We will get him and walk him back to his enclosure as soon as I finish this log. •



You read part of the story. Now see the video.

Cougar Development covers a two and a half year period of research and behavior observation. It is produced and shot by Lynn and Bart Culver at the Natural Order Animal Husbandry (NOAH) Feline Conservation Center.

Shot in 1988 to 1990 with a video camera and now remastered on DVD, the amazing two hour program offers viewers entertainment as well insight into the stages of growth, behavior, and personality development of America's great predator, puma concolor.

The Culvers fenced a seven-acre habitat called Cougar Country that enclosed woods, thickets, hillside, clearings, and a wet weather swamp. The stars Cinnabar, Arjan, and Sharu, the sibling offspring of Tara and Mercury, were co-raised by both their natural cougar mother Tara, and the Culvers. This allowed the Culvers to observe natural maternal/off spring relationships.

At 31 days of age the kittens were removed from Tara for four weeks of hand rearing by the Culvers. While living in the Culver's home, these cougars learn the

domestic behaviors necessary to safely interact with humans in their environment. Then the kittens were re-introduced to Tara. This co-rearing allowed intimate observations and interactions between the Culvers and the cougar family.

This video contains amazing footage that could not have been captured without the close bond of love and trust existing between cougar and researcher. Viewers of this video watch Tara's natural instincts guide her through her first delivery. Other scenes include Tara and her sons playing in the snow, the adolescent cougars running through their spring-fed watercourse, fantastic jumping demonstrations in a lively game of catfishing, and finally, the adult cougars walking with researchers through Cougar Country.

Cougar Development teaches you about the patience necessary to be a cougar mother, the sibling roughhousing which is a natural part of cougar behavior, the humor, good nature, and the incredible capacity for love that exists in these wondrous creatures. Order a copy today for only \$25.00. Mail check made out to FCF to: Cougar DVD, 7816 County Road 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879.

# The 36<sup>th</sup> Annual FCF Convention

**Dallas, Texas, July 25-28, 2007**

There are three kinds of people: The ones that learn by reading, the few who learn by observation, and the rest of them who have to touch the fire to see for themselves if it's really hot. For you fire-touchers, make plans to attend the FCF Convention Extravaganza. This ain't no "big hat, no cattle" affair. (Translation – it won't be all talk and no action.) So don't miss out! We're roundin' up all the doggies and kitties and hitting the trail for the Lone Star state and landin' in Dallas, Texas on July 25-28

We'll stay at the Southfork Hotel in Plano, not a "fur piece" from downtown Dallas. (Translation – just 35 miles from DFW International Airport.) Far from just another bunkhouse, the Southfork Hotel is "finer than a frog hair." (Translation – it's real nice.) It has impeccable service, traditional elegance, and modern convenience. Guest rooms are furnished with today's traveler in mind providing large sitting areas, full-size desks, dataports, and modems for comfort and convenience. The Southfork offers a fitness center, outdoor swimming pool and whirlpool, Remington's Restaurant, Lobby Bar & Lounge, free parking, and complimentary shuttle service within a 5-mile radius of the hotel. The FCF Convention room rate is \$79 per night, single or double.

The convention will kick off Wednesday, July 25, with the FCF Exotic Feline Husbandry Course. Director of Education Ms. Carol Bohning will present natural history of wild felines, regulatory agencies and permits, facility design, handling equipment, diet and nutrition, health care basics, dispo-



**JR's accommodations**



**Your accommodations**

sition and handling, behavior conditioning, and contingency planning. Now take my advice "there's two theories to arguin' with a woman. Neither one works." So just listen up and get your learnin' from the "trail boss." This course has earned positive marks from state Fish & Game agencies and the USDA.

Our home corral is the Trinity ballroom. As always, vendors will furnish displays for us to browse. Auction items will be available for silent bidding. The Trinity ballroom is the perfect place to relax and socialize between scheduled events. Members are invited to bring their feline friends and these free times can be spent getting to know the little furballs, up close and personal, one-on-one.

Things will start blowin' like a Texas tornado Thursday

evening at the icebreaker reception. There will be some fine eatin' and we can all "howdy and shake." (Translation – get to know each other, eat and drink, and party down!)

Friday we'll tour the Dallas Zoo and their extensive animal collection including lions, ocelots, bobcats, cheetah, tigers, and more. It "won't take a genius to spot a goat in that flock of sheep." (Translation – there's plenty of different animals to see at the zoo.)

Then we'll mosey on over to America's most famous ranch: Southfork Ranch, recognized as the homestead of the Ewings from TV's long-running Dallas series. If you were born in the last century you know what I'm talkin' 'bout.

We'll tour the Dallas Legends Exhibit showcasing memorable moments from the Dallas series, clips from memorable episodes, even the gun that shot J. R. We'll hear interviews with J.R. Ewing, who was



**JR's self-fertilizing lawn**





**JR's suite**



**Your suite (optional)**

“full of wind as a corn-eating horse.” (Translation – he’s rather prone to boasting.)

From there, a tram will take us on a tour of the ranch. We’ll learn the history of the ranch and see Texas longhorns and American quarter horses and then end up at “the most famous white house west of DC,” the Ewing mansion.

We got the Southfork Ranch reserved for the FCF annual membership meeting. We’ll be in air-conditioned comfort while members remind the FCF board of directors that “if you’re ridin’ ahead of the herd, take a look back every now and then to make sure it’s still there.”

We’ll be treated to an authentic chuck wagon barbeque from the old west, featuring choice beef brisket with Miss Ellie’s famous barbeque sauce, homemade tangy southern potato salad, Southfork ranch style

beans, creamy cole slaw, trail biscuits, and Southfork’s signature hot strawberry cobbler. Singing cowboys will entertain with campfire songs and ranch hands will tell authentic tales of the old west and recite cowboy poetry during dinner so “don’t miss this good chance to shut up.”

Saturday we’ll be back at the hotel learning from speakers so smart “the sun comes up just to hear ‘um crow.” (Translation – the speakers know what they’re talking about.) We’re gonna keep you guessing who’s booked cause “lettin’ the cat outta the bag is a whole lot easier’n puttin’ it back in.” (Translation – stay tuned for surprises on speakers.)

Later that evening put on your fancy duds fur our last roundup at the banquet. You’ll get a fair chance to rope in some of the bargains that are always available at the auction.

There are still plenty of other things being worked on to make sure that this FCF round-up deep in the heart of Texas will be another memorable one. The convention committee members tell me this “ain’t their first rodeo.” (Translation – they’ve been doing this a few years.) So “don’t worry ‘bout the mule, just load the wagon.” (Translation – just do your part and get here, we’ll take care of the rest.)

