

# Feline

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

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**Cover: James E. Broadus with his high-content Florida panther, Dani. Dani is 3½ years old yet only 70 pounds. She was re-homed to James at the age of two. It took Jim the better part of eight months to establish this bond. Background: Dani again.**



## 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.

Letter from the President .....	4
Training Tigers .....	6
Flying Jets vs. Training Big Cats .....	12
New Accreditation Committee Member .....	13
Emergency Preparedness .....	13
Long in our Memory: A Tale About Zoos .....	14
The LoCATor: A Radio Tracking Collar .....	15
Bobcat Love .....	20
Convention 2008 .....	22
Information on Convention Accommodations .....	23
Tiger, Tiger, Burning Bright .....	24
Building a Refrigerated Commissary .....	26
Wildcat Safety Net Fund Guidelines Approved .....	28
Meet the New Board Members .....	28
How are the Margays Doing? An Interim Report from Brazil .....	31
Ulcers in Cougars .....	32
What is Wild and Free? .....	34
Blast from the Past. . . Cascade Branch, May 1972 .....	36
From the Blast to the Present: A Commentary on the Featured Blast from the Past .....	37
U.A.P.P.E.A.L. Announcement .....	38
Meet the New State Reps .....	40
Update from Fauna Andina .....	44
The Sad State of India's Tigers .....	45
FCF Board Meeting Minutes 1/7/08 to 1/14/08 .....	46
FCF Board Meeting Minutes 1/24/08 to 1/31/08 .....	47
Focus on Nature® .....	50

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Feline Conservation Federation

## Letter from the President

### *The Future of FCF*

We are into our 52<sup>nd</sup> year as an organization and my second year as president. I have great expectations that with just another couple of years of hard work and dedicated volunteers FCF might succeed in reaching a far broader audience. It is my goal for FCF to gain the understanding and support from the media, the general public, the feline community at large, and very importantly, the legislators.

Last year I had to lead the board through troubled times, including a revote of the general election, the withdrawal of the two secretary candidates, necessitating an appointment to fill that position, and the resignation of two life directors in July that left the board short handed. All of this has taken a toll on my time and my ability to expand the FCF.

FCF needs a full team to reach its full potential and I have been doing double duties for most of my term as president. So I am most pleased to announce that the board has appointed Robert Bean as our marketing director and Deborah Rabinsky as our development director. Both bring professionalism and dedication to the board and a healthy dose of new energy and enthusiasm. Please welcome them as your newest FCF representatives and share with them your ideas about advertising and programs.

FCF legislative teamwork is paying off. The Field Director program celebrated its first year. Sara Comstock, director for region 5, stepped down after doing a tremendous amount of start-up work for the program. Thank you Sara for your efforts in helping to organize and gather resources for the program—job very well done. The FCF board of directors will appoint someone to fill this vacancy. Members who live in the northeast states are encouraged to volunteer. Volunteer even if you do not have cats; that is not a requirement. What is required is an ability to work with other members and act as a coordinator for the state representatives appointed for your region.

The regional directors will be meeting with the FCF president, vice president, and the legislation, conservation and education directors at the March Wild Feline Husbandry Course at Tiger Safari Zoo in Okla-



homa for a weekend of planning, training, and organizing. The level of dedication of the FCF volunteers who have accepted these field rep positions is greatly appreciated and is what makes FCF so special. When we give, we go all out! I encourage all FCF members in nearby states to attend

this Oklahoma husbandry course and take advantage of the opportunity to meet with the board of directors and field representatives.

The regional directors have chosen the first five state representatives. This journal issue contains articles from these volun-

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teers—Laura Jeffries, Missouri; Becky Barker, Kentucky; Greg Lyons, Nebraska, Tina Thompson, California; Marsha Hague, Wisconsin. We need more state reps and we need you to step up to the plate. This program can work, but it takes your involvement to fuel the engine of success. Greg lives in a closed state, but the man has a dream and he has taken the first step and created a web site, [www.nebraskaserval.com](http://www.nebraskaserval.com), to inform and gather the oppressed citizens of Nebraska into a united voice for legislative reform. I would love to see other informational web sites hosted by every state rep. What a great way to find people and network.

In legislation, the FCF organization is the leader. Our representatives have met with officials in Ohio, West Virginia, Missouri, Oklahoma, and North Carolina and in each case our professional approach is gaining the desired results: animal rights backed bills are not moving forward.

In conservation news, the FCF approved another Conservation Grant request. \$2,000 has been awarded to Fauna Andina in Chile, South America to fund the caging and supplies to establish ex-situ conservation breeding of guinea for eventual reintroduction in the future. Since basic ecology and biology aspects of this small feline are unknown, investigation in this field is one of the project goals. This effort could be the difference between extinction or conservation of this endangered species in the next decade. Fauna Andina is an educational facility that offers rural schoolchildren and teachers a rare opportunity to learn about ecology of native species. Fernando Vidal, who visited us in Dallas at last year's convention, runs Fauna Andina. Both injured and orphaned guinea have been sent to the facility because it has the necessary government licenses to embark on a captive breeding program. With FCF funding, federation members are now stakeholders in this epic journey 'to go where no man has gone before.'

Speaking of captive conservation, I am proud to announce the FCF board has appointed Karl Mogensen to the Feline Facility Accreditation board. The five-member accrediting panel consists of some of our most experienced members who are ready to review facility applications, so let's put them to work reviewing yours!

In education, the husbandry courses con-

tinue with one planned for March 15 in Tuttle, OK. Arrangements are being made for a course in North Carolina in May. July will host a course in conjunction with the FCF convention at Myrtle Beach, SC. FCF has been invited to hold a course at the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. Expo the end of August in Hot Springs, Arkansas. We need more certified course instructors. If we do not recruit you to fill this need, a great program could be stalled out. Don't let this happen to the FCF. Get involved. Have you already taken the course? Then why not take the next step and become an instructor? FCF needs you.

The FCF web site has been stagnant for the past year. Our members-only section remains broken, online membership applications and registration forms are not user friendly, navigation has become cumbersome. The World Wide Web is our single largest advertising opportunity and a good working web site is vital for growth, for conservation education, for public relations, and for legislation activism.

FCF has been fortunate to have the free use of its present web site code from Irene Satterfield, but our needs have outgrown it and the board has decided it is time to own its site. Instead of purchasing just a marketing site as proposed last fall, the board hired Eagle Web Designers to completely rebuild the FCF web site to meet our broadening organizational needs. This is a major financial investment in the corporation, but FCF will finally own and control its web site. The FCF site is also our working database and a vital part of membership services and improvements are planned for these areas as well.

