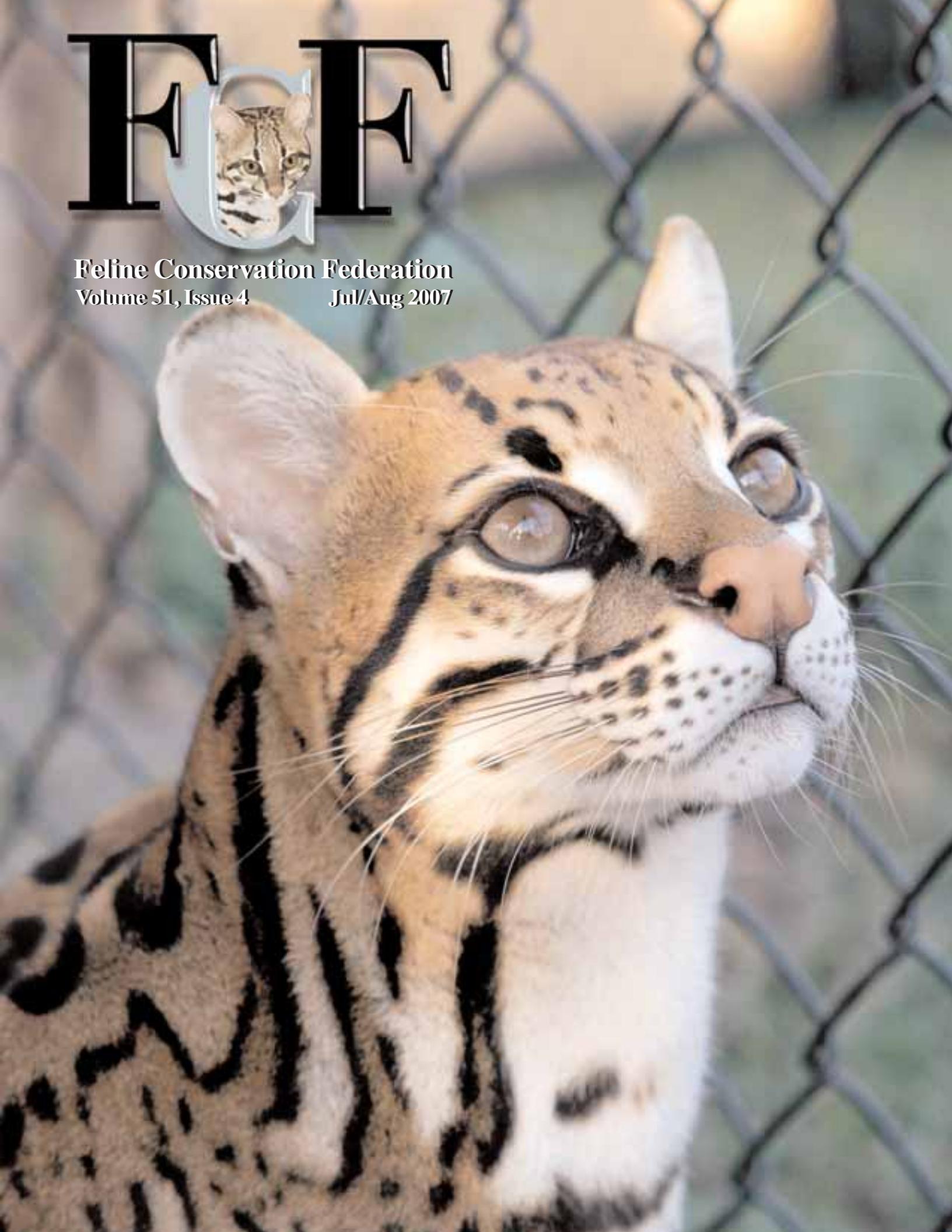


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Feline Conservation Federation
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A membership to FCF entitles you to six issues of this journal, the back-issue DVD, an invitation to the convention, and participation in our discussion groups. Your membership helps the conservation of exotic felines through support of habitat protection and conservation, education, and breeding programs. Send \$30 (\$35 Canada, \$40 international) to FCF, c/o Kevin Chambers, 7816 N CR 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879.

Members are invited to participate in e-mail list discussions on-line at:

http://groups.yahoo.com/group/The_FCF/

Cover: Macho Man, an ocelot. Photo by Judy Berens.
Inside: Very close shot of Zuzana Kukol's Bam Bam.
Photo by Mike Fries



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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Feline Conservation Federation

Letter from the President

By Lynn Culver

AZA municipal zoos are visited by millions of people annually and pursue many missions: easy public viewing by everyone from small children to professional photographers, conservation education, family entertainment, and captive breeding. Not all of these goals are harmonious and the noise and crowds and cyclic nature of activities in a municipal zoo can lead to a lifetime of stress and reproductive failure for some of the animal residents.

These zoos hire specialists to design naturalistic enclosures that allow animals to appear to behave somewhat normally. The many gift shops, food vendors, parking fees, gate fees, tax subsidies, and special fund raising events expand their budget to fund construction of these impressive habitats.

If a zoo lacks a big savings account, if it doesn't meet a minimum public attendance level, or if the parking lot is not paved, or if the walkways are not handicap accessible, it cannot be an accredited member of AZA. Non-member facilities may not participate in any of AZA's feline Species Survival Plans because these are the exclusive property of that organization and the only survival that matters is survival in their member zoos.

Private conservationists are important educators. There are ten times as many independent zoos, sanctuaries, and outreach educators as AZA member zoos. Exhibitors don't have the annual attendance of a municipal zoo, but they offer something no AZA zoo can: a personal experience and learning opportunity that can have a lasting impact on visitors. It is up to all the private conservationists to make sure their guests learn while they visit. The exotic felines have incredible magnetism. This creates a great advantage for successful teaching; tigers, lions and other big cats command attention. When people are viewing Bengal tigers, make sure they learn that conservationists now believe official estimates of tigers in the Indian forests are grossly exaggerated and the true figure may be closer to 2,000 tigers or even less. Those who keep cougar, have an important obligation to create conservation awareness of our big cat in the US. Highways and housing develop-



ments are fragmenting the cougar's habitat. Scientists are racing to document its needs before it is too late. In many cases, housing developments and shopping centers pop up before it is known that their location will block vital travel corridors necessary for healthy genetic flow between populations. Even the American bobcat, so adaptable and possibly the most successful wild feline species in the world, needs friends and

allies too. Timothy Mallow's account of "Bobby" in this issue shows us that life in the wild is harsh for bobcats. Education is everyone's responsibility, whether you have one pet cat, or work tirelessly to breed a species, or exhibit a whole collection of felines. As we educate the public about our planet's inhabitants, we often enable our guests to connect on a very personal level with the felines in our care. This helps them

to really understand and appreciate wild feline behavior and personality. We are able to accomplish this because our felines are raised with love and they learn to trust people and return affection to us. They reveal qualities hidden within, personalities that can only be seen in response to human kindness. It is the private conservationist's trusting ambassador felines that succeed in making people genuinely love the species. The big zoo environments do not evoke this emotional connection because their institutional approach separates the animals from the public and shows them off only as wildlife.

Private conservationists must also educate other keepers. Catherine Cisin originally founded this organization in 1955 to share knowledge and improve the welfare of captive ocelots. Today this is still an important role for the FCF. There is still much to be researched and improved in neo-natal and geriatric care. We need

answers to stereotypical behavior like fur plucking and stress induced ailments like gastritis. We need to better understand species behavior so we can make successful introductions that result in feline reproduction. Our experiences add the medical knowledge of each species, improving health care and lengthening their lives.

Our collective work adds up. All the little arks are genetic lifeboats. All the ambassador felines help us build bridges between man and nature. Each private conservationist raises awareness and that motivates people to change how they view and treat wildlife and natural places. We are not large enough to raise the funds to buy vast wildernesses, but taken collectively, our message and our felines touch the hearts and minds of millions of Americans and motivate them to vote responsibly, modify their personal habits and support protection of nature. We are extremely important and we must never concede this fact.

We must strive to be the best we can.

Private conservationists must strive to insure that felines in their care are not behaviorally frustrated. We must address our feline's need for privacy, diversity, flight distance, hiding places, mate choices, and food preferences. When animals in captivity are healthy and emotionally satisfied, then we know we are on the right track. When we address these needs, animals produce offspring for future generations. This completes the cycle and insures that our felines will be here for the next generation of educators.

Shoddy husbandry practices and exhibits that do not protect the public cannot be tolerated. FCF was founded on concern for wild feline welfare and our members must either improve substandard facilities or join in the call to have them closed.

Accrediting facilities and registering handlers are both FCF services designed to help our members establish their husbandry expertise. FCF members who are private keepers and not licensed by the USDA have not availed themselves of the opportunity to submit their application for FCF accreditation. These are the very kinds of owners the accreditation committee had in mind when it formulated the standards. FCF Facility Accreditation covers all kinds of facilities and does not require commercial activity. Please visit the FCF web site under the husbandry page and print out a form for accreditation and handler registration and participate in these programs.

The Feline Conservation Federation is dedicated to the conservation of wild felines and enhancement of their welfare and management in captivity. Private conservationists are privileged to share love with and gain the trust of wild felines. We are far more knowledgeable about wild feline personalities and behavior than any AZA keeper because we live intimately with our cats and raise them from birth to death. The private conservation educator offers humanity something critically important for motivating change in social behavior and habits. When we share our hand-reared felines with visitors, we are offering people a priceless opportunity to meet the other residents of our beautiful living planet and to feel genuine love for them and respect for their kind. It is this love that changes everything, even the world. •

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Lessons with Lions

By Brian Ferko

I am a middle school life science teacher in Las Vegas and I am a rather new member to the FCF. I had the opportunity to volunteer for a month last summer with the Masuwe Lion Project (African Impact) in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe. The Masuwe Lion Project is a reintroduction program of captive bred lions into the wild through a three-stage process. Stage one is where lions between 2-18 months are out of their natural environment and they have the opportunity to use their instincts such as hunting in the bush. Stages two and three

are in the process of development. Stage two involves the expenditure of millions of dollars to sustain various territories, each of which require approximately 25,000 acres of suitable land. The lions from stage one will enter this stage when they reach two and a half years old. These lions will be fully capable of killing prey and will be sorted into breeding groups and left to fend for themselves. The area will have an abundance of game for the lions to hunt. There will be no human habitants or other wild lions. The third or final stage occurs when the offspring from stage two will be

released into major wilderness areas such as national parks.

I had the opportunity to take part in this exciting conservation project. I interacted daily with lion cubs from 3-18 months for the Lion Encounter. I participated in enclosure cleanings, meat preparation, bottle-feeding, veterinary procedures, and the collecting of behavioral data. I learned how to handle lions by using discipline, dominance, distraction, affection, and balance. I miss the lions I worked with. It was truly an amazing experience. Walking with lions in the African bush is an unique experience as

I shared the same ground with other large game such as elephants and buffaloes. The guides were knowledgeable about the lions as they led the walks and their interactions with the lions were intimate. My friend and guide Henry would conduct training on the Ps—the larger lions. The Ps consisted of Phoenix, an 18 month-old male, his brother Penduka, and Becka, a 15 month female. They were my favorite lions to work, although you had to watch your back a lot with these guys. They were inquisitive and affectionate but when feeding time came along the true lions came out. Phoenix and Penduka weighed about 200 lbs and Becka was about 150 lbs. The giraffe carcasses seemed to be their favorite along with zebra meat. These lions were fed every other day to keep their prey drive natural. They would also stalk and attempt to make kills at their young age during some of the walks. They had adequate nutrition with vitamins included in their diets. Phoenix was the dominant male of the Ps. His attitude was very lazy-like and grumpy. He always won over the largest carcass during feeding time. Penduka or “Dukie” was my favorite lion. He was clumsy and usually in the best mood of the cubs. Some of the guides called him “sexy eyes” since his had this green tint to his eyes. Becka on the other hand was a feisty lion. When I first met Becka she tested me a few times to see who was more dominant. You always had to watch your back with her. I don’t know how many times I had to shout, “watch your back” to tourists on our lion walks. She was known as our butt biter.

The Ns were two female sisters, Nala and Narnia. They were about 7 months old and weighed about 70-80 lbs. I got my initial training with these two before moving onto the Ps. They were fun but very shy towards people. Nala and Narnia were also skittish around men too. So I didn’t have an intimate relationship with these cubs compared to the Ps. A lot of the female volunteers had close relationships with them. They were fun to walk since they loved to tackle and play with each other. I would often play hide and seek with them.

The Ls were our youngest cubs. They were two brothers Loka and Langa and were only 3 months old. Amanzi was a 5 month-old male also with the L group. These guys were adorable. We had to feed

them three times a day with milk, mince, and bottles. Amanzi got too big to hang out with the Ls and he was eventually moved to the Ns enclosure. The Ls would sometimes go out of sight near their enclosure so we would have to keep a sharp eye on them and pick them up by their fur behind the neck just like their mothers would do in the wild.

My experience while working for the Lion Encounter in Zimbabwe was incredible. Not only did I have the opportunity to work with lions daily, I also went on a whitewater rafting trip on the mighty Zam-

bezi River and went to Chobe National Park for a day safari across the border in Botswana to see the highest concentration of elephants in Africa. I learned a lot about lions and their behavior. I find it important to preserve and save these great cats. I hope to increase my knowledge in working with big cats. I plan to continue to volunteer with conservation programs like the Masuwe Lion Project. I also plan to attend the 2007 Annual FCF convention in Dallas to attend the husbandry course and events. Contact www.africanimpact.com if you are interested in the Masuwe Lion Project. •



Above: Brian feeding Loka his bottle. **Overleaf:** Scratching Penduka under his chin.

FCF Convention, Dallas, Texas July 26-28, 2007—Don't miss it!

FCF Basic Wild Feline Husbandry Course is July 25 at the Southfork Hotel

The Registration form for both events is inserted into this FCF Journal. The cut off for the hotel discount rate of \$79.00 double occupancy is July 17 and the early registration price of \$150 for the FCF Convention goes up to \$165 after July 11. Reserve your room by calling the SouthFork Hotel at 972-578-8555 or the toll-free number, 866-665-2680 and asking for the special Feline Conservation Federation convention price.

This year promises another fun-filled feline event.

Thursday register at the FCF hospitality suite all afternoon, visit with members and their kittens, drop off your donations for the auction and catch up on all the news.

Important: Auction items can either be brought with you to convention, or if you wish to help with the annual FCF fund-raiser but cannot attend convention, mail your item to Kevin Chambers, 7816 N CR 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879 and he'll make sure it arrives.

Thursday night enjoy cocktails and finger food while bidding at the silent auction during our icebreaker reception.

Friday get an early start to catch the bus to the Dallas zoo. Visit behind the scenes of the animal exhibits. Eat lunch on your own. Then board the bus to the SouthFork Ranch where we will tour the Ewing mansion and museum, famed residence of J.R. Ewing and the Ewing family. Then we'll tour the quarter horse and longhorn cattle ranch grounds before our general membership meeting at the Ewing mansion.

After discussions, we'll be treated to southern hospitality and cowboy music while we feast on a Texas chuck wagon barbecue dinner.

Saturday we have lots of great speakers lined up, including two international guests, Anne Sophie Bertrand, who is studying margay in Brazil, and Fernando Vidal, native of Chile.

Fernando Vidal operates Fauna Andina, dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of native species and the breeding of Chilean

endangered species. Pudus, the world's smallest deer, is the center's main work. Fauna Andina is now entering the stage of releasing animals born at the center.

Fauna Andina cooperates with external NGOS on the capture and translocation of the Chilean emblematic deer southern huemul (*hippocamelus bisulcus*). Fauna Andina is a leader in this project and has pioneered captive breeding of this species. Another project Fernando is involved in is the reintroduction of guanacos, (*Lama guanicoe*) a Chilean camelid.

Just recently the first female guíña (an orphan) arrived at the center and plans are to pair her up with the resident males to begin a breeding program. The center has housed male guíña for a while,

but did not want to capture any female guíña, preferring instead to wait for a female in trouble to arrive. The ultimate goal of the captive breeding program is to release the offspring back into the wild.

The rescue center has done a lot of work on the protection of pumas, capturing and translocating problem cats and also fighting illegal hunting of pumas (cougars). Presently there is an orphan puma that lives at the center. Fauna Andina does educational programs at rural schools.

Fernando is a jet pilot and does work as a wildlife consultant and wildlife manager and member of the IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialists Group. Fernando also serves as a freelance wildlife officer for the Chilean S.A.G. (Servicio

Call for FCF General Membership Agenda Items.

All written subjects or motions from the members will be listed on the written agenda. Topics brought up at the meeting will be addressed if time allows. Insure that your thoughts and ideas get heard. Send your request for inclusion on the General Membership Agenda to the secretary by July 20. Mail to FCF Secretary, c/o Betsy Whitlock, 1385 Middle Burnington Road, Franklin, NC 28734. Or send by e-mail to: secretary@thefcf.com



Meet Fernando Vital, the only person known to be raising captive guíña.



Tala, a guíña kitten rehabbed by Fernando Vital. This kitten will be one of his breeding founders.

Agicola y Ganadero.)

Joel Slaven is another exciting scheduled guest speaker. Joel has over 30 years experience working with exotic animals, beginning in Columbus, Ohio raising and training exotic animals at the Columbus Zoo for Jack Hanna, director emeritus and host of Jack Hanna Animal Adventures.

In 1997 Joel established Joel Slaven's Professional Animals Inc. JSAP Inc is the largest producer of domestic animals shows in the world, employing 34 trainers. Over 200 cats, 100 dogs, 15 pot-bellied pigs, and numerous ducks, pigeons, rats, skunks, and exotic birds have been rescued from shelters across the country. JSAP has earned a reputation for quality shows and professionalism of staff that provides excellent



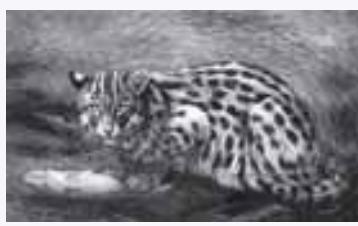
Joel Slaven exercises Katana, one of his performance animals.



This flat headed cat is a baby born here in Bangkok. Its mother came in ready to drop.

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care for the life of each animal from adoption through retirement.

Joel has worked with and trained a variety of exotic animals including: lions, tigers, cougars, lynx, serval, primates, camels, hoofstock, birds, reptiles and numerous other small mammals. He was the animal expert for several television



Try this in a US zoo. The golden cat's name is Gim, pronounced Jim. The researcher's name is Jim, pronounced Dr. Sanderson.

shows and his production work includes training animals for *Ace Ventura Pet Detective*, Disney's *That Darn Cat*, and *Rain Maker* to name a few.

JSAP currently provide domestic animal shows for Anhueser-Busch theme parks, and specializes in children's shows producing *Pets Ahoy* at Sea World Orlando, *Pets Rule* at Sea World San Diego, *Pet Shenanigans* at Busch Gardens Williamsburg, *Land of the Dragon* at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay. *Jungle Jam* will premier in June of 2007 at Busch Gardens Tampa Bay, and *Waggin' Tails* at Sea World San Antonio premiers in May of 2007.

Jim Sanderson, FCF Conservation Advisor and international globetrotter, makes his third encore appearance at the FCF annual convention. What's Jim been up to this past year? Well, take a look at these photos. Jim's remark "Try this in a US zoo."

Jim will be sharing details of his never-ending quest for flat-headed cats in southern Thailand. Jim cautions, "This is Muslim controlled Thailand where insurgents explode motorcycles with cell phones. The

two parks on the border with Malaysia about as far south as one can go in Thailand look very promising."

There are more speakers and more fun lined up.

The Saturday evening banquet and awards ceremony includes the new FCF members' choice Conservation Recognition Award being presented to the nominee who receives the most votes from FCF members. Ballots are inserted into this journal. *Ballots must be received by July 16, so don't delay. Mail in your vote today!* Candidates are:

Bhagavan "Doc" Antle, owner/operator of The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species and their interactive conservation experience;

Jim Sanderson, Ph.D, founder of the Small Cat Conservation Alliance and FCF conservation advisor,

Cathryn Hilker, founder Angel Cheetah Fund, conservation educator and cheetah advocate;

Joe Maynard, founder EFBC Feline Conservation Center in Rosamond, CA.