To reserve your room, call the hotel reservations department at 972-578-8555 or the toll-free number, 866-665-2680. To receive the special rates, FCF attendees should identify the group as Feline Conservation Federation. All reservations should be made by July 17, 2007. **IMPORTANT:** Anyone planning to bring cats, you **MUST** contact a member of the convention committee for the special requirements necessary. •

### The registration fees for the convention are:

#### FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Course:

FCF members	\$65
non-members	\$95
Convention Registration (before July 11)	\$150
Late Convention Registration (after July 11)	\$165
Children 6-18	\$75
Children 5 and under	Free
Single Day Registrations	
Thursday	\$25
Friday	\$100
Saturday	\$75



**JR's dining experience**



**Your dining experience**

# Commitment to a Serval

By Jill Booth

All animal ownership is a commitment and so many people don't take that commitment seriously. Think of all the pet owners you know. Many people do not think out the decision to own an animal, any animal. A domestic animal usually takes re-homing quite well, however the transition is much, much harder for exotics.

While a domestic may seem more resilient, most of them react with fainter echoes of the response that exotics have. I raise and show dogs. In that domestic species, I see different responses. Some are very adaptable, and as long as someone is feeding and caring for them, they are content. Others are very fixated on one caretaker and mourn continuously without them. Some seem meant to live in a pack (like we have), others seem better off in homes where they are 'onlys' or there are only one or two same species animals. I obviously can't keep every dog I breed forever and we do place older animals on occasion. Our view is that we are responsible for the ones we breed forever, however. We keep in touch with puppy buyers and if somewhere down the road they can't keep that dog—in a month, two years, eight years—we either take the dog back or assist with re-homing. We have a six year-old neutered 'repo' and a year-old neutered repo currently. Both of these were because of health issues in the dog's families. We screen people over and over again to make as sure as we can that these homes will take, and that the dogs are seen as a commitment, not a passing fancy.

When you decide to have a human child, your life changes profoundly. Most people who have chosen to have children or accept their entrance into their lives gracefully at least, agree that the changes that occur in your household and in your family dynamics are worth it.

To those of us who are serval owners, the changes we make in our homes and lifestyle are very similar and worth it to us. If you are very house proud, probably any house pet isn't for you. It bothers my mother to wash laundry and have any animal

hair on the lint filter! It bothers her when a dog goes outside and comes in with wet paws, muddy or not. She doesn't like it when they bark, even if it's in the middle of the day and just in happy exuberance.

Servals have habits that some people will enjoy. Other habits they have we can tolerate and find ways to live together. The serval is a serval, and will act like a serval. We can't make them act like a domestic cat, because that isn't what they are. They may or may not choose to use a litter box. If they do choose to use the litterbox, they may decide they aren't covering feces. They may or may not spray, whether or not they aren't neutered. (Neutered male cat urine stinks a lot less, at any rate!)

They will probably always see beings that are much smaller and weaker as prey. Predator behavior is much closer to the surface in a serval than it is in a dog or cat. I've had domestic dogs (not my small breed, another mid sized bull breed) kill cats, even after years of seemingly living amicably together. Animals are animals, and they will prove that to us upon occasion. I wouldn't leave my serval alone with newborn puppies or kittens. They squeak, they twitch, they look like prey.

Just as with children, I have to think about the environment and what the cat will come in contact with will hurt her. I have to worry less about the 'stuff' and more about her. We ended up with our cat having her own room. (In some areas and states, you have to have the cat in an outdoor enclosure; in our state this is not so.) I'd wanted to open up the wall and have an outdoor enclosure for her, but we ended up with a neighbor that was awful and I didn't want to feel she was ever vulnerable to him.

A smooth, easily cleansed floor, her large cat cage (five by six) in there, usually with the door open, her kitty litter box (used most of the time) and her toys (climbing stuff, stuffed toys) completed her ensemble. We raise chickens, so occasionally some freshly killed chicken, her ZuPreem and Mazuri. I bought vitamins for her from Wysong (I know others have vitamins and

minerals they prefer) and occasional treats of raw beef and icky old store bought chicken. The result: we had a nice healthy, happy serval.

We'd been traumatized by the loss of our first serval—he had full house rights along with our domestics. That wasn't the problem—he was neutered, almost two and the only problem I'd had was him eyeing those newborn puppies. Easily solved: a door between him and any pups under six months old. A pet sitter came and somehow, unbelievably, left *three* guard doors open, and he got out, and she was afraid to just pick him up (after several visits to our house to learn to do our animals, she'd assured me she was comfortable with him!) Now, you or I would have sustained a possible bite to get the cat—she did not. Then she did the next worst thing—she chased him. Naturally, he ran. Then the *third* worst thing—she waited two hours to call us. When she finally did, we made a six hour trip home in about three and a half, and spent the next two weeks and \$2,000 trying to get our cat back.

That's the other thing about owning an exotic cat. If Fluffy gets out and you can't find her, you may be devastated but you don't have a responsibility to the public to retrieve that cat like you do with an exotic. I'd move heaven and earth like that to find *any* animal of mine that was missing, but you don't *have* to. With an exotic, you *have* to.

We tried live traps, nets, all kinds of things. We would see him, almost every day, but he was too afraid to come to me. He was clearly tied to us with an invisible cord, but he just couldn't bring himself to cross that final fifteen feet and come to me. I didn't want to dart my baby, but finally I was calling around to all the vets and dog pounds and humane societies for a dart gun. We finally located one dart gun in a tri-county area (we later learned a person with exotics an hour or so north of us would have come down with his). The problem was, they wouldn't *lend* the dart gun. It came attached to their veterinarian, at a cost



of a hundred or two hundred dollars an hour, and only during daylight hours. Since we only saw the cat at night, that obviously was not going to work.

I finally ordered a dart gun. It came the day after he was hit and killed on the expressway. The sheriff's department had ended up wonderful with us. They saw him a couple of times, realized he wasn't a dangerous animal, recognized our great love for him, and backed off. They began simply calling and reporting sightings so we could run and investigate. When someone called in about his body on the side of the road, they stayed by his body till we got there. I'd told the dispatcher, through my tears, that I couldn't bear the thought of someone stopping and picking up his body for a trophy. Bless their hearts, they stayed and guarded him for me.

Angus' cremated remains are on a shelf. His loss was horrible. Some time later we got Ariel, and I determined that if anyone came in the house, she'd be locked in her cage. It seemed mean to her, perhaps, but it was absolutely for her safety. Any future sitters could just feed her through the cage. The longest we are gone is for five or six days and if need be, a kitty litter can wait that long.