It will take a bit longer before the new site is ready to go live, but I look forward to

this opportunity to update our message, offer easy joining and donating features, and for our members, to provide a fully functioning members-only section with membership database, easy to find corporate forms like the registered handler and facility accreditation, and an active legislation section to keep everyone informed and active.

Please set aside some time to enjoy reading another award-winning issue of the FCF Journal. Of all the projects I assist with, working with our editor Mike Friesse to help compile our organizational publication is my favorite. In this issue you will find valuable articles on tiger training, conservation of tigers, and an update on the FCF supported margay research in Brazil. Read member stories of bobcat-inspired conservation and of zoo animals teaching conservation. Get emergency prepared and meet our FCF state representatives. All this and more, thanks to all the photo and article contributors and most importantly, thanks to our editor who puts it all together and gets it out on time. Way to go Mike!

And finally, I wish to brag about our upcoming convention in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. If you have never been to convention, now is the time to attend. Not only do we have a great location at a top notch, beachfront resort, staying in unique villa lodging, and promising super speakers, we have a private visit to T.I.G.E.R.S. Preserve operated by FCF member and internationally acclaimed animal trainer, Doc Antle and his staff. Trained tigers, lion, lynx, elephant, orangutan, birds of prey... need I say more? See you there.

—Lynn Culver

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Thierry Plaud

# Training Tigers

*By Thierry Plaud*

I have been an Air France Airline pilot for 19 years and am still learning on every flight. To be employed by a major airline, you need to already be a professional pilot, multi-engine and instrument rating qualified with about 1,500 hours on your log-book. Before accepting you, the airline will check you both on your piloting skills, personality type, behavior under stress, ability to work within a team, physical shape, and

who knows what else.

Then your real training begins with your first commercial airliner type rating and line training. During the first 3-4 years you are constantly put under pressure both by the job and the airline. After this—if you are still there—you begin to understand what it is all about but it will take you about ten years to really become a proficient and skilled airline pilot.

During your entire career you will be

checked three times a year both on flight simulators and during actual flights and pass your annual medical check. If you fail one of those checks, you are given a second chance. If you fail a second time, you have to find another job.

Of course during your duties you will have to face difficult or marginal situations where you had better make good decisions quickly if you do not want to make the first page of the newspapers...

I am sure that you are wondering what is my point here and how this is related to the FCF.

Let's imagine that I receive an email from a mister nobody, recommended by one of my esteemed colleagues, asking me something like: "Hello Thierry, I have had some limited experience of flying light twin engine jet airplanes and would be very interested if you could give me a two-week intensive course about flying your heavy Boeing 747/400, just a healthy base so I can see what it is really like!"

No kidding! I would surely assume that it was a bad joke and answer politely, "no way!"

Well, I did exactly this with an expert on something that is as difficult as flying big airplanes but seems for some reason underestimated by a lot of people. If I tell you that this field is the training of tigers and the expert is Bhagavan "Doc" Antle, world famous animal trainer, then you probably are becoming more interested!

Doc's initial reaction was exactly the same as mine: a very polite answer (but only because Lynn Culver had recom-

mended me) clearly meaning, "you are out of your mind, just forget it." But to my surprise a few hours later I received a second email asking me when did I wish to come to Myrtle Beach, SC, his main training ground. I am sure that Bhagavan knew what he was doing but I am still not sure why he did this; he had everything to lose and nothing to gain from my visit. I could be a troublemaker, not to mention the possibility of an accident that would likely put him out of business and I could absolutely do nothing positive for T.I.G.E.R.S. (Doc's company) except maybe teach him a few French words.

Bhagavan was performing a show near Boston, MA and I proposed to fly there for three days to meet him face to face, see what kind of training he was doing, ask questions about my stay and also get a feeling of the animals there. My various internships had already taken me around the world working in various types of facilities (zoos, wildlife preserves, sanctuaries, educational facilities) with more than 20 different felids species and only two of them (the Lion Park of Johannesburg, South Africa

and the Cheetah Outreach of Stellenbosch) did have animal training departments but this would be my first experience in a place solely dedicated to animal training.

I was welcomed by Doc the evening of my arrival and quickly introduced to the cats (all leopards and tigers including the 2 month old cubs seemed to consider me as a nice big mouse ready to be eaten) and offered a good meal in Doc's truck. Much to my surprise two baby orangutans shared the place and seemed very happy to meet me. I explained my projects to Bhagavan and Mokhsa (the trainer of the two babies), asked numerous questions and was invited for the following day to watch the show both from the public area and from backstage. I did exactly this the next days. This is when I started to notice the similarities between the training and my own job: both look very easy when practiced by experts and most of the time the trainers seemed very relaxed, but I noticed dozen of small actions that had to be done at a very precise moment: the way to place yourself according with the tiger, to position your hands on the leash, to move at a certain pace, to talk or stay silent, the visual circuit of their eyes, etc. At this point I realized that it was an extremely complex activity: my estimation was that it would take a decade to master it, and this was confirmed to me later by Doc. Fortunately my goal was not to become a master trainer but just get a healthy base so as to be able to perform safely basic presentations of small to medium size cats to the public. I wanted Bhagavan both to assess my ability to do this and give me that healthy base (I would practice later at home) because he might very well be the best animal trainer in the world.

After discussing all this and my projects he graciously accepted and we managed to find two weeks compatible with our hectic schedules at the beginning of December.

I arrived in Myrtle Beach on December 1 and was welcomed by Doc, presented to the staff, visited the facility (this included the safety procedures) and introduced to all animals including 50 tigers (age 4 months to 18 years), a lion, seven leopards, two bears, four lynxes, six wolves, a binturong, various birds of prey, alligators and crocodiles, and a female African elephant named Bubble.

I made my very first mistake that day: Bubble seemed very interested in me so I

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talked to her and gave her a handful of fresh grass that she ate with great pleasure. A few minutes later Doc casually mentioned that elephants live in matriarchal groups and Bubble's group was the people working here: in other words she was in charge. Since I had given her some food, she would likely expect me to do that in the future and may become aggressive if I did not follow her expectations. Lesson number 1: if you do not know an animal and are not instructed to do something, just don't do it! In my own job this would translate in "do not apply your own procedures, use the ones you have been instructed to by experienced people."