The center cooperates world wide to breed Amur leopards, fishing cats, pallas cats, and many other species.

You don't have to dress up for the banquet, but for those who enjoy it, there three ways to go:

We're giving away prizes for the best-dressed 'western-theme' cowgirl and cowpoke, a prize for best Tom and Queen 'feline getup.' (Any Furry wannabes out there? Get your fake furs and fuzzy ears and tails out.) And there will be a people's choice best dressed man and best dressed woman award as well.

And all day Saturday will be a chance to mix with the art appreciation crowd in the room next door at the Cats—Facts, Legends, and Myths Art Show put together by FCF member and professional art curator, Deborah Rabinski. The artwork will be a great draw to bring awareness of FCF, members, our cats, and the work we do. We'll be looking for a few members to spend time in the art room to visit with the public and answer any questions about our organization. •

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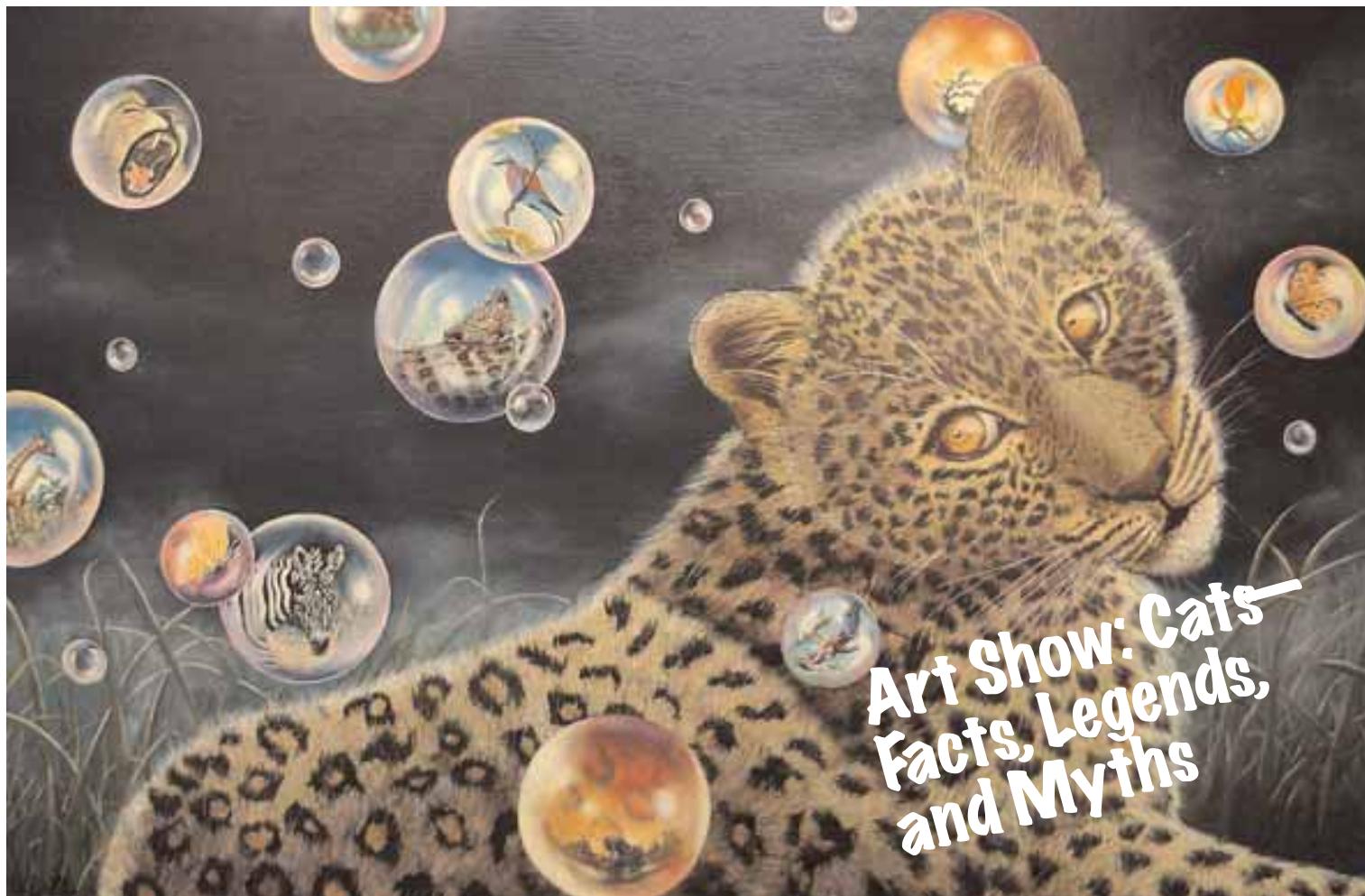


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Laura Walker

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July 28, 2007 11:00am-11:00pm*

The art exhibition has made many changes as it is developing. First the name: Cats—Facts, Legends, and Myths. We add *Facts* to the show description because this exhibition will debut Wildcats of the World, a collection of paintings showing of all 36 species of wildcats from all continents. Artists Rochelle Mason and Linda DuPuis-Rosen bring 200 linear feet of facts and paintings, which gives insight into each wildcat. The artist's work is balanced with skill and sensitively to each cat. Both Linda and Rochelle will be showing this remarkable series of prints in California and London. Both artists are working together to raise awareness about endangered species though art. So take a walk on the wild side. Bring your checkbook and take home an endangered cat of your very own!

So what's new pussy cat? Be the first to see this show: Laura Walker first has a dream and transfers these ideas into painting. She is working in several layers of oil. The artist's goal is to bring the metaphor to

life. It's between nature and spirit; it is the myth within her soul.

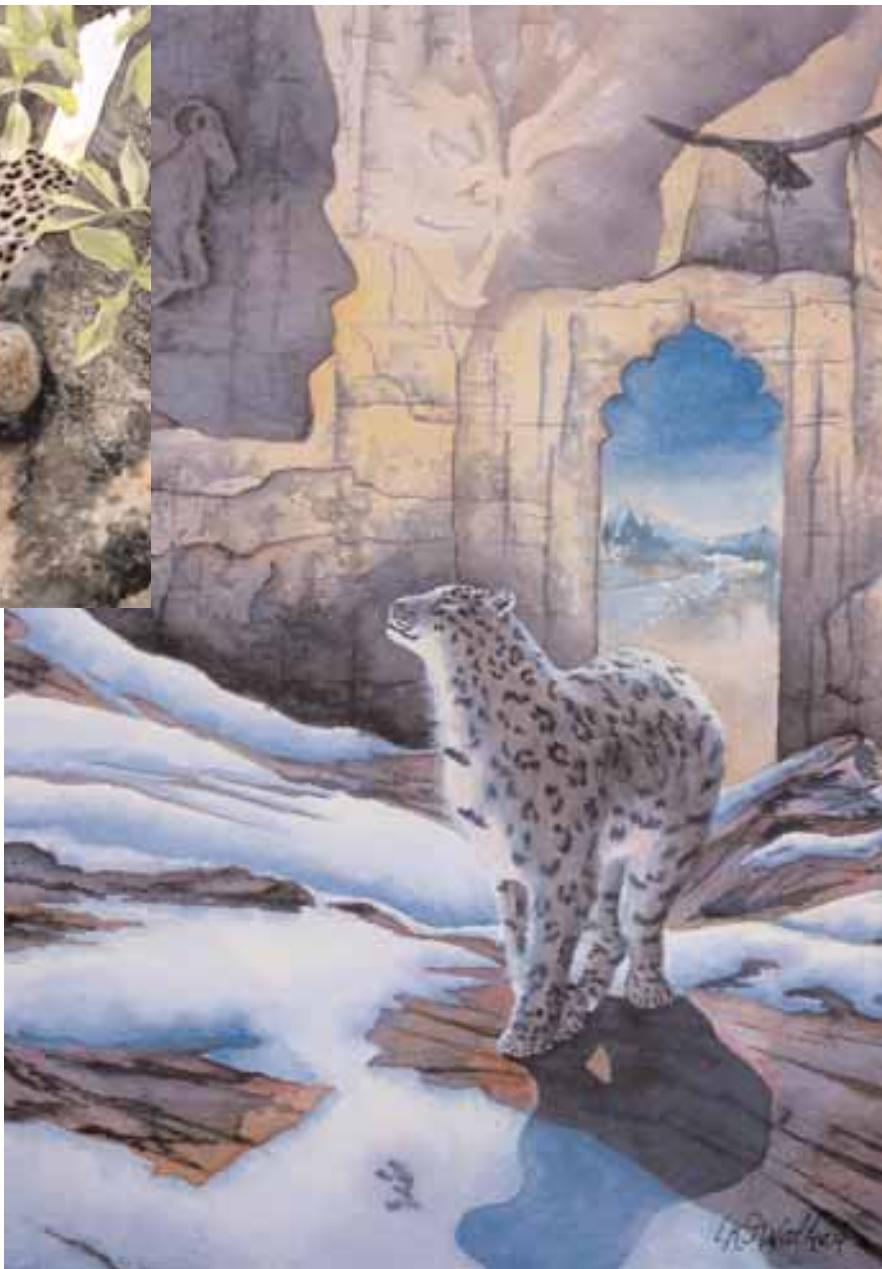
So many firsts. Rick Hildebrandt will show his watercolor series of cave paintings. He has been reviewed in *New York*



Iberian Lynx, oil, Rochelle Mason



**Jaguar in tree, watercolor,
Linda DuPuis-Rosen**



Gateway to Paradise by Laura Walker

Arts Magazine just last fall.

We will feature photographs, other painters, jewelry, and pottery.

I have art calls out in Texas so the exhibition is growing everyday. I'm very privileged to be working with artists of this level of commitment to both their art and this show's success.

This will be a day of very fine art that you can be proud to own.

We are working at having performing artists throughout the day.

This show is for everyone to come in and meet many of the artists and enjoy the beautiful work, and ask questions. The artwork prices will be from \$10-\$7,000.

I would like to thank everyone from FCF who, without their help, this show could not happen: Lynn Culver, for her ear when I needed it the most. Brian Werner, for his knowledge. Kevin Chambers, for all our long phone calls; he always has an answer to my never ending questions. Marcus Cook, wow for his understanding. Sara Comstock, for knowing how to help. And special thank you to all the artists.

—Deborah Rabinski

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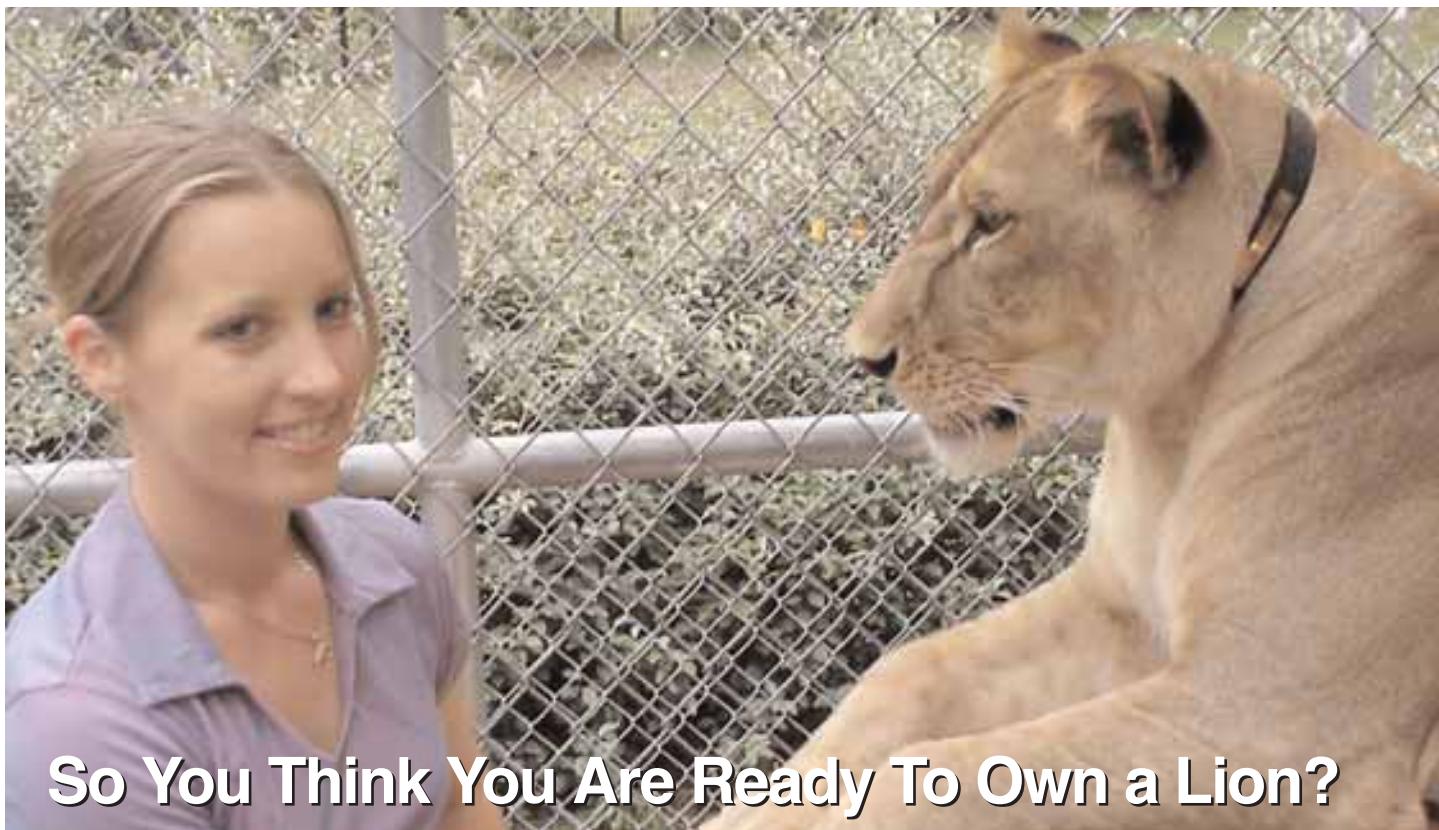


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So You Think You Are Ready To Own a Lion?

By Vanessa Larkin

It's 3 am and there is a roaring coming from the enclosure. The sound envelopes your chest and causes the hairs on the back of your neck to rise. You realize it's only the African lioness and hope something preoccupies her, so you can go back to sleep. If not, it is going to be a very early start to the day, since she will make certain that she is the center of attention. Needless to say, she does not go back to sleep. Once you manage to stumble outside half awake, she greets you with warm chuffing and jaw rubbing. She has rearranged everything possible in the enclosure, but prefers the surroundings to be clean and organized. The day begins with cage cleaning and scrubbing water buckets; however, the most critical part of daily care is enrichment and socialization, which is not always easy. In captivity, her "pride" is composed of the individuals around her that are assigned status levels on a hierarchy and provide companionship. The inherent nature of the lioness is to be at the top level in order to survive. This drive through her lifetime, coupled with her large size and strength, is why she can be very dangerous. Even at a young age of six months, her challenges for superiority had the propensity to do permanent damage to an adult human. Ideally,

most facilities provide the lion with a companion to aid with this intense socialization need, but this is not the case in your situation. Although, this lioness keeps close tabs on all of the activities at the facility (from the butterflies to airplanes) she still depends on you highly to keep her mentally stimulated and to spend a good portion of time each day keeping her company and occupied.

It is now early afternoon and a pair of unexpected visitors arrive and one is in uniform. Although there have not been any complaints, your stomach still drops at the thought of your spontaneous state and federal permit inspection. You have worked to obtain these permits by meeting land and facility requirements, a minimum of one year's husbandry experience and by having letters of reference submitted on your behalf; in addition to sustaining your own business, since Florida laws only allow possession of lions for commercial purposes. One by one, these individuals meticulously inspect the facility. They begin with the size and structure of the nine gauge chain link enclosure, lock out area, perimeter fencing, den, shelf structure, enrichment items and then the animal is evaluated for overall health and condition. Once these aspects are observed, they request docu-

mentation regarding vaccinations, deworming, veterinary inspections, escape and enrichment plans, evidence of commercial use, renewal applications and last but not least, confirmation that the license fees have been paid. At last, the inspections are complete. You managed to find everything and the animals behaved by not spraying or charging either of the inspectors. As you sit for a moment and sift through some of these documents now scattered over the kitchen table, you pick up the commercial activities log portion. Reflections flash through your mind of how magnificent the lioness has been, by having little fear of an audience and yet subtle enough to proudly pose for photo sessions.

As time with animals almost never stands still, the evening is now approaching quickly. Despite the inspector's interruption, there's still training to be done and meat to be prepared. Mind you, the lioness has been sleeping through most of the day, other than briefly checking out the strangers and occasionally whisking a toy or enrichment item from one side of the enclosure to the other. After training and feeding, you check to make sure all is secure, feed yourself, lay down to sleep and before you know it, your awakened by a roar at 3 am to start all over again. •



Tiger Safari Visits Savannah Cheetah Foundation

By Bill Meadows

After enduring an 18 hour flight from Oklahoma to South Africa, Savannah Cheetah Foundation's Pieter Kemp greeted 17 jet-lagged personnel from Tiger Safari. We loaded into vans for the hour and half drive to the foundation grounds. Upon arrival at the camp, we were warmly greeted by Pieter's wife, Estelle. We got our tent assignments and dragged our luggage and camera equipment for this last leg of the never-ending trip. We then returned to the lodge for dinner. After an incredible dinner, everyone was ready for some rest. It was delicious and a perfect ending to the day. Everyone was too excited to go to bed now. We ran around comparing accommodations and unpacked. Many of us were astonished by the unexpected luxury of our tents.

Once the sun came up, we were amazed

at the beauty of the place. Giraffes were grazing 100 yards from our tents. Imagine our surprise when we looked out to see the flora and fauna and finally realize that we were in Africa. Over breakfast we got to compare who heard what noise and to what animal we thought it belonged. After a wonderful breakfast, Pieter and Estelle met with Tiger Safari Park Director Bill Meadows to plan our itinerary for the stay. Trips on the weekend include tours of other facilities under construction, Krueger National Park, and Elephant Park. Work projects to be completed during this week will be constructing the cheetah run.

After Dr. Bhagavan Antle's recent visit to the foundation where he demonstrated the lure system and showed how beneficial it was to cheetahs' health and attitude, the foundation has been striving to add one to

their facility. Tiger Safari's volunteers are here to implement that project. One of our activities today was to visit the site of the proposed cheetah run. The rocky grounds really make us look forward to digging holes. We also had a photo opportunity and got to pet some of the tamest cheetahs, which will get to use the run.

An open safari bus tour of the grounds showed us an amazing variety of wildlife. Gemsbok, springbok, wildebeest, zebras, sable antelope, kudu, eland, and red hartebeest were among the herd animals we spotted. During orientation, Pieter said we shouldn't see any poisonous snakes, even though some exist in the area. He stopped and backed up the bus because we had passed a snake. We immediately had to roll up our windows because the snake turned out to be a black Ringholtz cobra which is a

spitting cobra, and we were downwind! The cobra posed nicely for us and was quite a thrill. There were shades of Jeff Corwin when Pieter got out of the bus to get the cobra to flair out so we could see the two white marks on its neck that give this cobra its name. An even better thrill was when he lost it in the grass. The highlight of the tour was when two southern white rhinoceroses crossed the road directly in front of us. The frantic shuttering of cameras clicking as well as Kurt's shivering in the front seat didn't seem to bother the rhinos a bit.

Later that afternoon we returned to the cheetah breeding facility for feeding time. Estelle and Pieter demonstrated their regime with their balanced diet, as well as handling techniques. We were thoroughly awed by their expertise, and by how much these cheetahs will allow Pieter and Estelle to do with them.

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Last night a few of our intrepid explorers returned from their night walk, i.e. ground safari. Kurt discovered that the sign that



said 'Rhino Crossing' really means that! The group was walking and shining their flashlights looking for eye reflections. They found some eyes and kept their lights

trained there trying to figure just what the critter was. The critter began stomping the ground and snorting. It was a rhino! Our fearless explorers, 'Rhino Bait', Kim, and Jeremy, scattered. Actually Kim was walking briskly backwards trying to get a good photo shot! Kurt was dragging her by the arm and saying 'Hurry!' They could hear the rhino walking through the brush. After reaching safety and no more rhino walking noises, Kurt 'Rhino Bait' walked off the road and fell in a hole. His fellow explorers wanted to help but couldn't stop laughing.