So what I'm trying to say is, there's a lot of reality in the decision to add a serval to your life. Why do it? Absolutely the relationship with a serval is different than the relationship with a domestic cat. I love my domestics; I love my dogs. The serval loves me as much as I love my husband, my other animals, my deity—all put together. Along with that is the absolute certainty that she is very sentient, very much her own being. As much as she does love me, she will still make her own decisions and will be her own being. They are not looking to us for guidance like a domestic cat or dog. They are looking to us for that incredible bond, period. Will they do things for us? Sure, in some circumstances. But they are going to do it because they think it's a good idea too. They are not golden retrievers, that's for sure. •

## Going once! Going twice! Sold!

The FCF ebay Fund Raiser Store has had great success since its opening in November 2005. Little did we realize the store would generate funding greatly needed so quickly. We were able to generate the appropriate funding needed for transport two precious tigers.

After noticing the traffic being generated to our store and discovering our purpose, several ebay sellers have donated items for our continued fund raiser store or have given us excellent discounted prices to supply our store with auctioned items. As one seller stated, "you guys are the troopers, saving and preserving our precious wildlife. We have the utmost respect for you." And yet another, "knowing our product line is going to a good cause in helping the big cats, is reward enough for us."

Several hot items were the collector's plates and the painted rocks! The painted rocks are custom made for the FCF ebay Fund Raiser store, as well as the custom switch plates and the Italian charms. The FCF DVD and the Cougar Development DVD are also popular items.



Can you supply the FCF ebay Fund Raiser Store with hand-made items? We are always in need of new items!

Come and join in the fun of trying to win an auction! All proceeds from the auction go to helping felines in need!

<http://fcffundraiser.com/>

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# Zoos and Aquariums Committing to Conservation Conference January 24 – 28, 2007

By Mindy Stinner

I attended the Zoos and Aquariums Committing to Conservation (ZACC) conference in Houston in late January. I was not sure at first if I was going to be comfortable at the meeting because of the large numbers of AZA members there. We all know how they feel about “private owners,” though legally many of them are just as privately owned as our places are.

I went for three reasons. The Houston Zoo staff went out of their way to invite me and make me feel welcome. Several people working in the field in other countries that I had met only via email were going to be there and this was an opportunity to finally meet them face-to-face. And I wanted to hear for myself about the sorts of projects that exist, who’s funding them and what is not being adequately covered by this funding.

Over 250 people attended some components of the six-day conference. About 50 of them were from outside the US, most presenting about their various projects. Some are very well known for their amazingly abundantly funded work with orangutans, snow leopards, tigers, and elephants. Others were coming to the US for the first time to make contacts to help fund small or new projects. In all, we listened to over 100 presentations and viewed another dozen posters and table displays.

I have always been under the impression that many AZA zoos contributed to conservation work. After all, if they make their money displaying these animals, surely they understand the need to give back to the ecosystems they come from. I was stunned by how wrong I was.

In my notes I classified the presentations by my level of interest (tapirs aren’t a species I study, but they are food for animals I work with) and by the level of funding they have coming in. I found mostly what I expected: that the big and glamorous species are the best funded. The pet projects of a few zoos are well-funded by those zoos and a few other zoos and sponsors they brought in to help. The lesser-known species are all but ignored, with their advocates struggling to cover their most basic

expenses. Jim Sanderson was the only speaker specifically addressing small wild cat issues.

All the presentations opened with the speakers thanking the conference sponsors for helping them attend. All the presentations ended with several slides full of logos of the AZA zoos providing “major support,” thanking them for all their help.

I knew that funds went far in most of these field research areas. Living wages as low as a few hundred dollars per year mean that even small donations to these programs have a huge impact on their effectiveness.

When I heard the details about how these small projects are surviving, I was stunned. The keepers of a single zoo holding an annual fundraising event are the primary support for some projects. Some are piecing together “major gifts” from the big AZA zoos. Most of those gifts are between \$200 and \$5,000, or consist of in-kind equipment donations. Most of the funds sent to small projects are raised with the cute “rainforest parking meters” or special small fundraising campaigns run by zoo keepers or conservation programs officials. Almost none are treated as serious conservation efforts by the zoo directors.

Yet the speakers were very pleased to list all those logos on their presentations. Jim Sanderson listed the FCF logo as one of the top sponsors, noting that as an organization, we have done more to support his work than most major zoos and better-known conservation organizations.

This conference involved a lot of “preaching to the choir.” The Houston Zoo staff pushes a strong conservation education message both on and off site. The presenters certainly all knew the need for the work they sought to fund and the attendees were largely from zoos who do fund projects at a reasonable level based on the annual income at their facilities. Many zoos had no representative present

and no logo flashing after the presentations. Perhaps they give to projects not in attendance or maybe they do not view conservation as a priority.

A goal the conference committee set for future years was the attraction of additional zoos’ participation to help create enthusiasm for this work.

Impressed on me was the indelible proof that our FCF conservation funds are critical for successful work on all small cats, and for specialized local projects in vulnerable areas not recognized as high-profile enough by the big zoos. FCF conservation resources must continue to go to carefully chosen and prescreened projects where it will have the most impact. FCF is having as much of an effect on the success of the smaller projects as most AZA zoos are.

I was fortunate to be able to speak to several people about applying for future project support through FCF Conservation Grants. Many of the people I spoke with were representing an area where other people worked nearby with cats, and they agreed to help spread the word.

Ongoing work in Panama City was one of the highlights of this conference. The recently elected mayor of Panama City, the

**Jim Sanderson listed the FCF logo as one of the top sponsors, noting that as an organization, we have done more to support his work than most major zoos and better-known conservation organizations.**

youngest ever, is a passionate conservationist. Their zoo’s directorship is a politically appointed position. For perhaps the first time they now have a trained businessman and conservationist in this position. Both the mayor and the zoo director gave presentations. They recently got funding for a jaguar exhibit and breeding facility. They are very interested about other small cats in

their area, especially the jaguarundi, and may be seeking funding in the future to support conservation work with them.

Sonora Mexico has taken an interest in preserving their wild jaguar population and they have several related small projects ongoing through AZA zoo support. It is possible they will take an interest in small



cats if funding is available for such projects.

Scott Robertson and Thai Nguyen from the Small Carnivore Program in Vietnam are planning to expand their facilities to include additional species in the near future, funding permitting. The national park near them holds most of southeast Asia's rarest cats. They would like to be able to accept seized cats poached from this area for rehabilitation and return to the wild or for captive breeding. At the top of their list is the marbled cat.

