



Feline Conservation Federation
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Members are invited to participate in email list discussions online at:

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

Cover: Teresa Shaffer's very first serval, Kovu. Inside: J.R. the cougar shows off his blue eyes. I am told this photo is not retouched. Photo by Gail Laviola.



Feline Conservation Federation

This magazine is published bi-monthly by 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

We work tirelessly to give our felines a comfortable and healthy life. When we succeed, there is no parade honoring all our years of service, there is no headline in the newspaper congratulating our efforts. So often it is only the satisfaction of hearing their friendly purr or chuff as we stroke their beautiful bodies or watching the athletic antics of feline play that makes it all worthwhile.

I am proud to announce that the FCF accreditation board has certified two more FCF member facilities as having "Excellent standards in feline facility and management."

Judy Berens, operator of Panther Ridge Conservation Center, is now FCF accredited. I have been to Panther Ridge and it is a wonderful home for its feline residents and Judy has plenty for which to be proud.

Vincent Dimaggio, a private puma owner, is licensed by the Arkansas Department of Game and Fish under the facility name Venom Traxx. He now joins a grow-

ing list of facilities to have passed the FCF accreditation process. Vincent has built a safe and enriching environment for Bekera, his two-year-old female cougar.

Both Judy and Vincent have the right to display the FCF accreditation logo on their web sites and the FCF accreditation metal plate and decorative wall certificate at their facility.

The FCF board of directors appointed the five-member accreditation board in 2005, after the initial FCF volunteer accreditation committee finished developing the accreditation process and standards and then was dissolved. The accreditation board reviews facility applications and votes on whether it meets the FCF standards.

Mitch Kalmanson, owner of Kalmanson Insurance Company in Florida was one of the original accreditation board members. He has tendered his resignation due to an increasing amount of travel obligations. I wish to thank Mitch for his service to FCF and willingness to donate his valuable time

and expertise these past few years.

Chateau Safari was accredited the end of 2006. In 2007 five more facilities have been certified: T.I.G.E.R.S., Cheetah Research Center, N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center, and now Panther Ridge Conservation Center and Vincent Dimaggio. My challenge to members reading this is, "Will you be next?" Download the application from the FCF website or contact the secretary for a copy.

Our goal as an organization and as individuals should be to work to insure the safety and welfare of all exotic felines. The education of owners is the best way to accomplish this.

Another FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Course was held in the Columbus, Ohio area on October 21. This is the third course Carol has taught this year. Over the years these FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Courses have educated hundreds of owners on proper husbandry and safety measures. FCF needs other instructors, preferably mem-



bers who have years of hands-on experience with exotic cats. If you have taken the course and would like to become certified, contact Carol. We are also looking for hosts for the next class. If you would like to have a course close to your home, consider being a host. Contact Carol for details.

Being educated is necessary because we are battling for our feline species' very existence. The gene pools we have are precious. Since I began my journey into exotic felines in the mid 1980s, I have seen the rise and fall of several species. Jungle cats are almost gone in private hands and so are jaguarundis. Ocelots are nearing the end of their genetic line. The Asian leopard cat population has been bred into bengals. The Geoffroy's cat is a species I have taken a personal interest in. I find it challenging to breed. I keep the studbook and use it to help guide pairings. It reveals the small number of founders in America. If not carefully managed, this species will also disappear.

In the case of the larger cats, so many states have passed laws that restrict ownership and breeding that in the near future we will see a dearth of cougar, leopard, lion, and tiger. Unmanaged breeding causes boom and bust cycles. Today there are too many adult big cats concentrated into too few warehouse-sized sanctuaries. It is extremely ironic that as tigers become more and more endangered in the wild, legislators are destroying the available captive habitat. In the next decade we will see our captive population crash from all the restrictive laws and this magnificent species may not recover.

We cannot risk our reputation by supporting those who don't do justice to our mission. Poor husbandry and dangerous practices threaten everyone. Fanatic animal rights extremists are now using the Siberian Tiger Foundation in Ohio as an example of a chronic USDA violator who lost her USDA license to exhibit, but continued to operate. It is the next animal rights poster

child for pushing Haley's Act through Congress. Passage of Haley's Act would override the USDA regulations for allowable and safe public contact with juvenile big cats. If you wish to see this over-blown craziness stopped, please donate generously to the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobby fund.

FCF is working to promote the good works that private conservationists do in education and species protection. FCF members each have an obligation to spread our message and educate their community. Quantities of the new FCF brochure are available to all the outreach educators and exhibitors to use in their programs, gift shops, or mailings. The more people we can reach with the FCF message, the more understanding the public has of us. Contact me with a request for brochures and I will mail them to you.

Please enjoy the spirit of the holiday season, which is peace on earth and good will toward all mankind and animals. We are blessed with a rare experience—our loving relationships with our exotic feline friends. Our lives are rich beyond measure so we should be thankful for our good fortune and never take it for granted.

—Lynn Culver

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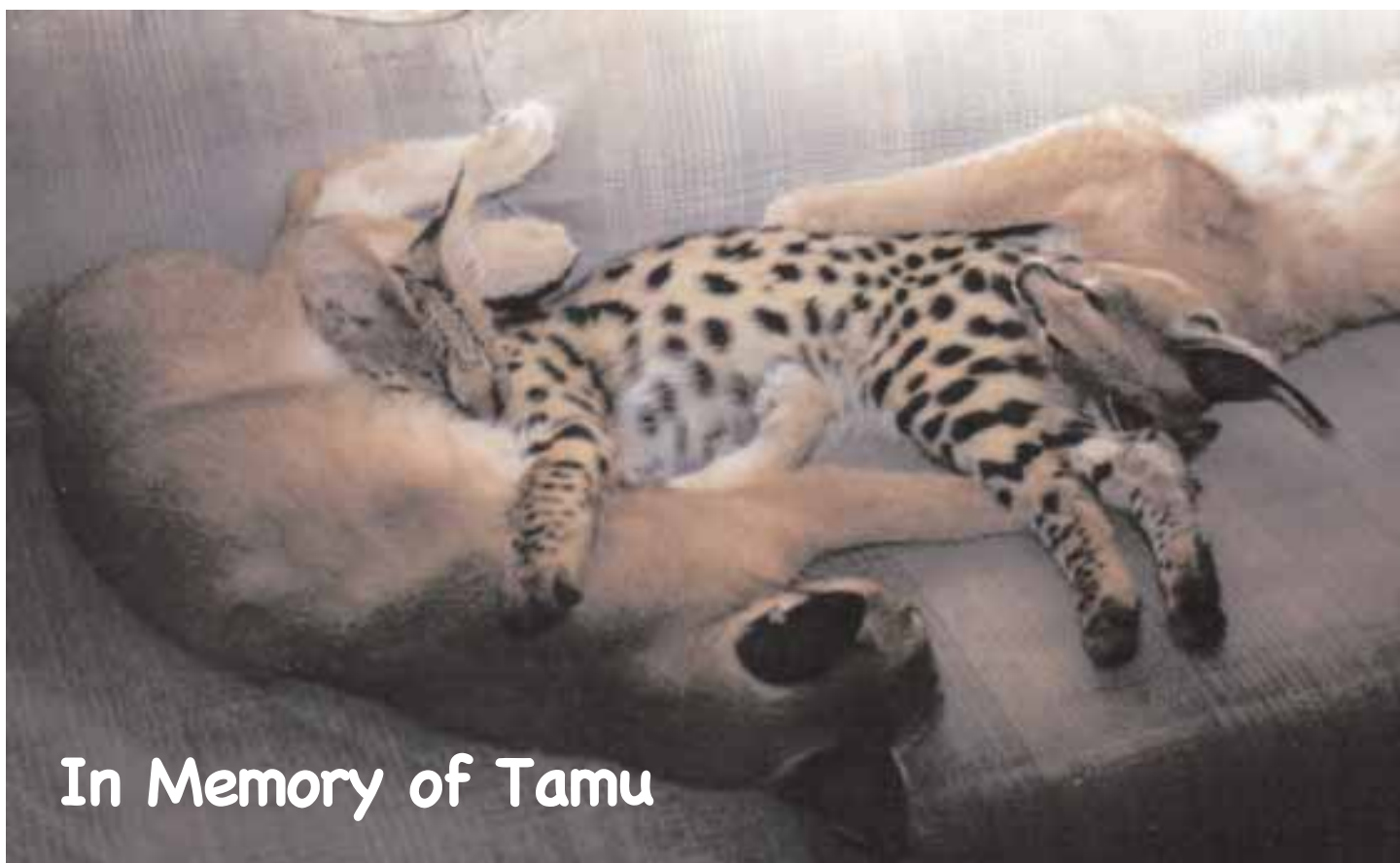


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In Memory of Tamu

By Denise and Bruce Little

Tamu, a serval, and his siblings were born on November 3, 2002. Three months prior to this serval litter, a caracal litter was born. (Brother, and his two sisters, Eraser Nose and Black Nose) Bruce was working out of town at the time, only coming home on the weekends. Because the caracal litter was so much older, I didn't want to introduce Tamu until he had some size and age to him. So Tamu and I shared the bedroom. He slept under the covers as close to me as he could with his head on my pillow next to my head. As he got bigger and one room wasn't enough space I would switch the caracals to my bedroom off and on through out each day so Tamu could get to know the rest of the rooms and all the cats were able to share each other's scents before the introduction.

Tamu and I became very bonded. He was my "jokester serval." He enjoyed games like peek-a-boo. He would hide somewhere. I would call his name and pretend to try to find him. He would jump out from wherever, purring and rubbing against

me. Another favorite was fetch. He would get his favorite snake toy, bring it to me, drop it, and wait for me to throw it so he could run after it, get it, shake it to make the rattle tail make noise, and bring it back to me to play over and over again. It didn't matter to him if I was trying to cook, do dishes, or talk on the phone!

Since Tamu's siblings left to their new homes at eight weeks old and Bruce wasn't home, Tamu was always there to make me laugh and come up with something new to surprise me.

"Brother" the caracal went off to his new home, and shortly after I felt it was safe to slowly introduce Tamu to the caracal girls Black Nose and Eraser Nose. The three became good buddies quickly and the caracal girls liked Tamu's games. Tamu always made sure he included me in the fun. He was very easygoing and loving.

Two months later Brother was sent back to us and he stayed in the bedroom with Bruce and me as Bruce was working close to home now. The two caracal girls and Tamu had the run of the rest of the rooms

until the slow process of introducing Brother to his sisters and Tamu was accomplished.

Months went by and our trailer became way too small and unsafe for four exotic cats to run, jump, and play. So the two caracal girls were moved outside to a 40 by 12 foot enclosure to be slowly introduced to a non-related male caracal. Tamu and Brother stayed inside with us.

We decided our outside animal family was complete. What were we thinking? We have taken in many exotics and even more since the thought of our outside animal family was complete. With that unreasonable thought, Bruce and I felt we wanted one house companion serval and one house companion caracal forever to live with us. Brother and Tamu were great buddies so we had the two neutered and declawed.

The years went by quickly. Brother was the laid back, mostly lazy, lay-in-our-lap, suck-on-your-hand and constantly purr, type caracal. Tamu (still) was the jokester, always bringing you a snake toy to throw, head butt, rub, and purr all over you. Some-

times Tamu would purposely wake Brother up to play or nose bump Brother when he was laying in my lap sucking on my hand to stop with me and play with him. Tamu was just so full of life and himself. He wanted to stay busy playing.

When Tamu and Brother became three-years-old, three bad hurricanes crossed directly over us. No animals were injured and no animals escaped. Bruce builds enclosures to last forever. We did have to find a new place to move our “special family.” We were lucky enough to find a nice place just across the highway. It took a year and much money to make our move.

Our home was not ready for Tamu and Brother to live inside with us unattended so Bruce built them an enclosure outside our back door. We only brought the two inside when we were home for the evening

Our plans were to attach the enclosure to the back door so they could come in and out as they wanted. Other priorities and another hurricane season delayed our plans for Tamu and Brother. Everyone seemed to be settling right in to their new environment.



Tamu and “Brother”

Tamu and Brother were still buddies, lying together, cleaning each other, and constantly playing.

Shortly after both Tamu and Brother turned four, something extremely unexpected happened. I was inside their enclosure cleaning, talking, playing, and laughing

with Tamu and Brother. I received much love, kisses and rubs from both of them. The two handsome cats went off to play together and I set off to clean and interact with other exotic cats. I came back about twenty minutes later to Tamu and Brother’s enclosure to get something. Tamu was lying on the ground on his side in a normal position in the sun. I thought he was sleeping. I laughed at him and said “Tamu—are you crazy? It’s too hot to be sleeping in the sun!” He didn’t pick his head up and blink his sleepy eyes at me like he had always done in the past when waking him. Then I looked for Brother. He was hiding, cowering in his house. The look in his eyes was confused and scared. I dropped everything in my hands and ran into their enclosure yelling Tamu’s name, thinking this can’t be, but knowing he was dead. I picked this beautiful, jokester, happy go lucky, loving serval up and started CPR, crying and praying for him to come back to life. It was too late – he was gone. I inspected him from head to toe. No wounds, no blood, no broken bones, no marks could be found. He was so full of spirit and energy. A gorgeous, healthy four-year-old serval. What happened?

Then I thought about Brother. While I was cradling Tamu in my arms, I called Brother. He slowly, cautiously came out of his house cowering like he was in trouble. Knowing caracals kill vervet primates by crushing their skulls, I re-checked Tamu’s head but found nothing. Knowing caracals also crush their prey’s esophagus to stran-

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gulate, I checked Tamu's throat. No marks whatsoever but his throat fur was all wet with saliva. Brother had killed Tamu! But why? How could this happen? They were buddies for four years! The reason was unclear. Maybe Tamu wanted to continue playing and Brother didn't. Maybe Brother got over-stimulated and just got too rough, we will never know. What a sad, awful thing to happen to such a wonderful creature.

I was so angry at Brother for doing such a horrid thing to our beloved Tamu. But I had to put my anger aside and remember that Brother was also one of our beloved animal family members and he was suffering also. We feel Brother grieved the loss of his friend. He looked for and called for Tamu for days. He stopped eating and wouldn't play. We will never know why this happened but we do know we can

never put Brother with another cat again. We cannot trust that he won't kill again. So we put a young serval named Chewie beside him. It seemed to confuse Brother at first. Chewie looked like Tamu but didn't smell or act like him.

In a few days Brother was acting more like himself and eating again. He runs, jumps, and plays peek-a-boo with his new friend Chewie along their common wall, a safe environment for both cats.

This is a sad story I did not want to write and something I did not want to remember, but I felt forced to do so for other exotic cat owners. Although this occurrence never happened before to our many cats living and interacting with each other and it has not happened since, you just never know when or if it will happen. They are what they are. They are all so different. And they are all very special.

Bruce and I cherish each day we have to share life with our exotic animal family. Fifty percent of my day is spent interacting with each animal here in whatever way they want to interact.

Not all of the animals we have taken in want to be cuddled but we have learned through them what interactions from us they will accept and feel comfortable with. Our goal is to spend as much time each day with them because you never know when the time will be taken away. Time is precious for them whether in captivity or in the wild. •

"May your sadness be a gentle reminder of the joy our animal friends bring to our lives... and the memories they leave in our hearts."

—Kimberly Rinehart

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FCF Funds Margay Conservation

A young male margay treed with anesthetic dart.

By Anne-Sophie Bertrand

Anyone who was blessed enough to get close to a margay can tell how gorgeous this animal is. As a cougar lady, I was quite unprepared when margays started popping up in my life. In late 2006, we received an interesting call at the Iguaçu National Park (southwestern Brazil) where I am a guest researcher. The person was saying there was a little jaguar up in a tree in one of Foz do Iguaçu's suburbs. Surprisingly enough, phone calls for cat matters are not that common, so it is very important to respond right away. You must be quick also because silly habits and people's curiosity can make them throw rocks at a given treed animal. You certainly do not want to see that happen. So we went there. Guess who was up there taking a nap? Yes. A gorgeous young male margay (*leopardus wiedii*). He didn't even blink. He was chilling up there recovering from his little dog chase. I had never seen a margay before. Beautiful, wide oily black eyes, pink nose, wide paws for stability and a long, very long tail. He was definitely a close cousin of the better-known ocelot (*leopardus pardalis*). As there was no

way out, people and farms with dogs everywhere around, we decided to anaesthetize him, put a radio collar on him, and release him in a nearby, more favorable habitat.