Apart from Doc, I was instructed during my stay by two senior trainers: Rajani and Chris. Both are completely different characters. Rajani is a short beautiful woman radiating energy (she has a background in yoga and martial arts) and always ready to explain and teach while Chris is a very tall and strong guy extremely relaxed and introverted, so I had to question him constantly. (Sorry about the trouble, Chris.)

Both have more than ten years of experience with adult big cats. Chris is in charge of the husbandry while Rajani's focus is on young animals. If you met either of them in your local town, there would be no way to know that they are truly extraordinary people,

and this is something that I noticed a long time ago with my colleague pilots: all of them are very different but seem very "normal" when you meet them outside of their cockpit. During one of our long conversations, Doc explained to me that the selection process is quite hard: from the 400 inquiries he gets every year only two or three are accepted and most of them initially coming to train for a few years with him (the minimum is two years) will never be good with animals and quit within the two years.

To become a good trainer you need three things: an ingrained love of animals, a good connection with them, and the tools and



experience to train them. Unfortunately the only thing that you can really be taught is the latter. Once again this is exactly the same process to become a pilot: you have to love flying, an instinct to do it safely and correct training. Unfortunately a lot of people imagine that you only need to have the desire and love to train big cats and everything is going to be all right: this is just not true!

Coming back to Rajani and Chris: Interestingly, both do not consider themselves as trainers but as “senior handlers.” This put things in perspective: I have no doubt that any of them would be hired as senior trainers anywhere, but the standard is very high at T.I.G.E.R.S. The reference is Bhagavan and it helps a lot to keep your self-esteem low: Bhagavan admitted to me that it took him ten years to understand his first tiger, and he is one of the most gifted individuals that I have met! This self-denying is also very common among pilots: you will often hear things like “there are no good pilots, only old pilots.”

The training sessions of the cats mostly

consisted of walking them on a leash in various environments, but also making them perform specific exercises like running unleashed, jumping on some places, or behaving correctly in the presence of other animals. This helps them to be comfortable with unusual situations, trust their trainers, and keep them from becoming too territorial. Most people think territorial instinct in cats is related to a place. In fact the territorial instinct is related to a biotop, which means not only geographical territory but also the different species and individuals living there and the interaction between the place, the cat and the other inhabitants. The territorial behavior is naturally triggered when the cat begins to intimately know and master every situation and place, constantly bringing changes partly prevents this behavior and reinforces the passive dominance of the trainer.

Training an animal is building a bridge of understanding between you and the animal and this bridge is achieved by obtaining a reliable behavior from the animal each time you ask. This is a very fundamental

notion that is misunderstood too often: you need the three legs of the tripod: the understanding of the animal by the trainer, the understanding of the trainer by the animal, and the reliability of the behavior. If any of those three things is missing, then you cannot call it training.

Coming back to the training sessions—they are definitely a teamwork: walking young cats took three people, walking adults cats between three and five people, running the tigers five or six people. I also can relate this to my job: there is no way to fly a big airliner alone and you rely very much on the skills of other people, from the other pilots, to the mechanic, to the commercial crew, to the people loading your cargo, to the air traffic controllers.

This too is very often underestimated: some people think they can safely own and train a big cat alone and this is strictly impossible. I particularly felt this while taking some pictures of tigers running unleashed at full speed. I had chosen an angle where they were running directly toward me and the visor of my Nikon cam-

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era made them appear even bigger than they actually are, so when they were closer than ten yards I just saw those enormous cats and had to completely trust my trainer friends to divert them with meat from running directly to me, which would have been very uncomfortable to say the least.

Another example was when a leopard refused to go back to his enclosure

(I only witnessed this once during my stay.) it would have been impossible to move him safely to his habitat with only one person.

To participate in those sessions without danger, I had to get the cats used to me, which I did by spending as much time as possible and constantly talking to them while cleaning the cages or participating with the feeding. I clearly saw the difference between the very first day (I was considered by every big cat as a nice big meal) and the day I left. Nearly all the cats I spent some time with chuffed cheerfully when I approached. Nonetheless I would not have approached any of the adults closely without Doc around, no more than I would have flown a completely new aircraft without an experienced instructor.

I also had to learn the basics of walking the cats on leash. Doc has developed his own method and I did not find it easy to learn. Rajani and Doc helped together and did not hesitate to point out each mistake. This is the very same method that an airline instructor uses at the beginning of the training.

In fact, I did not know it letting me approach and walk some of the cats was a major bending of Bhagavan's rules. Newcomers are normally not allowed to touch any animal before about a year. This sounds harsh, but this way the animals can get used to the person, his motivation is being tested, and he learns all of the theoretical aspects of training.

During my stay I enjoyed my time and had an almost family-like feeling because the people were so friendly and eager to share with me. I also learned tons of things, but I still would never consider myself a trainer.

Finally, the goal of this article is not to deter anyone to live his dream. But if you do consider getting a big cat from the Panthera family (lion, tiger, leopard, or jaguar) and want to have safe hands-on contact with him during all his lifetime, then just

consider it as you would if you decided to become an airline pilot:

1. Be prepared to spend ten years of your life learning.
2. Be ready to commit: this is something that you have to do professionally (spend most of your time and spend most of your money on the cat)
3. Be sure that you have the right type of mind and personality to do it. The only way to be sure of this is to go and spend some time with skilled and experienced people.
4. Seek good instruction: never ever expect you will be able to figure things out by yourself. This would only set a path to dis-