Jim Sanderson's presentation on the small cat projects he spearheads was designed to call attention to the fact that zoos have a tool available to them to help assess how critical a species' situation is in the IUCN Red List. He outlined current projects underway to assess the Andean mountain cat, the margay in Brazil, the Chilean cat in Chile, and additional work being started in Sarawak, Sabah, Brunei, where he can leverage his expertise to help others set up and follow through with this work. Jim specifically mentioned the support provided by several institutions, including the FCF, as being critical to his success. He has started a Wild Cat Endowment Fund with small contributions scavenged from each project he works on. Over the years it has accrued \$110,600. He would like to get the fund up to one million dollars to it can support this work far into the future.

Texas Parks and Wildlife held a roundtable about their partnerships with state agencies and the wildlife action plan for their region. There was brief discussion of their regional conservation plan with regard to high priority eco-regions. FCF is involved in the South Texas Plains Eco-region's Ocelot Recovery Team. In partnership with the Dallas Zoo, work is being done to determine the current range of the ocelot, to identify areas of their historic range not currently inhabited, and to begin reintroduction plans in those areas. This is a long-term project that will require the cooperation of many landholders, much groundwork to confirm the research and re-plant the area with appropriate foliage, and careful establishment of a releasable or transplantable population of cats. FCF conservation funds are already providing support for some aspects of this research.

Several community conservation based programs were represented, including

workers from Tanzania, Mongolia, New Guinea and the Eastern slopes of the Andes. Mongolia's Snow Leopard Trust has a wonderful program of incorporating conservation in local politics and trade. Conservation agreements help to insure that products created by local communities are helped to market. Work being done in the Andes will help protect the Andean mountain cat, one of the least known wild cat populations.

A creative approach to overall health assessment of predators comes from the African Predator Conservation Research Organization. The organization consists almost entirely of one veterinarian who spent years at zoos, including Brookfield and Wildlife Safari before moving to field research. Together with a small team Dr. Michael Briggs camps in one area for several months, baiting for certain species. When they arrive, he does rapid knock-downs, blood draws, measurements, and sample collections. The overall health exam they provide each animal covers CBC blood work, genetic sampling, pathology and clinical pathology, nutrition assessments, and inter and extra-species disease transfer. Much of this can be gathered from blood, stool, and hair samples.

Dr. Briggs's goal is to have the animals back on their feet in less than 20 minutes. When the numbers of animals arriving are low this is not a problem. However his traps have often been more successful than he planned. He shared the tale of one trap that attracted small carnivores that he sedated. Circling jackals threatened the safety of the smaller animals still coming up from anesthesia so he sedated them for processing as well. The hyenas arrived en masse shortly after and he sedated them so they would not kill the other smaller animals already sedated. And of course no veterinarian is going to sedate an animal and not work on it, so they processed the hyenas. As they were finishing with the hyenas the lions arrived and had to be sedated so they wouldn't kill the hyenas. It was a very long night.

The wide sampling across many species and locations has helped document certain illnesses and a spread of sole diseases across species. His sample areas so far have included locations in Zambia, Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, and Botswana. He has specifically targeted lions at several sites in west Africa for genetic and disease assessments. The volume of TB and distemper

showing up across the predator spectrum is concerning him and is certainly worthy of further investigation. The continued physical isolation of set populations of predators is indeed having the expected detrimental effects on the overall genetic health of some groups. Again, further study is needed to see how significant the impact may be over time. Their web site is [www.apcro.org](http://www.apcro.org).

One of the most thought-provoking presentations came from Wally Van Sickle of Idea Wild. He began assisting some field projects by assessing what elements were missing from their projects to help cultivate success. He found most were missing some small piece of equipment, an element of staff training, and networking with other institutions. He found that by providing expertise and equipment he was able to make a huge impact on the effectiveness of these projects. It is difficult to track animals without radio collars and telemetry equipment. GPS collars are necessary in mountainous areas where a radio signal cannot be picked up regularly. Camera traps work better in larger numbers, to more saturate an area. Idea Wild now focuses all its grants on equipment needs and the volume of results is amazing. They assist an average of 28 projects per month, totaling 4,500 affected projects across more than 70 countries. Idea Wild's goals, methodology, and desired results mirror those of the FCF Conservation Grants program. It may be worthwhile to cultivate a relationship over time. Their web site is [www.ideawild.org](http://www.ideawild.org).

A couple of presentations guiding applicants on how to successfully apply for field grants were interesting to me because I wanted to know how the FCF process compared with other grant making organizations' applications. I have found that despite the different ways of measuring successes, ensuing long-term effectiveness, and determining conservation value of the project, our FCF process is on par with most of the zoo applications. I think we have given weight to the level of FCF member participation in a given project over the urgency of need of the species and target area of some grants, but that is to be expected if we want to encourage involvement in fundraising for our FCF Conservation Fund.

The Conservation Breeding Specialist Group has developed a useful tool for help-

Continued on 49

# FCF Board of Directors Meet in Ohio

On Friday, January 19, the FCF board of directors as well as Mindy Stinner and Sara Comstock all boarded planes and cars to descend upon Johnstown, Ohio for a weekend of FCF business. FCF directors Carol Bohning and Evelyn Shaw met the travelers at the Columbus airport to pick them up and chauffeur them to the home of Carol and Craig Bohning.

The day started off smoothly enough with JB Anderson and Lynn Culver arriving just minutes after Caroline Clendinen's plane landed. However, the next planned arrival of Mindy Stinner didn't show. And when Sara Comstock arrived, unfortunately, her luggage didn't. Then Brian Werner appeared without mishap while we still waited for Mindy. I finally reached her by phone and learned she would be arriving several hours late so it was time to head off to Carol's and return later to pick up Sara's luggage and Mindy. Irene Satterfield's flight was also delayed several hours and her luggage was also missing. It didn't arrive until midday Saturday!

Carol was gracious enough to offer the FCF board members her home for this meeting and lodging. She and her husband Craig had only moved into it the week before! We arrived to a roomy and incredibly beautiful residence where we all thoroughly enjoyed spending time. Kevin Chambers arrived later Friday evening, having gotten a late start driving from Shelburn, Indiana. Bob Turner and Harold Epperson made their appearances early Saturday, leaving out in the wee hours of the morning for their five hour drive from Indiana.

The Saturday meeting began at 9:00. Several local FCF members who were friends of Carol and Evelyn attended the meeting as well: John and Terri Chuha, Nancy Nighswander, and Rick Armstrong listened in as the meeting commenced. Each officer and invited guest gave a ten-minute report to bring everyone on the board up to date on matters.

Member Services Director Caroline Clendinen reported that stock of the FCF membership handbooks is nearly gone. The next printing needs to incorporate the bylaw and constitution changes and include a page on the registered handler program. Addi-

tionally it was asked that the board adopt a mission statement for incorporation in the membership handbook as well as on the website. All board members are to review the FCF Handbook so that the next printing incorporates all the needed changes and it is completely up to date.