Since then, I am very grateful to Jim Sanderson for continuous encouragement. Thanks to him, I was invited to come to the last FCF convention in Dallas. Thanks to him, I was given the chance to meet nice fellows and share my project with people from different background. It was a very fruitful experience. I will always remember my encounter with Fred Boyajian, hearing his stories about sharing his room with a full-grown male puma in a student dormitory, or having 40 margays in his place. This man's experience with cats simply blew me away!

With Fred's donation and thanks to FCF, our margay research project is success-guaranteed. I am glad to announce that after six months of administrative hurdles, the Brazilian government has just issued a research license allowing us to capture more margays.

In order to maximize our capture effort, we are training dogs to see if margays can

also be caught with this technique usually reserved for larger cats. The FCF grant will allow us to buy brand-new UHF/GPS radio collars. Such equipment has never been used on small cats like the margay so this is a unique opportunity. These collars are only 70 grams and provide for one year or so exact 2D (and sometimes 3D) geographical location, date, time, altitude, latitude, longi-



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tude, number of satellites and the dilution of precision, i.e. an index of the quality of the GPS locations. Plus the radio system will allow determining whether the cat is active or inactive. Last but not least, two important features: the collars are equipped with a mortality signal and an automatic drop-off system when the pre-set monitoring ends.

Ideally, we aim to have an even ratio of males and females (4/4) equipped with these radio collars so that we can compare the home range size and potential overlapping between territories. Plus, we will be able to determine precise activity patterns and compare them between males and females. Most importantly, by putting these dots on a map, we will obtain key information such as margays' dispersion in the matrix (composed of forest fragments, agricultural lands, urban expansion), margays' relationship with forested areas, margays' diet variations among individuals living in forested areas versus the ones living in human-dominated areas. (Do they prey on opossum in the woods and on pigeons near the cities?)

Those research questions are only touching a few aspects of the poorly known in-situ margay ecology. FCF members can be proud to support a significant scientific contribution on margay ecology before their shrinking habitat (the Atlantic forest)



With Anne-Sophie is Juma, a 15-yr old female jaguar. The good news is that Juma has found a boyfriend and they will probably mate in 2008.



Phoenix with a radio collar (provided by Dr. J. Sanderson)

has turned into pastures, soy crops, and sugar cane forest.

By the way, if you want to come over to see the animals, our work, and the amazing Itaipu neotropical cats' breeding centre (Fig. 2-4), I have put together all that you need here in Brazil for accommodation in the finest hotel in town, transport, a full-week activity program, and all your meals in the best restaurants for \$900 USD (leaving your house on Friday and coming back the next Saturday). A round-trip to São Paulo from Miami is \$850 USD. (Look for flights to IGU. They will typically connect through GRU.) Please consider this offer. You could see what your support is doing for margays in their natural habitat, and also enjoy a tropical week in one of the most scenic places of Brazil. Contact annesophie@reservabrasil.org.br for more information. •

Guest Editorial

Getting and Keeping Volunteers and Members

By Raven Simons

Small organizations like the FCF rely heavily on its membership base and those members willing to do the organization's work without financial compensation. We have many ambitious goals and people are needed to meet them. How can we find enthusiastic, willing, motivated, responsible individuals who also have the ability to follow through with their commitments?

I have noticed in my long time experience serving non-profit entities in an organizational capacity that there are a few issues that seem to heavily effect people's willingness to be involved and remain involved as members or volunteers. I'd like to share with you some of my observations and insights in hopes of improving volunteerism within the FCF.

Belonging: People like to feel they wholeheartedly belong to an organization and have input in to how the organization functions. Certain behaviors that are a consequence of group dynamics can put a cramp in this feeling of "belonging." One of the issues that can drive away members, potential members, and volunteers is the negative expression of politics between individuals and subgroups within the main group.

I have learned that personal politics are universal whenever you get more than a couple of folks together. The trick with politics is to have guidelines and mechanisms to keep these politics positive and group building rather than group rending. Internet groups like the FCF Yahoo group can be positive or negative when it comes to personal politics. Flame wars between individuals and subgroups devastate attempts to build the group and come together to meet common goals.

I have seen organizations torn apart in Yahoo groups when the basic group rules and guidelines are not enforced or only administered to certain people and not others. When observers see a lack of fairness and impartiality on a conscious or subconscious level they will begin to fear that the inequality will at some point be applied to them. When basic guidelines and rules are

not enforced, people will not feel safe to express themselves or participate.

Seeing people attacked on a email list will put fear into any individual who wants to become more involved. I can honestly share that I have pulled back when I have seen or felt the effects of drama and negative personal politics seen or experienced on the Yahoo group or behind the scenes. I do not have the time and energy to put myself out there for possible attack, drama, or any other negativity. Life brings enough to my door without my volunteer activities bringing any more. I imagine that many others share my feelings.

Equality: People enjoy feeling like they are part of a group of peers. Even a newbie will wholeheartedly throw herself into working for the shared goals of an organization if she feels respected and equal, even while she might lack experience or expertise. Once a group or individuals within a group, knowing or unknowing, start a caste system, you can expect a drop in active participation. How might a caste system or negative hierarchy look like in a group such as the FCF?

Who actually owns or works regularly with exotic felines? I can see an individual currently living in a ban state not feeling like an equal member because it is illegal for them to own an exotic feline. In fact, if something like a tiered membership came to pass within the FCF, you may find even more people feeling disenfranchised. I say this because what is going to determine where an individual membership sits in the tiers? Will people be considered a lower tier because they cannot have an exotic, lack experience, can't pay a higher membership fee, or some other criterion or combination of criteria? What is more important in meeting organizational goals, having lots of enthusiastic members and volunteers, or establishing a rank of the potentially elite?

Communication, Follow Up, and Encouragement: People need to feel that they are wanted when the calls for volunteers go out. There is nothing more frustrating than to email an organizer or head of a

committee and not have any response. Even more maddening is to follow up with repeat emails and have the only response be the sound of crickets. One begins to wonder if only "certain" volunteers are welcome. This also relates back to the "equality" issue.

Positive communication and prompt feedback are very powerful tools to get and keep people motivated. When an organizer takes the time to remain in ongoing communication with her volunteers, they will get better results than a coordinator who is absent. Human beings like to feel "in the loop." Inclusion is a positive experience for volunteers. When there is a lack of positive communication, one begins to wonder if one's efforts are even seen or appreciated.

Regular encouragement keeps morale boosted. When individuals are reassured that they are doing a good job and given that extra bit of pep talk, you will be amazed at the results and work you can get out of people. This is a special communication skill that takes sincerity. Leaders need to feel genuinely interested in their helpers to communicate this type of feedback.

When asking an individual if she is willing to step up to volunteer for a particular position, job, or duty, be sure that this is the person you really want if they decide to say "yes." If you are a board member, head of a committee, task force, or any other organizational potentate, please be sure that you consider this issue. It is very discouraging to get asked to do a job, search one's soul to see if time, skills, and resources are available, come to a "yes" decision, then later hear nothing or on inquiry be told that the group/board/whatever decided a different person would be better for the job. Personally if this happened to me, I would prefer not to be asked in the first place. If I have searched my soul and gotten a "yes" for an answer, I am usually now quite excited to take on the job and feel good that some official thought me the appropriate candidate. I know that leaders are very busy people, but volunteers have lives, too. Taking time to get back to your potential helper goes a long way with fostering a

positive work force.

Recognition and Appreciation: Individuals feel good when they know that their efforts are seen and appreciated. Volunteers do not receive financial compensation. Why would anyone take on a job and not get paid? Recognition and appreciation are high on the list of non-monetary compensation. When one is getting active appreciation and recognition for a job well done, one feels a special satisfaction. When a person can see and recognize that they are actively helping an organization meet important goals and that they are uniquely valued and seen as important to meeting these goals, then reward is felt within the heart.

On the other hand, if the leaders take all of the credit for the jobs well done, then the organization will lose helpers. I saw this happen in several organizations that I was involved with in the past. It is sometimes easy for leaders and organizers to forget the contributions of their helpers in the flush of kudos and success. You will get further if you can be humble and see that your volunteers are well appreciated, especially in a very public (as far as the organization goes) way. You will keep the loyalty and future work of your volunteers when you keep this in mind and actively practice it.

Matching volunteers' interests and talents with the work/goals needed: People

enjoy making good use of their unique talents and abilities. They will also maintain longer focus and greater follow-through if they are interested in what they are doing. Many people will enjoy learning new things or stretching their abilities, but nobody likes to feel like they are bored or thrown in to the deep end of the swimming pool to sink.

If an individual is interested in doing a particular job, then it may be productive to try and facilitate their interest as much as practical. Perhaps the person currently doing the job they are interested in could make use of an assistant or helper. Most busy and productive leaders have more work on their plate than they can easily get done. An assistant could perhaps help with some of the tasks and learn more about how that particular job functions. An extra bonus when this system is used is that you have a person in training should the need arise. The organization will not be left in the lurch should life change for the person currently holding the position, even if the helper only steps in on an interim level. I have seen the FCF make very good use of some of its volunteers. I am hoping with these reminders to make these issues conscious and used as tools to obtain and keep helpers.

Keep goals, committees, and work focused one step at a time: Finally, even with the best volunteers and hardworking leadership, it is important to look at the

issue of growth, goals, and focus. Sometimes organizations and businesses try and grow too fast and actually fail because nothing really gets done due to confusion, disorganization, and dropped communication. New volunteers need clear direction and training to properly do their jobs. When you have massive calls for volunteers trying to start too many new projects and committees, work begins to become confused. Too much ambition can dilute the efforts of all. It is often better to go slower, establish new jobs, titles, and projects a few at a time, and allow for stability before more growth is attempted. Remember the tortoise and the hare, slow and steady wins the race.

Given the flurry of bans, the success of the Animal Rights agenda in outlawing pets and husbandry, and the uphill battle that all animals will face to survive extinction, it is vital that the FCF rally its members and volunteers to be part of this battle for the animals. Every individual has something to offer and is valuable. It will be the challenge of the board members, committee heads, and other leaders within the FCF to gather and challenge its members and volunteers in a positive fashion. The above observations are just a few issues to look at when you are organizing and considering getting individuals to support the many ambitious goals of the Feline Conservation Federation. •

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For 50 years the only way to subscribe to the FCF Journal was to become a member. Now there's a second way. FCF members in good standing can give one year gift subscriptions to the journal to their friends and family. Subscription is \$15 which is less than cost. (The difference is being made up by an anonymous donor.) Look for the enclosed form or send a check and your list of lucky recipients to Kevin Chambers, 7816 N CR 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879. Offer expires January 2, 2008.





The Chilean Guiña

Very few people know what a guiña is. Even fewer have ever gotten the chance to see one. But for those of us who have seen one, we will never forget the experience.

Guiñas (*leopardus guigna*) are the smallest New World cat. At Fauna Andina, we call it “the petite jewel.” They weigh from four to seven pounds. They live only in Chile and parts of Argentina. Guiñas are a beautifully spotted cat related to the Geoffroy’s cat.

Very little research has been done with the species. As a result, it is one of the world’s most ignored cats. Guiñas have never been exported outside their home country and have never been bred in captivity.

Even though it is considered vulnerable

by I.U.C.N, Chilean authorities consider it to be in danger of extinction. Why? The answer is simple: as I explained at the Dallas FCF convention, 50% of the Chilean forest has been logged on the last 100 years. Since guiñas live in the forest, it is not difficult to realize that even though there are fairly good numbers of individuals out there, the habitat is fragmented. This results in many isolated populations.

There is something that researchers never mention. Guiñas can live up to 4,000 feet elevation, but from 2,000 feet to 4,000 feet they don’t do well. That portion is not primary habitat for the species. Sadly, human populations are “using” the fields up to 2,000 feet of elevation. This is the habitat that is the best suited for the guiña. As a

result, what we have in most parts of the country are guiñas living very close to humans, dogs, and domestic cats. The result is one that everybody can guess—guiñas aren’t doing too well.

People in the Chilean countryside don’t like guiñas. They consider them vermin. In fact, the name guiña is translated to mean “thief.” This attitude harms the population count of guiñas. Very few locals know the cat or have seen one. People living in the cities don’t even know that the animal exists. Yet everyone uses the name guiña, calling them thieves!

It is absolutely impossible to do conservation on what people don’t even know. Education is the most important tool of conservation.

Good proof of this is what happened at the Fauna Andina Center around a month ago.

A small local child brought to the center a male guiña that had been trapped with a snare used to catch rabbits. Snaring is legal in Chile. If a protected animal like guiñas falls victim to a snare, it is considered an accident and nothing happens to the person responsible.

The cat was injured badly, and that resulted in us having to amputate his front leg. It was one of the saddest moments that we have had to face at the center. Even though we have put animals to sleep due to serious injuries, this was just as heart breaking, if not more.

This case was different. The young adult male was fighting to live and he gave us many signs of it. Wild guiñas do very poorly in captivity. They won't even eat at all most of the time. This case was exactly the opposite. As soon he entered the center, he began eating and drinking water. We could inject antibiotics with less difficulty than we expected. He didn't fight us...it was incredible. Now he is in the process of recovering... still with a long way to go. It is still too soon to open the champagne.

The advice of Mindy Stinner, a FCF member, was very important to this center. Mindy told us their experience with three-legged cats.

Going back on this, what we want to highlight is that this cat's survival was the result of a child's visit to the center. From that visit, he gained a newly found knowledge and respect for the species with which he is sharing this planet. It is important to mention that four years ago the same thing happened. Another child brought a small male pudu, the smallest deer in the world and an endangered species, to our center after participating in a guided visit. This is one of the most rewarding things in doing conservation work—knowing that you have passed on your passion for wildlife to the next generation. After all, conservation is a task that will never end. The knowledge that there will be someone to come along to take over where we have to stop somehow makes you feel that all of your hard work and passion has not been wasted.

We are putting in the time showing local people our “petite jewel.” As a result, we had the chance to save one guiña and that's one more guiña on this planet.

Many times my wife, Michelle, and I feel absolutely alone. From time to time doubting about the real result of our work but these little children gave us hope.

Definitely, we are going in the right direction. Children are the future. This little boy only had the chance to briefly see one of our guiñas during the speech at the center. Imagine what would be the result of children touching “Tala,” our loving orphan female guiña living at the center. Perhaps someday we can let them touch her kittens if we are so lucky and are able to breed the species in captivity for the very first time.

If in the long term we educate people, chances are that guiñas can use their primary habitat in the comfort zone of below 2,000 feet. People must understand that guiñas can prey on rodents that cause a lot

of losses in agriculture and also kill people by carrying diseases like the hanta virus.

We won't be able to return to nature the handicapped guiña but if we succeed in our goal, his grandchildren could be the first free guiñas born in captivity...who knows?

—Fernando Vidal



Fernando holding a baby guiña.

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When Dryfuss Came To Town

By Shelleen Mathews

Dryfuss was one of the biggest African leopards I have had the pleasure to know. He was not only big in size, but the biggest sweetheart as well. A bad “word” or attitude never came out of this cat.

In the 1970s and early 1980s I had a facility housing many exotics (cats and wolves). The majority of these animals came to me because they were in need of a new home for various reasons. We were contacted by a well-respected public facility that gave visitors a chance to experience animals and interact to some degree. Dryfuss had been an ambassador for leopards and had spent his life thrilling people with his magnificence. As he matured he grew to be a very *large* leopard. It was decided that he should “retire” and perhaps find a lady love. This is when we became involved.

He was shipped via air to us. In talking with his previous handlers we were “warned” that we should not be taken aback by his size. That, in essence, he was a very mellow boy.

Now, whenever I handled any of the “big” guys outside of their enclosures, they were always chained to my waist. If they were going to go somewhere, I was going with them. The facility Dryfuss had come from was, for the most part, concrete. My place was in the middle of the woods: trees, rocks, dirt, grass, and enclosures. Before he arrived, his handlers told me that he was going to surprise me with his size. They said, “get over it. When you open his crate just snap the chain around his neck and take him to his new home.” Needless to say, when I opened the crate I was surprised! I perhaps even muttered some colorful apprehensions! But I did as I had been told. I totally trusted their expert analysis of Dryfuss. So, the chain (already attached to me) went around the neck of the biggest leopard I had ever seen!