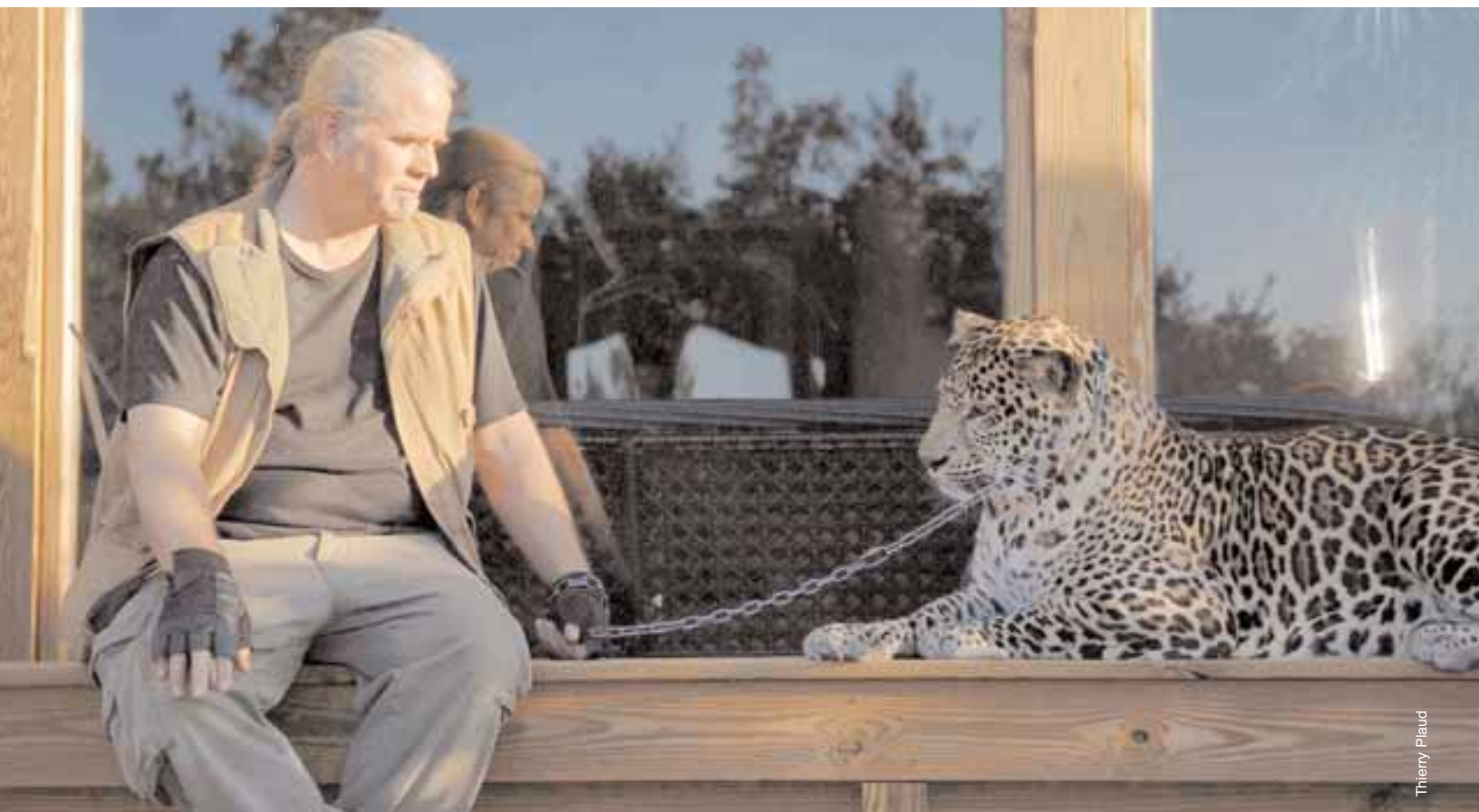
aster.

5. Expect the best, but always prepare for the worst.

I hope that all this does not sound too boring or moralistic. Just take it from someone who does not pretend to know much about cats but has been very lucky to have been allowed to be at the right places with the right people, someone who is just like you: with a few wildcats at home and a will to learn more.

Cheers to everyone and special thanks for Rajani, Chris, Moksha, Rob, Jason, Mark, Kheira, and of course, my friend Doc Bhagavan Antle. •





Thierry Plaud

## Flying Jets vs. Training Big Cats

*By Doc Antle*

There are several different reasons I decided to accept Thierry Plaud when he solicited me to do a two-week internship so he could learn more about big cats.

First and most importantly, he had dealt with life and death situations for more than 20 years as a commercial airline pilot and as a professional rock climber and instructor. Secondly, Thierry is in great physical condition. He is exceptionally strong and agile from a life of personal physical discipline and exercise.

These qualifications gave me a degree of assurance that he was not your average crazy fool who wants a big cat. Thierry was not going to be someone who was going to stumble over his own feet or be unable to take directions and not understand the mortal danger that improper activity with big cats can create.

I hope that after a two-week period of internship a person will gain the understanding that they actually need at least ten more years to figure out the process. I think seeing us work lets a person realize that

only a highly trained team of professionals can properly train and handle adult big cats out in the open, as they traverse the human environment.

I also attempt to show people how an individual tiger can carry many positive and negative traits. If you have expectations of a tiger regularly producing behaviors like on

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ZAOA web site: [www.zaoa.org](http://www.zaoa.org)

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a film set or a live show, then you will certainly need multiple tigers to accomplish that task. On the films we've worked in like *Jungle Book* and *Dr. Doolittle*, three to five tigers regularly play the part of one individual tiger.

Another reason I wanted Thierry to visit was to ask him to write this article about flying commercial jet airliners and training tigers. I have been an amateur pilot for 30 years. I have a hobbyist's understanding of how to fly helicopters and single engine aircraft. I have landed and taken off many, many times in a wide variety of aircraft. I have a greater degree of flying experience and knowledge than the average person.

Yet I have nowhere near the experience and knowledge of a professional commercial airline pilot, like Thierry. I have enough experience to know I am qualified to only risk my own life in a plane. I am certainly not qualified to fly a commercial jet airliner. I have absolutely no business to risk the lives of a 747 full of passengers, or the lives of the public on the ground below. I have used this comparison over the years because it illustrates a parallel concept that I often try to explain to people when they tell me they want to own or handle big cats.

Training and handling big cats is just as specialized and dangerous a profession as flying commercial jet airliners. Each one involves a set of circumstances and situations that must be experienced in order to fully understand it.

Because of the dangers that are an integral part of the complex nature of flying commercial passenger jets, and the many areas of knowledge in which a pilot must be proficient, it is something that only highly trained professionals are allowed to do.

In that sense then, training tigers and lions is no different than flying commercial passenger jets. Danger is an integral part of the complex process of working with, training, and handling big cats and other dangerous animals. There are many areas of knowledge in which a big-cat trainer, just like a jet pilot, must be proficient and backed up by a team of highly qualified assistants. It is not good enough to be simply proficient; one needs to be an expert whose knowledge of the situation is second nature and whose actions and reactions are virtually instinctive. •

## New Accreditation Committee Member



The FCF board of directors welcomes our newest Accreditation Committee board member, Karl Mogensen, an FCF member since 2004. Karl is the founder and owner of Natural Bridge Zoo in Virginia.

Karl attended Cornell University for two years, majoring in poultry science. He left school to marry and raise a family. Karl was employed as a New York State police officer from 1962 to 1968. During this time he also operated his Adirondack Animal Farm.