Education Director Carol Bohning reported that she is nearing the end of the husbandry course modules and student manual update, working on updating the enrichment section with more photos of cage designs and fixtures. The veterinary section needs some updating, as does the nutrition. The USDA section would benefit from incorporating the article, Understanding USDA Licensing, from the FCF web site, since federal permits increasingly are a requirement for private ownership.

Legislation Director Evelyn Shaw reported on the legislative season. She will be updating the web site with state bills as they are introduced. It was suggested that on the FCF members-only section documents that have been useful for educating purposes be uploaded to help members

oppose county legislation that seeks to ban ownership.

Treasurer Harold Epperson reported that the FCF checkbook balance is currently at \$6,788.34, and FCF CDs total \$36,944.56 earning 4.9% interest yearly. Harold noted the FCF fidelity bond needs to be increased and that additional names need to be added, including Sara Comstock since she is now holding FCF donated items and running the FCF fund raiser ebay store.

New Vice President Brian Werner was given extra time to outline his many exciting ideas and proposals for the FCF. He began his presentation by drawing the board's attention to the need for overhaul of the FCF bylaws to better conform to standards commonly utilized by other non-profits. He suggested moving much of the present bylaws into a program and policies document.

He further stressed the need for various committees to better run the business of the FCF and delegate duties away from the board of directors. Committees suggested by Brian were a Corporate Structure Com-



Lynn and Bob both wear spots



mittee, an Ethics Committee, a Financial Accountability Committee, an Advisory Committee, and a Steering Committee.

Additionally Brian outlined the need for increased member services to attract outside appeal to FCF. Suggested ideas were free admittance to member's facilities using a membership ID card as proof of FCF membership and development of donor levels and associated benefits for \$25, \$50, \$100, and \$500 donations.

FCF directors were also briefed on the need for FCF members to be educated on estate planning and the ability for donations of stock to FCF by those wishing to avoid capitol gains taxes. These areas need development and call to the need for accounting or advisory committees.

Brian stressed the importance of an FCF Registry for feline species and spoke of the Tiger Registry by Tigerlink that utilizes DNA testing.

Recognizing that with greater growth, the FCF needs to strive for maintaining a positive image. Brian touched on the sensitive subject of creating a member alert list, that is, persons in the feline community known to be a source of husbandry or image problems that the FCF might need to reference when considering new membership applications.

Life Director JB Anderson indicated his desire to work with other organizations and related his involvement with Safari International and their massive fund raising that is earmarked for grants to fund research and conservation. JB has been invited onto the board of the local Missouri chapter of CI and believes he will be able to funnel CI grants through FCF to feline research projects chosen by FCF for support.

Robert Turner, Life Director candidate, spoke on his desire to create a special fund for speakers at the annual conference. He has agreed to head up this idea and raise funds for this year's Dallas conference.

Mindy Stinner, Conservation Director candidate, spoke on the upcoming five-day conservation conference she is attending the following weekend. This conference hosted by the Houston Zoo, features 200 researcher speakers from around the globe including Jim Sanderson of Conservation International. (Jim is the conservation advisor for FCF.) Mindy received permission to use a brochure she created for this event to promote and represent FCF to the research

community.

Kevin Chambers spoke as the chairman of the Accreditation Committee and reported that one facility has passed in 2006, and two applications are in the works. An accreditation logo was approved with a wall certificate and an outdoor metal sign. Discussion of future advertising of the accreditation program in Animal Finder's Guide as well as the FCF web site and journal to increase awareness and participation was suggested.

Kevin is also chairman of the FCF Conference Committee and he reported that the plans for the Dallas convention are moving along and that a hotel contract is soon to be signed.

The group broke for lunch and to socialize and visit. Most participants braved the cold and walked down to Carol's sanctuary to visit with the cougars, bobcats, and Siberian lynx that call this rural property their home. Carol's Butternut Farm is a well-constructed facility with ample room for the cats. Yards consist of large areas with tables and trees, and structures for enrichment. The cougars have their own commercially constructed wooden sheds with electricity for warmth.

In addition to providing homes for wild cats, Carol has a big heart that extends to the many domestic felines that find themselves on death's door at the veterinary hospital where she used to work. Not willing to let a healthy cat be put to sleep, she has agreed to take them home and care for them and sometimes she is able to adopt them out.

I was amazed when we entered a large building that housed about 36 domestic cats. I assumed such a building would smell of litter boxes and I was amazed when we



**Carolynne pets Shadow, a wolf**

opened the door and there was no smell at all; only cat after cat, all colors, sizes, hair lengths, and personalities, each with their own story, living in harmony! Incredible.

In addition to the many domestic cats, one side of this building housed three chain link indoor spaces for five bobcats. These indoor rooms attached to long runs outdoors, and four of the resident bobcats stayed inside vying for our attention, especially Bob, Carol's first bobcat. He was a true ambassador for his kind, friendly and outgoing; we each took a turn being loved by him. What a joy!

After an hour visiting with the felines that drive us to do so much for the FCF, we returned to Carol's wonderful home to finish the meeting and training session.

Sara Comstock reported the amazing success of the newly formed FCF ebay Store. Opened in mid-November, it has raised \$1,775.62 for the FCF to be used to provide funds for felines in need of transport. Sara graciously donated the cost all ebay listing fees and any shipping fees incurred for the month of November and December and pledged to continue this generosity through January. Sara's work enabled the store to exceed its fund raising



goal for the two tigers in Ohio and is most appreciated!

In addition to FCF members donating items to the store, Sara reported we have attracted established ebay sellers who are commenting favorably on the brisk traffic at this site. Several artists are donating items and are interested in long-term arrangements with the FCF to showcase their work. It was suggested a news release for the FCF web site be crafted, as well as letters to FCF vendors asking for additional donations and support of the store.

The FCF Store is actually run utilizing Sara's ebay rating. Sara outlined a plan to run two stores simultaneously so that FCF may ride on her coattails and credibility while it gains positive feedback from its fledgling existence. Sara will invite bidders to purchase at a lesser price at the FCF store. When FCF has gained a high enough rating, Sara's store will be closed and the FCF store can run alone. Mindy Stinner offered to donate a warehouse of pottery to the FCF E-bay Store for a split of the profits. Volunteers in North Carolina will ship items as they are sold. Sara will get with Mindy to upload photos and item descriptions.