As he stepped out of his crate and onto the vehicle’s tailgate, I had a moment of dread. He surveyed his surroundings and seemed particularly interested in the tall fir trees nearby. Anyone who has had a domestic cat knows the look that comes into their eyes when they are feeling unbelievably playful. I started muttering more expletives

to myself as he put his playful plan into motion. He headed straight for the trees. So did I. At first I was able to keep up running behind, but as he picked up speed I was reduced to “water skiing” on my knees. Then we went up the tree. We got up in the tree about 20 feet. My weight on the other end of his chain did not faze him at all. However, when he decided to come down he chose the opposite side of a limb from where I was hanging and clutching the tree. We spent several minutes bouncing off one another up in the air. Mind you, Dryfuss had all his claws, but he did not use them.

In all honesty I don’t remember how we got down. I think the limb broke. Next thing

I do remember, after catching my breath, was sitting on the ground with a happy, big leopard sitting next to me. We got up and easily sauntered over to his new enclosure. He sauntered. I was shaking a bit.

In all his days Dryfuss never was anything but a sweet-natured cat. He doted on being fussed over and told how beautiful and sweet he was. He quickly bonded with one of my sweet young girls, Cassandra. As big as he was for a leopard, Cassandra was small. A pairing which concerned me, but they were devoted to one another. They produced several litters of spotted little ones and gave me countless hours of enjoyment and love. •



Review of October 20 Husbandry Course

By Tiffany Weisenberg

I was fortunate to attend the FCF husbandry course at Butternut Farms this year. I have a 6-year-old serval, a 1-year-old Geoffroy's cat, and four savannah cats of various generations, and previously owned a sand cat and melanistic Geoffroy's cat.

I learned many new things that will help me take better care of my animals. The discussion of diet and anesthesia was of particular interest to me as I am a veterinary assistant. This new information will be an asset for my cats and the cats brought in for future care at the animal hospital. I cannot wait to put to use the knowledge of cage construction. Every detail from hardware to substrate was discussed, things I would have never thought of.

The course was over eight hours long and every single topic was interesting and vital. Even though the curriculum in itself was great, I also love how it was an open forum. There were owners of big cats, small cats, and native cats. We all learned from each other's experience through interjection and stories. It was great to put faces to e-mail addresses.

The tour of Butternut Wild Cat Sanctuary was a delight. It was great to see species up close that I have never worked with before. The cats and their people were friendly and very welcoming to visitors! •



Graduates Tiffany Weisenberg and Anne Marie Hoffman



Graduates Nancy and Beau Nighswander



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O'Malley's Story

Or, How I Fell in Love with Cougars

By Robert Hohn

I always loved animals. Growing up in a city with limited exposure to wildlife, going to the Bronx Zoo was a big deal. When I was in fourth grade, my uncle and aunt took us across country in a VW bus and we visited many zoos. The only time I saw humans interacting with big cats was at the circus.

Eight years ago my wife and I visited Out of Africa Wildlife Park in Arizona. We saw them swim with full-grown tigers, comb out the manes of lions, and walk leopards on leashes. I was impressed.

Four years ago we started volunteering at the Ashville Game Farm in upstate New York. Ashville Game Farm is owned by FCF members, Jeff and Mary Ash. We got to help raise cougars, leopards, lynx, and lions. The tigers were my favorite but everything changed when the cougars had babies.

One of the males had difficulties, so I had to stay overnight at the zoo and wake up every four hours to feed and stimulate the baby cougar. It was not a chore but a responsibility.

I was allowed to pick the name of the male and I chose O'Malley from the Aristocats.

Animal planet hired the zoo to bring a baby cougar, baby bear, and a baby alligator to New York City to be on TV. They were on DaySide and Fox & Friends. All of us stayed overnight in a hotel. With the alligator in the bath tub, the cougar and bear were free to stalk us as prey all night. It was fun when your roommate got pounced, but you knew you were next.

That was when I fell in love with cougars. Soon after, my heart was broken when a breeder purchased O'Malley. With tears in my eyes, O'Malley was on his way to a new home over an hour away.

But this story has a happy ending. FCF members Cindi Bardin and her husband, Mark, are taking wonderful care of him. They invited me to their home anytime to see him. Their love for him is amazing. Everyday when Mark gets home, he plays with O'Malley, and Cindi loves him up. He is one happy cat. •



The Cat Rules

[Editor's note: When Bart sent this to me, I assumed he got it off the internet... but Bart avoids the internet. These are actual rules that his cats have taught Bart. I'd say Bart's a good student.]

Doors:

Doors are evil. They are unnatural barriers frustrating the natural curiosity of the rightful rulers of the galaxy—cats. If you repeatedly ask humans to open the door and then stand there, refusing to go through it, they will eventually learn the two primary cat rules of doors.

1. All doors should be removed, or at least remain open at all times. (What idiot keeps closing this door?)
2. An open door is an invitation that no member of the feline explorer's club can refuse.

By far the swiftest way to get outside past a closed door is to begin loudly ripping a piece of furniture to shreds. Older cats should be careful not to over apply this method as they may become airborne during the ejection process.

Heights:

All cats are mountaineers. They must ascend to the highest possible vantage point where they can establish their throne and look down on their domain. Any bric-a-brac occupying these exalted positions must be removed with the aid of gravity.

Training humans:

Most humans instinctively understand their natural role as servants of cats, but some stubbornly refuse to learn or obey feline law. The sound of their possessions crashing to the floor, especially the sound of breaking glass or ceramics is the best way to get their attention and punish them for their sins.

Some humans will actually be audacious enough to attempt to train you. The cat. Really. The best way to discourage this is to completely ignore them. Close your eyes so they know you are denying not only their authority, but their existence. Do this in front of their friends to humiliate them. Even though humans live and even sleep with dogs, they still have pride. Humiliation will discourage their attempts at dominance and they will resume their rightful place in nature—below cats, and slightly above

dogs.

Food:

When humans fail to provide what a cat wants to eat, when it wants to eat, that cat is justified in placing itself underfoot until the human either falls down or steps on the cat. In either case the cat should then emit an agonizing scream. If the human attends to their own injuries or merely pets the cat and still fails to address the food issue, the lesson must be repeated. This is called 'guilt tripping.'

Humans who feed themselves before feeding the cat should be reprimanded by stealing the food off their plate. If the human food is unworthy, the cat should at least lick it or walk in it while flogging the hungry human in the face with their tail.

It is beneath a cat's dignity to consume all their food at one sitting or commence eating from a bowl that is partially full. The remains of a previous meal must be discarded and a new full bowl provided. Humans must learn that royalty do not eat leftovers. If they are concerned about waste, let them eat it, or give it to charity, like a dog. This lesson can be taught by running back and forth between the human and the half empty bowl and doing repeated applications of the guilt trip.

If you feign disgust at the food you are offered, a properly trained human will keep offering you different things in an attempt to please you. Even if you like the food, an occasional protest is a good idea just to see what you might be missing.

Traitors:

In multiple cat households there may be sycophants who will eat leftovers or accept human dominance in other ways. These cats are traitors. They must be ostracized. When the humans are not looking, they should be harassed until they develop neurotic behaviors like coprophagia or regurgitation so the humans will banish them. Of course territorial marking must be increased and this will often convince humans there are too many cats.

Affection:

The best way to get all the affection you want is to deny humans affection when they want it. Then when you want a massage you can just jump on their lap and they will

be so grateful they will do exactly what you taught them for as long as you like. Be careful not to become addicted to these massages, you cannot get them in nature and many humans have turned the tables on cats and become dominant through this addiction.

Litter:

You have complete control over the litter situation. If you are not satisfied with the media, cleanliness, or location of your toilet, stop using it. Persian rugs, shag carpets, sofa cushions, and laundry baskets make excellent substitutes until your human servant realizes their mistake.

Furniture:

The shredding of furniture and paper is the perfect exercise and mental stimulation for the cat. It is essential for territorial marking and very useful for quickly opening doors (see doors) but the human reaction to this wholesome activity is most perplexing. They obviously do not like it. Yet, they never challenge your ownership of the furniture by marking it themselves. Even stranger, just when all the furniture looks and smells the way it should, they remove it and bring in all new furniture. And once again, they do not mark it as their property. So there it sits, all this virgin unclaimed furniture. Do they not understand that a cat absolutely has to find out who owns all that stuff? If they would just claw it and pee on it then that would settle the question. Humans still have a lot to learn about territoriality, as you can clearly tell by watching their television.

Computers:

Computers are a relatively new addition to human dens and humans are very jealous of them. They seem to be some kind of hypnotic device for ignoring cats. They have a mouse that no matter how many times you kill it, it keeps coming back. Humans will spend hours pawing at these things but they never let a cat join in the game. There is no reason to tolerate computers and they should be destroyed by any means. Be careful when biting their tails as they can bite back.

—Bart Culver

Building Baffled Bobcat Bungalows

By Bary Culver

Global warming is giving us all a painful lesson in the dynamics of the heat engine known as climate. Adding heat to the system causes all kinds of unstable and unpredictable fluctuations that present serious challenges to agriculture and animal husbandry—record-breaking conditions of every sort. Storms and floods one year, draught the next. Niños and Niñas, making the jet stream whip around like a snake. This last phenomenon can produce the paradoxical effect of extreme chill factors in formally mild climates. It looks like mild, stable climates are a thing of the past.

Those of us who have exotic animals and who may not be living in the animal's ideal climate to begin with, need to protect them from worsening extremes of every sort. This requires better, more adaptable housing than was adequate in the past. For



most feline species, extreme cold is more important to deal with than extreme heat.

The objective is to conserve the animal's own body heat inside their house. This is done with insulation, thermal mass, baffled doors to reduce drafts, and by making the house small enough. Overly spacious houses are impossible for cats to keep warm and are not comfortable to them. Cats want a small defensible space with a small defensible entrance they can block with their body. Snug is the word, with just enough room so a mom can lie down comfortably without lying on her babies. In cases where the ground can get really cold or even freeze, the house needs a wood floor, which has a trapped air space separating it from the ground. Supplemental heat can be added with waterproof heating pads made for puppies or piglets and sold in pet and farmer supply catalogs like FarmTek. In the case of neonates, these would be essential. The floor should be large enough so there is an area where kittens can get off the heating pad if it is too warm. I build my houses so they sit on a $\frac{3}{4}$ or 1 inch plywood floor, which in turn sits on pieces of treated 4 by

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4 and is not fastened to the house. That way the floor is easy to clean or replace and it can be removed in the summer so the cat can get the cooling effect of contact with the ground or concrete pad.

I also make the door baffles removable to provide better ventilation in the summer. Shown are plans and dimensions for a sim-

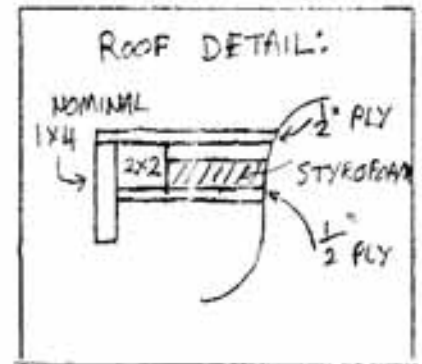
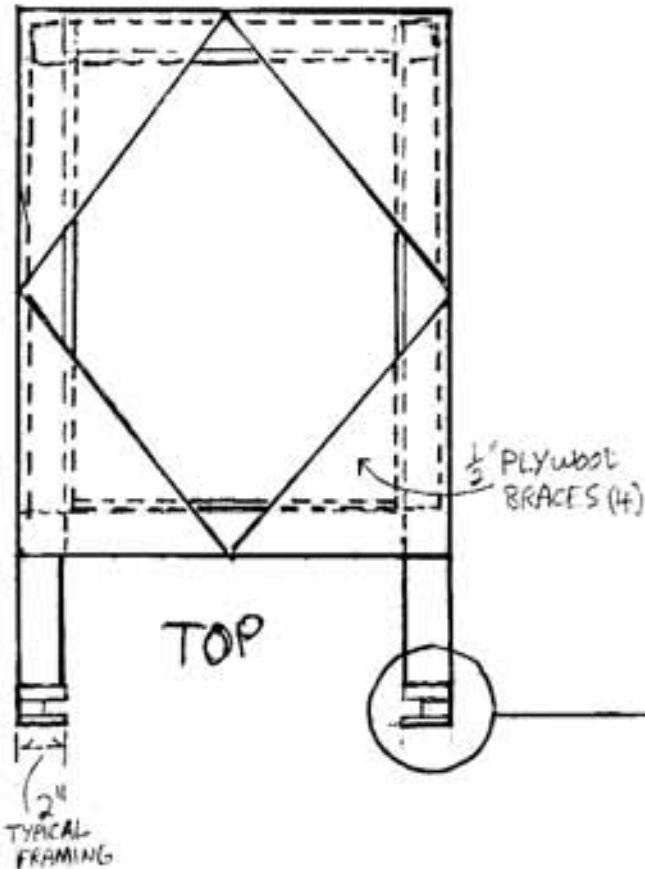
ple house suitable for bobcat, serval, caracal, fishing cat, etc. I frame these houses with treated 2 by 4s ripped in half to make 2 by 2s. The walls are $\frac{1}{2}$ inch treated plywood inside and out. The space between the inner and outer walls is filled with 1-inch Styrofoam insulation. The roof is made to fit down over the walls and is

removable for cleaning and to allow for removal of the door baffle in the summer.

I locate the house under a larger shelter that is part of the cage roof to protect the house from weather and reduce radiant heat loss in the winter and to provide shade in the summer. This way the roof can be flat or gently sloped to provide a nice lounging

HOUSE PLANS WITH ROOF AND BAFFLE REMOVED

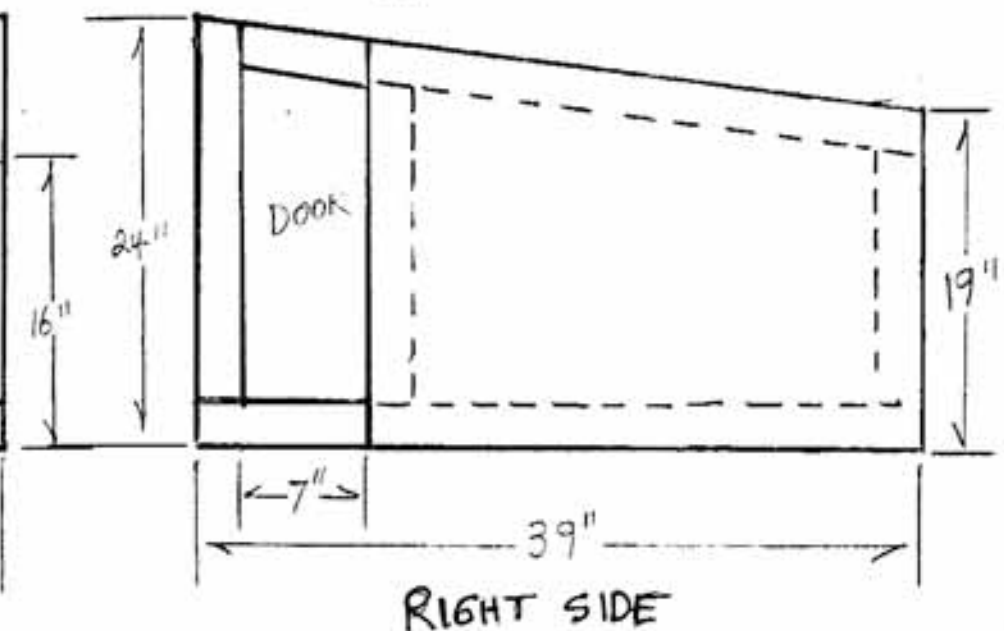
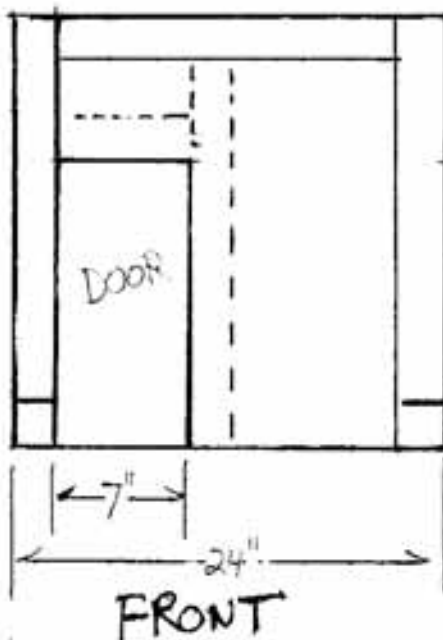
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platform and doesn't have to be covered with roofing material that the cats might ingest. If roofing must be applied, use metal and roll the corners under with a needle nose pliers so the cats won't cut themselves on it.