Breeding exotics and dealing in zoological animals then became his full time profession. Karl moved his family to Virginia, bought 25 acres and built a zoo from the ground up. The Natural Bridge Zoo opened in 1972. Karl's zoo exhibits cougar, African lion, Siberian and Bengal tiger, serval and caracal, as well as giraffe, zebra, camels, many species of antelope, and seven kinds of cranes. His zoo employs ten people and is open eight months a year. The zoo hosts about 90,000 visitors each year.

Karl is experienced with designing and building enclosures for the large and small cats and has visited many zoological parks and animal facilities throughout the country. •

## Emergency Preparedness

In February 2007 FCF member Steve Salton and myself completed the AZA Advances in Animal Keeping course in Wheeling, WV. The course was designed for zoos but we use this information for the safety of our animals.

We learned the importance of being prepared for emergencies. The zoo I volunteer at hosted the FCF Basic Wild Feline Husbandry course and one of the subjects was contingency planning and the importance of having a well-defined written plan.

The zoo owner printed emergency guidelines on flip charts and placed them in public view. (Our USDA inspector loved this.) We invited the local fire department to tour the zoo for safety night. They brought their families and were excited by the safety practices. The highlight was the lion Mufasa seeing something bigger than him, a fire truck.

At home we invited our neighbors over to tour our habitats, most never knew we had animals. One of our neighbors is a supporter of HSUS and they do not believe in zoos, but they respect us for having relationships with our animals and not just keep them locked up in a cage.

We made a photo album with 5x7 photos of all our animals with handling techniques. For example, this is Max, a coatimundi, to handle him use gloves, a net, and transport cage. We put this in an unlocked mailbox marked with "First Responder," so it is a quick reference for emergency personnel.

Keeping exotic animals is a responsibility we do not take lightly. For additional resources see, FCF Basic Wild Feline Husbandry manual, and AAZK's (American Association of Zoo Keepers) Animal Keepers Forum Nov/Dec 2007.

—Robert Hohn

# Long in our Memory: A Tale About Zoos

By Cathryn Hilker

The old man had already lived nearly as long as his paternal grandfather, who died at 98. Now, in the year 2065, he waited for his great-grandson to return from school. The door slammed, and the little boy ran toward him.

"Grand-dad," the boy shouted, "look at my new book." He climbed up on the old man's lap and held out his treasure. "What is this on the cover?"

The old man took the book. "Why, that is an elephant," he said.

"What is an el-a-fant?" asked the boy.

"Well, when I was a boy, we had elephants in zoos. My mother used to take me to the zoo and I could watch the elephants take a bath. I could feel their breath and I even touched one."

The boy looked astonished. "A zoo," he said. "What is that?"

"That is a long story," the old man began. "A zoo was a place where young people like you could see animals from all over the world, and you could learn about them."

"I want to go to a zoo," said the boy. "I would like to watch an el-a-fant."

"They are all gone now," the old man said. "Oh, there are a few in Africa and perhaps a few in Asia, but none in this country. And there are no more zoos. We are not allowed to have zoos any more."

"Why?" asked the boy.

"They told zoos that it is cruel to keep elephants."

"Was that true?"

"Of course not. Everyone who worked at the zoo loved their animals. They gave their entire lives and careers to the animals. They cared for them every day."

"You mean like mom takes care of me?"

"Exactly, and for about the same pay," the man chuckled. "My mother worked at the Cincinnati Zoo. She loved it. She brought animals home back then. Cheetahs were able to run then and people were allowed to watch. It was great and the cats loved it."

The boy reached for the book. "There is a cheetah in this book," he said, finding the right page. "Did you get to see cheetah too?"

"Indeed I did," answered the man. "I grew up with ferrets, ground hogs, owls,

skunks, cheetah, mountain lions, and lots more."

"Wow!" exclaimed the boy, "What a great time."

"Yes," the man replied, "it was a great time. I didn't realize how great. Neither did a lot of other people. First, they came after the elephant because Cincinnati loved its elephants. They knew if they could take the elephants, the rest of the animals would soon follow. They said that zoos could not care for elephants. But they could."

"Who were they?"

"The 'experts,'" came the reply.

"But I want to see an el-a-fant," the boy said, "I want to go to a zoo, I want to see what you saw. Why can't I?"

"I guess nobody fought hard enough for what the animals tried to tell us. I remember

my mother used to tell me that the cheetah loved running and she thought they even knew why they were running. It was to save their own kind. And they did—at least back in 2008."

The boy looked puzzled. "2008," he said. "That was a long time ago."

"Not as long as you think." The man paused. "Take your book now, I hear your mother calling you."

The boy slipped down from his great-grandfather's lap. The book fell to the floor and opened to the cheetah. The old man looked at the picture. He smiled as the sound of racing feet and loud purring filled his memory. •

*Cathryn Hilker has worked for 43 years at the Cincinnati Zoo, where she started the Cat Ambassador Program.*



Great-great-grandmom Cathryn and cheetah Sara.



# The LoCAToR: A Radio Tracking Collar

Teresa Shaffer

**Jaeger the caracal showing off his LoCAToR in his natural environment.**

*By Mike Friese*

The following real-life nightmare was experienced by Alise Tucker in November 2007. (These internet postings from Alise are reprinted with her permission.)

*Our two servals are missing from our home. They were in an outside run and the door, which was locked, was pried open with the lock still on it. I am hopeful that they will come home if they got away and were not taken. We have been looking all day on foot and horseback. We will keep checking tonight with a flashlight when they may be easier to spot. Please keep Oscar and Nala in your prayers, we are just sick over them being out there somewhere. I will not be able to sleep. I will be*

*up all night checking out the area around their pen and I have let all of our neighbors know.*

**Day 1:** *One of them was spotted yesterday about a half mile from home. All of the neighbors in that area and a half mile beyond have been advised. This is a small town and people want to help. So I am optimistic they will show up. How far away do you think they would go? Are they territorial in these situations and might stay close by? It will be cold tonight, that may encourage them as well to reach out to someone.*

**Day 2:** *We set two traps last night and will go out to check them soon. It is very good to know they probably will not go*

*very far. The radio station is starting to talk about it this morning and I have personally spoken to everyone within a mile of my house and in the area they were seen another 1/2 mile. I am so sad, but feel better now that one was seen, I am remaining confident.*