Irene Satterfield spoke on furthering the Feline Conservation Federation membership image as "Private Conservationists." She requested that FCF review its logo and all corporate documents to unify letterheads, business cards, applications, and other corporate papers. She stressed the need to avoid using any canned press releases and instead, FCF must address each media event individually but use every opportunity to incorporate FCF approved sound bites. Irene reported she is currently working on writing code to allow for credit card payment of FCF dues online on the FCF web site.

President Lynn Culver updated the board on her involvement in UAP-PEAL. Lynn is the Feline Element in this 501(c)(4) organization and she provided input to the hired lobbyist firm on two federal bills, the Technical Amendment to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act and the Haley Act, both introduced in 2006. She wants the FCF to promote this legislative lobbying resource and encourage FCF members to support it though their individual memberships or donations so that is has a greater voice in

feline legislation issues.

Lynn reported the ZAOA conference attended recently by several FCF directors proved to be less productive than hoped. Further work needs to be done to clarify and expand this relationship between the two organizations.

The trademark registration opposition lawsuit filed against the Long Island Ocelot Club has just passed the testimony phase and now entered the brief phase. Lynn reported that Kevin Chambers took the lead in preparing the FCF brief with legal assistance and council from FCF attorney



**Rick Armstrong visits his Shawnee member Julie Roper.**

Lynn reported that the FCF Journal is now on schedule and expected to be released in the odd months in 2007, moving the bi-monthly production dates up by about five weeks ahead of 2006. Lynn invited other BoD members to participate in development of each journal with themes and required submissions.

1000 copies of the LIOC/FCF Journal Searchable Archive DVD was successfully produced and included with the January/February 2007 FCF Journal. Lynn worked with Mike Friese to facilitate this historic project for the FCF.

This concluded the presentation portion of the meeting and then Irene Satterfield conducted a 90-minute training session on the administration pages of the FCF web site and how to upload pages to the FCF site.

By then it was well past dinnertime and the group was treated to pan steaks and salad and baked potatoes and pie prepared with the greatest of care by Carol. Everything was delicious and it was a perfect ending to a really productive day for the FCF Board of Directors. •



**Nancy interacts with Keshu**



## Special Board of Director's Meeting

A special meeting of the FCF board of directors was held on the forums section of the FCF website, convening December 17, 2006 and adjourning January 7, 2007 after two extensions.

An accreditation logo was approved by consensus.

The minutes of the 4th quarter 2006 minutes were approved by consensus.

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Kevin Chambers, that the FCF board approve the 30-day free trial of QuickBooks online. Motion carried 9-0.

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Carolyn Clendinen, that an investigation of the recently ended election be held under executive session. The election results, after two separate countings, gave different voting results. Motion carried 10-0.

The investigation found the following problems with the election and counting process: Not all nominees were contacted to confirm they accepted or declined a nomination by secretary Harold Epperson and a candidate's name was improperly removed from the ballot. Ballot design allowed for two votes on a single paper and caused a problem with the counting method used. Written counting instructions were not given to accountant. JB Anderson was present during counting and provided incorrect "shortcuts" in counting to the accountant. The accountant counted the ballots only one time and did not recheck her work. Two of the races were counted incorrectly and the reported tallies were incorrect. After the counting of the ballots by the accountant, JB took the ballots home. JB performed a recount of two races while the ballots were at his home and additional votes were found in one race that changed the outcome of the race. President Bob Turner combined JB's recount of the Conservation and Vice President races along with the accountant's tallies in the other races and presented them as the official accountant's count to the FCF Board.

Motion by Lynn Culver, seconded by Carol Bohning, that we direct JB Anderson to return the ballots to the exact same accountant and that she recount all the races and record all the total tallies in each race

and the individual candidate tallies in each race. The accountant is to be directed to perform the exact same steps she did the first time for reaching a winner for the Vice President and Conservation race, that is, she separated the ballots into piles according to each candidate and then proceeded to place all the second choice ballots for the first round winner in the first round winner's pile (for vice president that would be Brian Werner.) Specifically, the accountant placed the second choice votes for Brian votes from Zuzana Kukol's pile and Marcus Cook's pile and Sara Comstock's pile onto Brian's pile. The accountant is to record that total. For the conservation race, the accountant is to place the second place votes for Leann Montgomery that she found in Mindy Stinner's pile and the second place votes for Leann she found in Bill Meadow's pile onto Leann's pile and record the new vote tally for Leann. After she has retraced her steps and recreated the exact same situation that led to the first incorrect report and has recorded the results of this exercise and recounted these piles a second time and recorded those results separately, she then is instructed to recount the Vice President and Conservation ballots using proper preferential balloting instructions, record those results, and then recount the results of a proper preferential balloting process a second time and record the results in writing. The results are then to be e-mailed to the president, vice president, secretary.

Specifically, the report should contain the following information:

Total number of votes cast for first place in each director or officer race.

Total number of first place votes cast for each candidate.

Total number of Brian's and Leann's first place votes and second place votes counted from all the candidates' piles in the Conservation race and in the Vice President race. This step, which recreates what the accountant did the last time, is repeated and counted and recorded again. Then she also provide:

Proper preferential balloting results that should contain both an initial first round vote and a second determining round vote

for Conservation and for Vice President, a first round, an intermediate round after Zuzana is eliminated, and a final and determining round after Marcus is eliminated.

If, in every race the recounts and recreation of incorrect procedure for VP and Conservation successfully duplicates what was reported by the accountant the first time, the board will accept the results of her properly performed preferential balloting for VP and Conservation as well as all other races as final.

If any contested race results are found to be different in any way, from the original report issued by the accounting firm in this new tally, even by one point in the total tally, or one point in the individual tallies, or one point in the incorrect tally from the incorrect preferential balloting process, then the board will declare that particular race null and void and we will issue new ballots for that race only. Motion carried 9-1.

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Evelyn Shaw, to extend this special meeting to Sunday, December 31, 2006. Motion carried 7-0.

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Kevin Chambers, that we extend the meeting to Sunday, January 7, 2007 at midnight. Motion carried 9-0.

Moved by Bob Turner, seconded by JB Anderson, that we accept Public Accountant "Evers & Company" re-count of the vote tabulation results for FCF officers and directors as official that shows which candidates got the most votes for the office or director position that they ran for. The date of the Evers & Company re-count of the votes is January 3, 2007. The re-count vote tabulation results matches the same candidate winners as the first vote count when JB was present on December 13, 2006. Motion failed 5-6.

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Kevin Chambers, that the board remove the executive session from the investigation of the election results so that we may move forward and issue a board approved statement that addresses the findings and the outcome of the motion presently before the board. Motion carried 8-0. •

## Second Special BoD Meeting

A special meeting of the FCF Board of Directors was called to order by President Lynn Culver on January 11, 2007 on the forums section of the FCF website for the purpose of determining the details for a re-election of five contested races necessitated because of irreversible errors and improprieties discovered in the counting and handling of ballots in the December 2006 election.