Birthing houses are more complicated. Some have drop doors to lock the mom out and removable hatches in the back for taking the babies. Most of them have some sort of funny looking pyramid shape on the roof. This is to accommodate small security cameras we got from Harbor Freight. They can be mounted inside a one and a quarter inch inside diameter plastic pipe, pointed down through a hole in the center of the roof. The exact shape is determined by the viewing angle of the particular camera. I choose a floor size larger than my heating pad with the same aspect ratio as the camera (in this case 2:3) I cut a piece of cardboard that size, plug the camera into a monitor and hold it over the cardboard at the height that lets me just see the whole piece of cardboard on the monitor. That is the minimum height the camera must be mounted above the floor of the house. •



Camera pyramid adorns this birthing house.

Going once! Going twice! Sold!

New items at the store: The Savannah Cheetah Foundation DVD with Dr. Antle—listen and watch the video while Nikita tells her story! Watch and listen to Doc Antle tell us about the cheetah chase and his visit to Africa's premiere spot, the Savannah Cheetah Foundation! • Beanie Babies! We have an assortment of Ty Beanie Babies up for auction! • Jahari's Adventure Read-Along storybook and DVD. Listen, watch, and read as you travel with Jahari!

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Hobbyists: Can you make jewelry? Do you paint? Are you gifted with arts and crafts? Need that extra spending money for Christmas? Got a bunch of stuff hidden in that attic? Or in that closet? Don't throw it away! If it is resellable and in good to excellent condition, help supply the FCF eBay store with your items!

FCF Appears at Oregon's Unique Animal Expo

On September 29 and 30 I had the opportunity to represent the FCF at the Oregon Unique Animal Expo. September is the smaller of the expos, with approximately 1,000 people coming through on Saturday and 700 on Sunday. The February show will be the big show, which sometimes sees 3,000 people visit on just Saturday. The expo owner was pleased with our display and has invited us back for the larger show in February.

Though we only signed up two new members, all in all, it was a very positive experience. I was able to talk with many folks and was able to put out the message of private exotic ownership's contributions and benefits. Because this was an exotic animal expo rather than a general animal expo, I think I was spared the attention of the die-hard animal rights activists that we sometimes run into. All the folks I talked with had a positive attitude towards private ownership of exotic felines or were at least politely skeptical. Though it was fun to empathize with the people who already shared our views, it was the skeptics I most enjoyed talking with. Though I cannot say I "converted" all of them, a number of the skeptics came away with a new understanding of private ownership. At a minimum, they were all exposed to a different view of private owners than what they had come to think of before.

Working expos is a new endeavor for the FCF and this is still a learning experience. We have a number of expos coming up in the next months where we can build on the experiences of past expos, and hone our message and communication techniques. If you are in the area where we are working an expo, please come by and say hi—or even better, ask about helping out at the expo. You may or may not feel like an expert, but we are all just volunteers here and your FCF representatives at the show will appreciate the moral support you bring. Besides, you will have the chance to meet a lot of great people and have fun!

—John Turner, Region 1 Director



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Cheetahs, Cheetahs, Everywhere

By Gail Laviola

The journey began October 15. After a long flight from Atlanta to Johannesburg on Delta Airlines, Scarlet Bellingham, a fellow FCF member and I arrived a tad weary. Pieter Kemp, Savannah's manager, met us at the airport and quickly took charge of the luggage and enrichment toys we brought for the cheetahs.

It was nightfall when we arrived at the Savannah Cheetah Foundation's lodge and we were greeted by 15 impala grazing on the front lawn. Before dinner, we were introduced to Pieter's wife, Estelle, and their two interns, Lizzie and Carol. We enjoyed dinner and had a good night's rest.

Bright and early the next morning, we were introduced to the three cheetahs which claim Estelle and Pieter's sizeable front lawn. From the lawn, they gaze at sable and wildebeest as well as horses who roam free. Nala, Jemima, and Nikita came over to investigate us and were very relaxed in our presence. Cameras appeared

immediately and we took many wonderful photos.

Later that afternoon we met the younger members of the family: Tessa, Charlie, Rommel, Matt, and Mufassa. A pregnant cheetah stayed nestled in her house. A birth should occur early in December. At that time, Pieter and Estelle move out of their house and into a small apartment to be with the cheetah constantly.

The box of toys was brought out. We distributed amongst the group 10-inch red teaser balls and 12-inch yellow and purple eggs. Pieter got the games started by tossing the eggs and kicking the balls. It was great fun to see the cheetahs racing about. The afternoon passed so quickly.

We spent time with the cheetahs in the mornings of each of the four days we were at Savannah and it was fantastic.

When the younger cheetah see Estelle, it is a free-for-all as to which one can be pushy enough to get to sit on her lap. Its almost as if she is Santa and the children

are lining up. They all sit as close to Estelle as possible. What a special bond between Pieter and Estelle and their cheetah family! As one can easily see, the relationship is built on love and trust. The cheetah are not leashed and respond to verbal requests.

The cheetah run that Bill Meadows and his team built is being put to good use. They have cheetah runs often for the community to enjoy. I saw three cheetah runs while I was there. One time Tessa actually caught "the prize" before the end. There is a beautiful sign acknowledging the team's work.

We also witnessed the cheetah feeding. Their food is ground, weighed, and logged in and vitamins and oil are added. They dine on horsemeat or wildebeest (when available) and have little interest in either chicken or beef. Ironically, there are local cattle and chicken farms. The cats eat in groups, each with their own bowls, and everyone is quite mannerly. Tessa, the delicate lady that she is, does eat separately as

she is a slow eater.

One afternoon I was kneeling down taking some photos. At eye level, Nala showed an exceptional interest in my T-shirt that had a big cheetah face on it. We all decided that a T-shirt with an impala or a wildebeest on it should never be inside the compound!

The property is quite lovely with frontage on the Vaal River. We rafted around the small islands in the river and saw many goliath herons and other beautiful water birds. I must admit I did nothing but sit back and enjoy as Lizzie did all the paddling. Scarlet got into the spirit and took on the rowing of her raft with Carol.

On a game drive we saw sable, gemsbok, blue wildebeest, and giraffe. There are also rhino on the property.

There is a swimming pool with loungers for sunbathing, napping, or reading.

Although we stayed in the main lodge,



Cheetah plays with the egg Gail brought while Estelle looks on.



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the tents are spacious and are situated around a water hole. You can sit on your private deck and wait for the game to come to you. There is a wooden walkway up to the main lodge.

For me, time at Savannah was amazing. It was a brilliant experience and was a privilege that I most appreciate.

To Estelle and Pieter, thank you for your wonderful hospitality and for sharing time with the cheetahs.

To Bobby Hartsliel, thank you for opening up your home to us, and allowing us the privilege of visiting Savannah Cheetah Foundation.

We said our goodbyes and were escorted back to the airport to begin the next leg of our safari to Little Sabi Bush Camp to view leopards. More to follow in the next issue.

The wonderful memories of Savannah will last a lifetime.

While there, I saw the newly designed website which is www.scfafrica.co.za, so take a look, plan a trip and bring your binoculars, cameras, and bathing suits. FCF will be offering another trip in 2008. •



Pieter and Estelle pose before the sign donated by Bill Meadows and his crew. Read about it in volume 51, issue 4 of the journal.



Gail and Scarlett bond with Jemima.

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A Tribute: Tracy Diane Ellsworth

MAY 31, 1968 - OCTOBER 26, 2007

Tracy D. Ellsworth, age 39, of North Fort Myers, Florida passed away on October 26, 2007. Tracy was born in Fort Morgan, Colorado. Her father passed away when she was 12. Her mother remarried and the family moved to Bonita Springs. Tracy graduated high school, then worked in a deli and taught aerobics. She then went to work for 5-7-0 Shops where she won an award for being the youngest "Manager-of-the-Year" throughout the whole country.

Tracy married George B. Ellsworth 10 years ago in Jamaica. They lived in Fiddlesticks for 8 years, then they moved to 20 acres in North Fort Myers to be with all their animals. Tracy volunteered at many wildlife sanctuaries, but her favorite one of all was the Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary in Punta Gorda. She was in charge of the rehabilitation of all the animals that were brought in from all over the county. She would rehabilitate them and release them back to the wild whenever possible.

This obituary was sent to me just recently about one of our members and one of the special people in my life. As I read it, I had many thoughts. Some thoughts were along the lines of "yes, that was true" or "oh, I never knew that about her." But my main thought was that there was so much *more* to her! Yes, she volunteered at different wildlife sanctuaries and helped with rehabilitation, but it doesn't tell you that she devoted her life to the animals at these sanctuaries. Each animal she touched became part of her family. She often joked

to me that she introduced herself to each new animal as its "official social worker." She, like many of us, spent countless hours, resources, tears, and love on these many animals. She never stopped working for what was best for the animals in her care.

Even as she was growing more ill, she would still work tirelessly at her efforts to help the animals. I was amazed each time I visited her. She often could do more in a day, being unable to get out of bed, than many people could accomplish in years. When she physically could no longer be with all the animals at the sanctuary, she began an eBay store called Satina's Closet, where all of her profits went back to the care of the animals. She was a strong supporter of FCF and when she couldn't attend conventions any longer, she would still support the convention as a vendor. Tracy was strong, caring, and nurturing and loved her animals. She was a very special friend.

Tracy, in sharing her animals with me, gave me experiences that I will never forget. But Tracy, in sharing her life with me, gave me even more.

—Carolyn Clendinen

I had the good fortune to meet Tracy at the 2002 Convention in Wichita, Kansas. In 2003 my husband Bart and I took our last vacation together to Florida. We visited with Tracy's husband, George, and Octagon founder, Peter O'Caron, at the Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary. Tracy devoted herself to helping better the lives of those felines and sadly Tracy was too ill from her Lyme disease during our visit to join us that day. George also drove us to the property they had purchased for their future animal sanctuary. It was 25 acres of native Florida tropical growth, surrounded with an impressive perimeter fence and electric double gate entryway. (I had fence and gate envy.)

Inside were seven well built tiger enclosures meeting Florida Class I cage stan-



dards that were only housing harmless little creatures like raccoon and kangaroo while George and Tracy waited the outcome of a county court battle decision. A zoning battle with the neighbors delayed this labor of love. (See Volume 48, Issue 1, *FCF Member wins County Zoning Victory* on your backissue DVD.) Tracy was an inspiration to me. She was tireless in her dedication to the animals and she found her strength to live though her service to them. She is a lesson to us all about what is really important in life.

—Lynn Culver



The Lonesome Cougar

By Andy Turudic

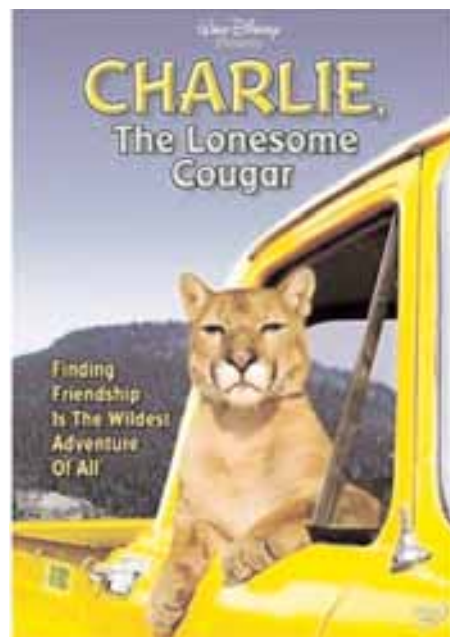
Back in the sixties, the highlight of our week, as kids, was Sunday night, a time when we would gather around our black and white TV and watch (ironically) *Walt Disney's Wonderful World of Color*. One of the episodes that has always stuck in my mind was *Charlie the Lonesome Cougar*, the story of a logger raising a troublemaker-comedic cougar kitten amidst all of the day-to-day aspects of life, which included a job, a boss, and dealing with a troublemaking dog called Chainsaw. Along the way of growing up, we would have family pets in the city where we lived—dogs, hamsters, guinea pigs, orphaned raccoons, and rabbits. The rabbits I would discover much later in life quietly disappeared one day after a neighbor complained to the city.

Fast forwarding to the early nineties, I found myself working in St. Louis as a fiber optics research scientist for SBC. Being an avid car guy, I would always pick up a Nickel Ads type of newspaper to see what kind of donor cars might be available for my next project, having most recently

completed a swap of a 455HP V8 into an Oldsmobile Diesel Cutlass. For some reason, I scanned the exotic pets page and spotted the word “cougars,” re-sparking my childhood wish of having my own Charlie. I called the lady and chatted with her for a good half hour about the cats she had, deciding through the conversation that I did not want to deal with year-old cats imprinted with someone else’s bad habits, particularly with my first foray into keeping such beasts. She understood and told me about a man that had sold her some bobcat kittens, whose queen cougar was about to have a litter.

I called Robert several times, and sent him money to have first pick of the litter. Being a bachelor, I had my own plane back then, so flew down to the southwest corner of Missouri to pick out my 10-day-old kitten, daughter and spitting image of the starring villain in the movie *The Bear*. With the necessary three-hour feedings and warm belly wipes, I took my kitten to work each day, a pretty radical thing to be doing at a conservative phone company’s headquar-

ters and research jewel. With time, people got to know her and our VP demanded that I bring her in during the office Christmas party for all the kids to see. As she grew older, my cougar kitten and I used to fly places together on weekends; she’d sleep



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AMERICAN ZOO AND AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION



though the whole flight, as if my plane was some giant cougar mother with a very loud purr. As a kitten, she used to play with the dogs, having a particular fondness for my black lab, Bart, and not much use for my German Shepherd since she used to bark all the time. That continued until she got to a size where things got a bit rough in play and then tempers would flare.

That winter, I met my only true love, a beautiful, intelligent, animal-loving, biologist. After a couple of months of dating, I decided we had too much in common to let her go, so I asked her to marry me. My new wife was quick to observe that, with both of us working in St. Louis during the day, that my teen cougar could use some company of the cougar kind while we were away. We took a trip to Mexico, Missouri and after spending a whole day looking at the massive quantities of the varying exotic animals on auction, we started to leave home, disappointed that Lolli Brothers did not have a friend for our lonely cougar. On our way out, we spotted a cougar on auction, one being held like a baby as bidding progressed for him. I ran into the arena and bought him. On the way home, I

got pulled over by the state patrol—not for any infraction of the law, but out of curiosity about whom those green eye reflections belonged. The officers were amused and indifferent. Our supposedly lonely cougar turned out to be jealous and territorial, taking a few months to get used to having her new friend around. Our lives were good: newly married, working, three acres and a nice house in the country, great neighbors who let their 12-year-old daughter feed the

cats when we went away for the weekend.

Then the bad luck started. My plane was found by the mechanic to have corrosion in the wing spar, so I had to sell it. We were trying to have little humans, with no luck. Then, I got laid off. In looking for work, we decided that we had to live in a cougar-friendly state. Being an electronics engineer, most of the jobs were in the bay area in California, a state that's very unfriendly to keeping cougars as, I'll say it, pets. After four months on the dole, I found a job in Oregon, a cougar-friendly state, with a company I worked with while at SBC. They remembered me and hired me.

My task, then, was to find a place in the country where we could keep our cats, while the cats and my wife remained behind in Missouri. This continued for about nine months and part way into it, the male got severely ill to where the vet declared his life to be over in a few days. I got on a plane and flew to Missouri, going straight to the vet clinic where he laid dying with a condition where the peristalsis in his intestines had stalled out. We don't know if it was seeing me, or the reasoning I used in trying out a warm washcloth belly wipe every couple of hours, as I did my kitten, to see if I could help him come out of the condition. In any case, our boy bounced back, and returned to his lonely girlfriend, who had missed him dearly during the several days he was dying at the vet clinic.

With severe sticker shock, I finally





Mishi and Mutchka get acquainted through the fence.

found a place, paying for three acres of land what the house and three acres would fetch in Missouri. I designed a house for us to be built on this land, a property that had covenants and restrictions on it with no mention of animal restrictions. One of the requirements set forth by my wife was that my pets have a view of the mountain and valley to the east.

In October of 1994, we set out for Oregon, cougars in the back of a U-Haul to our new home. The cats weren't on the property in Oregon but three days when we got a visit from the sheriff's office—apparently some neighbors had questioned the legality of the cats' presence. He laughed and said nothing was out of order since we had worked with Fish & Wildlife, building a cage to their "cougar and bear" requirements, importing the ridiculously robust 6 gauge chain link from Canada to be fully compliant with the law at the time, not wanting trouble with anyone.