**Day 5:** *Nala was spotted and we almost caught her, she was determined to not be caught. I am hopeful that food will motivate her in a day or so. But we know that she is in the area. No spotting of Oscar since possibly the day they left. It is possible if someone was trying to steal them that they got Oscar and Nala got away.*

*We have set four traps, plus a neighbor set another on his property adjacent to the*

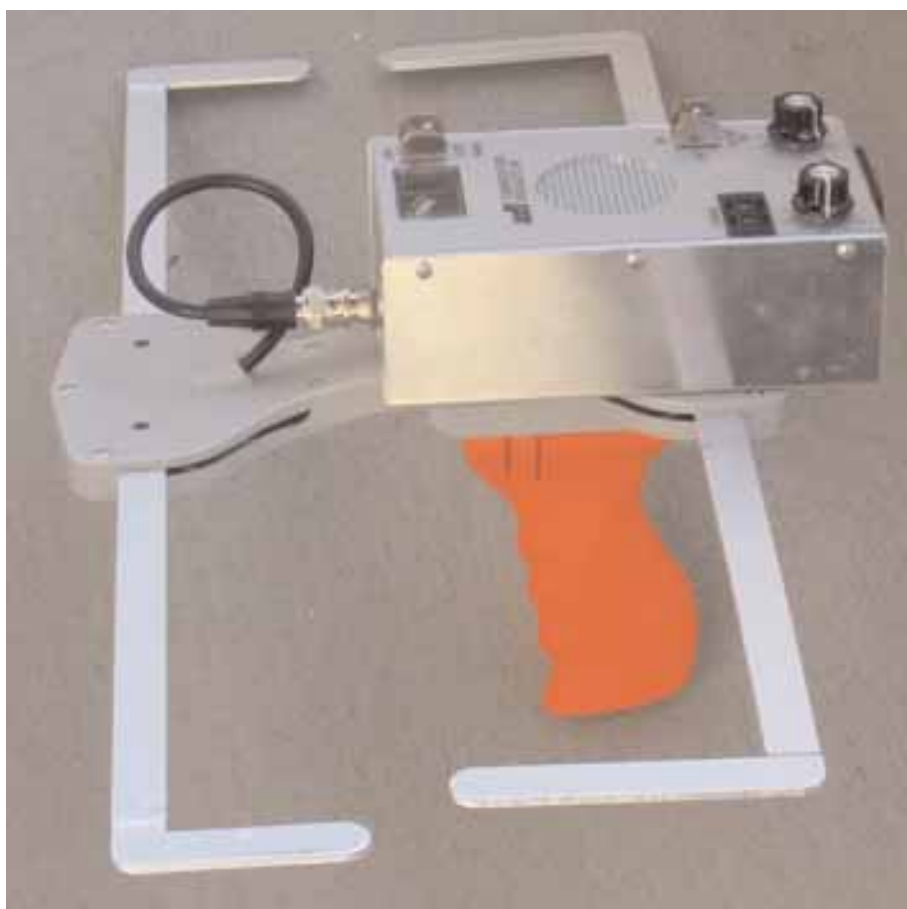
place she was seen. Altogether there is about 500 acres of woods, so I am sure they do not need to get out on the roads. Maybe that is good, maybe it means they will not be seen. I hope they will go to someone's place when they are hungry.

I am just so sick over it I am beside myself. Tomorrow is my 50th birthday and all I care about is getting them back. Thanks for all your help and thoughts and please keep up the prayers. God looks after all of his creatures. It is unbearable to think of them out there alone and hungry and maybe hurt. It is simply unbearable.

**Later on Day 5:** One of the wayward twosome has been apprehended: our female, Nala! A neighbor, where she has been spotted a lot lured her into his basement and I went over to get her without incident.

The other one is still out there or was taken in the trauma. Please keep up the prayers and positive thinking for Oscar. Today is my 50th birthday and I am blessed with this beloved gift!

**Day 7:** Oscar is home! Fabulous news, Oscar came home all by himself! We heard the dogs barking all night and the smell of a skunk and we checked with a several million candlepower spotlights and nothing. At 3:00AM the geese in the pond were going crazy. This morning when we went out to check, he was in his cage, door still open.



**\$250 PR-100 direction finding receiver. The antenna elements fold for storage.**

He smells like a skunk so he has been out practicing some sort of interspecies relations (interesting cross to consider?). He was missing one week almost exactly to the

## A Technical Look at the LoCATor Transmitter

The LoCATor transmits about fifty 25-millisecond pulses of carrier frequency every minute. The output power is a miniscule one milliwatt but it travels far because of its very narrow bandwidth.

The LoCATor antenna is formed by three thin silver threads woven onto the collar. cursory tests indicate that the field strength is independent of the cat neck size.

The LoCATor can transmit on at least 100 unique frequencies which requires a frequency synthesizer design rather than a fixed crystal or fixed PLL. The frequency synthesizer chip takes the fixed frequency from a temperature compensated frequency oscillator and using a divider and frequency-locked loop, generates almost any needed frequency.

Each time the LoCATor is powered up, the frequency synthesizer parameters are loaded by the microcontroller. The microcontroller is a low pin count eight-bit Microchip PIC. Between beeps, the microcontroller powers down most of the circuitry to minimize battery drain. The battery is rated at three volts at 180 mAh, so there's not much energy there. Still, the LoCATor will run for about 30 days on this battery. •



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**Range of upstairs cat. Cat was positioned at the star.**

hour.

*Thank all of you so much for your prayers, well wishes...and advice. This was one of the most upsetting events of my life and those of you who know me know that is not an insignificant statement. Feeling helpless and that not only something you love, but are responsible for, is potentially hurt, stolen, or hungry. It is more than a sensitive person can bear.*

Alice Tucker was lucky. Some escaped cats end up as prey, get injured, are shot by neighbors, or die of starvation. What if Alise, upon realizing her servals were gone, could find out which direction they went? She could have reduced her search to a day.

When a cat is lost, the thing that often comes to mind is, "I'd give anything to get my cat back." Does \$50 a cat plus \$1 a month (plus the cost of the receiver) sound like too much to find out where they went?

The LoCATor is a radio-beacon which can be used to track animals up to 1/4 mile or so. Unlike typical bulky wildlife transmitters, the LoCATor can be worn unobtrusively by even small adult cats.

The LoCATor is about the size of a stack

of seven quarters but it weighs only 1/3 ounce. The antenna is invisible as it is woven into the fabric of the collar. Break-

away and non-breakaway versions are available for smaller cats. There are collars for large cats too.