Moved by Brian Werner and seconded by Evelyn Shaw, that all bios of candidates of the election be resent to the membership prior to the ballots being mailed. Motion carried 6-0. The bios will be inserted in the January issue of the FCF newsletter.

Moved by Evelyn Shaw and seconded by Brian Werner that FCF hire a company to create, mail, send, and handle the processing of the ballots. Motion failed 3-0 (The cost for this service was found to be \$3500 after the motion was made.)

By consensus, the board determined that the Borda counting method would be used on multi-candidate races, the date for counting the ballots would be February 14, 2007, Leann Montgomery's name should be added to the list of Life Director candidates since she never declined nomination and she was denied her opportunity in the first election though an error by Harold Epperson, and that the ballots would be prepared and sent out at the meeting to be held in Columbus, Ohio on January 21, 2007.

The meeting adjourned on January 18, 2007.

## Re-Vote Results

The re-vote of five officer and director races was concluded on February 15. The mail did not run on February 14 due to snow and ice in Columbus, Ohio so an additional day was allotted to receive ballots.

Senior Account Lori Kitchen of the Mennel Mining Company received all envelopes and using the current FCF membership list verified the eligibility of each voter. She tabulated these races three times, providing official election results to the officers of the board Friday evening.

### Winners of each race are:

Treasurer - Kevin Chambers  
Director of Conservation - Mindy Stinner  
Director of Legislation - Evelyn Shaw  
Life Director - Robert Turner

The races with three and four candidates were counted using the Borda count method for preferential voting. Totals for each race follow:

### Treasurer (race participants-185)

Kevin Chambers: 99 votes  
Harold Epperson: 86 votes

### Director of Conservation (race participants-182)

Mindy Stinner: 344 points  
Bill Meadows: 310 points  
Leann Montgomery: 299 points

### Director of Legislation (race participants-183)

Evelyn Shaw: 128 votes  
Zuzana Kukol: 55 votes

### Life Director (race participants-184)

Robert Turner: 472 points  
Bobby Bean: 441 points  
Nanette McGann: 331 points  
Leann Montgomery: 287 points

The candidate for secretary declined her nomination to the position after the ballots were mailed so even though members did vote for Terri, the results are not included. The board will vote to appoint a secretary shortly. Volunteers for this position are encouraged to contact any board member and indicate interest in serving.

The board of directors extends their sincere appreciation for all candidates who ran for office and to all the FCF members who cast their votes.

I would also like to personally thank Bobby Bean, Nanette McGann, Marcus Cook and Harold Epperson for their service as officers and directors of the FCF.

—Lynn Culver, president



## Minutes of FCF Board Of Director's Meeting on January 21, 2007

The first Board of Directors meeting of 2007 was conducted on January 21 at the huge new home of Craig and Carol Bohning near Johnstown, Ohio. The officers in attendance were Lynn Culver, Brian Werner, Harold Epperson, Carol Bohning, Evelyn Shaw, Carolyne Clendinen, and JB Anderson. Absent were Irene Satterfield, Bobby Bean, and Nanette McGann. Also present were Robert Turner, Kevin Chambers, Sara Comstock, Mindy Stinner and Nancy Nighswander.

President Lynn Culver called the meeting to order.

>Motion by Harold and second by Carol to reimburse \$220 to Lynn for duplication of the Cougar Development DVDs. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Lynn and second by JB to reimburse Lynn \$60 per month for high-speed Hughes Internet service with \$300 yearly stipend. Seven YES votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Lynn to adopt a dissolution clause to the FCF bylaws was presented. No second was offered and JB moved that the BoD table the motion to a committee. No action was taken.

>Lynn requested that the board review the FCF Constitution and bylaws for possible changes. Brian Werner will present three examples for consideration by the board.

>Motion by Carol and second by Evelyn to remit \$20 to Gloria Johnson to represent FCF as a lobbyist during the legislative session in Florida. Six Yes votes and one No vote, motion passed.

>Motion by Lynn and second by Harold to appropriate \$200 to Lynn to attend

"Excelling as a First Time Manager or Supervisor" seminar. Six Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Lynn and second by Carolyne to reimburse the attendees at this meeting for their expenses to attend this meeting. Four categories of expense were presented and voted on separately.

(1) Round-trip airfare for officers, seven Yes votes

(2) Round-trip automobile for all attendees, seven Yes votes

(3) Round-trip airfare for non-officers, seven Yes votes

(4) Food allowance for the hosts, seven Yes votes

All motions passed. Carol Bohning and Brian Werner waived reimbursement and stated they would not submit an expense report.

>Motion by Lynn and second by Evelyn to authorize Brian Werner to represent FCF and speak before the Florida Fish and Wildlife Technical Advisory Group. No funds were appropriated. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Lynn presented a 30-day free trial online offer from QuickBooks to use for entering all FCF financial records. The cost is \$20 for each additional month or \$16 per month for one year.

>Motion by JB and second by Carol to subscribe to QuickBooks online for a year, seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>JB requested that the board reconsider his request for reimbursement of his airfare to attend the ZAOA. No action was taken.

>Motion by Lynn and second by Carol that Carol and Evelyn accept the duty of mailing the election ballots for the re-vote

of five races to the members. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by JB and second by Lynn that members must sign the election envelopes. Four Yes votes and three No votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Evelyn and second by Carol that Brian submits an outline for restructuring of the policy and bylaws that govern FCF branches. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Carol and second by Lynn that a steering committee be established. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Carol and second by Carolyne that FCF submit the financial records to an accounting firm for review. Brian will present a recommendation of firms for consideration. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Brian and second by Lynn that the BoD approve the request by JB for reimbursement of \$700 minus funds paid previously for his expense to attend the ZAOA conference with the stipulation that JB submit a report. Five Yes votes and two No votes, motion passed.

>Effective 01-21-2007, JB announced his resignation as the chairman of the Lotty Committee.

Also, JB recommended for consideration by the board for the Annual Convention be renamed the Annual Conference.

>Motion by JB and second by Carol to remit \$2417.70 to Evers & Company for payment of invoice submitted for counting of ballots. Seven Yes votes, motion passed.