Well, trouble did find us. The neighbors held a secret meeting under the CC&Rs, got clever with interpreting the nuisance clause, and declared the cage to be unapproved on that basis in a letter to us from a lawyer. In shock, we hired an attorney and sued for a declaration that we were legal. After many months of legal wrangling, we lost our case and the judge ruled the cats had to go. I decided to appeal, since the ruling and everything about the logic behind the ruling seemed awfully wrong. Little did

I realize that I'd be spending an average of \$1,000 per month for the next 10 years fighting this lawsuit, not to mention a good part of my waking hours and the erosion such emotional involvement causes spousal relationships.

In late 2001, we got word that we had won our appeal. With that, came the battle of getting the money back as well, so the legal battles continued in arguing amounts, and finally, collecting the awards from those reluctant to pay their share. I got laid off in the summer of 2002, and tried in vain to secure employment in Oregon, where our family home was, and where the cats were happy as well. Two and a half years later, I found work for six months, away from my young family and cats and got laid off again.

Four months later, I found work in Pennsylvania, leaving everyone behind in Oregon. My kids and wife developed severe summer allergies over the next few years, our daughter developed asthma, and our male cougar got gravely ill in 2004. Our girl-cat knew he was ill and treated him kindly and gently as he neared the end. His condition worsened with time and, after waiting to see me return home from Pennsylvania to visit him one last time, died two days later, on my birthday in April 2005. She kept vigil with him that night, knowing he would leave us.

Meanwhile, a couple of our human children were developing allergies to the point

of them being shipped out of state as soon as the school year finished. My wife stayed the next two summers in Oregon, suffering through massive allergies herself, partly to selflessly care for, and to keep company with, our cougar, while I tried to stay working out of state. Mid-summer of 2005, I found myself laid off yet again. I got back on my feet quickly this time, finding work in the bay area in adjacent California, after a mere two months of unemployment.

Even though my wife made an extra effort to spend time with our remaining cat, our cougar would have lonely days and nights, nobody to snuggle up with in her den during cold Oregon winter nights, nobody to body slam in rough play, and nobody to growl at during feeding time. Above all, she was missing a companion of her own kind, and more specifically, a soul with whom she had spent the better part of 13 years.

The spring of 2007 was particularly brutal on our allergy sufferers, with my wife throwing in the towel and declaring she would be leaving the state in late June. With me working out of state and with little to no infrastructure in Oregon to maintain our animals during the summer, and having them in California an impossibility due to the draconian pet-keeping laws there, we were faced with placing many of them in good homes. Our cat, however, was complicated, as we wanted a place where she would not feel abandoned or lonely and where we could visit once in a while to reassure her that this was not the case.

After some research, my wife found a place that was agreeable on these terms. As we got down to the brass tacks of hammering out an agreement for visitation, the organization backed out of allowing us to visit *at all*. Now, days away from my wife's departure, I faced the grim prospect of no home for kitty or losing my job by staying behind myself. After some desperate phone calls, a friend from long ago came up with a situation where her friend's male cougar had lost a lifelong companion, and the idea of having a companion for this lonely guy seemed almost karmic.

While all of this transpired, I managed to find and buy a plane in North Carolina, similar to the one I had years ago, flying it back to Oregon on the July 4 holiday. With the ink barely dry on both the vet health

certificate and the plane's bill of sale, I removed the rear seats in Columbian drug smuggler fashion, and rigged two wire cages inside, one folded up to be used as a transfer cage, the second to hold kitty as I flew her from Oregon to Arkansas in nine hours versus three long, hot, days by truck. Reminiscent of our times traveling when she was a kitten, she was calm during the nine hour flight, with the door being opened to reassure her that all was well during the less busy portions of the flight where I could interact with her. Threading our way between thunderstorm cells in Arkansas the last 100 miles, our plane, with the rear seats removed, landed under the cover of darkness with its cargo, at about 9:00pm, at one of the most notorious US

airports for drug smuggling and CIA covert ops in the nation, the very hub of the Iran Contra affair, and a place with some very nice people.

To eliminate the risk of an escape, we wheeled the airplane into a large hangar, belonging to the best people I've ever run into in aviation, MAC Jet Center. These folks helped us rig the two cages, using tie wraps on the corners to prevent escape, and assisted in the transfer of my cougar from the holding cage to the transfer cage. Since my cougar had a collar, I used a chain that was threaded through the doors of the two cages, forcing her to go along the line of the two cages, versus making a leap into the hangar. The transfer was uneventful, though everyone breathed a sigh of relief

when it was completed.

We arrived at the new temporary home in Mena. A new holding pen had to be built and Bart and Lynn were gracious in providing housing for our cat while this happened. I said my goodbyes that evening and the following morning. She hissed at me the whole time, sensing I was abandoning her there, though not aware how great these folks were going to be to her in keeping her from feeling abandoned and lonely.

So, now, when I am in Oregon, I look over at the cat enclosure for a familiar face, a happy chirp, a friendly kitten roar, from the sentient being with whom I had the privilege of interacting for the past 16 years. She spent her sixteenth birthday without us. I am hoping she misses us after all this time, and that we'll be enthusiastically greeted the next time we visit. My wife and the quads miss her terribly, also looking to the enclosure for a dear family member.

I do have regrets in sending her to Arkansas and wish I could get her back into my regular life. Laws meant to prevent abuse, neglect and profiteering in the animal trade, have pretty much shut down the interstate transport of exotic pets, these being family members for some of us. Other laws, put in place by animal rights maniacs, have not had the proposed effect of keeping animals from being hurt. These very laws prevent the passionate of us from continuing to provide a home and care for our exotic animals—an aspect I was willing to assume as a responsibility, and did so as long as I could.

The prospect of my family's illnesses remains each spring and my employment continues out of state, precluding having my cougar in her beautiful Oregon mountain home. I know she will love the new place and hopefully will find in her new companion a friend she'll enjoy her remaining days with. Meanwhile, I studied hard to get my instrument rating and just got it, allowing me to visit our cougar sometime soon. •

Links from story:

<http://www.ultimatedisney.com/charlie.html>

<http://caselaw.findlaw.com/scripts/get-case.pl?court=or&vol=A95493&invol=1>

http://www.analogzone.com/col_0411.htm



Mutchka is loaded for trip to her final home.

Postscript to the “Lonesome Cougar”

Lynn Culver writes:

When Andy contacted me for help finding a home for his female cougar, I remembered that my friend Julie’s male cougar Taz was lonely after the death of his long-time companion Tela. Julie was looking for an older female to keep him company. I asked Bart to design a cage for Julie and oversee its construction by Julie’s neighbor.

Andy flew into the Mena airport with Mutchka. She was put out at Andy and the change to her world and fasted for four days before adjusting. Then we discovered her true personality, which is that of an affectionate and gentle lady.

The heat was terrible this summer and Julie’s neighbor ended up not being able to build the cage. It fell upon Bart and my shoulders. Oh well, the best-laid plans... We made seven trips to Julie’s to finish the cage project. Finally everything was completed and the day arrived to say goodbye to our new cougar friend Mutchka. Careful plans to load Mutchka were rewarded with a completely successful and uneventful transfer. She was so laid back during the 75 miles drive to Julie’s.

We released her into her new enclosure. Once in her new cage she rewarded us for all our hard work with an ugly and hateful growl and hiss, just like she did to Andy at our place. Taz was nowhere in sight, hiding somewhere in the back of his overgrown habitat. We left feeling a bit sad, but hopeful her mood would brighten. Julie called that evening to report that Mutchka ate without a problem and was quite friendly to her.

Julie reported by email to me the next day:

My big baby is afraid of her. Last night after dark I called Taz out of hiding in the woods. When he walked past her, she hissed and he stopped in his tracks seeing her for the first time. He hissed back and they stared for five minutes just hissing on both sides nothing else. Taz came on past her and nibbled at food and decided to pass on nightly hugs and opted to go hide again.

Today he has been in total hiding. I have called and called. One in ten calls will yield a feeble peep back from him but he is scared to come out. She has eaten well. She loves the extra attention of scratching and rubbing. Tom walked down to meet her. She was less friendly toward him than she was with me but she still trilled and purred and let him pet her too. She is rolling and lolling in her fluffy bed of fresh straw. The weather is perfect for sleeping so she is very relaxed and snoozing. She is fascinated by passing dogs and seems interested in the woods around her.

If I can just get my gigantic baby to suck up enough courage to come meet her I think this is going to work out well.

And two weeks later I received this:

Magic moment today! I fed them at the fence close together as always but today I

brought two small pie pumpkins. After they ate, I gave Mutchka her pumpkin and she immediately olfactored on it then started to play with it. Taz was hypnotized! He moved his face right up against her fence and gave her a big love trill. His presence startled her so she hissed and he hissed back but he stayed there while she played for a long time. I later saw she was lying up against her fence and he was still there.

She loves that pumpkin and was on her back playing with it on her chest right under Taz’s nose. When he walks by she follows him. She apparently thinks he is pretty interesting too. Sometimes I can’t see him coming but she will be looking into the woods where he is on his way up and she is watching for him.

When he had moved away from her in the afternoon, I rolled his pumpkin into the enclosure close to her and she came to her fence to watch him. He has never been big on balls but he came immediately and he just smelled it but then he laid down right there by her cage looking at her. I think he would groom her and be nice but she is still a little scared of him even though she seems fascinated with him. They are going to work great together in a short time. I was thrilled for him to give her his big love greeting that he always gave Teela when they touched. •



SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman



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Vincent Dimaggio is Accredited

Vincent Dimaggio is the latest FCF member to have his facility accredited. Vincent is licensed by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission to hold mountain lions. His G&F officer passed him with flying colors, noting he had followed all the regulations and requirements which were modeled after the FCF model regulations. Vincent was one of the last people in the state to be approved for puma before G&F closed its doors to new permits.

Vincent is no stranger to exotic animals, having many years experience with reptiles and snakes including hot snakes, giving rise to the name of his facility, Venom Traxx. The addition of a young puma to Vincent's animal collection required gaining new knowledge in animal husbandry. Vincent prepared by visiting and phoning Lynn and Bart Culver to gain advice on cage design and construction plus behavior and husbandry insight as Bekera grew up.

Vincent's enclosure is a sturdy structure measuring 20 feet by 40 feet and eight feet high. Vincent used 4-gauge welded 4 by 4 Barker panels U-nailed to 4 by 4 treated wooden posts. The panels and posts are dug into the ground two feet and set in concrete. The roof is constructed of treated 2 by 6 beams.

Bekera's house is built of plywood surrounded by thin brick insuring a sturdy thermal mass structure. Inside the cage is a cus-



tom-built rock pool and waterfall. Vincent says, "I am always doing something. This enclosure is a work in progress." Attached to the exterior wall is a 4 by 8 by 4-foot tall wood framed box covered in the same Barker panels. A slide gate controls access to this trap so that Bekera can be locked inside if need be.

Vincent has the double-door entryway padlocked shut and the 8-foot tall welded wire perimeter fence surrounds the cage at a distance of ten feet in the front and five feet on the sides of and behind the enclosure.

Bekera was hand-raised by Vincent from the age of 6-weeks and is a loving, playful and happy feline. Vincent was able to spend a lot of time with her while she was growing up, as he was off work for nearly 18 months to recover from several surgeries. He is now working full time. Bekera greets him when he returns home with classic cougar whistles, purrs, and thumb sucking. •



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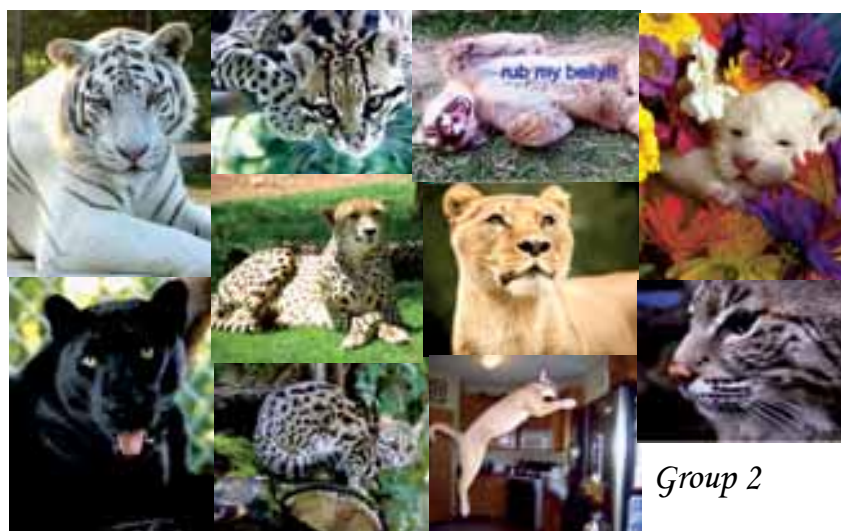
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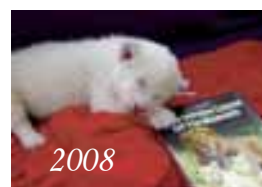
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Blast from the Past. . . . *Dixie—Because He Whistles*

LIOC-ESCF

November/December 1966—Volume 10, Issue 6

By Ron Toyser, New York, N. Y

The Jaguarundi's reputation in zoo circles:

My research, phone calls, and conversations in quest of knowledge about jaguarundis have proved to paint quite a black picture of this small jungle cat. My notes contain such statements as: "particularly vicious," "non-tractable," "cannot be tamed," "must not be kept as a pet," "although most cats (wild) become friendly with their keepers after a while, the jaguarundi, never! They will always strike out at anyone who comes near."

A phone call to the Bronx Zoo (New York) provided: "The jaguarundi is the most difficult cat we've ever had aside from the tiger" and "They are not tractable, not to be trusted and besides there is a law against keeping wild animals in New York State." (Dixie was sitting next to me on the chair when I heard this.) The Central Park Zoo (New York) said, "Although we have never had one, we know their reputation to be most vicious and, unlike an ocelot or margay, they can't be domesticated."

I neglected to ask the Bronx Zoo if they had a jaguarundi now, so a couple of weeks ago I took a trip to the zoo. My roommate and I asked a guard where the small South American cats were and we were told they



A four month old jaguarundi (not Dixie)

had none, only a bobcat and some others (which are not cats at all.) Turning a corner we saw what we thought looked quite a bit like Dixie. The label on the cage said something like: "Jaguarundi—the smallest of the New World cats. Although diminutive in size they are quite savage." We were most anxious to see the cat in action but no

amount of calling, whistling, or hand clapping would wake the animal from his slumber at the back of his large cage.

A few cages away was a guard watching the most attractive bobcat I have ever seen. We decided to ask him a few questions and began with the bob. He told us the bobcat was very friendly and gentle, about a year old and one of the best specimens of this species they had ever had. After a few more questions we asked about the jag.

"That's a real bugger," he said. "Can't get near him, don't even try." After more questions about the jaguarundi: feeding, sleep habits, age, etc, etc. he turned and said: "You got a jag?" We both looked to the sky (remembering what the legality of this animal was according to the front office) and finally said, "Why, yes." He became quite interested as he did not think it would be likely that anyone could live with this particular cat. "Had lots of people with ocelots, margays, and other strange

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animals in here, but never a jaguarundi," he said.

He decided then to show us around his own particular domain.

"Now if I were to want a wild cat, this would be the one." He went into the cage with the bobcat and began to play with him like a young dog. At last, after foxes and something else, we reached the jaguarundi. He put his key into the lock on the cage and the cat sprang to his feet, his ears back, growling and hissing until finally the cat was dripping saliva and shaking with anger. The guard did not go in. "Now this is a good exhibit. We don't keep ocelots or margays very often. They're too tame, like pussy cats," he said. The jaguarundi continued to carry on for a full ten minutes.

Yep, that's a jaguarundi, I said to myself. I had heard the same growl and hissing in my very own living room, although never so intense. The jaguarundi was twice the size of Dixie and would certainly not qualify as the "smallest of the New World cats."

He showed us one more candidate for petdom, probably to get the taste of the jaguarundi out of his mouth, a lesser panda. "This was a lady's pet—she couldn't keep him any more for some reason. This guy wouldn't bite you if his life depended on it." He went into the cage and roused a red, white, and brown bear that looked like something someone had breathed life into from FAO Schwartz.