The LoCATor is powered by an inexpensive CR2032 lithium coin battery. This battery is said to last 30 days. Communications Specialists sells 12 of these batteries packed onto a monthly reminder card for \$20. A quick look on the internet will find these batteries for about \$1. Digi-Key offers them for \$0.35.

If your cat is ever lost, you use the companion directional radio receiver (\$250) to locate the cat. Set the sensitivity switch to "Long." If the cat is within range, you will hear a distinctive beep-beep. If you get a strong reading, try switching the sensitivity to "Med" or "Close." Adjust the volume so the meter swings to the 3. Standing where you are, turn slowly 360°, noting where the indicator needle shows the strongest. Walk in the indicated direction for a dozen yards and do another sweep. Soon you'll be able to interpret the signal changes so you can follow the signal as you walk.

To acquire proficiency using the LoCATor, I installed it on an old recently-neutered domestic tomcat, Bosco. Bosco and I live in a typical suburban neighborhood. I always assumed he stayed pretty close to home but the LoCATor showed



**Range of downstairs cat. Cat was positioned at the star.**

otherwise. I tracked his signal to three different city blocks. The LoCATor showed me that he ranged up to 550 feet away. In all cases, the directional signal was very strong. (One time when he was hiding in a metal storage shed, the signal was weak but readable even though I was close.)

One day, Bosco came home without his collar. Normally when a cat loses his collar, it's gone forever. In this case I easily tracked it to the middle of a large expanse of lawn in a neighbor's back yard.

Since Bosco did not push the range limits of the system, I devised a test to help characterize the range of the system. During afternoon cat sleepy-time, I walked the neighborhood with the receiver attempting to find the limits of the signal. The transmitters were installed on two different cats, transmitting on two different frequencies, and located on two different floors at my house. Both transmitters were on the 222 MHz ham band. As I walked the neighborhood, I logged the reception on the transmitters on a map. For the purposes of this test, I only counted signals which were strong enough to fix a direction.

I found that in a suburban environment the range varied from a couple of blocks up to quarter mile. Occasionally I would get a whiff of a signal from longer ranges. I also

noticed times when the signal did not appear to be coming from the direction of the transmitter. This is probably caused by reflections from metallic objects. A short walk in any direction would often give better results. This shows that one should take regular fixes when tracking a lost cat.

If an escaped cat is too far away to be detected, a quick drive through the neighborhood will almost certainly pick up a whiff of his signal.

Up to 50 cats can be tracked on the ham bands and 50 cats can be tracked on the wildlife-only band.

Even when a cat is at home they sometimes become invisible. Rather than searching high and low, just turning on the receiver and hearing a strong signal is assurance that the cat is near. And that's what the LoCATor is about: assurance and insurance. •

PR-100 receiver and antenna: \$250  
LoCATor transmitter with collar: \$50

*Communications Specialists, Inc*  
426 West Taft Ave.  
Orange, California 92865  
Phone (800) 854-0547  
<http://www.thecatlocator.com>



**Transmitter test configuration 1:**  
Bosco attempts to maximize range by forming additional dipoles.

## Licensing the LoCATor

The LoCATor is licensed by the FCC on the 218 MHz band for use with wildlife. "Wildlife" in this case may be any exotic or indigenous species, captive or free. Wildlife does not include any typically domestic animal whether captive or free. You cannot use the LoCATor on your domestic cat or dog with one exception:

If you hold a Amateur Radio License of any class, you can have the LoCATor transmit on the Ham 222 MHz band. The 222 MHz version can be used to locate exotic, indigenous, or domestic animals... anything. Some people even use it to locate model airplanes and rockets. (I do not think I have ever seen a rocket with a cat collar, though.)

The Amateur Radio Technician License is the easiest one to get. It requires a 35 question multiple choice exam plus payment of a \$14 test fee. The exam covers basic regulations, operating practices, and electronics theory. Morse Code is not required for this license. The license is good for 10 years.

If you use the 222 MHz version, it will transmit your ham radio ID every 10 minutes in compliance with FCC regulations. •



**Transmitter test configuration 2:** Dakar (right) attempts to maximize range by capacitively-coupling to his domestic friends.



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# Bobcat Love

*By Christian Mikusevich*

Where do I begin? I can still feel the humming of my beater car through the seat as I drove down the endless highway. The wind was smashing through my window and burning my eyes. Of course my air conditioning was broken. I had a slight ache in my eardrums because the music coming from my stereo system was trying to drown out the howling of the wind that was trying to cool me down. It was the longest trip I had ever taken and yet the 17 hour venture to N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center had a silver lining. It was only the start of what would become a lifelong journey.

Two and a half years later, Kisa (pronounced key-shuh) sleeps on her wooden shelf in her 400 square foot enclosure, oblivious to the snow scattering around her. When I watch her resting peacefully like this, I often try to remember the similar, positive times of her growing up in our house. But most of the time I am consumed with laughter at the negative, yet hilarious moments we have had with her. If I walk away with one thing, at least it will be that when recalling past moments, the not so good times can always be laughed at later in life. For instance, when she was five months old and decided the towel we had just used to clean some raw chicken was going to be hers. She strutted around the house, dragging it between her legs, but the moment we approached her to snatch it away, she would cry and growl as if to say “finders keepers.” Or the time Kisa tried scooping out the fish from our aquarium. We quickly learned that bobcats and aquariums don’t mix. Or maybe the numerous times Kisa greeted strangers by sneaking up behind them, springing up and wacking

them in the head, and then running off. I remember when Kisa decided my mother’s head was going to be her victim. It just so happened that at the moment of pouncing, my mother was on a very important phone call. Or maybe the time Kisa concluded that standing on the balcony, reaching out across the foyer, and batting at the chandelier was great entertainment. Although at the moment her antics were a pain in our side, today I can chuckle while reminiscing about such times.

Kisa grew up just like any other household animal. In fact, she might have received more attention than the average pet. I live with my parents while attending college, so that made it slightly easier to raise her because the attention we gave her was dispersed from all of us: my mother, father, brother, sister, and me. She had her times when she had full run of the house and times when she was put away for her “naps.” Of course she hated those times and really never slept a wink. On days when I knew I was going to be away and no one else would be home to let her have some run-around time, she made a special trip to Aunt Suzie’s house, where she would get some extra love from her and her family, and romp around with the dogs and cats there. My Aunt Suzie had a special place in her heart for wild cats, and I appreciate every moment that she spent with her. I hope that she realizes how grateful I am for that.