>Motion by Harold and second by Carolyne the meeting is adjourned. Seven Yes votes, motion passed. •

## From Page 42: Zoos and Aquariums Committing to Conservation Conference

ing with consortium development and field project prioritization. The tool itself is a set of guiding principles and a set of weighted criteria for measuring the structure, ethics, importance, and conservation value of different programs. The principles include maximizing conservation impact, seeking partners that need your skills, committing for as long as it takes and no longer, conducting ethical reviews and objective evalu-

ations, reporting and prioritizing successes, and including species not necessarily represented at the facility doing the funding. The criteria include an assessment of both the conservation aspects of the project and the institutional concerns. Conservation aspects include impact and relevance, measurable outcomes, capacity building, sustainability, etc. The institutional concerns include a cost/benefit analysis, ease of entry and exit,

fundability, etc.

Overall, the conference was highly educational and allowed for an enormous amount of networking. It was wonderful to have dozens of people who may be interested in FCF Conservation Funds all in one location, where I could speak to them face to face about the process. I believe it helped establish connections to some terrific resources and to future FCF fund applicants. •

## FOCUS ON NATURE® *Insight into the lives of animals* FISHING CAT

As the moon rises, shadows move about the forest floor and an 18-pound fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrina*) stretches as she readies for her nightly forage. Two fast-growing kittens, born five months ago before the summer monsoons, are weaning and eating meat. So with hungry mouths to feed, the queen ventures out of her den hidden beneath a protective tree. As the fishing cat quietly makes her way down to the wide, slow-moving river the rhythmic sound of overly-social frogs permeates the thick air. She supplements her ichthyic fare with these delectable frogs and other aquatic animals, birds, small mammals and grasses.

The short-legged, stocky wildcat gently melts into the cool water and swims over to a partially-submerged tree at her favorite fishing spot. Sometimes she'll simply stay ashore, tap the water gently to mimic insects, and swipe fish out of the water with her sharp claws. She's even nabbed waterfowl from under the water. Suddenly, she sees a flash of silver below and with lightning speed dives in to catch a large fish in her long, civet-like mouth. Having a waterproof undercoat of short, dense fur and a short, rudder-like tail certainly help this fierce feline feel at home in the water.

Two fishing cat subspecies (*P. v. viverrinus* and *P. v. risophores*) are scattered throughout the coastal wetlands and densely-vegetated riverine habitats of Southeast Asia from Sri Lanka and parts of India



through Sumatra, Java, and Bali. Although widely distributed, this wildcat is locally threatened. With ever-increasing demands on the wetlands by agriculture and aquaculture the fishing cats have had to change their habits and habitats. Calves, young goats, poultry, and fish farms are becoming new food sources and many of these cats, trying to adapt to their altered habitats, are paying with their lives.

Zoos around the world have been breeding fishing cats with a high degree of success while additional protected habitats are investigated. Scientists feel optimistic about this wildcat's future and are continuing to study their population densities and range sizes using radio-telemetry and camera-

trapping. Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century little is known about the small wildcats, weighing less than 45 pounds and comprising three quarters of the world's 38 cat species. However, as the public's understanding and interest blossom, starting with a visit to the local zoo, conservation programs there along with organizations such as the Small Cat Conservation Alliance can garner support needed to study these elusive cats. Ultimately, conservation through understanding benefits all.

*Rochelle Mason raises awareness about endangered species through her paintings, columns and traveling exhibits. Her wildcat paintings and prints are sold through [www.Rmasonfinearts.com](http://www.Rmasonfinearts.com)*

### From Page 25

tact the Regional Director and confer with them as well to increase effectiveness in responses to situations.

#### *How the Program is Organized and Run*

The Regional Directors will be a sub-committee under the national FCF board to act as a liaison between the FCF board and the public, media, and legislators. It is not a lighthearted position but rather an important formal appointment that will include collateral duties that are very important.

Regional Directors must live in the Region assigned, they must be of solid moral character in accordance with our Code of Conduct, they must be current and remain current as a FCF member, they must agree to attend various

electronic meetings and meet in-person at the annual board meeting at the annual conference to present an annual report. They must establish clear communications with the chain of command both up with the FCF national Legislation Director and down with the State Representatives in their region and provide needed advice and open door accessibility. The key here is communicating with the staff, board, and down lines as needed on a regular basis.

To insure proper message content and consistency any Regional Director media releases or television or radio appearances will be coordinated with the FCF Public Relations Director who works closely with the FCF Legislation Director, prior to engagement.

Once the FCF Executive Board appoints these six Regional Directors their first duty will be to locate potential State Representatives for nomination and then vote on the nominated State Representatives.

State Representatives will meet most of the requirements of the Regional Directors except they will be nominated by their prospective Regional Directors based upon the Regional Director's direct knowledge and biographies on the nominee's capabilities, etc. These nominees will be voted upon to serve as the State Representatives by the remaining five Regional Directors. The nominating Regional Director must abstain from the vote on the State Representative. •



# Your best Shot



**Counterclockwise from top left:**

If I were any more handsome I'd be...er...ah...I'd be *more* handsome!—Anthony Lachica • Little Tony (the tiger) in pool—Gail Laviola • Isis the serval hangs out at the smelly end of her human—Roger Newson • Six week old bobcat Beelzabob explores the wilds of the great forest—Shelleen Mathews.







**Cheetahs at the Savannah Cheetah Foundation chase a lure provided by T.I.G.E.R.S. It's really safer than it sounds. Story inside. From left: Nala, Nikita, and Jemima.**

## FCF Upcoming Events

**Saturday, May 12, 2007 Husbandry Course.** Maryland class scheduled from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm at the Catoctin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo, 13019 Catoctin Furnace Road, Thurmont, MD 21788. This critically acclaimed class teaches: natural history of wild felines, regulatory agencies & permits, facility design, handling equipment, diet / nutrition, health care basics, disposition & handling, behavior conditioning, and contingency planning. Mail contact info—name, address, phone, and check made out to "Global Wildlife Trust" to the host address. Fee is \$65 for FCF members/ \$95.00 non-members. Call the Preserve 301-271-3180 Ext 0 to use your credit card. Accommodations in Thurmont, Cozy Motel, Motel 8, or Rambler Motel. More details on FCF web site.

**Sunday, May 13, Zoo Tour.** Course participants, family members, and friends accompanying a student will learn from a special behind-the-scenes tour of the Preserve's feline collection. Richard Hahn and June Bellizzi, the General Curator, will share with students their knowledge of caging, husbandry, and exhibit experience to help round out the previous day's FCF Husbandry Course curriculum. Admission is \$9.95 plus tax. All proceeds from the admissions will be donated to the FCF Conservation Fund.

**Wednesday, July 25, Husbandry Course.** Southfork Hotel, Plano, Texas, details inside.

**July 26-28, Annual FCF Convention.** Dallas, Texas, Rooms at Southfork Hotel, Plano, TX \$79.00 double occupancy. Convention early registration \$150. Details inside.

Sheri Duncan