On our way out of the zoo, we passed the jaguarundi again, still angrily pacing. Jaguarundis don't forgive quickly. This I know. We were almost nervous about going home to our own "savage." However we found Dixie looking down a long hall. After he was sure it was us, he gave a little whistle and came galloping down the hall to tell us he was glad to see us and "I'm hungry."

Everything said about jaguarundis up to now is true. I believe this after living with one. But it is all "more or less." Dixie is "savage," non-tractable, not completely

domesticatable, and not a pet in the true sense of the word. But he is trustworthy if you understand and respect his needs and he is not vicious. I would most certainly steer anyone interested in a wild cat away from jaguarundis.

There are always exceptions and I am sure some LIOC members have had them. I would much appreciate hearing from anyone who has such an exception; maybe I can do better with Dixie. I hope jaguarundi lovers will not be antagonistic about all I have said so far, as I dearly love Dixie and after a period of grave concern, I feel he is my cat and is here to stay. I have had to bend quite a bit, but compared to his adjustments, mine are probably minor.

My friends think Dixie is a loveable pet. I say to them, "Stay around a while and get to know him more intimately. See what a day with Dixie is like."

In the Morning, 7:00 AM

Dixie and his buddy, Rumpus (a small orange domestic) start the day with cowboys and Indians. They're the horses. (Why I haven't been evicted, I'll never know.) Then, it's charge the first person up. I usually hide under the covers until I hear "Cut that out!" My roommate has taken the "attack" consisting of jump-on-the-leg-of-the-first-person-you-see.

A little later, usually when I'm in the shower, comes whistle, whistle, whistle. Dixie is ready for breakfast. "I want to eat now." Dixie gets his morning chicken wing. Soon, however, terrible growls, hissing, and whistles are heard. His buddy has come to watch him eat. I rescue the intruder while Dixie dashes off to the living room to eat in peace. I follow. "No, Dixie, not on the rug." After a bit of soft talk he realizes it's OK. After all, I'm the guy who gave him the wing in the first place. I take the wing. Dixie squeals and trots after me to the kitchen where he finishes his wing, growling lest anyone bother him again.

Dixie, I must explain, has not been

caged or locked up since the first week I got him. I share a good-sized apartment that belongs to the cats as well as to me. Aside from accidents of nature, it has worked out quite well with no serious cat fights, no feelings of partiality and mutual respect all around. He has been a bit destructive and often wets on papers not meant to be wet on. He will not "break" to a box but will always wet on paper. I have learned to be careful about what I leave around.

Afternoon

Dixie's afternoons are usually spent resting either under a chair or on a dresser. The other cats are off sleeping, so Dixie rests. He rarely sleeps during the day. He gathers his strength for later.

Evening

In the early evening, his wicked sense of humor comes on him. He delights in frightening one of us. He will dash up the back of a chair so quickly he scares us, and then he dashes off just as quickly. You can almost hear him laugh as he runs off. Once I saw him making his preparations and decided not to budge. Up he came. I sat still and looked at him. He was quite surprised. Not knowing what else to do he bit me on the arm and jumped down. He has never gone after anyone viciously. This was only a game. When he is eating and another cat is near, I believe he is a "wild" animal, to be crossed by no one. The cats and I have learned this and keep a good distance. When there is no other animal about we can pet him, feed him from our hands, and take food away without more than a hurt squeal.

Late Evening

It is the late evening Dixie which is my favorite. Shortly before bed time he will come into the bedroom if I am watching television and lie on my pillow. Now Dixie is a tractable, lovable, cuddly affectionate pet. Pull his tail, scratch his belly, nuzzle your face against his, look at the size of his claws, measure him, lay your head on him. He just looks at you with big brown eyes and says: "I think somebody's out to give us jaguarundis a bad name." •

Panther Ridge Conservation Center is Accredited

Panther Ridge Conservation Center is a lush sub-tropical home for many exotic felines. The center is located on a ten-acre property in Wellington, Florida, in the middle of horse country; in fact, there is a stable and a few prize-winning show horses that share the property.

Judy Berens is the founder and manager of this facility. Judy has been handling exotic felines since the early 1990s. She credits Jean Hatfield for her ongoing education in exotic cat husbandry believing Jean is an invaluable resource. Judy says, "Jean Hatfield has forgotten more than most of us will ever know." Under guidance from Jean, Judy obtained her first exotic feline, an ocelot. Panther Ridge is currently providing refuge for ocelot, cougar, African leopard, clouded leopard, jaguar, serval, and caracal.



Judy was motivated to help cats in need because of the love she shares with her own cats. Her close relationship with Charlie, her first cougar, led to her desire to make life better for those less fortunate felines. While her first ocelot and cougar were her beloved pets, before long she found herself being asked to take in other people's ocelots and cougars. Then a caracal and a serval needed new homes.

Judy decided it was time to become a publicly funded facility, so in 2003 Judy

incorporated as Panther Ridge Sanctuary. By then Amos, a black leopard, was in residence, as well as CJ and Coco cougars and a pair of clouded leopards. Panther Ridge schedules tours by appointment and offers visitors a unique opportunity to see rare and endangered cats displayed in beautiful and well-kept settings.

Last year Judy expanded her mission again and she is now focusing her energies towards conservation. The facility is now called Panther Ridge Conservation Center.

She is developing educational programs with a strong conservation message and hopes in the future to work toward selective breeding programs of endangered felines.

Panther Ridge facilities are constructed using chain link and metal posts. Innovative designs incorporate peaked roofs for added height; enrichment structures made of wood and logs, and liberal use of elevated loafing platforms.

Enrichment items utilized at the facility include hard plastic tunnels and cardboard carpet tubes. Select treats are hidden up in the trees inside the enclosures. Natural toys are given to the cats to play with, such as pumpkins. Ornamental grasses and plenty of trees and bushes inside the enclosures provide a safe source of shade, hiding places, and fragrance.

The newer enclosures are built using the black vinyl-coated chain link, protecting the galvanized metal from the corrosive effects of concentrated feline spray. The cats have dogloos for houses and also custom built wooden houses, giving them a choice of dens.

Two of the six cougars at Panther Ridge are special felines of Judy's and they actually live separate from the main facility. These fortunate pumas enjoy a fenced-in back yard behind Judy's home where they have access to a pool with waterfall, and plenty of room to romp and play chase.



This compound is constructed of vinyl coated chain link 10 foot tall with a four-foot recurve.

Vinyl coated chain link compounds enclose the facility's clouded leopards. Special attention was paid to this species' need for height and resting platforms and places to hide. Inside the cage is a jungle of plant life, including palm trees. Glorious

magenta bougainvillea bushes surround the enclosure providing fragrance and seclusion for these secretive cats.

The latest arrivals to Panther Creek are a pair of jaguars. Being a water loving species, these beautiful boys have a built-in wading pool and water fall for their enjoyment. Their favorite form of recreation is fishing. Live tilapia fish are caught from the canal that borders Judy's property and released into the jaguar's pool. Judy reports this little known fact—jaguars can swim underwater and hold their breath for up to two minutes!

Security is addressed with 8-foot vinyl coated chain link perimeter fence.

While cold protection, or threats of snow and ice are not an issue, Florida has its own special brand of weather issues—hurricanes can and do strike. In fact, in 2004 and 2005 there were three class 3 hurricanes that hit southern Florida. Hurricane Wilma passed over Panther Ridge in 2005 and the high winds and rain toppled over 29 ficus trees. None of the cages were seriously damaged, but the property's plant life took a serious blow.

When hurricanes are predicted, Judy takes extra precautions. She has the ability to crate all the ocelots, serval, and caracals so they can be temporarily housed in her rock home if need be. The large cats have





solid bunkers inside their cages for severe weather protection, but under conditions that predict more than a class 2 hurricane, the big cats are loaded up in aluminum transport cages and rolled into the garage. A generator on-site insures that should the facility lose electricity, up to 2,500 pounds of food will remain cold in the refrigerators and freezers.

The next phase for Panther Ridge is the expected arrival of a pair of cheetahs to be used in educational and ambassador roles for raising awareness of this species' plight in nature. Hopefully their presence will raise funds for its conservation. A new area has been constructed for them that includes a large enclosed cage and over three acres fenced-in for a running and exercise area. Judy is awaiting final approval for her CITES import permit. •





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The Chance of a Lifetime Lobbying at the Federal Level

By Nancy Nighswander

In the past few years, I have gained experience dealing with legislation at the state level, especially in my home state of Ohio. My husband, Beau, and I own a cougar and a few primates and that is why I volunteered to be the Region 3 Director for the Feline Conservation Federation. I am also involved in U.A.P.P.E.A.L., (Uniting a Proactive Primate and Exotic Animal League) a 501(c)(4) organization with unlimited lobbying capabilities that has hired a lobby team to represent exotic animal owners in federal legislation. I serve as the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. non-human primate representative and I am a member of the board of directors.

The Ferguson Group is the lobbyist firm hired by U.A.P.P.E.A.L. They arranged for an October 1 meeting with the staff of Congressman Rahall, who is the chair of the House Natural Resources Committee, to discuss the Captive Primate Safety Act. This bill was introduced this year as an amendment to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, which prohibits interstate and international transport of the seven big cat species by anyone not exempted. In addition to adding all primates to the list of prohibited species, this bill also rolls in some technical changes to the wording of the CWSA to insure that violators can be properly prosecuted in a federal court.

I was asked to attend this meeting to represent U.A.P.P.E.A.L.'s primate owners and Dr. Sian Evans, a primatologist, was also attending for U.A.P.P.E.A.L. as our primate expert on disease transmission. Even though I have experience with legislators at the state level, the thought of meeting with federal people was a little intimidating to me. But I thought, what the heck, it would be the chance of a lifetime.

Beau and I packed our bags and kissed our monk kids and our cougar goodbye and drove to Washington, D.C. We picked up Dr. Evans at Dulles Airport and headed for our



Dr Evans, Nancy, and Beau.



hotel in downtown D.C. I could not believe the hustle bustle of the downtown area. There were all sorts of people everywhere and beautiful, tall buildings with all kinds of

storefronts and lots of restaurants with outside tables that were full of people eating and having a good time. We ate dinner at a place called "The Front Page" and the food was excellent.

After dinner we walked to the DuPont Circle area. DuPont Circle is a traffic circle in the northwest quadrant of Washington, D.C., at the intersection of Massachusetts

Avenue, Connecticut Avenue, New Hampshire Avenue, P Street, and 19th Street. The name is also given to the public park within the circle, as well as the surrounding neighborhood. The DuPont Circle neighborhood, as a whole, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The neighborhood is home to numerous embassies, many which are located in historic residences, and is located nearby on Massachusetts Avenue in Embassy Row Street. DuPont Circle is served by a transit station on the Washington Metro's Red Line. There is a huge set of stairs that lead from the street level down to the underground station. The whole area is historic and it has a beautiful double-tiered, white marble fountain in the center of the circle which was installed in 1921. Three classical nude figures symbolizing the sea, the stars and the wind are carved on the fountain's shaft. The park area was lined with trees and park benches scattered around and felt very inviting. It was truly a breathtakingly beautiful area. At sunset, we headed back to our hotel. Dr. Evans and I talked a little bit about our meeting the next day then we went to our rooms to try to get some sleep.

The next morning we got up bright and early and got ready for our meeting. We put on our best business attire and walked to the Ferguson Group office building. We

were first meeting with lobbyist Bill Hanka at 9 a.m. at his office for a breakfast strategy session and then we were to meet with Dave Jansen, senior aide to Congressman Rahall, at 11 a.m. There were two aspects to the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. strategy. First, was to dispute any reason for adding primates to the list of prohibited species. Disputing disease concerns would be addressed by our primate expert Dr. Evans, and disputing the public safety issue such as escapes or bite injuries would fall on me. The other mission we wished to accomplish was to present the need for adding an exemption for the non-commercial transport of prohibited species where there was no change in ownership. Adding this exemption would help the big cat owners, primate owners, and the owners of any other species that may be added to the prohibited list in the future, that were not already exempted under the bill. These owners need to be able to move to another state, or to transport their animals outside their home state for veterinary care. We felt that the primate bill is our last chance to amend the CWSA and we knew we had to mention this exemption now or we could lose our chance to talk about it.

During our breakfast meeting, Mr. Hanka explained how these people do not even own a dog much less an exotic animal and they have no concept of what it is like

to be an animal owner. He said to remember that it is totally foreign to them why we would even want to own these exotic animals. He talked about the proper protocol for meeting with a federal staffer and he said, "Don't show any emotion, do not be defensive, and stick to the facts. If you act emotional or defensive, the meeting will be over." Then he said, "Nancy, I am counting on you to run this meeting. If I run it, Mr. Jansen will wonder why U.A.P.P.E.A.L. can't talk for themselves. I want him to hear what you and Dr. Evans have to say." Huh? Me run the meeting? When I agreed to go to D.C. for this meeting I kept thinking that all I had to do was follow Mr. Hanka's lead and everything would be fine. Now, I was the one doing the leading and I felt panic set in. I suddenly felt a hot blast on my cheeks and my heart started to race. I must have looked like a deer in the headlights because Sara Stockdale from our lobby team said, "Now don't worry Nancy, you will do just fine." I took a deep breath, and let it out slowly through my mouth. It was then that I realized that while having a lobbyist firm opens doors and gets you appointments, what everything really boils down to is being a stakeholder—being a citizen affected by this legislation and making an impression that is favorable and convincing. So, I pulled myself together and made a quick outline to guide me through the meeting with Mr. Jansen.

At 10:30 a.m. we caught a cab to the Ford House Office Building where our meeting was to take place. On the way there we passed the White House and followed Pennsylvania Avenue where there were so many historical buildings to see that it took my mind off of the meeting for a little while. By the time we got to our meeting location I was feeling much more relaxed and capable of doing the job I was sent to do.

We knocked on the door to the office where we were to have our meeting. The door opened and there stood Dave Jansen, in blue jeans and a sport shirt. OMG, he was just a regular person like me! We entered the conference room and took our seats at the big table. Dave introduced himself and said he was really booked up for the rest of the week and we were very lucky we caught him for a meeting that day. I told Mr. Jansen thank you for meet-

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ing with us and that I realized how busy he was.

I started the meeting by introducing everyone and told him about U.A.P.P.E.A.L. based on our mission statement. I then handed him a letter that had 150 signatures from West Virginia (Rahall's home state) U.A.P.P.E.A.L. members and supporters who are opposed to the bill. I gave him the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. legislative packet which contained our list of concerns about this bill and I explained our opposition to the bill.

I asked Mr. Jansen why they felt the need for this bill. Mr. Jansen stated that the Humane Society of the United States had made them aware of the threat of disease transmission such as monkey pox, Ebola, and AIDS. Our primatologist, Dr. Evans explained there was no disease threat. She said that scientific integrity is very important in her line of work as a scientist and that this bill totally lacked any scientific integrity. Dr. Evans said there was no basis at all for any fear of disease transmission from non-human primates (NHP) in the private sector. I told Mr. Jansen that I had contacted the Center for Disease Control to see if they had any record of disease transmission from NHP to humans in the USA and

the CDC responded that they had no record of any disease transmission. Mr. Jansen looked at Dr. Evans and said "So you are saying there is no threat of disease transmission?" Dr. Evans looked him square in the eyes and said, "That is correct."

Next, Mr. Jansen mentioned that the committee was worried about the importation of NHP to the US. He said that the committee is concerned about the unregulated importation of exotic plants and animals into the United States and that border controls are a prime federal government function. Dr. Evans and I explained that federal quarantine regulations have prohibited the importation of NHP since 1975 except for scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes and that imported NHP are not permitted to enter the private sector under any circumstances.

Then Mr. Jansen mentioned the public safety issue with bite incidents or escapes. He said that NHP can bite and Dr. Evans said "of course they can, they are animals." I said that "any animal with teeth can bite, including humans." Mr. Jansen agreed. He had a 4 year old child at home that was biting. I explained that NHP are not predatory animals, they are flight animals and if they

escape from the control of their owner they will usually jump into a tree or onto a roof. The owner can usually coax them down and gain control of them without incident. I also explained that most bite incidents involved the owner and that the risk to the public is very minimal. I said that NHP owners know and accept the risk of being bitten when we decide to share our lives with these animals and it "goes with the territory."

We then got on the subject of regulations at the state level and how U.A.P.P.E.A.L. feels that legislation should be at the state level rather than at the federal level. Mr. Jansen wanted to know how many states already banned or regulated and I said all the states except for eight. Mr. Jansen wanted to know how we can enter states that are banned if our vet is in that state. I told him that most banned states have a window of 48 to 96 hours where a person can legally enter the state and leave again within that time period.