Since the next two days were the weekend, we visited local attractions. The first was a local elephant sanctuary. The animals are rescues that have been 'naughty' in other areas by leaving their enclosures, uprooting local farmers' trees, or even being removed from other animal parks due to mistreatment.

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On Sunday we visited Lionsrock Park in Bethlehem, South Africa. This is a conservation project funded by foreign investors for the rescue of non-breeding lions only. Lionsrock Park currently houses 25 lions, all of which have already been altered. Their plans are to be the largest facility of this type in the world. Some of the pens will be the size of six football fields when the



Pieter and Estelle

project is completed. The pens are oval to prevent fence-pacing behavior and to facilitate exercise.

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Ice on the walkway! Most people may not realize that summer in the US means winter here in Africa, but we are really feeling the chill. The elevation here is 6,000 feet, quite a difference from Oklahoma.

There are nine provinces (or states) in South Africa and 11 official languages. The major African tribes each have their own languages. However five of the major ones are more dialect and understand each other well. Bantu, Zulu, Sotho, Swazi, Tsonga, Tswana are just some of the ones I can remember being told about. Afrikaans is a combination language consisting of 80% Dutch, 10% French, and 10% German, but everyone speaks English.

Our work assignments were given out right after breakfast. When Pieter asked how many women would rather paint than pick rock, 'Rhino Bait' Kurt raised his hand too! Nice try, Rhino Bait. This ground is

growing rocks, all of which need to be removed from the 100 yard long cheetah run site before topsoil can be delivered. Our heavy equipment consisted of two bent up rakes, two heavy metal picks (with dull ends), and a kafut, which is a heavy iron bar with a flat side and a point on the other end for breaking up rocks. We used a 'shovel wannabe' which was very small and dinged up to scoop up the loose rocks. Hands actually worked better. Our last piece of heavy machinery was the gwala, which is a heavy metal bar with a flat piece of iron welded to the end. This is used to dig the holes—it is used like a one sided post hole digger. Then, of course, all of our American muscle completed the array of equipment. The African crew of five guys helped as well. Abraham was the crew leader. Meshak and Bontu didn't say much but were hard workers. Jimmy seemed to be the one everyone was picking on. Isaac supervised the girls painting in the morning. Someone (Sam) taught them about red-necks. Now they call us 'The Redneck

Team.' The Africans were cold with stocking caps and jackets and the Okies were hot! All of us together racked up an impressive pile of very heavy rock. The rock got much heavier during the day! We also accumulated plenty of blisters and tired muscles. John Deere sounds really good about now. Back hoe? Box blade? However, we can look down at the mostly rock free ground and feel good. We have a very personal relationship with each one of those rocks.

Our three veterinarians started their morning going into Parys to meet with the South African veterinarians, a husband-wife team of Drs. Johan and Brigitte Wessels.

A tour of their very nice facility (Parys Dierehospitaal) was provided, complete with a stock of Hill's Science Diet, Eukanuba, and Royal Canin! Parys was considered a retirement town, but is booming and growing now. It is located near the largest meteor impact site in the world, which has been declared a World Heritage Site. The





biodiversity and climate here is also unique compared to the rest of Africa. This region is near where the oldest human remains were discovered. The veterinarians laid out the some of the work necessary to finish polishing the cheetah foundation proposal. Health protocols, vaccination requirements, cheetah and human safety, stress factors, tracking and monitoring techniques, land impacts, food sources, local and national resources were just a few of the many topics that were discussed. The Species Survival Plan was discussed and will be researched. Overall, the vision is to train and release captive bred cheetahs in order to create a wild population of free roaming cheetahs from their offspring. There are currently no wild cheetah populations in the Free State or in many other provinces. This worthwhile project is unique, and hopefully, should contribute greatly to the survival of this species and the existing limited gene pool. Our vets returned to a cold lunch, before going out to assist our team's flagging energies. Everyone helped with a big burst of rock moving and raking up all the little rocks to help protect the cheetahs' paw pads. A very impressive amount of rock was moved!

The next morning we had an ostrich crew leader supervising our rock work. Sam tried to give him a pick, but he was just closely supervising. Later a giraffe

came to monitor our progress. It sauntered up to the edge of the road and just stood and watched. We finished our rocks and started spreading sand today. This part is a lot easier. The postholes are nearly done. Digging technique consists of getting down in the hole with a coffee can. That's after penetrating two feet of rock with the gwala and scooping that part out with hands. We never thought we'd miss a manual posthole digger. Visible progress is a good feeling.

Later after lunch, Bill learned butchery skills when he helped prepare the cheetah food. Some of us walked down to the remnants of a local African village. The group before us had plans to rebuild this village, but only managed to erect four mud walls. Personally, we think mud pie making would be a lot more fun than rock picking. Look, another future project! We collected branches for our bonfire tonight. We are very excited because it will be in a big

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African pit near one of the huts. One of the African crew noticed Pam's T-shirt with "American Red Cross" and its logo on it. He laughed, and pointed, "Look, the T-shirt has a mistake on it. It's supposed to say 'American redneck!'" Obviously we are establishing a camaraderie, because we all got a big laugh. The vets got brain strain sitting in front of the computer most of the day compiling the proposals and protocols for the Savannah Cheetah Foundation. Anyone want to know how to treat a cheetah? Actually, they worked on standardizing health protocols, release techniques, monitoring parameters, as well as researching other organizations' work in this field.

Dinner was delicious as always. They drink a lot of juices and water here instead of sodas. There is always a juice de jour. Often it is a mysterious juice but very delicious. We think tonight's was apricot. There also seems to be a different type of bread for every meal. The morning toast is fried and very yummy. Probably not very healthy, but everyone has been having extras of that toast. Kimberly 'Perfect Shot' strikes again because she captured a photo of a meerkat! They move burrows periodically and this one has moved in not too far from the tents. Sam plans on staking out that burrow in the morning. Our other morning treat will be watching the cheetahs run. That is planned for 7 am. We are very excited, but now it is time to go light up that bonfire.

There is nothing like a blazing fire. The permanent fire pit was dug down and lined with stones. Very nice. The amount of dead wood collected was enough for a forest fire however. The bonfire site is reached by walking down one of the raised wooden paths. There is a covered hut with a refrigerator as well as a large outdoor grill. This would be great for a cookout. Most of us, however, stood or sat around the fire, but then had to stand up and get the other side warm. Africa chills very quickly once the sun goes down. The surrounding wood pole fence is strewn with various animal skulls. Most of the skulls were collected on the property. We were able to identify hartebeest, eland, springbok, and a really cool rhino skull.

•••

Perfect Shot was up before daylight to capture the meerkats. She went around and woke up a bunch of us who wanted to see



them. Sam dashed out there because he knew this was the morning for meerkat manor! Pieter had told us the meerkats like to get to the top of their burrows and sunbathe first thing in mornings. Well, some of us slept in this morning, and so did the meerkats! We will have to keep trying. When the rest of the group moseyed out of bed, we gathered up at the cheetah pen because this was the time for a scheduled cheetah run. This is great exercise for the cheetahs. It builds up their endurance and keeps their interest. The lure is a chewed up piece of rope that the cheetahs like to play with. Abraham, one of the African crew, carried out the car battery to power the lure box. All the cheetahs wanted to help and kept grapping the lure! It seemed they knew what was coming and were willing to play. Pieter pulled the lure and its attached line to the other side of the pen. He told us to get our cameras ready, but guess what! They are unbelievably fast! We did get other chances because they repeated this exercise four times. It was awesome to see! The new area that we are constructing will be used for this exercise once it is finished. It will be an improvement because is a much longer runway. We have voted on a name and it will be called the "Savannah Speedway."

After breakfast, back to the road crew. The rocks were gone now, but the top covering which was mainly sand and dirt had a

lot of rocks as well. These have to be hand picked out. In case your conception of spreading sand sounds easy, let us enlighten you. This soil mixture is scooped up out of the ground from another site so is actually hard baked African clumps. These must be busted up with shovels, then the road crushing crew (that would be our big feet!) would crush these. The ones that don't crush are the rocks! The post hole crew stepped up their pace today. They had the coffee can and the cut off top of a liter Coca Cola bottle for scooping dirt. Amy told us the top makes a real nice handle. With that gwala and two scoops now, all the post holes got done.

The high altitude is very drying, as well as all the sweating everyone is doing. We finished the sand but unfortunately, the posts have to set in cement (not quickcrete, but hand mix) for a week before the wire can be stretched. We are a little sad because we really wanted to finish this project, but apparently our Okie crew is way ahead of the schedule they had set for us. We are hoping the foundation crew is pleased with our work. We have lots of blisters and sore muscles to take back with our memories and photos. The veterinarians finished all their papers and research as well. In between assisting the road crew, they finished typing up the documentation. Copies were emailed off for the next stage of input from the farm managers. Another meeting

with the South African vet, Dr. Johan Wessels, and the veterinary protocol was fleshed out. As an extra, they also finalized and wrote up their observations and recommendations from the meeting at Lionsrock on Sunday. That got emailed off to that farm manager and they are done.

Tomorrow is our last full day at the Savannah for most of the group. It seems to be zipping by so fast.

•••

Today is the last full day for most of the group. We started our morning with breakfast rather than work, then breakfast, because we are so far ahead of schedule. We built bleachers African style. Pieter had three huge tree trunks that he planned on setting up for seats which people would watch the cheetahs run on the new Savannah Speedway. He planned on making a rock base, then building it up higher in the back in a bleacher formation. Guess what? We had to move all those rocks again and line them up for a base. Why didn't we just put those rocks there first? However, it turned out beautifully and is very comfortable as well. We made an assembly line passing down the rocks and went fairly fast. The tree trunks were so big that a tractor was used to move them. The tractor kept going up on two wheels. We got all three seats in place, and then filled in all the gaps with sand. Yes, that means another truckload done by hand. We actually had to go out in the field and get more rocks! Big heavy ones, but the final product was worth it. Supervisor ostrich was hanging around again, and even the giraffes wandered by for a quick inspection. All three of them were together which is pretty neat looking.

Lunch, and then back out to building again. Started setting the poles. Pieter expected us to only get two poles, but we managed to get all six set. That was quite an accomplishment, considering the hand mixing concrete technique. It was quite an education. The bags actually have the recipe on them with measurements by the wheelbarrow! We used six wheelbarrows of sand to one bag of cement and add water to effect. Don't need a mixer, because it is mixed on the ground. Bill loaded the first wheelbarrow of sand, and then wheeled it over to where the African crew told him to take it. Then one of the guys dumped the wheelbarrow on the ground. Bill just



looked at him like 'Why?' They piled six wheelbarrows worth of sand on the ground, then made a central hole and added the bag of cement. Everyone lines up with shovels and mixes the sand and cement together so appears uniform. Then another central crater hole and add water. Mix from outside

to inside and keep repeating until all is wet and uniform. In the meantime, collect a wheelbarrow of the small rocks and head to the hole. Add rocks into the hole, then a couple shovelfuls of cement, then more rocks, and fill up the hole. We used a level on the poles so got them set very straight.



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We got really good at this. We were tossing the little rocks in at the same time as the cement. Who needs a mixer? We scraped up all the cement mix, then raked out our mixing site, and it was pretty neat how it all worked out. One batch fills two holes so we just moved the sand truck and the mixing site.

These poles have to set for two weeks before any wire stretching can happen, so we got done all that could be done at this time. After finishing, we all gathered at the bleachers to assess all our work. It gave us all such a great feeling to see what has been accomplished. The African crew was sitting with us as well. They seem to really like the bleachers. They also got a language lesson and can now all say, "Hello Oklahoma red-necks, git R done!"

Pieter and Estelle took us off for an afternoon/evening safari ride. The male giraffe was very close eating leaves from the top of the trees. J. T. was having a conversation with a huge herd of wildebeest. The big male stood alert and started snorting back at him, and J. T. kept snorting at him—was rather funny. We went by the boma (like a



corral with tall solid sides) where some of the cape buffalo are being kept. These are known to be very aggressive and appeared quite wild. Estelle told us they are known as 'Black Death' by the hunters because if one

is just wounded it will circle around and kill the hunter. She stated, "They are very crafty." One of the white rhinos was near the cheetah house at the end of the tour. He snorted and posed for all the cameras.

Tonight most of us have to clean up and pack. We will only take one small suitcase to Kapama because of the little planes. Our booking is at their lodge. The rest of luggage will be checked at the airport for us to pick up on Sunday after our next adventure. Five of our group will stay at the Savannah and keep the place running. Then we will all meet up on Sunday to head back to the USA.

• • •

It was a very early morning with cold cereal and bran muffins so "the tourists" could make it to the airport in time for the next leg of their trip.

Since the "tourists" left, the "hard cores" had to get down to business. As we know from working at Tiger Safari, there is always a lot to do. Today was no exception. Poles had to be set and concrete footings had to be laid. Since there were fewer hands for the shovels to be passed onto, each of the hands had to work harder to get the same amount done. Rocks needed to be collected, concrete needed to be mixed, and the most disheartening thing ever: we had to fill in some of the holes. Some of the holes were simply dug too deep.

After the best lunch ever, we went up to



add concrete footings to the bleachers we set up yesterday. When we were just about finished, one of the African crew came to get Pieter to see about a snake. It turned out to be a young Rinkholtz cobra trying to swallow a brown whip snake almost twice its size. Pieter actually caught the cobra, after the cobra regurgitated the other snake. He put it in a water jug for us to look at. He gave us the dead whip snake to look at and identify. Pieter will relocate the cobra tomorrow morning.

The African crew thought most of us were crazy for keeping snakes in our houses and having giant ones at the park. We learned a lot from our African crew today. Ryan and Cameron brought out their music, and some of the crew knew some of the words to the songs. The crew brought out some traditional African music, and taught the crazy American rednecks to dance. It was quite a sight.

Kurt helped Estelle feed the cheetahs. He called it an enjoyable experience. He said he was looking forward to that all week. He now wants to get up the hill before the cheetah breakfast starts tomorrow.

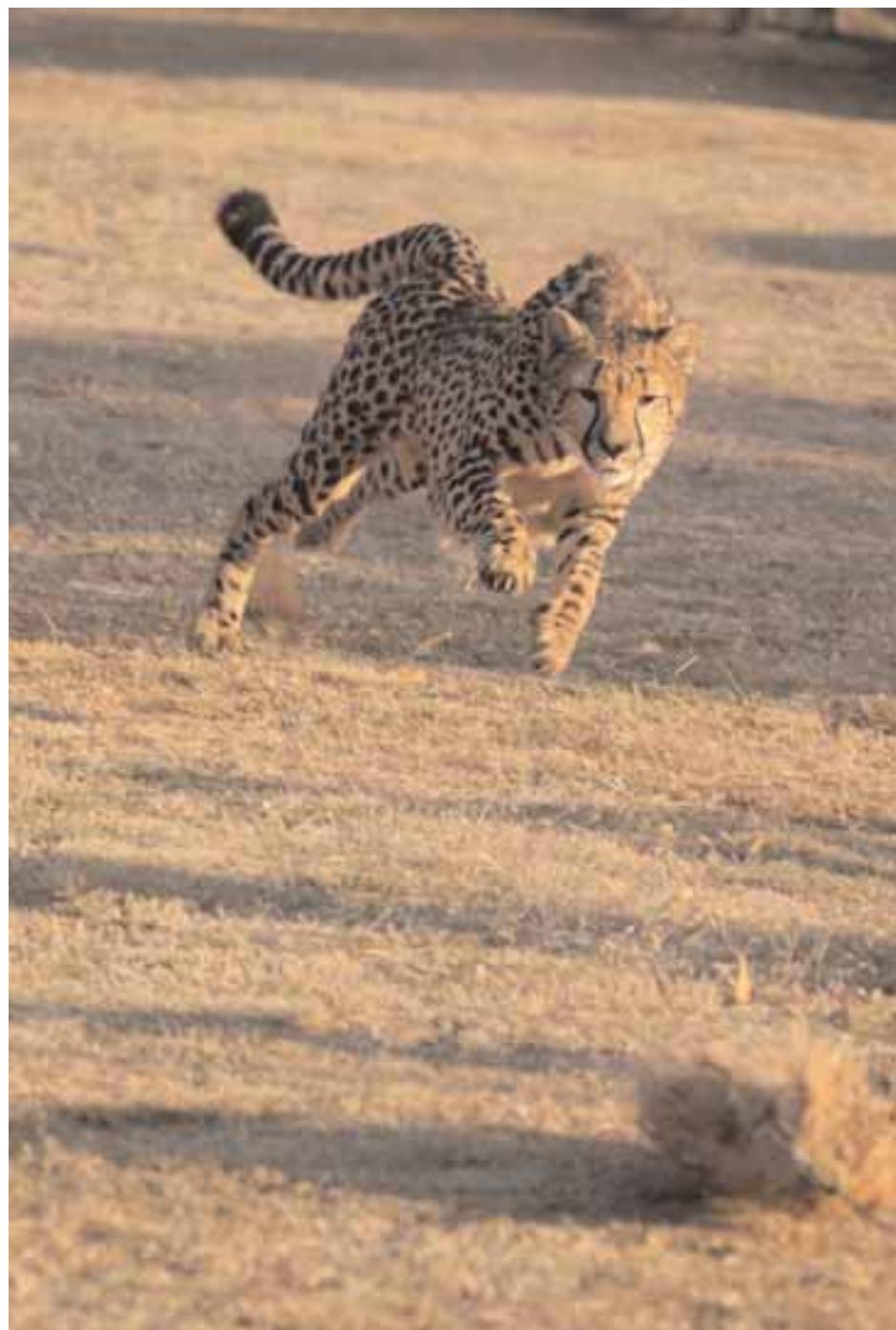
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We were all ready for an early breakfast. As we sat around twiddling our thumbs waiting over an hour to be served, we realized that Annie, the chef, had pulled a prank on all of us by telling us that breakfast would be ready by promptly at seven. She then served us at 8 o'clock with a big cheesy grin on her face. "Why are you here so early?" she asked. If only we had time to get her back. We are going to miss Annie's cooking.

We loaded into the van with Estelle driving and Ilsa riding shot gun. They took us into town and showed us the sights. We hit several shopping places, art stores, antique stores, and even took time to run into the liquor store.

We stopped at the Plum Tree to have lunch and we learned that Estelle is very popular and knows everybody in town. So many people came to chat with her. It was like eating with a celebrity. Pieter joined us and the food was delicious.

We had to get preparations ready for the BBQ (which in South Africa is called a brie) that will accompany the bug rugby semi-final matches this afternoon. For those of you not in the know, this is the first



time in history that two South African rugby teams have made it to the semi-finals. We were informed that this part of the country would completely shut down at 3 o'clock so everyone can watch the games. We saw many cars driving with either Shark or Bulls flags waving showing team spirit.

As we watched the game, we gorged ourselves on snacks prepared by Estelle. We learned intricate details of the game strategy from Pieter. After a very exciting eighty minutes, the South African Bulls

won! The historic semi-finals have made way for a historic super bowl-style clash. For the first time ever both teams playing are from South Africa. So no matter who wins, the title comes home to South Africa.