Mr. Jansen heard that there were 15,000 privately owned non-human primates. We told him that there was no way to be certain how many there were, but, we felt that number was very inflated and that the ownership of NHP was not the big problem the



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double insurance in case the primate bill loses support. So, this will be another opportunity for U.A.P.P.E.A.L.'s lobby team to propose an amendment to lessen the hardship on families trying to move to another state with their prohibited felines.

After our meeting we all talked outside of the Ford Building for a while and then we caught a cab back to our hotel. We loaded our luggage into our car and went sightseeing for the rest of the afternoon. We took Dr. Evans back to the airport where we had dinner together, then we said our good-byes and she caught her flight home. Beau and I started the eight-hour drive back home also.

I learned so much about legislative strategy from this experience and I also realized how much I love my life, love where I live, and how much I don't want to live in a place like D.C. We are so lucky to have the opportunity to share our lives with our animals and we have to keep fighting to preserve that opportunity, not only for ourselves, but also for future generations. This trip to Washington, D.C. was one of the most memorable experiences of my life and I will never forget it. •



L to R: Lobbyist, Bill Hanka, Nancy Nighswander, Dr. Sian Evans, and lobbyist, Sarah Stockdale

HSUS makes it out to be.

Mr. Jansen asked me how this bill would affect our members. I explained that U.A.P.P.E.A.L. had both feline and primate owners and this bill would hinder our ability to find the best vet care in another state or to move to another state and take our animals with us. I told him that these animals are a very important part of our lives and they are considered members of our family the same way domestic animals are. I suggested that this bill needed an amendment for another exemption to allow interstate travel for non-commercial purposes where there is no change of ownership of the animal.

Mr. Jansen then said that he would recommend to Congressman Rahall that they have an oversight hearing about this bill because he felt that they did not have enough correct information to make an

educated decision. We told him that U.A.P.P.E.A.L. would be happy to supply him with any information he needed from the ownership standpoint and we asked if we could be included in any hearings about this matter.

The meeting lasted about 45 minutes, which is more than the usual 15 to 30 minutes that are customarily allotted for a meeting like this. Mr. Hanka felt that Mr. Jansen was very interested in what we had to say and he was very open minded. The fact that he realized there needed to be an oversight hearing was very encouraging.

During this visit we discovered that in addition to the Captive Primate Safety Act there is also another draft bill being readied for introduction that will be another technical amendment to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act, similar to the amendments in the primate bill. It is



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To learn more or to join using the online membership form visit:

www.UAPPEAL.org

U.A.P.P.E.A.L. has retained The Ferguson Group lobby team and is currently opposing Haley's Act (SB1947) and the Captive Primate Safety Act (SB1498). Your membership and donations are greatly appreciated.



Cougar Development: Tara's Second Pregnancy

By Lynn Culver

Tara was in estrus the entire month of May 1989. Tara became pregnant towards the end of the month and after that she rejected her first litter, Cinni, Arjan, and Sharu, who were only 11-months old.

We walked Tara over to their Big Top compound for a few visits in June and July, but she was very growly and hostile to their overtures of love.

Once the second litter was sold in late September, Tara rebonded with Cinni, Arjan, and Sharu. I could walk her over to their compound for very friendly, purring, mutual grooming sessions. The boys had never stopped loving her.

Excerpts from the daily logs:

Monday, July 24, 1989

Yesterday we decided to move Mercury and Tara to Cougar Country for a visit. Tara was leashed up but wouldn't leave the Cougarama cage until Mercury had. Then once inside of Cougar Country, she immediately wandered down the firebreak and into the woods. We didn't see her at all while we were in there with Mercury. Mercury followed me around and he stuck close. He wanted to leave after about two hours so we leash walked him back to Cougarama.

Tara showed up a few hours later but she was extremely growly and hissy. The presence of the kids and their cries were obviously upsetting her. She would walk up to us and purr then walk over to the Big Top

and growl. We were unable to leash her up because she would not allow us to. She would growl if she saw the leash. We decided to let her stay longer in hopes that hunger would drive her out. This is a very drastic change from her former relationship with them. Bart entered Cougar Country to try to coax her out and she backed over to the tower and growled and offered to bite Bart. It was very dramatic. We decided to wait a few more hours. At dinnertime I found her down the firebreak and she was purry and sweet. We walked back to the gate together but once she heard the kids calling and we got near their compound, her whole mood changed and I was unable to leash her up. At 10:00 that night, there was lightning and it was threatening to rain.

We entered Cougar Country and called for Tara but she never appeared. This morning I found her down in the middle of Cougar Country in the swamp. I called and she answered and after about five minutes came racing over to me and purred and bowled me over. I snapped her leash on and her mood immediately changed. She dragged me to the front of Cougar Country and then stubbornly laid down and wouldn't walk all the way to the gate. I dragged her to the gate and tied her up and got Bart to drag her out the door, whereupon she immediately began dragging Bart all the way back to Cougarama. Once at Cougarama, she ran to her dinner and ate and growled. We feel that this behavior may be an indication that Tara wants to den up in Cougar Country so we will have to keep her out of there while she is pregnant.

Saturday, August 26, 1989

I left for California on August 22. Bart was in charge of the cougars. He reported that Mercury was subdued, not screaming and not asking to go to Cougar Country. All the cougars were gentle and there were no behavior problems, outside of Mercury's depression at my being absent. The weather



Tara and two kittens

turned into a heat wave for the week and the cougars reduced their eating.

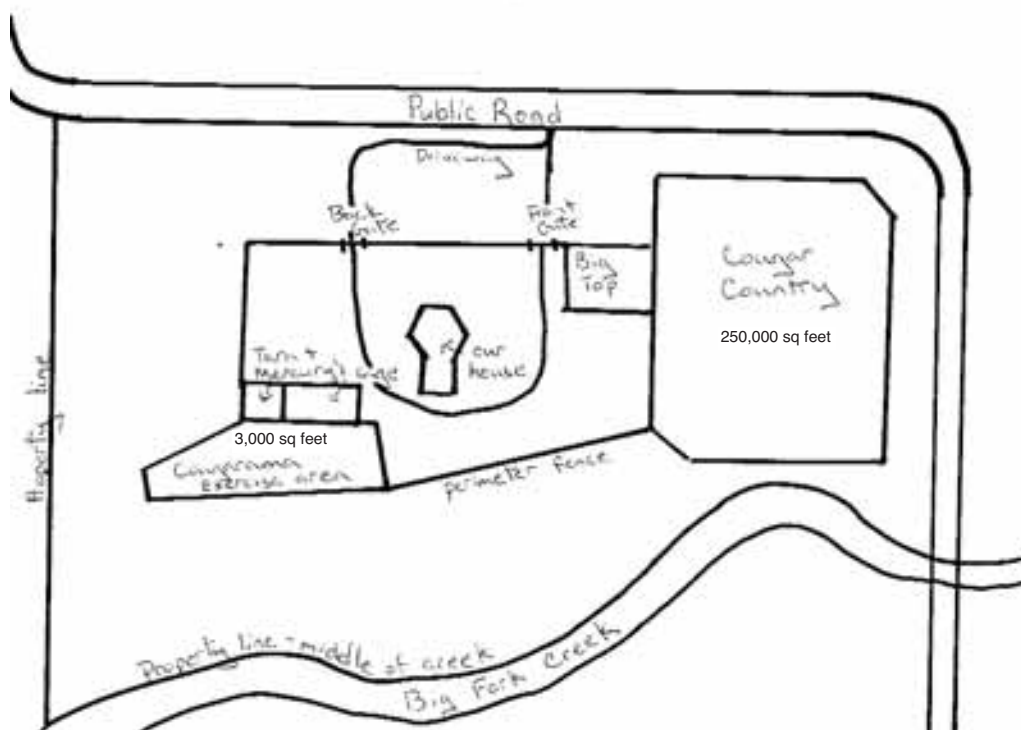
Friday night Tara didn't eat her dinner, instead she buried it. Bart felt this was a sure sign that she would soon deliver so he kept an eye on her.

Saturday evening around 6:30 or 7:00, Tara began her labor. Mercury let out a loud scream, his first since I had left for California, to inform Bart of the event. Mercury then hovered around Tara's nursery attentively, uttering soft supplicating cries, which Tara answered. Bart inferred that as solicitation and reassurance.

Tara had a pinkish watery secretion. Bart felt sure it was not her water; she was only dilated ½ inch. Bart observed Tara have several enormous contractions that actually made her ribs "pop" audibly. She was very serene and appreciative of Bart's presence. After about a dozen contractions about a minute apart, they subsided and she got up to get a drink and walked around.

Bart thought it would be like last time where she would wait all night and deliver in the morning. He left her to fix his dinner and do a few last daily chores. It was dark, about ten in the evening when from inside the shed, about 150 feet away, he heard Mercury screaming urgently. When Bart arrived on the scene Tara was licking her first cub and had already cut the cord and eaten most of the placenta. It was a large male with three stripes on his neck.

Bart noticed a head appear out of the vagina and then slip back inside. It was a dark, round glistening head. He had just read the Cat Owner's Home Veterinary



Simplified map of N.O.A.H, Tara's home (not to scale)

Handbook section on dystocia, and he knew that the cub should not linger in the birth canal.

Tara let Bart inspect the situation but he could not see or feel any sign of the cub. He knew that she had not broken the water sac and he did not want to interfere unnecessarily. He returned to the house and read the chapter on birthing again. It was at least ½ hour from when the cub's head first appeared before he returned. He resolved to stimulate and or assist a normal birth and not invoke emergency procedures unless he observed a green discharge indicating a loss of oxygen to the cub.

Tara was very cooperative. Bart got her to stand and he stretched her vulva while trying to massage the baby down the canal with the other hand. After about 15 minutes the head appeared. He did the feathering maneuver and then grasped the cubs' neck with a towel and gently pulled while Tara pushed. When the cub's shoulders passed through the opening, suddenly it just whooshed out with the afterbirth right behind it. The cub was limp and motionless. Bart put it down in front of Tara who just stared at it. They both thought it was dead. He gave Tara no more than ten seconds and then he pulled the sac off the

cub's face, held it upside down and squeezed its chest. Still very limp, he tow-eled off its face and puffed a few breaths of air into it. It raised its head and started to squirm. Tara stepped in at that point to lick it and eat the cord.

Bart went to the house to get some pillows and returned to wait for more cubs. He crept in Tara's house and lay down behind her. She snuggled up to him, pressed her head against his and purred while she nursed her two cubs. He laid there for hours listening to the cubs cooing and chortling in total darkness. At 2:00 in the morning he awoke to find Tara sandpapering his face with her tongue and purring loudly.

Sunday morning he weighed the two cubs, and each were 620 grams on a spring scale, which enables him to suspend them briefly in a handkerchief for minimum disturbance.

Saturday, September 9, 1989

The cubs are two weeks old today. On Thursday, the male weighed 1495 grams, on Friday he weighed 1545 grams and today he weighed 1620 grams. The female weighed 1370 grams on Thursday, 1395 grams on Friday and 1470 grams today. They have been maintaining the 100 to 150 grams difference in weight consistently. Their daily weight gains have fluctuated quite a bit though, with Thursday's gain of only 25 grams for the female and 50 grams for the male as a low, and a high weight gain of 150 grams in 24 hours for the male and one time high of 100 grams for the female, and mostly a 75 gram daily increase for the female.

Today Tara indicated that she wanted to leave the nursery and go into Cougarama. I opened up the entrance door to the adjoining cage. She left immediately and had a confrontation with Mercury. His initial response was to jump off his tower and approach her, while she laid on her back, pawed his face and hissed and growled at him. This continued for several minutes with a short attack by Mercury.

Mercury left the cage area for the hillside with Tara on his tail. She followed him and goaded him. Tara followed him back to the cage area, and then she entered through the small opening to her nursery to check



Bart launches Sharu into orbit.

on the babies and then returned again to Mercury.

I was standing in the nursery during this time and when the growling started, I ducked my head into the house to check on the cubs. They both squeaked at me, and came running over for comfort. I knew that it was time to take Tara's babies so I closed the small door and locked Tara out of her nursery and I took the babies. They did not struggle. I believe Tara saw me carrying the babies into our home.

Tara needed to be able to escape from Mercury, so I returned and opened the nursery entrance for her. Tara checked inside her house and noticed the babies were gone and then left again. She spent the afternoon on the tower with Mercury and they seemed to be getting along fine after the initial re-introduction. Tara is not making any distress calls for the babies, which is a relief to me.

Monday, November 20, 1989

Today I moved Tara to visit Cinni, Arjan, and Sharu and she stayed for two hours. Lately she begs to be moved first thing in the morning. I heard her while I was typing in the house. She had a friendly visit with the kids.

I visited Mercury in their Cougarama cage while she was gone. He didn't love on me and he barely purred. I was suspicious of his mood. He laid down beside me but I didn't completely trust him—I was on my guard. He laid with his head in my arms, on the hay on the ground, which is his favorite winter sunning spot. He abruptly woke and checked out the sound of Bart entering our house. I took that opportunity to leave him.

Yesterday we let the kids into Cougar Country while Bart chainsawed trees and I dragged brush. They stayed close, watching our work. At one point Arjan visited me and seemed to want reassurance while Bart was sawing. Then he walked over to in front of Bart and began calling at him. Bart stopped sawing, and gave Arjan reassurance also. I believe he was worried about the extent of



Arjan missed lure swung by Lynn.

the change we were making in his woods. Bart has reported that Arjan is very helpful when he is sawing alone. He has asked Arjan to jump up a tree and pull down branches and he has understood and performed! Maybe he felt left out yesterday.

Friday I fed the cougars their first deer carcass. Everybody loved it and there was much growling and possessive behavior. They ate the rib cage—bones and all. Mercury and Tara also enjoyed the deer. On Saturday a friend gave us another deer carcass and head. I gave the ribs and the skin to the kids and the head and neck to Mercury and Tara. The deer fur was a big hit. They plucked it and pulled at it and ripped it to shreds. Their Big Top is full of fur. And all that was left of the deer head and neck was the ears and a lower jaw. Mercury

and Tara ate it all.

Tara has been very friendly with hardly any mischief, though she has not been perfect. The other day she came up to me in Cougarama and I had to grab her collar because I knew she was up to no good. Mercury is back to loving on me like he used to.

Cinni has been very affectionate as usual. Bart visited them in the dark this evening and was seriously loved on and drooled on by Cinni.

The boys still get along with each other well and I really doubt they will ever turn on each other. There is much mutual grooming, purring, and of course, roughhousing.

About a month ago we developed a new game for the cougar kids. It consists of a



Mercury showing some attitude to his sons.

fishing pole, eight feet long, and about six feet of twine. Tied on the end is an eight-inch piece of plastic water pipe. We swing it around and the cougars stalk and chase and jump for it with super gusto. They catch it and then we wait till they loosen their grip and pull it away and start over again. They love that game and chase it 'till they are completely out of breath. The highest I have observed the kids jumping is no more than eight feet, with the center of gravity no more than six feet.

Saturday, November 25, 1989

Yesterday we moved Mercury to Cougar Country. The kids were whistling at him and perhaps to be allowed to be let into Cougar Country. Mercury checked out a few pee smells and then walked over to their compound fence and began hissing and growling at them. Cinni paid the most attention and he was pawing at the ground, trying to dig out into Cougar Country. Mercury and Cinni and Arjan came nose to nose, and I heard Mercury make a sound I have never heard before. It was very much

like the sound of domestic cats when they are mad. It was a deep whirring sound coming from his chest—a monotone pre-cat fight sound. Then Cinni laid on his back and exposed his belly and stretched his back legs and looked at Mercury. He hissed while in this position. Cinni got up and then Mercury laid down and rolled over, away from Cinni. Mercury too exposed his belly. Cinni seemed determined to be allowed into Cougar Country and I really wonder if these cougars could work out their pecking order without serious injury. The kids do not seem frightened of Mercury.

Mercury wandered into Cougar Country and began calling for me. I followed, but was a little unsure of his mood since his growling session with the kids. I called and finally located Mercury, who came running up for a hug and some rubbing. He did not ambush me, which was nice, and we enjoyed a long walk together. When it was time for Mercury to leave, Bart moved him.

Sunday, December 3, 1989

Sharu has been limping since last Saturday. We had moved Tara into the Big Top to visit and in their zeal chasing her around Sharu must have run into the water spigot because when I checked them an hour later the Big Top compound was flooded. One of the cougars had twisted the water pipe and caused the plumbing underground to break.

We did not know who did it at first, but the next day Sharu had a slight limp and we figured it out. But we could not figure out what he had hurt. We tried poking, pulling and pushing all along his front leg and shoulder, but could never elicit a response. I was not very worried as I figured he just bruised himself. But the past three days he has still been favoring his front leg, and it has been 12 days. This morning Bart was very concerned and he managed to determine the problem. He has a hurt wrist. Bart got Sharu to respond when he twisted his wrist. Not much we can do for Sharu today, but tomorrow we will have him X-rayed in Hot Springs. •

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.



FCF Legislation Regional Representatives Report

We welcome aboard Laura Jeffries as the new Missouri state representative, Marsha Hague as the new Wisconsin state representative, Tina Thompson as the new California state representative, and Greg Lyons as the new Nebraska state representative.

John Turner, Region 1: Tina Thompson has been appointed California State Representative. Tina has been an FCF member since 2004, and became interested in legislation upon discovering the myriad of regulations, jurisdictions, and conflicting information that owners of exotic cats must face. Tina can be contacted at tsquaretwo@cox.net.

John reports there is local zoning legislation in Pahrump, Nevada, which is of concern. Zuzana Kukol has been active in education and public relations work in Nye County, working with community leaders, sheriff's department, and the local news media, however the proposed two-acre minimum requirement to possess hybrids or exotic animals passed in spite of widespread opposition. FCF needs a Nevada

state representative.

In Oregon we are trying to get representation on a Fish & Wildlife committee that will be putting together a list of animals that are banned/not banned. Cats are already covered since the department of agriculture regulates them, rather than Fish & Wildlife. F & W wants our representative to have a degree in biology or another animal related field and live in Oregon. The last time this committee met, it took legal action before private owners were able to receive representation. If anyone knows of someone living in Oregon with an animal-related degree that would be willing to help us, please let me know.

John Turner was a vendor at the Oregon Pet Expo. (Read full report in separate account.) John signed up two new members and was able to put out the good word about the positive aspects of private owners to many people, paying particular attention to those who seemed borderline in their opinions. Saturday had about 1,000 attendees, Sunday about 700. The Expo owner liked the booth, and invited us back for the

February show.

Bill Meadows, Region 2, reports: He has been searching for state representatives, but with no prospects at this time. Bill has had some computer problems. He has purchased a new computer and is up and running!

Nancy Nighswander, Region 3, announced: Laura Jeffries is the appointed Missouri State Representative. Laura has been active in Missouri legislation, writing letters, and emails in opposing introduced legislation. She has joined a lobbyist group that will be help for the rights of all animal owners in her state. Laura can be contacted at Laura@exoticfx.com.


Marsha Hague is the appointed Wisconsin state representative. Marsha has been active in Wisconsin legislation, writing letters to the representatives, and does her best to keep aware of any pending legislation. She attends her local town board meetings and attends the annual Wisconsin Conservation Congress in the spring. Marsha can be contacted at marshaha@pressenter.com

Nancy Nighswander, Region 3, continues: Ohio HB 45 has been tabled due to the official opposition by the Division of Wildlife to this bill. HB 45 will remain tabled until Representative Distel can persuade the DOW to support this bill. I don't see that happening unless some major changes are made to the language in this bill.

Wayne Sluder, Region 4, has reported no candidates have been selected; a few leads may bring state representatives on board in the future.

Sara Comstock, Region 5: Sara has been informed by a FCF member of a situation in Maine that a committee, formed by Maine Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, is putting together a proposal to change the wildlife possession/propagation regulations in Maine. Proposed is a stop to breeder permits for any wild felids and no new possession permits, not even for small felids like servals. F & W is in the proposal-writing phase at this point.

Jeannie Baker, Region 6 announces: Greg Lyons is the appointed Nebraska State Representative. Greg joined the FCF in April 2005 and attended the FCF husbandry class in Indiana in early 2006. Greg has been active in fighting state legislation.



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He launched his first website in February, www.NebraskaServal.Com. He states, "It's fair for the government to try to look out for the welfare of animals, but they are overstepping their bounds by dictating to people what kind of pets they can or cannot have." Greg can be contacted at glyons@blue-crow.us

FCF Legislation State Representatives Report:

Missouri FCF state representative, Laura Jeffries reports: She has been working on uncovering all the laws that pertain to exotics in MO, and she has been in contact with the state veterinarian, and the veterinarian in charge of the Animal Care Facility program. She is also working with a lobbying group in MO to keep up with all the inside info they can get on legislation that may be introduced.

Wisconsin FCF state representative, Marsha Hague reports on the public hearing before the Natural Resources Committee (WI Assembly) on AB-342 on 09/26/07: Rep. Sheryl Albers is the author of the bill AB-342. This bill would require registra-

tion only for large felids, but it was very clear that DNR would have authority to promulgate rules such as adding animals to the list. USDA permit holders would be exempt from registering with the DNR, and would be allowed to charge for photographs. She indicated that the issue was initially brought to her attention by a public health official that was concerned about first responders going to a property where there might be dangerous animals.

The second speaker was Jeff Kozlowski of Big Dad's Big Cat Rescue (now Wisconsin Big Cat Rescue.) His primary concern was stemming the tide of cats going to sanctuaries after they are too old to use for photography. He stated that he turned away 210 cats last year. He also stated there is no reason for anyone to breed unless they are part of an AZA Species Survival Plan. He says the two white tigers born at his facility last year were an accident because he was told the parents were too old to breed. (They are now on birth control.) (Note: the mother was 4 at the time of the births, the father was 12.) He acknowledged that there

were some responsible owners, but too many that aren't: "The state has to come up with something."

I was the third and last speaker. I gave each representative an information packet, consisting of a cover letter, one page addressing specific issues in the bill, and one page about the FCF (Statement of Purpose and About the FCF from the website). I did not repeat everything that was in the handout, just said that I wanted to emphasize my two most important concerns: 1) the granting of rule-making authority; 2) the public database.

Random notes: Though Representative Albers is the sole legislator listed on this bill (no sponsors), she is a career politician (and now a lawyer too), and appears determined to push "something" through. She had an answer for everything. Jeff has youthful energy on his side, but seems to lack a clear focus on what should be done.

A more detailed report and documents can be found in the Wisconsin section of the FCF website or the files section of the FCF Yahoo group. •

Donations

The FCF membership and the board of directors wish to offer a special thanks to the following individuals who have made donations to various projects over the past few months. These donations make it possible for the FCF to provide additional funding for special projects, fight negative legislation, and support conservation projects which we might not be able to fund as fully in our annual budget.

We thank these contributors for their special effort and encourage others to follow their example by helping to provide extra funding for those projects that are of special interest to each individual.

Project: General Funding

Liz Hatton

Angela Anderson

Sara Comstock

Project: Conservation

Robert and Sandra Hohn -

Fauna Andino

Lynn Culver - Fauna Andino

Grant:

On Shore Foundation

The FCF appreciates your generosity and continued support.

Betsy Whitlock

Secretary FCF

Announcing FCF eBay "Consignment"

*By Sara Comstock,
FCF eBay Store Manager*

The FCF eBay store can now handle consignments. I know some of you have items for sale on your own websites, your own web stores, and you might also have souvenir shops at your physical locations. I also know some of you are quite handy at making items, have hobbies, etc. Instead of donating your items outright to FCF, you will be able to make a few dollars on your items, especially now, when holidays are fast approaching us!

What is consignment? It is the act of placing an object in the hands of another to sell for you, but retaining ownership until the goods are sold. In the context of a consignment, it is usually understood that the consignee (the consignment seller, which is the FCF eBay Store) pays the consignor (the person with items to sell) only after the sale from its proceeds. A consignment contract will be established between you and the FCF eBay Store. Together we will pick a plan that most benefits you and the FCF, whether it is fixed dollars, fixed percentage, or a variable graduated scale.

Consignment shops differ from charity

or thrift shops in that the original owner retains some of the revenue from the sale, rather than donating the item. Consignment shops are usually second-hand stores that offer used goods at a lower price than new, but we are also going to offer new items at a lower cost than the general public will find in stores and other websites. Merchandise sold through consignment shops can be anything! Anything that can be resold and is in good to excellent condition such as t-shirts, baseball caps, key chains, calendars, posters, note cards, books, jewelry, and toys. One difference is that you will be shipping the item from your location. The winner of the eBay item will pay for shipping. The FCF will place your item up for bid and send you the link so you can watch your item being bid on and sold.

The proceeds you help FCF to net are tax-deductible.

So to recap: The FCF consignment store gives you an opportunity to make some money selling your crafts and inventory plus you get a tax deduction for the portion you donate to FCF!

Send your consignment ideas to FCF-StoreManager@FelineConservation.org. •

Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The Registered Exotic Handler Program was developed to help document the experience of FCF members. In addition it provides a tool for FCF to measure the experience of its members and participants in some way that the general public and the various legislator we come before can understand. It is hoped that the statistical information gained from this program will add credibility to the FCF when speaking to matters of private conservation and private sector keepers. The statistics generated to date are as follows:

There are currently 43 registered handlers participating in the program. There are 28 Basic Handlers with less than 10 years experience and the remaining 15 have 10 or more years handling captive wild felines and are considered Advanced Handlers. These handlers represent 452

years of combined feline husbandry experience. That is an average of 10.5 years experience for each participant. Our participants have cared for or are caring for 22 species of wild felines plus several hybrid varieties. That is more than half of all the species of wild felids in the world. The experience ranges from cats as small as the sand and Geoffroy's cats to lions and tigers. Many members are breeders and educators and some are involved in sanctuary programs as well.

These numbers show that the participants are more than just hobby wildcat owners and are truly dedicated to captive husbandry and conservation. We encourage all of our members to get involved in the program to show their dedication to the cats they care for and their right to continue to do so.

| | | |
|--------------------|----------------|----------|
| Margaret Staley | Advanced Level | 40 Years |
| Phil Parker | Basic Level | 5 Years |
| Shelly Tooley | Advanced Level | 13 Years |
| Tiffany Weisenberg | Basic Level | 6 Years |
| Bettie J. Auch | Basic Level | 5 Years |
| Terri Chuha | Basic Level | 4 Years |
| John Chuha | Basic Level | 4 Years |
| Robert Hohn | Basic Level | 4 Years |
| Sandra Hohn | Basic Level | 4 Years |
| China York | Basic Level | 8 Years |
| Christina Bush | Basic Level | 2 Years |
| Phyllis Parks | Basic Level | 9 Years |
| Mokshu ByBee | Basic Level | 6 Years |
| Julia MacKenzie | Basic Level | 5 Years |
| Kheira Knoop | Advanced Level | 16 Years |

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 this program that members will take the next step and further show their support for excellence in the care of their cats by apply-

ing 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
FCF Secretary

Wanted: Board Volunteers

Director of Marketing:

Promotes FCF, its programs and services and related events through advertisements and other means available. Solicits sponsorship advertising from other organizations and companies for the journal, convention, websites, etc.

Director of Development:

Develops ideas, programs and services to promote growth and fund development including the prospecting and cultivation of donors, sponsors, as well as grant writing and special events, etc.

Both of these positions are important new additions to the working FCF Board of Directors. All board members must have internet access to participate in internet board meetings and discussion list. If you are interested in serving, please send a resume to the FCF Secretary. (See inside front cover for contact information.)

Feline Facility Accreditation Board Member:

Please submit to the FCF Secretary a letter with your name, contact info, number of years of hands-on experience you have with the husbandry of exotic felines and the type of experience, i.e. breeder, exhibitor, employee of another facility, etc

List all that apply:

- species that you have worked with and approximate number of cats
- any other qualifications that you feel make you qualified for this position
- a statement that you agree to the following confidentiality statement:

I agree that I will maintain all information obtained or involved in the accreditation process in a confidential manner and will not disseminate any information without the prior written consent of the applicant.

Committee members serve two-year terms that are staggered. The accreditation committee's sole purpose and power is that of approving/denying accreditation applications; suspending, revoking, placing on probation, and reinstating accreditation status; and making suggestions to the FCF board of directors for needed changes within the accreditation program. •

FOCUS ON NATURE® *Insight into the lives of animals* **MARGAY**



Draped elegantly across a loosely-supportive branch of a moisture-laden evergreen tree is the beautiful, spotted margay (*leopardus weidi*). Sounds of the forest penetrate his consciousness ending his daytime nap. As the slivered moon rises, casting faint shadows through the thick vegetation, this small, 8-pound wildcat stretches to limber his lithe body and ready for the nightly forage. Arboreal prey sense the danger and scurry about. Monkeys scream their alarm calls while tree-dwelling rodents disappear quickly. The cat spots slight movement and a furry mass hanging in the canopy high above. It's a slow-moving, three-toed sloth and, like Pavlov's dog, the margay's mouth begins to water. With large eyes to see in the dark, flexible tarsi and toes for maneuverability, and a long, thick tail to maintain balance, this adept predator moves sinuously through the leafy, moss and lichen-covered branches with ease and stealth. There

are challenges to catching a sloth, he soon remembers, and this wily opponent proves to be more than the margay is willing to deal with. Perhaps some other small mammal, or rodent, reptile, or bird will be easier fare tonight.

In studying this solitary wildcat, radio-telemetry helps conservation biologists measure range sizes and hair snares to determine the cat's presence by analyzing hairs rubbed onto a pad infused with feline-attracting scents such as men's cologne and catnip. Occupying deciduous and tropical forests here in Mexico, extending through Central America and into Argentina, it appears the little-known margay prefers native forests from the mountains to lower-lying swamps but will occasionally inhabit mature coffee and cocoa plantations. Deforestation reduces the margay's choice of habitats while his beautiful, spotted pelage makes him vulnerable to illegal fur trade.

Education, nature conservation, and responsible eco-tourism can help overcome these threats to this wildcat and a myriad of other species.

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 awareness blossom, starting with a visit to the local zoo, conservation programs there along with organizations such as Small Cat Conservation Alliance, can garner support needed to study these elusive cats. Ultimately, conservation through understanding benefits all.

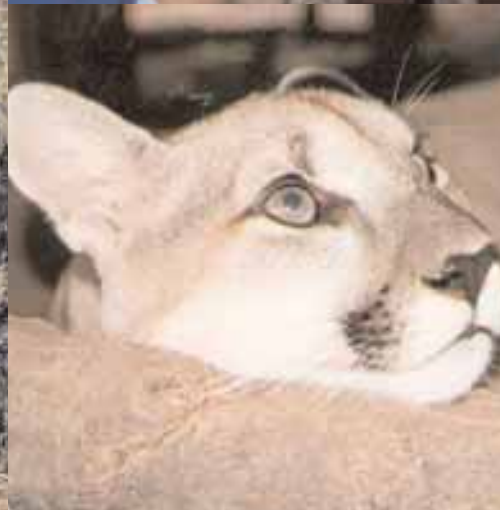
© 2007 Rochelle Mason. Rochelle Mason raises awareness about endangered species through her paintings, columns and traveling exhibits. Her wildcat paintings and prints can be purchased through www.Rmasonfinearts.com



Your best Shot

Counterclockwise from top:

Jaeger the caracal levitates onto fridge—Teresa Shaffer • Christian Mikusevich gets a head butt from his bobcat, Kisa • Blitz the Siberian lynx chases his Belgian Tervuren friend through patches of snow—Mace Loftus • Cougar at Cindi Bardin's home—Robert Hohn • Kelsee and Hummer exchange kisses—Teresa Shaffer





White lion from the calendar by Zoological Animal Reproduction Center. See ad inside this issue to find out how you can enjoy 12 months of white lions. Photo by Dawn Cloutier-Jones.

FCF Upcoming Events

Wednesday, July 23, 2008, Husbandry Course. 8:00am-5:00pm. Myrtle Beach, SC. This husbandry course is run in conjunction with the FCF national convention. This 8-hour course is a must for the responsible private owner. Topics include regulations, nutrition, caging, contingency plans, natural history, and more. More information in the next issue.

July 34-26, FCF National Convention. In Myrtle Beach, SC. Reserve your vacation time! In addition to the regular excitement, we'll visit Doc Antle's T.I.G.E.R.S. (The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species) Preservation Station. There we will meet some of his animal ambassadors. We will learn about the unique training that his animals receive and how it enhances their lives. We will see tigers and ligers chase after a mechanical lure, cheetah-style. You will also learn about T.I.G.E.R.S' commitment to the animals in the wild and how these animals benefit from the outreach.