This ending of our trip could not have been any better. We've watched animals and animal behavior, and now we got to see people and people behavior in South Africa. We are really going to miss this place. This was definitely the trip of a lifetime. Thank you Pieter and Estelle for having us. •

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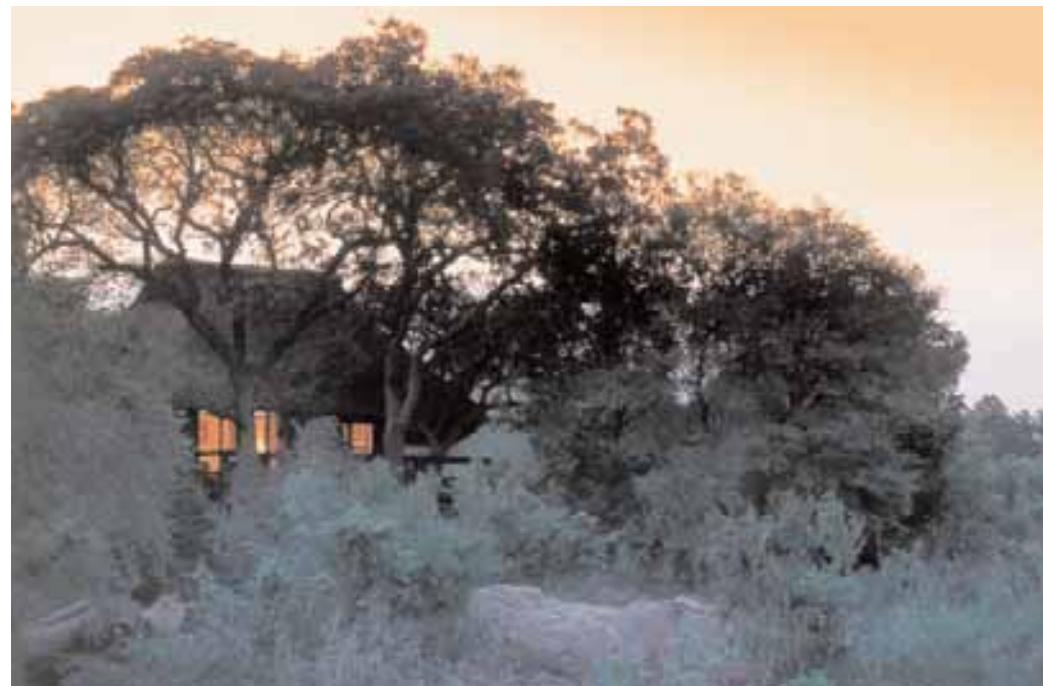
Day 1: Travel on South Africa Airways flight from Dulles Airport or Washington, DC leaving around 5:00 pm for a 15-hour direct flight, arriving in Johannesburg the next day around 4:00 pm.

Day 2-5: Pieter, the manager at Savannah Cheetah Foundation will collect you at the airport. After a short drive, you will enter the world of the cheetah. You will have time to unpack, have dinner, and retire in anticipation of spending the next three days in the company of cheetahs.

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Captive Primate Safety Act: Not Just About Primates

SB 1498, the Captive Primate Safety Act, is more than last year's bill. It is a new piece of legislation that combines the language of last year's Technical Amendment to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act to fix the mess the original Captive Wildlife Safety Act created and it adds primates to the definition of 'prohibited wildlife species.'

In the year 1900, Congress passed the Lacey Act to support states in protecting their game animals and birds by prohibiting the interstate shipment of wildlife killed in violation of state or territorial laws. The Lacey Act makes trafficking in illegally acquired wildlife a federal crime.

In 2004 the Animal Rights community used the Lacey Act to further their agenda by crafting an amendment and calling it the Captive Wildlife Safety Act and finding legislators to introduce their bill. Disregarding the paragraph above which clearly describes the purpose and intent of the Lacey Act to federalize the interstate transport of *illegally* taken wildlife, the CWSA added prohibitions that criminalizes the interstate transport of *legally* owned wildlife.

The US Department of Interior testified against the bill in 2004, stating it would do little to further their main mission of protecting wildlife and habitat. It didn't matter; Congress passed it and Bush signed it into law. The F & W had 180 days to write regulations.

F & W Service immediately ran into problems with regulations since the language of the CWSA was inserted into the felony prohibition section of the Lacey Act, in complete disregard for the legal statute on felonies which requires a two-step process.

Each trafficking violation requires proof of two separate steps involving wildlife at issue. First, the wildlife must be taken, possessed, transported, or sold by someone in violation of existing laws or treaties. Second, the wildlife must then be subsequently imported, exported, transported, sold, received, acquired, or purchased. These two steps cannot be collapsed into one step or act committed by the defendant. As presently written, the

two-step process for violations of the CWSA do not exist and therefore cannot be prosecuted. The F & W Service and the Department of Justice recommended the Technical Amendment to move the CWSA provisions to another part of the Lacey Act to allow the CWSA to be fully enforceable.

If SB 1498 passes, violations of the CWSA will be in the misdemeanor section, not the felony section of the Act. It will hardly be worth anyone's time to investigate, charge, and prosecute. It is however, a dangerous abuse of our federal system and the Lacey Act by the Animal Rights community and it further empowers them with our elected officials. Congress has given them too much of their time and spent way too much of our tax dollars on this matter.

SB 1498 includes a prohibition to transport any species of primate as well as the seven large cat species of the original act, and unlike the big cats, I am quite sure this new legislation will affect many times more pet owners than the original CWSA.

We already know from the draft regulations proposed by the F & W Service last February that they have interpreted the CWSA to mean anyone who tries to move from one state to another with a household pet that is a listed "prohibited wildlife species" is now violating the Lacey Act. The comments below are a direct quote from the F & W proposed regulations published in the Federal Register last February:

It is also important to note that the transport prohibition contained in the CWSA applies to any transportation of the prohibited wildlife species in interstate or foreign commerce, not only to transportation that involves commercial activity. This means that any person who owns a live specimen of a prohibited wildlife species and who wants to transport the animal in interstate or foreign commerce as a pet, or even as part

of a household move, would not be allowed to do so under the prohibitions contained in the CWSA.

As more and more states and counties and cities pass ordinances and laws affecting pet owners, people are calling their realtors and putting up 'For Sale' signs and moving somewhere else to find refuge that will allow them to live in peace with their pets.

This means that any person who owns a live specimen of a prohibited wildlife species and who wants to transport the animal in interstate or foreign commerce as a pet, or even as part of a household move, would not be allowed to do so under the prohibitions contained in the CWSA.

the Lacey Act. Neither bill should pass. I am sure this bill doesn't directly affect more than a tiny handful of FCF members. We are not out there selling baby tigers on the Internet and most big cat owners are USDA licensed and exempted, but we still have to express ourselves. It's a bad law pushed by an Animal Rights agenda and a waste of our tax dollars. We have to write Congress. We have to call Congress. We have to put our foot down. And I am asking you to please open your wallet as well to make sure this does not pass.

The U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobbyist team, as well as the FCF, and many other wildlife organizations are contacting and writing the agricultural committee about this new bill. I wish for every cat owner and cat supporter in FCF to consider joining U.A.P.P.E.A.L. Membership fees are directed towards fighting the feline federal bills and U.A.P.P.E.A.L. will need funds to see this legislation through the year. Membership information is included in the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. ad elsewhere in this journal. •

Bobby

By Tim Mallow

Bobby is one of many bobcats that I have been studying in Florida for the last few years. I capture and radio-collar bobcats in order to study landscape-scale population dynamics related to disturbances—habitat loss and alteration, fragmentation, isolation, etc. These disturbances are the result of an increasing human population and subsequent developments. With the use of the radio-collars, I can locate these bobcats to study habitat selection, movements, social interactions, nutrition, energetics, and many other life history functions.

My objective for conducting this study is to obtain information on this species in disturbed landscapes in order to prevent its extinction in the wake of a rapidly shrinking wilderness. Though bobcats are not listed as threatened or endangered in most states, they are wide-ranging. This means that a population requires thousands of acres of suitable land in order to experience long-term persistence—biomedically, genetically, and demographically.

I estimate that this actual minimum area is about 291,000 acres. However, contiguous lands in this size range are becoming less frequent. As a result, bobcats, like other animals, are being forced to live in areas that are broken up and fragmented. Some populations in these kinds of areas are isolated with little or no movement by breeders in or out of the population. Small isolated populations are susceptible to epidemics, deleterious physiologic (sometimes fatal) effects due to increased inbreeding, etc. However, if some connectivity between disjunct populations can exist, then many of the above problems may not occur. The alleviation of these problems would be due to the facilitation of movement between groups, especially by dispersing juveniles like Bobby.

Thus, as part of this very large and multi-faceted project that Coryi Foundation, Inc. is conducting, juvenile movements are considered a priority. We are seeking answers to questions such as: Will dispersing juveniles or nomadic adults use corridors? Can these corridors lace through narrow tracts of land defined by an abrupt natural-developed boundary? How narrow can it be? How does geometry of a heterogeneous land-



scape affect population viability? What is a minimum habitat area and can a population exist as several disjunct cores connected by corridors (metapopulation)? How do nutrition, genetics, and health factors fit into the picture in these landscapes? The list of questions is rather long. Suffice it to say that there is very little that will not be researched by the time this project is completed. The findings should help agencies to successfully manage viable populations in disturbed landscapes.

Thus, as a juvenile, Bobby was a very important asset for research. However, my interest in cats goes well beyond the academic. Anyone who knows me is aware of the fact that I have a love affair going on with cats. And those of you that are “cat people” know where I am coming from. To put it plainly: to bond with your own domestic tabby is an experience only known by those who understand it. But to have the opportunity to study a wild feline, especially a growing kitten up close and personal is totally euphoric.

Granted, most of my time with Bobby would be spent via my radio receiver listening to his transmitter pulse. However, there were many instances where my radio-tracking would lead me directly to his location and I would catch a glimpse of him in the wild. Many of these observations were not fleeting glimpses. Rather, they were long duration views as he was walking

upon a trail or looking back at me from within a brushy thicket. Regardless, I did experience a very rare opportunity. I wish I could share all these experiences with you, but there are so many of them. Perhaps I will write a book one day. At least you should be able to read my published professional papers soon, of which a great deal should include information on Bobby. But I will give you some up-front stuff right now.

Bobby was first captured and radio-collared just after dusk on September, 11, 1996 near the Mallory Swamp of the big bend region of North Florida. He was only 11 pounds at the time. Still a dependent kitten, his mom was nearby when he was captured.

At the time, we were using trained hound dogs to pick up bobcat scent. Just before dusk, we were following the dogs down a grassy road that wound through a very darkened pine forest. All of a sudden, the dogs shot off into the forest in several directions barking and howling. It quickly became apparent that there were multiple targets. This meant only one thing—there were multiple bobcats which were just on that section of the road and we probably had just stumbled upon their evening forage. We brought our vehicles to a stop to prepare for the capture. Rowdy and Mark (houndsman and veterinarian) walked down the road to monitor the howling while I stayed back at the vehicles. All of a

sudden, I heard a scratching sound to my right. When I turned to look, I caught the view of an animal scrambling up a pine tree that was next to the road and just one hundred feet away from me. I quickly determined it to be a bobcat. But his size was small. I called Rowdy and Mark back to my position. We rallied at the tree and tied the dogs to its base to keep the cat from climbing down. Keeping him in the tree was not a problem. What was a problem was how to get him down once sedated. He had climbed to the very top - about 50 feet off the ground. If we fired the sedation dart into him, he might fall once sedated. So we came up with a plan that unfolded as follows: Rowdy climbed the tree to about the 30 foot level, with the dart rifle and rope in tow. He tied his end of the rope to the tree at that point. Mark and I tied the other end to Rowdy's Toyota Forerunner. Rowdy then proceeded to dart the young cat from his position in the tree (Try this while holding on for dear life.) It took Rowdy three shots from his precarious stance before a dart finally made its mark. After he climbed down, we literally pulled the tree down by slowly pulling on the rope with the Toyota. Fortunately, pine trees are very flexible. We had this tree making a complete 90 degree bend. Such brought Bobby's location to about ten feet off the ground. By now, Bobby was fast asleep due to the effects of the tranquilizer dart. All we had left to do was crawl along the trunk of the now horizontal tree and unlatch his claws from its bark to retrieve him. Easy enough! Later that night we unleashed the tree. To this day there is a pine tree in the north Florida wild lands that looks like it's only interested in the light it gathers at sunrise!

As a kitten he definitely was small, 11 pounds, still mamma's boy, about 5 months old! This little guy was real cute and adorable, but every bit as wild and dangerous as an adult—very sharp claws and teeth and an attitude to boot. His small size made us realize that we would have to recapture him in several months in order to expand his radio-collar to accommodate his neck growth. So be it! In the dark, with flashlights, we attached the collar, took measurements, photos, video, blood, hair, and tick samples, etc. The chase started right before dusk, but now it was 10:00pm and he was awakening from sedation. I



wondered where mom was. Would she and he find each other quickly? Of course, these guys are very capable. And mom is very protective and would not abandon him. So we carried him in an animal carrier away from the vehicles, found a break in the vegetation, and carefully opened the door. He came out of the carrier a little unsure of things and slowly retreated into the forest. It was sight that could almost bring tears to your eyes. This little guy was, for the moment, alone, without mom, and disappearing into the darkness, sort of disoriented. I wondered how precarious and tentative such a life would be. But, as predicted, he survived the ordeal and was with mom a few hours later. Three days later we used his radio-signal to hone in on mom. Sure enough, it paid off and we captured and radio-collared her on September 14. As before, he went up a tree. She, on the other hand, led us on a mile long chase across a great swamp to its far side in a pine stand, where the dogs were able to keep her at bay in a thicket. Once collared, we left her in place, confident that she would return to the tree that Bobby was in. Sure enough, by 11:00pm that night, Bobby and mom were back together. Why should we be surprised? These cats are very capable!

Thus began the up close and personal view into the intimate and mysterious lives of mother and kitten. For the next several months, I intensively tracked them. Most of

the time, Bobby was with mom. However, gradually in time, it seemed as if the two were spending more time apart. By March 1997, when Bobby was then 11 months old, the two could no longer be observed together. Moreover, through most of March, Bobby stayed at the southern end of mom's territory, right up against a creek. I became concerned that he was not doing well. However, my fears dissipated when I realized that I was observing the onset of dispersal. A few weeks before, his mom was with a nearby resident adult male, while Bobby was nearby. She must have been mating and subsequently had evicted Bobby from her presence. Females do this so that the kittens from the previous year are not around for her new births. Older kittens are a burden, her attention must be on the newborns, and these older kittens might harm the newborns. Thus, Bobby was now forced to be on his own. For the first time in his life he was going to have to find all his own food and defend himself. With this in mind, I got the impression that he was cowering at that southern end of his mom's territory and too timid to go anywhere. One thing was for sure—he could not stay there for long. Food would run out and the resident adult male would eventually do his part to chase him off. Surely, this time in the life of a young bobcat must be particularly difficult.

Ironically, it was at this stage in his life

that his injury took place. On the afternoon of April 8, 1997, he was being chased by a group of dogs and sought refuge in a tree. Felines in Florida really have no need for this evasive tactic anymore since there are no longer packs of red wolves in Florida. Wolves cooperatively hunt together. One on one, a bobcat can handle a wolf. But when there are two or more wolves, the cat must retreat to safety—trees are the only sure way. It's funny how this behavior is still occurring in the present day in the absence of wolves. But there are wild dog packs in our modern time. Such would explain the felines, persistent inclination to tree. Regardless, Bobby found his refuge at the top of a 50-foot maple tree in the middle of a mixed hardwood swamp. As it turned out, the dogs did no harm to him. But perhaps his state of health as a juvenile was a factor that contributed to his fall. Because he had remained in a small area at the southern end of his mom's range for a few weeks, he might have depleted the available prey. This would lead to a loss in his body weight and strength. Perhaps he was a bit weakened and such prevented him from maintaining a secure stance in the tree. Regardless, he lost his grasp and fell to the swamp below. For-

tunately, there were a few inches of standing water and soft sediment to cushion his fall. However, it was not enough to prevent a break to his right femur.

The fall rendered him unconscious. When I got to him, he was lying motionless in the water. I instinctively grabbed him and took him to the nearby dry forest road. He was several pounds underweight and looked like he had been struggling to acquire sufficient food. He was bleeding from his right thigh. After determining that his leg was broken, we rushed him to a nearby hospital. An X-ray revealed an oblique fracture just above the right knee. He underwent surgery to stabilize the break. Veterinarians installed a long metal pin through the marrow for the full length of the femur, two cross pins at the break, a metal plate with nine screws along the break, and three wire wraps around that whole assembly. He was in the hospital for eight days. The vet technicians gave him the name 'Bobby.' I rehabilitated him for several more weeks.

Upon recovery, I released him back into his mom's range on May 23 with a radio-collar attached so I could study his movement patterns and monitor his acclimation

back into the wild. Most importantly, I wanted to make sure that he was going to survive after this ordeal. He basically picked up where he left off prior to the injury—as before, he hugged the southern portion of his mom's range for several weeks. By now I was wondering how his absence would affect his dispersal. Would he revert to near starvation or what? My fears were abated in June when Bobby initiated a series of movements that took him out of mom's range for the first time. He actually moved south of the creek and proceeded to travel away from his place of birth. From June to December, I watched him move incredible distances over a large area. I saw him several times. He had bulked up in size and weight. Apparently, he had become successful in finding food and was surviving quite well. It was as if his injury had no effect on him. He exhibited the typical bobcat dispersal behavior—moving long distances quickly (10-15 km in 48 hours), temporarily settling into a small area for 1-2 months, then moving on again—a nomadic pattern. By December, he had appeared to settle into an adult range. By then, he was 20 months old. Males are considered adults at or near 24



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when they die, especially as a result of the senseless and wanton destruction of their lives by people.

Bobby was not the only cat that ended up this way. I have lost other bobcats to callous, narrow-minded people. One was shot with a high-powered rifle and survived for four days until he died a horrible death by infection, blood loss, and starvation. Another was shot by a hunter's arrow and her body was left to rot near the hunter's tree stand while her dependent kittens looked on in horror. A third was killed by a trigger-happy farmer who didn't have enough sense to fortify his chicken coops. To this day, his stead continues to be visited by predators (which by all sense of reason, will continue to visit.) Such futility! The list goes on!

I am sorry that this story did not have a happy ending. But we had no control over his misfortune in the end. I only hope you share this story with others. Not only for the sake of the many creatures that live alongside us, but also that it might have some positive impact on the way people view life in general. We live in a troubled and cold world where so many are caught up in the throes of destruction, hate, greed, and anger. The crux of it is that many do not know the meaning of the value of life; such pervading mindset being the rule that dictates to such unenlightened souls that its acceptable to kill and injure human and animal as if it was a normal everyday event.

I dare say that these things eventually weaken the human spirit and degrade the lives of so many people. Many lives are wasted in the process. If only people could be put in touch with their humanity, then perhaps wars, warring nations, factions bent on genocide, racism, persecution and the like, etc., would abate. For then on that day, those persons could also see the folly of their ways, and just how much their own lives are in waste.

*Timothy John Mallow
Mallory Swamp Restoration Project
Lafayette County and Dixie County, Florida
Bobcat Metapopulation Research and Conservation Project - Brevard County, Florida
<http://www.coryi.org>
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X-rays of Bobby's fractured femur. One marrow (long) pin, one plate and nine screws, 3 wire wraps, and 2 transverse pins are visible. Also visible is the oblique fracture just above the knee. Total cost of in-hospital care including surgery to install the hardware and convalescence (total ten days): \$1018.00

months of age - when they attain adult size and weight, become sexually mature, and establish residency in the population.

So far this story was a total success: Bobby recovered from his injury, had re-acclimated into the wild, and was exhibiting a normal dispersal behavior. I was happy that it all worked out for him. Yes, there were many times over the course of those 15 months where things seemed doubtful. But this little guy proved himself a winner. And I did become attached to him through all that had happened. The icing on the cake was that a lot of valuable research data had been obtained. But it all took a nose-dive on Christmas day.

At around 9 pm on Christmas night, I went out to track him. After tuning my receiver to his frequency, I was floored, when I heard that his collar transmitter pulse rate had doubled from one beat per second to two. This happens if the collar has been lying motionless for more than five hours. It usually means the collared bobcat has died since bobcats rarely sleep for more than three hours. I honed in on the signal and found that it was emanating from the middle of an abandoned farm field. My heart was racing in anticipation of finding

out the worst, but I had to wait until day-break on Dec 26. That was a long night.

At first light, I walked out to the field and what I found was just as surprising. His collar was lying on the ground, but Bobby was nowhere to be found, despite a thorough search out to 50 yards in all directions. I started to breathe a sigh of relief—it looked as though he had simply pulled the collar off. However, I noticed that the collar was ripped in half. The cause of the rip did not appear to be animal-derived. It appeared that a person ripped it. Then I had a terrible notion of what likely happened. Bobby may have been shot by a hunter who subsequently tore his collar off and then had him mounted by a taxidermist. To this day I still do not know what really happened. But this last impression angers me.

These cats are like companions to me. I spend countless hours getting to know their movements and territories like the back of my hand, follow them around day and night, empathize with their wild lifestyle, and as a result, consider them friends. In a way, I have bonded with them. When some yahoo decides to blow them away, I personally feel that I have been victimized. Moreover, I sense a great loss for them

Blast from the Past . . .

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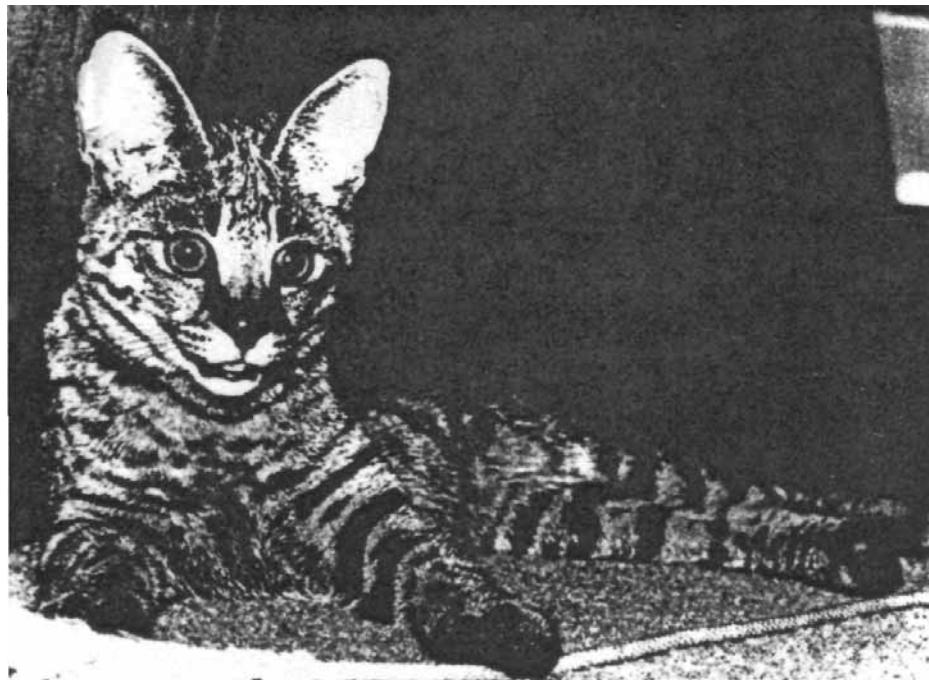
November/December 1986—Volume 30, Issue 6

By Suzy Wood

On April 7, 1986, one spotted, bouncing, 8 ounce female kitten was born to a Seal-point Siamese cat. The kitten was sired by one of my male serval offspring, which resides in Pennsylvania. The domestic mother cat weighs approximately 8 pounds; the serval sire "Ernie" weighs between 30-35 pounds. Referring to records I've kept on all my serval cubs from birth to placement, the kitten's weight was comparable to an average serval cub of the same time span. After that initial period, her rapid growth and weight gain began to taper some, although she consistently remained considerably larger than a domestic kitten of equal age.

The kitten's black spotting pattern is an exact duplication of a serval, against a grayish-brown background color. The ocelli, or "eye spots" on the back of her ears are clearly present in pale silver. Her ears are quite prominent, her legs lengthy, her body structure rangy, and her tail length medium.

Behaviorally or physically it is interesting to observe a hybrid and attempt to decipher the domestic or exotic origins of particular traits. From her domestic mother, she may have inherited her propensity as a talker, immaculate potty habits, and her athletic climbing ability. The combination of domestic/exotic characteristics include her voice quality, head shape, medium tail length, and her assertive temperament. The kitten's specialized serval genes are apparent through her reputation as an accomplished hisser and slapper, her basic orthopedic structure and movement, coat markings, large ears, facial expression, body language, her wariness of strangers, and in true exotic spirit is extremely affectionate, however restraint of any type is not well tolerated. The kitten enjoys a wide variety of foods, preferring to only nibble on domestic cat preparations while maintaining a healthy appetite for raw meat, chicken necks, and canned evaporated milk.



While it has been rumored that this type of hybrid was bred some years ago, to date research efforts in Europe as well as here in the U.S. have not be able to document the case. For practical purposes, this kitten is considered a first of its kind. Without comparison model or a standard available, at eight weeks of age the infant's hearing, sight, reflexes, and coordination were tested. All functions were excellent, as compared to general feline skills.

At six months of age, she now weighs ten pounds. She received killed panleukopenia virus vaccine at 8 weeks, 12 weeks, and a 4-in-1 modified live booster at 16 weeks. There were no adverse affects to any of the injections. The kitten appears to be a picture of health and vigor however this is only the initial tip of the iceberg. There remains a great deal to learn and understand about the combined genetic influence on long term health, behavior, and general development.

This hybrid combination will be known as the Savannah.



Editors Note: Although this essay appears to credit Suzy Wood with breeding the first Savanna, that is not the case. Suzy lent her male serval, Ernie, to Judee Frank, Philipsburg, PA, ostensibly to breed Judee's female serval. The agreement was that Suzy would retain one of the offspring. The final pairing was most unexpected, so Suzy ended up with the first Savannah. Suzy then produced the first F2 Savannahs. That story will be printed in the next Blast from the Past. •

Guest Editorial with Molly Shaffer

We all know about the F-word and the B-word. Many of us may have even had our mouths washed out with soap as a child for uttering one of these words in front of our parents. But how many of you know about the really bad one—the R-word? The R-word in my life is “regret.” Good ole reliable Webster’s dictionary defines regret as “sorrow or loss over a person or thing that it gone; disappointment or dissatisfaction over anything that one wishes might have been otherwise.” My definition of regret is “the thing that won’t let you sleep at night; the thing you can’t get out of your mind on a long road trip; those unexplained uneasy feelings in the pit of your stomach; those things that make you use words like woulda, shoulda, and coulda.” Everyone with a conscience has had to deal with regret at some time or another. I think we all agree regret is something that our lives would be much more peaceful without.

The best thing about regret is that we often have the option to take action and avoid it. None of us would intentionally do something we know we will sorely regret later; however, there seems to be a trend the last few years for people to want to bury their heads in the sand, to not get involved, to let someone else do the dirty work. If you haven’t figured out where this is going yet, let me tell you about the L-word—legislation and the evil H-word—Humane Society of the United States, along with their sidekick, Animal Protection Institute. I probably scared you with these last words and you have very good reason to be scared. The people that work for the Humane Society of the United States and the Animal Protection Institute are on a nationwide campaign to destroy one of the most sacred parts of our lives—our animals.

Oregon, the state I live in, was deluged with new anti-animal legislation this year, including a bill to prohibit the ownership and breeding of exotic animals. This bill started out with no USDA exemption but after making them realize we could not keep our USDA licenses if we could not breed and the people currently with USDA licenses do not qualify for state issued licenses, they exempted USDA facilities and curiously took out the AZA exemption.

A few of us in Oregon immediately started calling everyone we could think of in the state that had exotic animals or hybrids. People were absolutely furious and ranted and raved. We kept people apprised of the upcoming hearings where they could testify and let their feelings be known to the lawmakers in our state and spent hours coaching people what to say. We expected a huge turnout. Imagine our surprise when we showed up at these hearings armed with our written testimony to find that we were often the only ones there. The first hearing about 15 people showed up, the last hearing only five. We have two other bills that are potentially worse than our exotic animal ban and at those hearings, once I was the only one there in opposition, and twice I was one of two people. I can tell you there is strength in numbers as when I was the only opponent in a room full of people supporting the bill I can honestly say that I was a little uncomfortable. I even feel like my testimony was much stronger when I had comrades beside me.

I realize it’s really hard not to get disappointed when things don’t go your way, but HSUS is counting on the fact that we will feel defeated and quit fighting. If at first you don’t succeed, try, try again! Attack it from every angle you can think of. Please don’t let someone else speak for you. We have strength in numbers and even though we all are very busy, it’s more important than ever to show up to hearings, to write to your legislators, to call your legislators, and to make appointments to speak with them in person. Be prepared with facts and figures, and try to keep most of the emotion out of your testimony. You elected these people and they have the obligation to speak with you if you request an appointment.

Don’t take no for an answer. Remind these legislators that you are their constituents, not the Humane Society of the United States; ask them to help you protect your rights. Point out inaccuracies of the proponent’s testimony and be prepared to back up your facts and figures, but most importantly *show up!* Even if you are not comfortable giving testimony, sign in as an opponent and present written testimony. Your presence and moral support will be greatly appreciated by those who do testify. One thing I know for sure: when this session is all said and done, whatever the outcome, I will not be haunted by the R-word. Remember: you may not be interested in politics, but politics is interested in you!

Note: For anyone who would like more information on how these laws are created and how to lobby against legislation, go to the HSUS website. They have a “State Lobbying Guide” available on-line that is very well written and will walk you through step by step. API has a similar guide on their website. It’s awfully nice of these people to help us out, don’t you think? •



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“Branch Tigers” on Borneo: A Mystic Cat in the Midst of the Rainforest



Andreas Wilting collecting fecal samples

By Andreas Wilting

When I visited Borneo for the first time, I was very surprised to hear the local people talking about “harimau.” I knew from my visit on mainland Malaysia that harimau is the Malay word for tiger. However, tigers and leopards are absent from the island of Borneo, even though some tiger bones have been found in a cave in Sarawak. Therefore, I asked around and the always friendly local inhabitants explained to me that the local name for Sundaland clouded leopards is “harimau dahan” meaning “branch or tree tiger.” This seems to be an apposite name for a cat climbing trees down headfirst, similar to the margay in South America. But not only the arboreal skills fascinate me about the clouded leopard, it is more

their secretive nature. Almost nothing is known about their ecology and behavior in the wild and the only noted fact appears to be that clouded leopards are vanishing from many ecosystems throughout the distribution range. This is associated with permanent habitat loss. The reason that clouded leopards are so unexplored is a consequence of their partly nocturnal and far-ranging behavior as well as their existence in low densities in thick vegetated habitats and remote areas. This makes the counting and monitoring of these species extremely difficult. In my study I planned to abandon invasive methods and find scat and tracks in a lowland tropical rainforest, like looking for the needle in a haystack. The final goal during the first preliminary studies in 2005

was to estimate the density of Sundaland clouded leopards in my research area in Tabin Wildlife Reserve by classifying individuals by their tracks. Every night I hoped to face a wild clouded leopard on spotlight surveys along a dirt road along the western boundary of the reserve. It separates the jungle from the delimitated oil palm plantation. Unfortunately vast areas of Sabah (the Malaysian state, where I conducted my field work) are already converted to huge oil palm plantations. This situation will most probably get even worse, because of the huge demand on biodiesel.

For most people coming from temperate zones, tropical rainforests stand for adventure and paradise, but this might change when they see that the most common ani-



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mals are mosquitoes and leeches. Some days my work there was very frustrating: walking in a hot and humid jungle searching the ground for signs without any success, sometimes for weeks. Night surveys were a much better opportunity to see some wildlife, because a lot of animals are nocturnal. Due to bright spotlights and the animals eyeshine sometimes up to 10 different mammal species could be spotted in one night, ranging from Asian elephants, different flying squirrel species, bearded pigs, mouse deer, different porcupine species, and various carnivores (different civets, leopard cats and sun bears). However the most exciting was an adult male clouded leopard, lying in the grass just about five meters off the road. On this night a Swedish couple joined the survey. About three months later a second Swedish couple accompanied me in the night survey and as if by a miracle we spotted a second clouded leopard. Therefore I believe that you need to bring along some Swedish friends on your next trip to clouded leopard habitat!

Especially due to the difficulties during the field work, the suspense what will be the next encounter, I really enjoyed the time in Tabin Wildlife Reserve and I'm planning to return to Sabah to conduct further research. Our results were a promising start. By analyzing the digital images of the track, I could differentiate four clouded leopards within my research area and altogether I calculated a rough density of nine individuals per 100 km². A landscape analysis revealed that most of the potential

distribution of clouded leopards in Sabah is located in commercial forest reserves, where selective logging and licensed hunting of unprotected species is allowed. Therefore in a next step we are planning to conduct a three year project in Sabah to evaluate the consequences of selective logging on clouded leopards, but also on other carnivore species. The use of infrared cameras will help us to get a glimpse of some of most secretive carnivores in the enigma of the tropical rainforest. On the one hand

these results will hopefully contribute to the understanding of the ecology and lead to a first status assessment of some very threatened carnivore species in Asia. On the other side we hope to gain information about the threats these secretive animals are facing in changing landscapes to implement a successful management and conservation plan. This information will be of importance for the conservation of some of the most spectacular and diverse rainforests in the world. •



My Husbandry Course experience at the Ashville Game Farm, New York.

By Wayne Sluder

I attended the basic FCF Exotic Feline Husbandry course at the Ashville Game Farm in upstate New York on May 12. Earlier in the year I had registered for the course in Tumwater, Washington, just outside of Seattle. And then when it got cancelled, I registered for the course in Maryland. As you may know the owners of the Catoctin refuge where the Maryland course was to be held were involved in a tragic auto accident. Subsequently, the Maryland course was moved to New York. Hmm, I'm from Little Rock, Arkansas and it's a long ways to Seattle or New York, so you may wonder what motivates someone to travel across the country to take a course in exotic feline husbandry.

Well my story begins with a feline named Willow. She's a bobcat, *lynx rufus*. When I mentioned to my wife, Rhonda, early last year that I wanted to get a bobcat, she just sort of nodded her head and said, "okay." My wife is a championship dog owner and member of the American Kennel Club. She has her own kennel and raises and shows the Shiba Inu dog breed. Until this time she had about a dozen show dogs

and I had one ordinary but onerous house cat. She probably thought, "Allowing my husband to own a bobcat should balance us out. I have twelve dogs and he will have a house cat and a bobcat. That's fair." Then when I told her I wanted a female bobcat she said, "you are nuts." "Female cats can be very difficult to raise and are aloof and independent," she says. "If you must get one, make it a boy. They'll be much more sweeter and easier to care for." Rhonda's a veterinarian technician speaking with years of experience. Well did I listen? Not exactly. I said, "Oh, you're thinking of domestic cats. This will be different." Besides I told her, "I'll take a course on how to take care of and raise exotic cats."

Well the female bobcat came from Lynn Culver last spring. Some of you may remember Willow, as a kitten, from last year's convention in Cincinnati. She was a year old in May and now weighs close to 30 pounds. Somehow we all survived, and needless to say I was still eager to take the husbandry course. There was lots still to learn; like why she enjoys splashing water out of the commode until the whole room is wet or her unexpected sojourns into the hot

shower with me or my wife. Yikes! When I built her habitat, I daydreamed about the water pond I was to put in that would provide her hours of fun. (Now that I've taken the husbandry course, I know that's called environmental enrichment.) The day the water pond went in with the well placed rocks to provide her room to perch was very exciting. I even included colorful gold fish to tantalize her. Imagine my dumbfounded dismay, when she jumped up on the rocks, splashed a bit, then proceeded to balance herself on the edge like an Olympic gymnast followed by a long poop right in the pond. Argh!

Determined to take the husbandry course, I set my sights on Maryland and made the air and hotel arrangements. I told my wife, "If this one gets canceled I'll just hang out in Washington, DC for a long needed break from work." Then the course was moved to New York, and at the very last minute I too decided to head to the Ashville Game Farm, a private zoo. "Third times a charm", I told myself. I'll just leave after work on Friday, fly from Little Rock to Albany and then fly home on Sunday. However, as luck would have it, I got



delayed in a thunderstorm on my connecting flight in Atlanta. Earlier that day I had made arrangements to stay at the Sunshine Inn close by the zoo. The innkeeper told me it's about 45 minutes from Albany. The lady at the Inn asked me when I would be getting in and I told her it would be late. She said, "we'll just leave the door of room number six unlocked for you." Before leaving I printed out the directions from Google, stuffed them in my duffel bag and hit the road. Here's a tip. Always double check your directions when going cross country in the middle of the night. Sometime around 2:30 am I called my wife at home and woke her up. I said, "I left Albany in the rental car and I've followed the Google directions exactly and retraced my route three times, and I keep coming up to a farm house on a one lane road in the middle of rural upstate New York." There was a long pause, and then I thought I heard her muttering about bobcats, husbandry courses, and something about husbands. Then she said, "Okay I'm on the internet, what's the name of the place?" With my wife's diligent efforts she guided me from a thousand miles away coaching me on my cell phone until I arrived at door number six of the Sunshine Inn. And thank goodness



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the door was unlocked.

The next morning with just a couple hours sleep, I was up and out the door. I couldn't wait to get to the Ashville Game Farm. In the light of day the zoo was surprisingly easy to find. I arrived at their gate just before 8:00 am, where Robert Hohn, one of the zoo volunteers, met me. Robert immediately took me under his wing, and started showing me around and introducing me to everyone. "Hey," Robert said, "this is Wayne Sluder and he wins the award for the longest distance traveled to attend the class." I was met by Mary and Jeff Ash, the owners of the private zoo. They were friendly and very hospitable. Now, I'm from the south and in May it's in the 70s and 80s outdoors. However in upstate New York it had got down to around freezing the night before. The class was being conducted in an open-air tent on the grounds of the zoo, and it was a little cold. I stood there shivering in my t-shirt and said to Mary Ash, "you wouldn't have a sweatshirt or coat on sale in your souvenir shop would you?" Mary took one look at me and said, "Well no, the shops not open for another week. You can wear one of my husband's coats." Mary and Jeff were awesome hosts, and even took a small group of us out to dinner that night.

Then I met Carol Bohning our instructor and other classmates. There were around 20 students in all. I sat next to Cindy Bardin, and we shared cat stories until Carol called the class to order. Carol was a very effective instructor. She quickly went over the natural history of Family Felidae

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SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman



outlining the differences between the big cats and the small cats. The course covered regulatory agencies and permits, facilities, nutrition, health care, contingency planning, and handling and behavior training. It was kind of neat taking the class in a tent on the zoo grounds. There were big cats and other animals all around us including a large contingent of alligators sunbathing in a pool just in front of the tent. The resident peacock made several impromptu visits into the tent, but retreated to the laughter of the audience during Carol's lecture when she mentioned how tasty peacock was. However, when one of the resident roosters started crowing, Carol beat a fast retreat. Imagine, our instructor, master over the great cats, afraid of a chicken.

At the end of the day, we took our written exam and then Carol sent us all out and graded our tests. She called us back into the tent one at a time, and this created a lot of suspense, as everyone was eager to find out if they passed. Occasionally a student was

called in with a prefatory statement of "bring money." Only a bribe for the instructor would save them from a questionable score.

While we were waiting on our scores, Robert and Jeff allowed me to participate in the evening feeding of the big cats. And then we toured all the animal's cages and areas behind the scenes. When we got near the monkeys, I had to be reminded a couple of times to not get too close to the cage. The monkeys will reach out and grab you or whatever they could get a hold of. One of Carol's quips from class rang in my ears: "stupid should hurt." A humorous quip lamenting a loss of natural selection in the human race. If people would follow the USDA guidelines and quit doing stupid things like sticking their hands in tiger cages, then maybe there wouldn't be such interest in ban bills. Of course this was said in jest, even if there is some small truth in it. I did however, keep my eye on the monkey. The kangaroo with the baby, or "joey"

as it's called, in its pouch was amazing to see. The Ashville Game Farm was exceptionally clean and Jeff was obviously a good steward of the animals telling me about the positive comments he gets from the public regarding the cleanliness, humane care, and his well kept zoo. I'm impressed by all his employees and volunteers taking the course to improve their skills.

Robert Hohn and his wife brought their two pet Coatimundi with them. The animals were quite inquisitive, and we all played and romped in the zoo center's store area.

Thanks to Carol Bohning and the Ashville Game Farm for the opportunity to learn about animals that I care about very much. Animal husbandry can be serious business, but in the final analysis it's all about the love, fun, and joy we share with our feline companions. I hope to see you and some of my new friends from New York at the 2007 convention in Dallas. •



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Matata and Cinnamon relaxing together.

Matata and Cinnamon and the little Rukas

By Denise Little

We purchased our first pair of caracals in 1993 and our first pair of servals in 1994. The caracals were ages six and five. The servals were almost four years old.

All four cats were beautiful, good-natured, playful, petable, carrier trained, and everything short of huggable-bonded. We could pet and interact with them but we longed for more.

So we kept a cub out of each pair in 1996 and have never regretted it. Matata, a serval, was born April 4, 1996 and was the huggy, lay in our lap, suck on your hand or finger cutie and still is. Cinnamon, a caracal, was born June 15, 1996 and was a dominant, independent beauty, but enjoyed her kisses and petting when she wanted it and she still is like that.

The two grew up together in our home with many visitors. Strangers and family members did not affect them in any way. If they didn't want to visit or be ooh-ahhed over and gawked at, they just politely excused themselves to our bed in our bedroom. That was their safety zone. If they went to our bedroom we always told every-

one that was their place to feel safe and not be pestered.

Bruce and I spoiled these two cats terribly. This was so special to raise these cubs to share our lives with forever!

We learned a lot of good and bad things about living with house exotics. We had to be very careful about leaving things out (like hair ties) because Matata wanted to eat things he weren't supposed to. Nicknacks were no-nos because Cinnamon wanted to be the flying cat just to knock everything down and break things. On low-hanging objects, she would just gingerly walk by, take one paw and swipe it off as she kept walking by. Never looking back as if nothing just happened!

If our daughter sniffled Matata would hiss at her. I guess he thought she was hissing! We even tried a Christmas tree one year. They could only be around it when we watched TV. Any other time the living room door was shut. Even with supervision it was difficult. A few Christmas balls broke. Cinnamon got tangled up in the lights and I couldn't tell you what TV

shows were on during that time. I was too busy watching cats.

The city museum where we lived invited us to bring out cats to show and educate the public. We put on a one hour program with video, cat information flyers, map and yes, Matata and Cinnamon. We were pleased just how many children, young and up to teenage age, were interested. Also very surprised that many of the adults were just as truly interested.

This program went really well, the local newspaper took pictures and we were invited back to the museum many times after that. So Matata and Cinnamon made the local newspaper in a positive way.

We were so proud of them. After every education outing they were allowed to get chicken nuggets at McDonalds. They would make their order at the drive-thru window and then the four of us would sit outside at one of the picnic tables to enjoy our McDonalds meal. Needles to say McDonalds made a lot of money on these days. People would see Matata and Cinnamon and come in for food. (I don't think

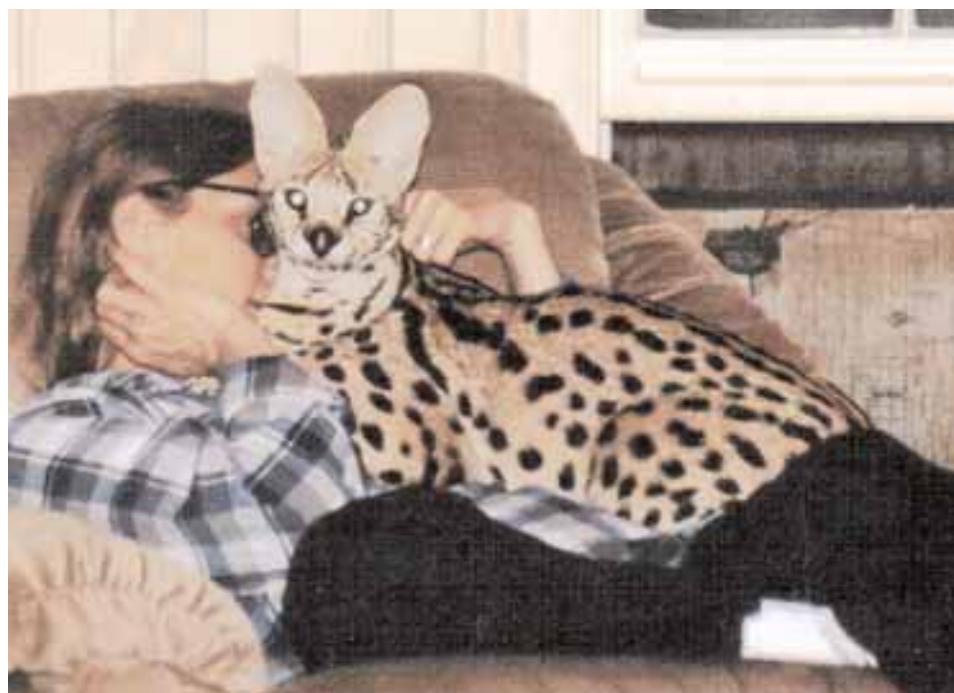
this would be something you could do nowadays.)

The local newspaper came to our home and printed a page about our adult cats with pictures. Then the early morning show on TV wanted Matata and I to be guests on their show. I was scared to death. I communicate better with animals than people. Bruce always did the talking for education programs. I was always the animal handler. But Bruce had to work. Matata was excited and just a big ham! He eventually became bored with all the talking about cats in the wild and decided to lay on my lap, suck on my hand and open his eyes once and awhile to look around. He stole the show and the hearts of everyone in the studio.

For one and a half years Matata and Cinnamon lived inside with us. Sleeping with us every night. Matata liked to sleep on half of my pillow by my head and suck on my hand. Cinnamon liked to sleep at Bruce's feet. At one year old Cinnamon became jealous, mad, or whatever of Matata sharing my pillow and yes the caracal 'pee gene' as our friend in Miami calls it, came out. Cinnamon politely peed on my head and my half of the pillow. What a rude awakening. From then on I gave her a pillow above my head, which seemed to do the trick because she never peed on my head again, or my pillows.

Throughout their first year and a half we went from Alabama to Maryland and then to Florida. When we arrived to our new home in Florida, we set up Matata and Cinnamon's enclosure in front of our bedroom windows. Our intentions were to attach the enclosure in a fashion so the two could come inside at night and continue sleeping with us. But—that didn't happen. For some reason both cats started spraying and marking territory. There was no way we were doing to have serval spray in our living quarters. Not with the smell and corrosion. I don't even know how much chain link, top rail, and other metal parts and pieces Bruce has replaced over the years from serval spray. It eats through anything.

Sadly we had to keep the two outside now. We missed them a lot but I was able to get better sleep. Matata always woke me several times through the night looking for his hand for "sucky time" and Cinnamon would several times stretch her legs into my head knowing I would automatically give



her a scratch or two before I fell back to sleep.

OK, so they were outside 24-7 now. Mind you, we only shared our lives with three servals and two caracals outside at the time (there was one young caracal and one young fishing cat inside), my time was plentiful back then and somehow without hearing, seeing, or me knowing Matata and Cinnamon bred.

Everyone we talked to back then and everything we read on the cats said they did not become sexually mature or have cubs until at least two years old. Well, as our friend in Miami says, "They didn't read the same book."

We weren't even thinking about cubs from them. We wanted to continue education programs with them.

So the first litter of "rukas" was born in

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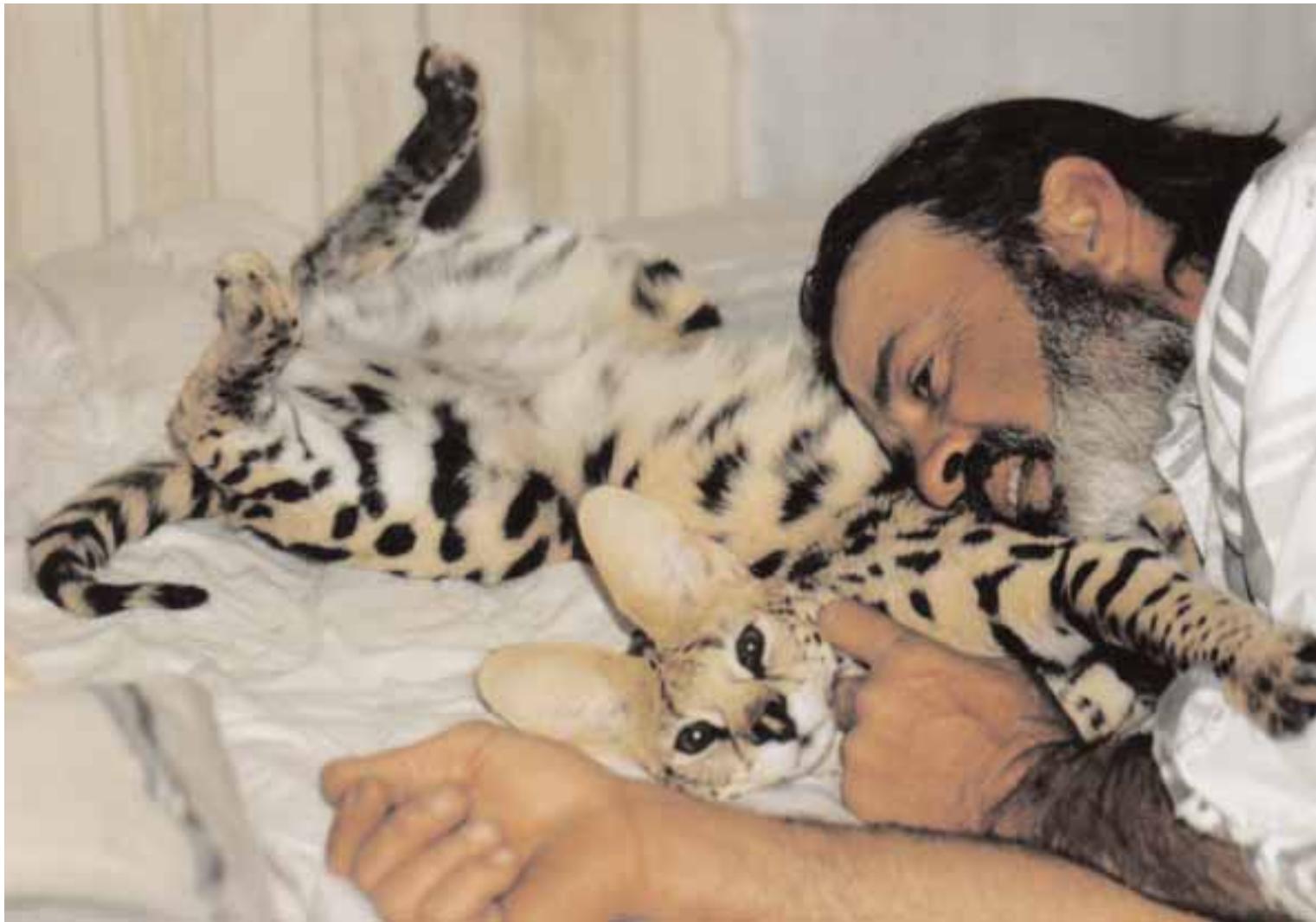
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1997. Shortly after moving to Florida. Bruce and I were so upset. We don't believe in crossing species. It wouldn't happen naturally in the wild. But Matata and Cinnamon felt differently.

Just like our other hand raised female caracal (KiPimba), Cinnamon shared her birthing and two squirming cubs. She also tired of the cubs at about four days old so I pulled them to finish raising them on a bottle.

I didn't know what to do with them. I had no clue what their personalities and behaviors were like. We remembered reading an ad in the Animal Finders Guide in 1996 about a cross litter. I had always wanted to call and ask for pictures of the combination, but you know how that goes, I just never got around to it. Now it didn't matter, I had two cubs that looked like domestics calico kittens to me. I dug around, found the 1996 AFG issue and

called the phone number. I asked this nice lady what these cats are like. The lady suggested I call a lady in Miami who had one of her offspring.

The next phone call made a lasting, endearing friendship for life. She told me all these wonderful things about their personalities and beauty. She laughed when I said they looked like domestic calico kittens and had me send her pictures. She also found the two cubs excellent homes to go to.

Since Bruce and I didn't believe in crossing species, we decided to separate Matata and Cinnamon. Our goal was to find mates for them of their own kind.

Well, Cinnamon didn't agree. She chose to stop eating and drinking. We took her to a wonderful veterinarian who grew up in Kenya. After many extensive tests, hydrating, etc., he truly could not find anything physically wrong with her. Cinnamon went

to ten days of not eating or drinking on her own. I syringe fed her water pumped up with electrolytes and other good things. But she acted like she didn't care. She just wanted to lie there and die!

Finally my light bulb went on. I thought Cinnamon wanted Matata. We all know a caracal likes everything to be their way. So Bruce and I attached her enclosure to Matata's enclosure in a matter of hours. We were desperate. We seriously thought she was going to die.

With the enclosure finished and secured, we put Cinnamon in. She and Matata met at the common wall for head rubs, purring, and talking. Cinnamon started drinking out of her water bowl immediately. So I ran to prepare some mild food for her. You guessed it; she ate her food in minutes and looked around for more. Some people say these animals don't have feelings or emotions. Maybe Bruce and I

use the incorrect words. All I know is after all these years these animals have shown us they do have feelings.

Unfortunately we lost the battle of separating them. The second litter Cinnamon had was because he got clever. He lifted the latch on the common wall gate, went to Cinnamon's side and immediately started breeding her. Now I thoughts about trying to separate the two, They were our hand raised, bottle fed babies...and then I thought on, no, no—no, no. What, do you have a hurt wish?

So litter number two was born in 1999. Litter number three was born in 2000. Litter number four was born in 2001. Her fifth litter was born in 2002. Both cubs were born dead even with me there and helping.

I tired to console Cinnamon. Told her she was a good girl, it was ok, these things happen. But again she stopped eating and drinking. Another vet trip. Extensive test-

ing done, made sure no cubs were left inside her but nothing was physically wrong with her.

My thoughts: she was mourning her cubs. Call me crazy, its ok. Here I was syringe feeding and hydrating her. Then I decided to give Cinnamon a stuffed animal about the size of one of her cubs. I knew it was a chancy thing to do since a lot of these exotic cats like to eat things they aren't supposed to and then get intestinal blockages. But – it worked – she carried it around, lay with it and cleaned it constantly. I only gave it to her during the day so I could keep an eye on her. I took it away at night so she didn't have a chance to eat it. And – she immediately drank and ate on her own again.

Anyway, Cinnamon bounced back like new but never had any more cubs. Matata and Cinnamon shared their enclosures together with the common wall gate open

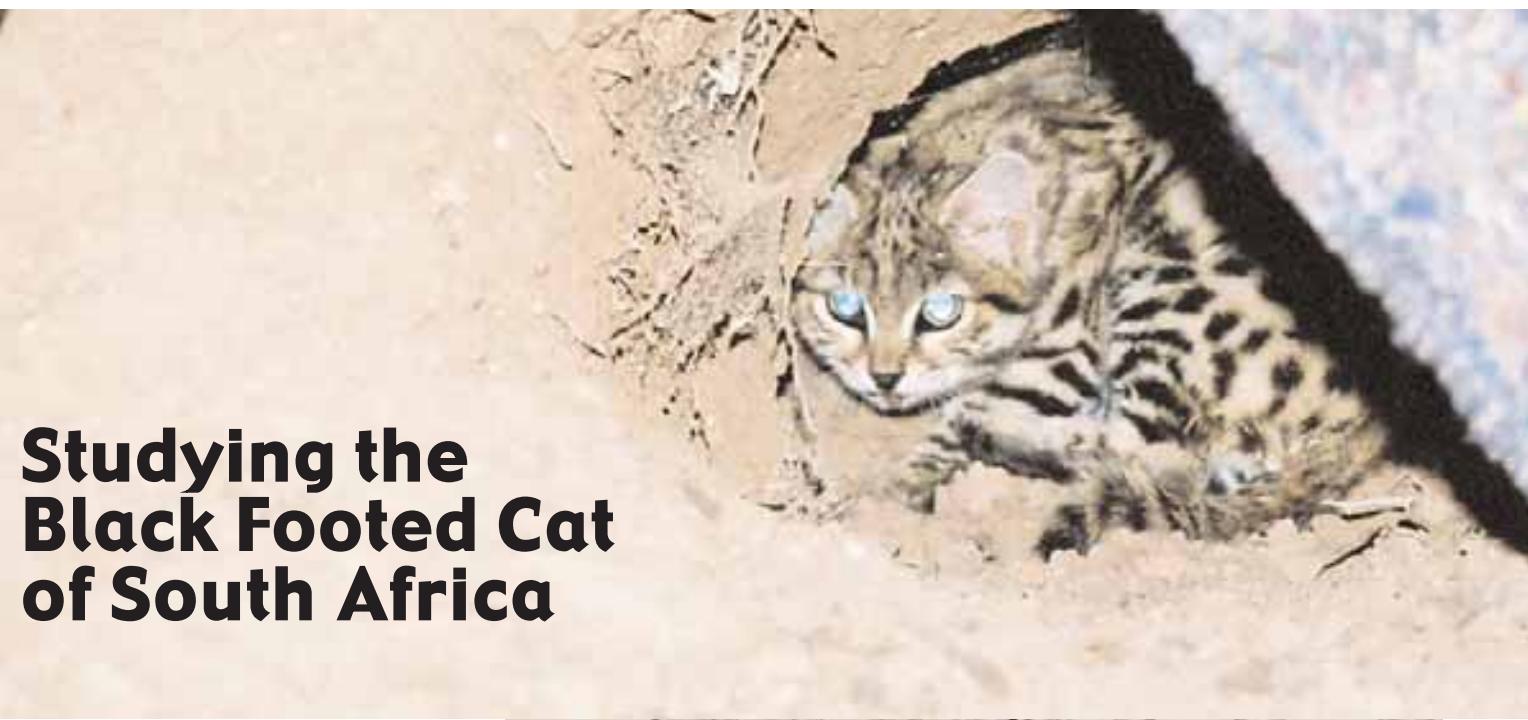
until they both turned ten years old (2006) Then Cinnamon decided she didn't like Matata's company anymore. Matata couldn't move without her attacking him. So we completely separated them in two different enclosures. They can still see each other and both seem relaxed and content. Matata is definitely more comfortable. He doesn't have to put up with Cinnamon being hateful!

Both are 11 years old now and very handleable. Matata has never lost his snuggly personality. Cinnamon still wants her petting, calls me in her caracal voice if I'm two feet away and still walks figure eights around my feet while I try to walk without tripping over her!

We love them.

All eight rukas, Jo-Jo, Trinket, Kiraka, Tsava, Sahara, Kenya, Aki, and Snuggles have excellent homes and are also well loved. •





Studying the Black Footed Cat of South Africa

By Patrick Callahan

In November of 2005 and 2006 I was invited by Dr. Jason Herrick, gamete biologist, to spend some vacation time helping on a research project. Since the subject was the little known black footed cat and the principle investigator was Dr. Alex Sliwa, *the expert*, I was thrilled!

November is chosen as it is springtime in South Africa. Temperatures are in the 80°F range by day and cool at night. It might even rain, but that's rare!

I flew from the US to Johannesburg and then travelled the city of Kimberly in the Northern Cape Province of the RSA. This is the diamond-producing region and the original home of De Beers Consolidated Mines, founded by the legendary Cecil Rhodes. Here you can visit "The Big Hole," the largest hole dug exclusively by hand—no power equipment—in the world! Millions of tons of dirt and rock were moved to get at millions of carats of diamonds. That mine closed about 1905 but others were dug. Gold and platinum are also found in the area. In military history, some of the Second Boer War or Anglo-South African War as they say now, was fought here. Just west of Kimberly, say 15km, is the (Orange) Free State Province. An Afrikaner stronghold, even today.

But to me, and hopefully you, the real gems are the cats living wild here. Black footed cats—BFCs as we say—and caracal



Nadine Lamberski, Senior Veterinarian, San Diego Wild Animal Park



**Jason Herrick and Pat Callahan
both from Cincinnati Zoo**

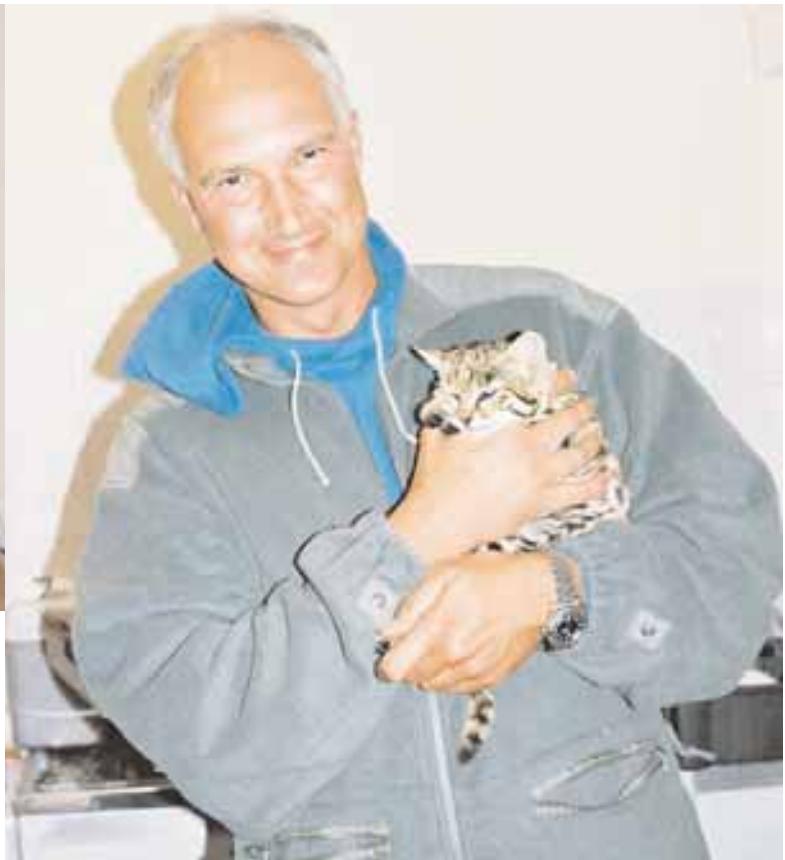
are here and probably serval. Other really neat mammals around are aardwolves, aardvark, porcupines, hedgehogs, cape fox, and bat eared fox. We saw all of these and more!

The property we were on is part of De Beers Ecology Div. and has some hoof stock, like black wildebeest and springbok, for sport hunting and meat sales. Water holes are provided and essential! Blue cranes and secretary birds are here. Animals like lion, rhino, and elephant are gone but you can see them in the great parks and private reserves. We have the little five of Africa here.

Dr. Sliwa told us the three habitats the BFC prefers are: Pan—dried up ponds, grassveld, and Kalahari sandveld. The edges of the pan and the grassveld are where the cats are. There are no trees, just flat, sandy grasses in clumps, and saltbush.

Since the pan quickly floods if and when it does rain, nothing burrows there and the sandveld soil is too soft for tunnels, so that concentrates things in the grassveld. The burrows, from springhaas and aardvark etc. and grasses are home to prey animals as well, such as large eared mice, cape rabbits, and lesser carnivores such as mongoose. Very importantly, the *termites* and mounds are there. An important food source for many species!

Shortly after a tiny rain, the termites swarmed and many animals responded to the meal on wings. Large leopard tortoises



Alexander Sliwa, Wuppertal Zoo, holds a black footed cat.

and little tent tortoises appeared to eat the fresh grass sprouts too! It was all *magic* to me!

I want to thank the same folks Dr. Sliwa lists as involved, with a special thanks to: Dr. Herrick, Peter and Jenny Gibbs—my hosts, De Beers Ecology Div., Beryl Wilson, and of course Dr. Sliwa who shared his expertise so readily! In 2006, I was awarded a small grant from my employer,

the Cincinnati Zoo, to aid the black footed cat project. It was a big help! And I met an amazing private BFC breeder, Marion Holmes, in 2006.

So please consider supporting Dr. Sliwa's work, maybe even visit the RSA, home to Bobby Hartslef's Savannah Cheetah Foundation, too! I plan to return in the near future. Perhaps a group would like go. •



Jason Herrick takes samples from a black foot.

Co-raising Cougars: Thoughts at Six Months



By Lynn Culver

Our experiment with co-raising Tara's cougars has been most successful in my opinion, in that we are able to safely observe natural behaviors between Tara and her cubs and also have a loving relationship with the cubs. Tara has remained bonded to her offspring and desires contact with them. She asks to be moved to visit them and she enjoys playing with them. She licks them and purrs and shows much happiness when spending time with them. I believe she is teaching them how to play rough. She will race around with them following and if they catch her she will tumble onto them and growl and bite them. These are probably hunting skills but since she doesn't have anything to hunt, they seem to be instinctual, not from practical experience.

Tara feels much loyalty to Mercury and wants to return to him by nightfall to sleep with him. When I feed the cubs in their Big Top enclosure and Tara is visiting, mostly she will make no attempt to eat their food, as if she knows where she is supposed to live and eat.

Cinnabar continues to be the most affectionate, at least in my opinion, because he nurses my hand, kneads at me, and purrs without reserve. Perhaps in someone else's eyes Cinni is neurotic, showing the aberrant behavior of an animal removed from his mother too young but I find it endearing. Cinni is also extremely special in that he almost never uses his mouth to express his love. It remains clamped shut while I am hugging him, picking him up, or kissing him. He is a very un-bitey boy.

Arjan is also a very affectionate animal showing it with spontaneous purring, nuzzling, licking, and lightly chewing my fingers. He is well-balanced in his love for us as well as Tara. He fully adjusted to having human parents and his love for us is deep. He may not have imprinted, that is, we weren't the first things he saw when he focused his eyes, but he bonded, making the conscious choice to love us. He is the most likely to bite Tara, or us, and he has seriously challenged Tara before.

Sharu is Tara's favorite, no doubt. I will see her licking him the most often and he

will purr so loud that I can hear it ten to fifteen feet away. She dotes him on. Sharu has come a very long way in surrendering his love to us. We waited for four weeks for a purr out of him when we first took him from Tara, then he stopped purring when we reunited him and his brothers to Tara. But now he is purring more often than ever. He is also the most "prusteny" cougar I have ever met. He usually greets us with that vocalization and Bart and I feel it is a positive sound, but perhaps the least committed in meaning of all the cougar greetings. A prusten doesn't have the emotion of a squeal or a trill or a purr. He does trill also and it is a very sweet sound, not like what I would expect from such a hard personality. Right now I have no fear of these cougars and feel confident about their future relationship with me.

Bart has a very special relationship with them also. They deeply love him and treat him like a sibling. They love to jump up on his back if he bends over and ride on him, gently mouthing his coat. Bart has a deep respect and love for Sharu. After their

rocky beginning, Sharu now kisses, trills at, and prustens to Bart.

I feel that our success at getting these cougars to bond with us after they spent so much time with Tara is due to how much attention we have lavished on them. If all three had been removed from Tara at Cinni's age, they probably would have been more like him in personality but Tara might have forgotten them or lost interest in them or they might have remained afraid of her when reintroduced. Or Tara might have returned to estrus, which would have affected her attachment to them. We feel strongly that Cinni's personality and behavior helped Arjan and Sharu accept us in the beginning, and Sharu remembering Tara helped Cinni and Arjan accept her when they were reintroduced. So it was a combined effort from all for this experiment to work.

Mercury still hasn't had direct contact with the kids and he may never. He doesn't act obsessed with them, instead he ignores them. He is aware of their smells in Cougar Country so it will be interesting to see how that space is used in the future. Someday we may fence-in new territory if having four male cougars share the same home range causes distress. It is unnatural. Based upon the latest entry in this journal where Mercury clearly showed his anger and jealousy towards the kids and their smells I doubt that he will ever have direct contact with them. The kids still call to him, seem attracted to him and if allowed contact would probably race up to him, but what would happen next is too scary to contemplate. Mercury doesn't run around and play as he did in his youthful days and perhaps he wouldn't appreciate the kids' game playing. For now a fence separates them. Mercury never shows displaced aggression towards me when we are both in Cougar Country and the kids are calling. That is a good sign.

Tara is a funny lady. She has become the dominant cougar over Mercury in some ways but is completely loyal to him. If she is visiting the kids and Mercury screams for her to be returned, most times she will return without protest. In the other hand, she insists on licking Mercury after he has had enough and she doesn't back down from growls. She stalks him, jumps him, and hassles him but also sleeps and lives



with him mostly in harmony. She has developed a jealousy or devious nature toward us and I do not completely trust Tara these days. But if I put my hand out in front of her face and say "no" she is cooperative. She is extremely affectionate and will walk over to Mercury and me to rub my face and purr very emotionally. She loves both Bart and I very deeply and her biting our necks could actually be a result of the rough play she endures from her kids. She has never done serious damage to us from her pranks.

Overall I feel that by co-raising these cougars we have developed a very harmonious family group. We have observed many behaviors that the cubs use to express love and trust to each other and to us. Biting is not necessarily a negative behavior as I have seen them hold each other's throat in their mouths and the cougar whose throat is being held will purr in trust. I now allow them to mouth my throat, as it is a sign of trust. They have a deep need to bite each other and since they can do that, they don't bite us as much as Mercury did as a youngster. Biting in different amounts of firmness is an important communication gesture. And having the three living together has given us much insight into their language as they are always talking to each other and to us.

Jump to the February 21 – March 17, 1989 logs in the Journal

Tuesday, February 21, 1989

Last night I invited Cinni into our house when he greeted me at the door to their Big Top enclosure. He walked on the leash very well and once inside our home settled down to purring and nursing on me. He was super: very purry and affectionate. He

played with his stuffed teddy bear for a while but mostly he wanted to snuggle with me. I got on our bed and he followed and slept in my arms cuddled up against my body. He stayed for about an hour and a half and it was wonderful.

Today it finally stopped raining. We decided to take Cinni for a drive in our Datsun truck over to our other property. Cinni has never been there before. He rode in the truck very calmly though he didn't enter voluntarily. I had to lift him in. We also brought Bear, our chow dog, in the back of the truck. At the property Cinni was first curious about the public road and he walked that direction but I redirected his attention to the middle of the property and away from the road.

Cinni walked with Bart and I and Bear very well and was purring a lot. We walked for about an hour and half. Near the end Cinni was getting tired and he had to be dragged a little to get him going, but overall he was cooperative. He had to be pulled into the truck to drive home again. On the way home he peed on me. Oh well.

Bart moved Tara to see the kids in the Big Top after we got back home. I went in to visit about an hour later. Cinni was on the top of the tower and his brothers were eating. Tara was lying on the first level of the tower. I was wondering why Cinni wasn't eating, as I figured he should be hungry but I realized he might be tired. But I also wondered if he might be sick so I climbed up the tower to visit Cinni. I ignored Tara, as she looked unfriendly. I was visiting with Cinni, who proceeded to purr and nurse on my hand. Suddenly Tara climbed up the tower and she jumped into my face and bit my head. I couldn't believe it! I was on the third level of the tower in this confined space and she's biting my head. I said "no" to Tara and she quickly stopped and retreated. I climbed down to the ground and Arjan began following and then jumping up at me. Sharu appeared and he jumped up at me also. I was definitely being attacked and being asked to leave. I believe Tara was very jealous of Cinni and me, and Arjan and Sharu were reacting to her emotion. Bart moved Tara back to her Cougarama cage about fifteen minutes later. She was very sweet to Bart and me, like nothing had happened.

Saturday, March 4, 1989

On Thursday, March 2, Jerry and Nancy Overton, people interested in owning a cougar, came over to visit and learn about cougar ownership. The kids were taking a nap at 10:30 a.m. when the Overtons arrived. I invited them into the Big Top and Cinni jumped off the tower first to greet them followed by Arjan and minutes later finally Sharu. All three cougars were mild-mannered. The Overtons were not frightened and handled the kids very well. Jerry knelt down and received a very friendly hello and face rubbing from Cinni. Arjan also greeted him but did a little chewing. Sharu wanted to chew also but everyone was cooperative when I said "no". Cinni eventually settled down nearby and watched us while lying down. Arjan and Sharu continued to interact. Arjan started jumping up and trying to hang onto Jerry's coat with his teeth. I had to say "no" to stop it. Overall the kids were great and the Overtons were very excited about owning a cougar. Then I took them over to meet Mercury and Tara. They stayed outside while first Bart and then I entered Cougarama and received greetings from Mercury and Tara. Both cougars were extremely interested in my coat smell. They were both rubbing up a storm on me and I was just a little bit worried, but nobody got carried away.

Then we walked into Cougar Country,

the wooded fenced-in area, to find the kids. I called several times and heard one of them whistle an answer. All three of us walked over to the construction site and there was Cinni flat against the ground. He got up and greeted Jerry. Arjan and finally Sharu showed up and all three were little angels. They followed us to the gate and hung around while we talked. Sharu even purred for the Overtons. He was very nice, trilling and rubbing.

The next day I was in the Big Top to clean the top level of the tower of all the soiled hay. Arjan and Sharu followed me up the steps and began hassling me while I threw out their hay. I managed to shoo them down the stairs so I could finish. But when I returned to the ground it was incredible. Cinni and Arjan and Sharu were all jumping up at me. They weren't growling or hissing but they were very aggressive about jumping up at me. I screamed "no" many times and had to deflect their jumps at me and eventually I backed out of there. It was very unusual and it must have been in response to my removing their smell, but I have done that before without such an aggressive reaction.

After that Bart and I decided to move Tara over to visit them as she was asking for that. She received a vigorous chase from the kids and then settled down for a two-hour stay. Mercury was moved over to Cougar Country. He began complaining

almost immediately but since we were working in our garden we ignored his screams.

I weighed the kids on February 28. I was surprised as Cinni weighed 63 pounds and I would have thought he would have weighed more. Arjan weighed 60 pounds and Sharu weighed only 57 pounds.

Tuesday, March 8, 1989

Last night Bart went outside to visit the kids up on the tower. Cinni loved on his hand again. He has done this three or four times only in the past few weeks, never before. Arjan was purring and Sharu began to suck Bart's finger. All were very friendly and sweet. Then Tara began calling and Bart said that Sharu stopped sucking his hand and jumped on Bart's head and mouthed his head, then stopped.

Today the kids spent the day in Cougar Country playing. It has been cold lately since it sleeted Saturday night and I haven't spent much time with them. I moved Tara over to the Big Top and Bart moved Mercury to Cougar Country around five in the afternoon. They spent about an hour together. Then Bart moved Tara. He said that Tara was leashed up and in the double-door connecting hall when she suddenly jumped onto his back and draped herself over him, not biting or threatening him.

Friday, March 17, 1989

I have been away for nine days. I flew to Maryland to visit family and friends and Bart stayed home to care for the cougars. He reported only good behavior from all and Mercury loved on his hand after five days of me being gone.

When I returned the kids saw me first as we drove by them to the carport. Cinni screamed at me and his brothers also chirped. I ignored them though so I could pay my respects to Mercury first. I entered the Cougarama cage and was finishing up a hug to Mercury when Tara came charging towards me and jumped onto my back. I was startled and called for help but as I calmed down I realized she was just draping herself over me and then Tara suddenly bit my arm, not hard or anything, but still I didn't appreciate it. Bart came running but it was all over. Tara can be very mischievous like that. I am sure she sensed my fear



Winter at the Big Top

and reacted. I returned to Mercury but he was growling at me when I hugged him, possibly because he felt I had abandoned him when I was gone. I sat around for a while with Bart in their compound but considering the reception, we left.

Then I visited the kids. Cinni ran up to me and jumped into my arms where he began purring and rubbing his face all over mine. Then Arjan also jumped into my arms and purred and sort of chewed at my face, but very gently. Sharu didn't jump to me but I felt he was also happy to have me home.

Later on I returned to spend time with Mercury under the moonlight. He had been screaming and Bart had already visited him. I laid down next to him on his hay and Tara came over to purr and rub and lick me also. She was very well behaved, though I held her collar just the same, as I don't entirely trust her. She walked away and Mercury loved on my hand and purred. It was wonderful. Tara returned and laid down next to him putting her leg over Mercury's leg, causing him to growl. Eventually she got off of him and they were back to purring and I stayed for a while longer.



Cinnabar playing with his stuffed bear

Then I left to visit the kids.

They weren't on their tower as it was a bright, warm night. We sat on the ground together and they were wonderful. Cinni loved on my hand and Arjan rubbed my face with his while Cinni was worshiping me, nursing my hand. Sharu came over and sat next to us and I leaned over to tell Sharu

I loved him and he gave me a mouth-to-mouth kiss. They were just angels.

The kids cut their adult canine teeth while I was gone. Sharu has double upper and lowers and Arjan and Cinni have only double lowers. They cut their front teeth last month and I never really saw them cut their back molar shark teeth. •

Cougar Development DVD



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.

This video contains amazing footage that could not have been captured without the close bond of love and trust existing between cougar and researcher. View-

ers 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.

Field Representative Program is Created

Call for State Representatives is on!

Vice President Brian Werner presented the concept of this program to the board in February. The March/April Journal published an outline of the program to explain the need for and expected benefits of this program and included a call for volunteers for the six Regional Directors. In the May/June Journal we published another call for volunteers and on page 45, the official details of this program were included in the FCF board meeting minutes. They are also posted to the Programs and Policies page of the FCF website.

Legislative Director Evelyn Shaw identified six qualified volunteers. The board voted to accept her recommendations as appointments.

John Turner is appointed Region 1 Director and will cover California, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Hawaii, Alaska

“Over the past seven years, I’ve had the opportunity to interact with many wonderful animals; as a sanctuary volunteer I’ve worked with lions, tigers, and smaller cats. As a wildlife rehabilitation center volunteer, I’ve worked with raptors, songbirds, bobcats, and other animals. But with all the horrible legislation that is now being pushed, I feel I can accomplish the greatest good on the political front, and look forward to working with anyone else willing to team up for this effort.”

Bill Meadows is appointed Region 2 Director and will cover Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico

“I am the owner/director of the Tiger Safari Interactive Exotic Zoological Park in Tuttle, Oklahoma with more than fifteen years of experience working with large cats. I know the value of developing contacts in legislature. I have a good working relationship with my Oklahoma state representative and he supports our park. I want to help FCF develop influence in legislature. Besides being an animal enthusiast, I am also an Oklahoma City Fire Fighter.”

Nancy Nightswander is appointed Region 3 and will cover Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota

“I am owned by four primates and a cougar. I have been very active working at the state and federal level against negative animal legislation. I am a board member of U.A.P.P.E.A.L and have been an FCF member for three years. I am excited about the new Field Representatives Program and I look forward to serving the members in Region 3. Working together we can accomplish a strong network for promoting a positive image of exotic animal ownership.”

Wayne Sluder is appointed Region 4 and will cover Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky

“It is vitally important that everyone in our membership understands that they must do their part and take responsibility for the conservation of our exotic felines. As the Region 4 Regional Director, I look forward to working with our members to protect our rights of private ownership. My driving motivation is centered on my appreciation for the natural world, and my ultimate desire to see wild feline populations expand. As a private owner myself, I have a small USDA and state licensed facility. And, I recognize how important this right of private ownership is every day when interacting with my cats. As good stewards we should speak up whenever we see legislation and misinformation calling for banning this right. I urge you to help me identify those issues both good and bad, and to work with your state and regional directors. Thank you for your support.”

Sara Comstock is appointed Region 5 and will cover Maine, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey

sey, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia

“I fully support outreach and that’s why I volunteered for this position. I plan to work with the state representatives to reach FCF members on a more personal basis, keeping us more informed of our state and local regulations, and also of any new regulations being proposed. Additionally we need to identify and vote for legislators who promise to represent our local needs. We want to help our members to make wise use of their vote. This program will also help make legislators more aware of captive conservation, the needs and issues involved, and especially our need for the freedom to care for the animals we desire to own!”

Matt Baker is appointed Region 6 and will cover Colorado, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas

“I have had exotic animals most of my life. Currently we are a USDA licensed breeder of small cats and other exotic animals. I also have cougars but do not breed them. A couple of years ago I found myself having to fight for the right to keep my cougars when Kansas was considering banning large cats and bears. I made it to all but one meeting and spoke at most. We didn’t win the entire battle, but we did get to keep our animals if we can meet the states new regulations. I think we need to unite and educate to be prepared for the next battle for our rights.”

These Regional Directors of the Field Representative program will be listed along with their contact information on the inside cover of every journal. I urge each FCF member to keep these directors informed of legislation or ordinances that pertain to cats.

The Regional Directors will be teaming up to vote on nominations for State Representatives. State Representatives will deal with legislation and feline issues limited to

one state only. State Representatives will work with the Regional Directors to help build databases of current and pending legislation, legislators, feline members, local and state issues and resources available. Together they can help formulate best plans and approaches to represent the FCF and responsible captive husbandry and the value of the private conservationist.

Indicate your interest in being nominated for State Rep to your Regional Director. Each of the six Regional Directors nominates a State Representative for each state in their region. If you are nominated, you will need to provide a resumé of your capabilities, training, etc. The other five Regional Directors shall make the appointment by a majority vote, with the nominating Regional Director abstaining.

To be a State Representative you do not have to own cats. You do not have to live in a state that has active legislation. We want as many states to have a representative as possible, and for the states that have extremely oppressive laws that have essentially closed down captive husbandry, we still want and need FCF representation. Representatives for those states can help formulate plans and assist the other state representatives in their region who are fighting ban laws or supporting good regulations. It's a team effort that will enable us to get a lot more accomplished.

The FCF appreciates the FCF members who have generously agreed to donate their time and talents to fill the Regional Director positions. It is time for all FCF members welcome them as well. Pick up the phone, give them a call, let them know you appreciate their efforts and be sure to help out by reporting any legislative information, or contacts, or available resources to your regional director.

Evelyn Shaw
FCF Director
of Legislation

Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The members of the FCF Board of Directors are proud to announce that during the months of May and June the following individuals have made application for and been accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program. The board of directors cannot stress enough the importance of participating in this program. It is proof positive, to the legislators who make decisions which directly effect our ability to continue to own, breed, or exhibit our cats, that we as an organization are committed to responsible ownership and excellence in the care of our charges. We hope more of our membership will take advantage of this program to show their commitment personally.

Regina Hardison	Basic Level	3 years experience
Bobby Aufill	Advanced Level	20 years experience
Leah Aufill	Basic Level	2 years experience
Robert L. Boyce	Basic Level	9 years experience
Eugene Barton Culver	Advanced Level	22 years experience
Regina Hardison	Basic Level	3 years experience
Sheryl Ann Koontz	Basic Level	2 years experience
Brenda La Torre	Basic Level	2 years experience
Ron La Torre	Basic Level	2 years experience
Michaelyn Marie Reeves	Basic Level	7 years experience
Amanda Whitlock DVM	Basic Level	3 years experience
Elizabeth Whitlock	Basic Level	3 years experience
John S. Whitlock	Basic Level	3 years experience

Applications for this program can be found on the FCF website at the following hyperlink:

<http://www.thefcf.com/husbandry/reghandlerapp.asp?key+486>

The board further hopes that in addition to the this program that members will take the next step and further show their support for excellence in the care of their cats by applying the FCF Facility Accreditation Program. The overview, basic standards, and application can also be found on the FCF website.

Congratulations to all of these members for their dedication to their cats.

—Betsy Whitlock

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Minutes of FCF Board Of Director's Meeting on May 21-28, 2007

On May 21 President Lynn Culver called the FCF board Meeting to order by Internet forum. Lynn offered the following agenda items: bylaw changes, field representative appointments, and review of changes to the FCF New Member Handbook. Participating in the meeting were Lynn Culver, Brian Werner, Kevin Chambers, Betsy Whitlock, Irene Satterfield, Carolyn Clendinen, Carol Bohning, Mindy Stinner, and Evelyn Shaw.

Bylaw changes:

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Lynn Culver: Bylaw Article 1.1 be amended by deleting the following: "Life Directors elected after January 1, 2003," and also, the two places where the word "term," as in term director, be deleted. The new bylaw would read: "1.1 Officers and Directors are elected at the same time and serve concurrently. Each Officer and Director serves for two (2) years beginning on January 1 of the year following election." 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Lynn Culver: Bylaw Article 1.6 be amended by deleting the following: "If any Board of Directors' member does not have access to e-mail, they must be advised of all posts made during an e-mail meeting before balloting to allow that member to review and make their comments known to the entire Board of Directors before voting. All motions made shall then be mailed via regular mail or e-mail to the Board of Directors in the form of a ballot. The votes must be returned to the presiding officer before the specified adjournment date." And inserting the phrase "Internet forums" so that the new 1.6 would read: 1.6 The Board of Directors may also conduct meetings by mail, e-mail, Internet forums, or telephone conference call, providing that at least one (1) week notice is provided along with a call for agenda items. An agenda will then be mailed or e-mailed to the each member of the Board of Directors. This agenda shall include a date to convene and a date to adjourn. The adjournment date may be extended by a majority vote, if needed. Discussions and motions shall be made during this time period. For a motion to be passed, a simple majority or 2/3, as specified by Robert's Rules of Order or in these bylaws, of the entire membership of the Board of Directors is required. 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Lynn Culver: Bylaw Article 1.13 be amended

by deleting the word "Life Director," and replacing it with "Director at Large." The new bylaw would read: 1.13 The Board of Directors shall not accept for nomination to the position of Director at Large any person who has not previously served at least one term on the Board of Directors in another position. 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Lynn Culver: Bylaw Article 1.6 be amended by deleting the following: "as well as acting as Branch Coordinator." The new bylaw would read: 3.3 The Vice President will assist the President as the need arises with organizing and the completion of the projects approved by the Board of Directors. 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Betsy Whitlock: Bylaw Article 6 be amended by deleting the word "Term", thus making it "Directors." Bylaw 6.1 would be amended by changing the number of directors from 5 to 7 (to match the constitution) and by adding "F. Directors at Large (two positions)". Bylaw 6.8 would be added to reflect the duties of the Directors at Large as follows; "Directors at Large provide guidance and a line of continuity for the Corporation. They oversee adherence to FCF's purpose and assist in special projects where needed." The amended portions of Article 6 would then read: ARTICLE 6 - Directors 6.1 There are seven (7) Directors who are elected to chair permanent, standing committees as Directors of:

- A. Member Services
- B. Education
- C. Conservation
- D. Legislation
- E. Public Relations
- F. Director at Large (two positions)

6.8 Director at Large: Provides guidance and a line of continuity for the Corporation. They oversee adherence to FCF's purpose and assist in special projects where needed. 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Betsy Whitlock: Bylaw article 7, "Life Directors" be deleted in its entirety and appropriate numerical changes to bylaws following it be changed accordingly. 9 yes votes, motion passed.

Moved by Betsy Whitlock, seconded by Kevin Chambers: Bylaw 8.3 be amended by deleting the following: "as Nominating Committee," and adding "Board members are

expected to have Internet access and personally participate in all meetings on the Internet. Failing to participate in meetings on a regular basis would be cause for the Board to disallow any nomination of that person to office." The new bylaw would read: "8.3 Each Board Member is expected to attend the annual convention meeting. After two (2) years' absence, the Board may disallow any nomination of that person to office. Board members are expected to have Internet access and personally participate in all meetings on the Internet. The Board may disallow any nomination of any person to office by a 2/3's majority vote for failing to participate in meetings on a regular basis." 7 yes votes, motion passes.

Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Betsy Whitlock: Bylaw Article 11, "Branches" be deleted in its entirety and appropriate numerical changes to bylaws following it are changed accordingly. 7 yes votes, motion passes.

Field Representative Program Regional Directors:

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Evelyn Shaw: The board appoints these members as Regional Directors for the Field Representative Program

- Region 1 John Turner
- Region 2 Bill Meadows
- Region 3 Nancy Nightswander
- Region 4 Wayne Sluder
- Region 5 Sara Comstock
- Region 6 Matt Baker

5 yes, 1 no, 1 abstain, motion failed

New Member Handbook

The board reviewed the New Member Handbook for clerical errors, updates created by bylaw changes, language consistency etc. in preparation for reprinting. New inclusions are Field Representative Program and Registered Handler Service and the removal of branch page.

New Business:

Moved by Lynn Culver, seconded by Betsy Whitlock that the FCF join the Cougar Network, at a cost to the FCF of \$30.00. The group is dedicated to sharing information on cougar preservation. Lynn suggested Mindy Stinner be the contact for FCF or if Mindy could not handle the added responsibility, Lynn would handle it. 7 yes votes, motion passed

The board meeting adjourned at midnight 5/28/07.

—Betsy Whitlock, secretary

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

With incredibly sensitive super-sized ears, a five-pound sand cat (*felis margarita*) hears the desert snake's movement and approaches with caution and stealth. Quickly, she deals a knockout blow to the snake's head and bites his neck to ensure demise. Wary of predacious owls and jackals, she nervously devours this evening's meal and covers the leftovers with sand for tomorrow night's dinner. This has been a nice change from the usual fare of rodents, occasional large spiders, and insects. Surprisingly, her diet provides all the water she needs.

Sometimes meals are found a couple miles from home, but not tonight. As the sand cat returns to the den she dug beneath a sturdy shrub, the thick coat of sandy-colored fur insulates her from the desert's temperature extremes. Long fur covering her footpads enables her to traverse soft, shifting sands without a trace. With sparse populations scattered throughout the vast deserts and rocky plains of Africa's Sahara, through the Arabian Peninsula and into Central Asia, the cats "bark" to each other during breeding season and to assert male territories.

No one really knows how many sand cats are left in the wild as very few, if any, studies of range sizes and population densities have been undertaken due, in part, to the cat's harsh environment. This possibly-endangered feline doesn't suffer from loss of habitat like most wild animals, but instead, desertification creates an advantage. Many nomadic people in the region



believe the sand cat was a companion of the prophet Mohammed and his daughter so, therefore, do not persecute it for the occasional chicken theft. However, because of this wildcat's mild temperament it falls victim to illegal capture and is sometimes used for target practice. Captive-breeding programs in the US and abroad are working to ensure their survival, at least in captivity.

Even in the 21st century little is known about the small wildcats, weighing less than 45 pounds and comprising three-quarters of the world's 36 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. © 2007 Rochelle Mason

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.

Minutes Special Board Meeting to Vote on Regional Directors for Field Representatives Program

Meeting called to order on 5/31/2007 by Lynn Culver, president on the Internet forum. Lynn posted a poll for each regional director with a brief biography at the bottom of each poll provided by Lynn Culver. Participating in the meeting were Lynn Culver, Brian Werner, Kevin Chambers, Betsy Whitlock, Irene Satterfield, Carolyn Clendinen, Carol Bohning, Mindy Stinner, Evelyn Shaw, and Bob Turner. The polls were posted with the following results:

Region 1 Candidate John Turner: Cal-

ifornia, Nevada, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Hawaii, Alaska. 8 yes votes, Regional Director approved.

Region 2 Candidate: Bill Meadows: Texas, Oklahoma, Arizona, New Mexico. 10 yes votes, Regional Director approved.

Region 3 Candidate: Nancy Nightswander: Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Nebraska, Ohio, Wisconsin, Minnesota. Results: 8 yes votes, Regional Director approved.

Region 4 Candidate Wayne Sluder: Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Alabama, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kentucky. Results: 10 yes votes,

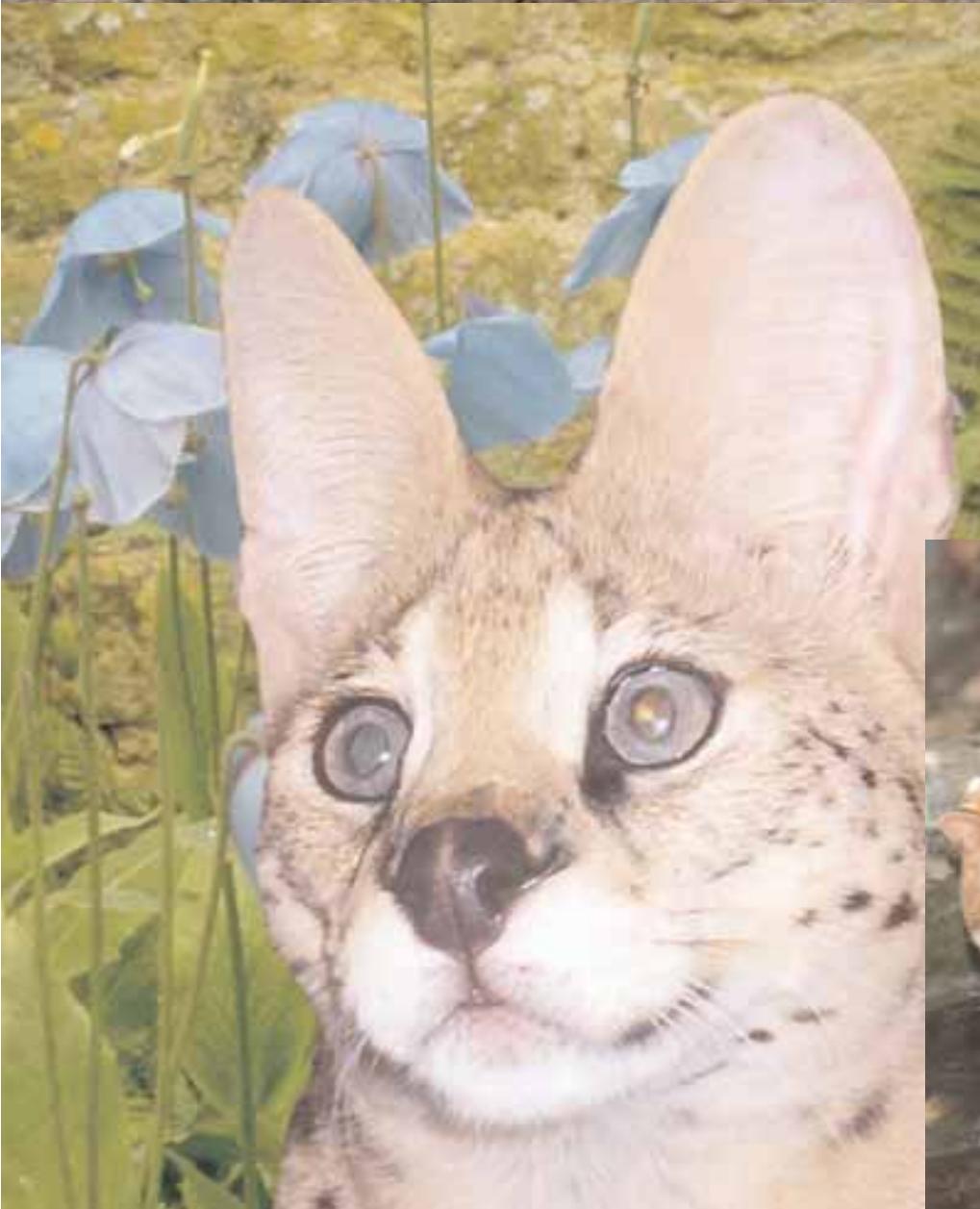
Regional Director approved

Region 5 Candidate Sara Comstock: Maine, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New Jersey, Connecticut, Maryland, Delaware, West Virginia, Virginia. Results: 8 yes votes , Regional Director approved

Region 6 Candidate: Matt Baker: Colorado, Utah, North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, Nebraska, Wyoming, Kansas. Results: 10 yes votes, Regional Director approved.

Meeting and poll closed at midnight 6/1/07. —Betsy Whitlock, secretary •

Your best Shot



Clockwise from top left:
Wild leopard in Africa—Bill Meadows • Baby Canada lynx—Cheryl Weickert • Flat headed cat—Jim Sanderson • Rowdy, a blue-eyed serval owned by Cathy Spohrer—Shelleen Mathews

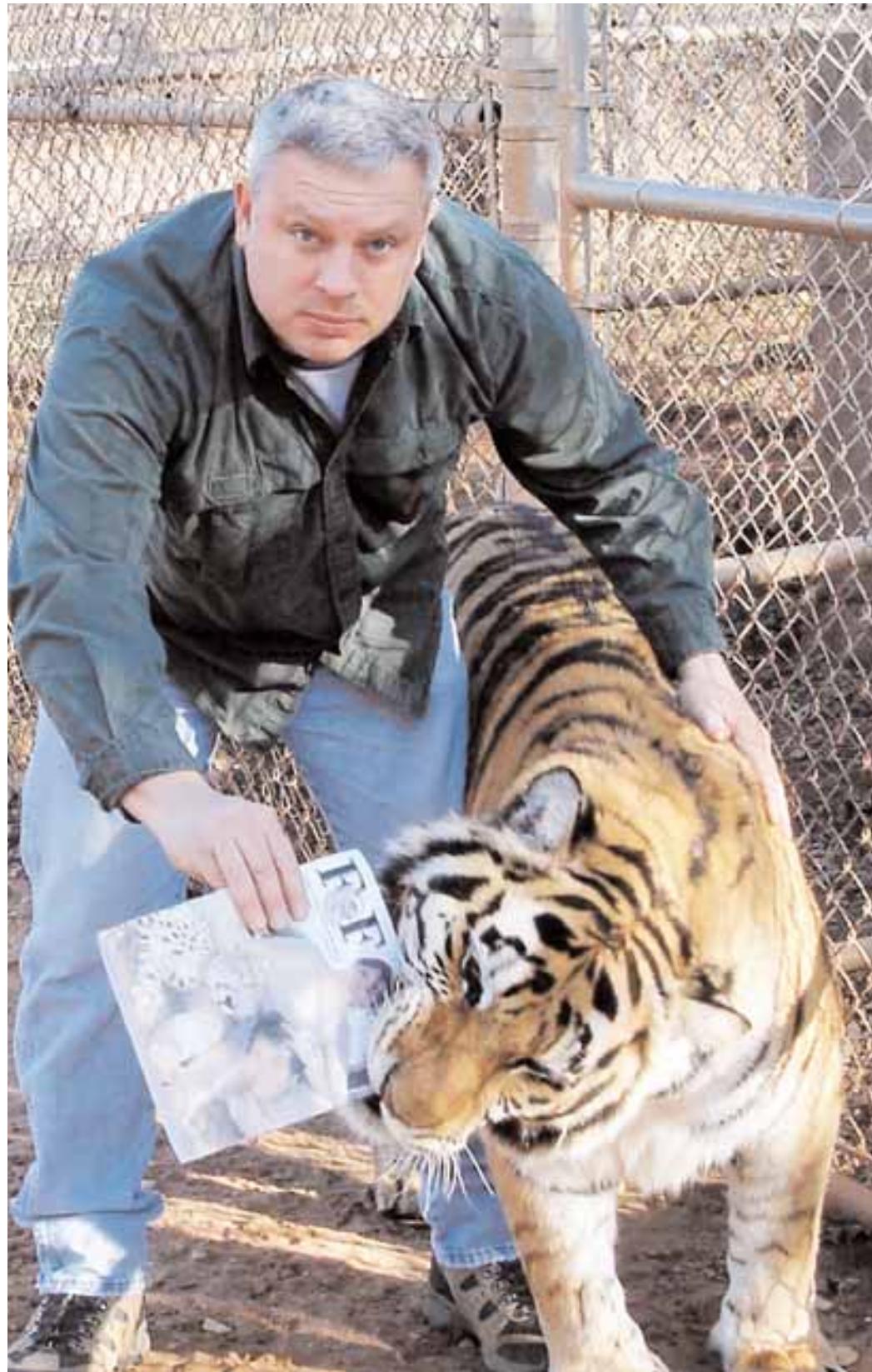


FCF Upcoming Events

Wednesday, July 25: Husbandry Course. Southfork Hotel, 1600 North Central Expressway, Plano, TX 75074. Cost: \$95.00 for non members and \$65.00 for FCF members. Hotel info below. More details inside.

July 26-28: Annual FCF Convention. Dallas, Texas. Hotel: Southfork Hotel, 1600 North Central Expressway, Plano, TX 75074. \$79.00 double occupancy. Convention early registration \$150. Details inside. 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.

Sunday, July 29, Convention Afterglow. 10:00am-3:00pm, Open house at Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge in Tyler, TX. Tiger Creek is operated by Brian Werner and is approximately two hours from the Southfork Hotel. Tiger Creek houses 38 cats including tigers, lions, leopards, cougars, and bobcat. If you plan to visit, you will need to arrange for your own transportation to and from the facility. Directions will be available at the convention or contact Brian for more information.



Brian Werner shares the FCF Journal with tiger, Lexie. You can visit Lexie and the other 37 big cat residents of Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge after the FCF convention. See details on this page.