One thing is for certain: time flies. And here I am sitting outside of her enclosure. Although the freezing wind is chilling me to the bone, I cannot help but be still and just soak up every moment I have to watch her. I get chills up and down my spine, not because of the bitter cold sweeping around

me, but because of the thought that there are people out there this very instant trying to destroy moments like these. They are trying to destroy how great it feels to see Kisa whistle to me with excitement when I approach her, or how great the brush of her fur feels across my cheek.

What about the people that come to meet Kisa for the first time? For a person who has never before seen a wildcat up close and run their fingers along her coat, that is the essence of what private conservationist should be striving for. In that brief moment of contact, that person is not only touching the fur of the wild cat, but is touching nature as a whole.

Have you ever thought that maybe it is the disconnection between people and nature that is causing the world uproar? Perhaps we need to realize that those moments are very important and need to be cherished a little more. Without Kisa being able to share her life with me, those people would never know what it is like to hear and feel the vibration of a bobcat purr. They would never witness the devotion that I have towards her as her caretaker and be inspired to take their own step toward private conservation.

Every question that they ask is so important, just as every answer they receive. And ultimately, if Kisa were not here sharing her life with mine, then the honest questions that are being asked by these earnest people would not be getting their crucial answers. After all, why would I need to know the answers to these questions? I never needed to know that even though bobcats are not an endangered species, their hardships in the wild are so tremendous that you wonder how they even survive. Take for instance the bobcats living in

A full-grown Kisa  
in her enclosure.



the far northern hemisphere. Battling the extremes of the bitter winter, they fight every second against the snow and ice to muster up enough energy to seek out and catch their prey for their daily survival. I never needed to know about the bobcats in the southern parts of our country, endlessly seeking out a drop of water to wet their tongue in the drought that is taking place right at this moment. Or what about the species as a whole, continuously searching for undisturbed land to make their home, but never finding it because of our own growing population that is continuously degrading their habitat?

Before my bobcat came into my life, the answers to these questions were simply nonessential. But now, when people experience first-hand the charm of a wildcat and fire out their questions, I can rest knowing that my answers are not only the key to a great start in education, but as well as the beginnings of conservation as a whole. Whether we are educators, propagators, or simply private conservationists, it is up to us to ensure that every species of these great cats continue to survive.

So how does one summarize two and a half years of life with a certain being? I believe that the answer is simple: you don't. And as Kisa peacefully sleeps on her wooden shelf in her enclosure, I think of how futile it would be to try to compress all of those precious moments into one. For me, I can't describe how thankful I am to have one day stumbled upon an old, tattered book with a short story of a little girl who had a pet ocelot, which sparked my interests, and has now led me to this point in my journey with such a magnificent animal. And do I say "led me to the end of my journey?" No, because the journey has just started. •

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# Convention 2008

Thursday, July 24 through Saturday, July 26, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina  
Husbandry Course—Wednesday, July 23



By Betsy Whitlock

Well, hey y'all!

This years we'll be packin' our Piggly Wiggly bags and headin south to the 37<sup>th</sup> annual FCF convention in Myrtle Beach, the Riviera of the south! The convention committee has don'em selves proud finding first class accommodations at Hilton's Myrtle Beach Kingston Plantation. We hear that this place is near as nice as Tara, just without the cotton! On Wednesday before the main gatherin' the Wild Feline Husbandry Course will be offered for those who are lookin' to get a little book learnin' on wild-cat care and such. Thursday evening we'll get together on a sultry southern evening to enjoy the ice breaker and annual membership meeting. Then the fun really begins! Friday we'll all be loadin' up for an outing to Doc Antle's place. Y'all won't believe all the great cats and critters you'll see there! This is a "one of a kind" opportunity for just us "cat folk" to enjoy his facility. This'll be better than a sale at Wal-Mart since the visit to T.I.G.E.R.S. alone would normally cost as much as the hold darn convention. We all be havin' the late after-

noon and evening off to lay out on the beach, just walking distance from your bungalow, or to soak up the local flavor southern style in this first class resort town. Saturday, most of the day, we'll be privy to some high-class speakers to enlighten us on all that's important in the cat world. And the grand fi-nalie, Saturday evening, the annual award banquet and auction. Well, I'll bet you been findin' some great treasures all year to donate to the auction. Bring it on down with ya for the good of the club and cats. If you hadn't found any great treasures then just buy some here and take 'em on home! I'm sure the hospitality committee will have some more surprises along the way to keep life interestin'. I expect we'll be hearin' more from them in the next addition of this here journal so pay close attention so you won't be caught flat footed at the party! Be sure to find your invite in this edition of the journal as well. Sure don't wanna miss this shindig.

This is gonna be a whole bunch better than a Tupperware party at Aunt Bea's or a turkey shoot down at the Elk Lodge, so make your reservations early. Why if you're

a want'in to make new friends, be extra social or just want to stay on the cheap rent, get yourself a three bedroom villa and take in boarders. Miss Carolynne of the convention committee will be happy to help you all out.

The husbandry class begins on July 23 with the main swaray starting Thursday July 24 thru Saturday night July 26. We're lookin' forward to see y'all, old friends and new, down on the beach. Y'all come now hear! •

*See next page for info on condo sharing.*



# Information on Convention Accommodations

The convention committee is looking forward to seeing everyone in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina! We have been working hard to make sure that this year's convention is top's!

We wanted to let you know that you can now start making your reservations for this year's convention. We have included the following information to help you in making your arrangements.

We will be staying in the Hyde Park Villas, a part of Hilton's Myrtle Beach Kingston Plantation. These are not the normal hotel rooms we are used to having. The Hyde Park Villas are a grouping of individual villas with one, two, or three bedrooms. Each villa has a full kitchen, washer/dryer, a minimum of two TVs, a deck, private bathrooms for each bedroom, a separate living area with a sleeper sofa (some one bedroom villas may only have a sofa and not a sleeper sofa... you will have to ask about this), and private parking in front of each villa. Daily housekeeping is included and room service is available. All of the villas have a queen or king size bed in the master bedroom and the additional rooms contain two double beds.

Kingston Plantation is located right on the Atlantic Ocean and our villas are only about a 5-minute walk to the beach. In addition, we will have access to many of the Hilton's amenities such as the pools, on-site golf course, Splash! Water park, racquetball courts, health club, and tennis courts (some of these are an extra charge). The villas are only a short walk from our hospitality suite and banquet room in Brighton Towers. Continuous shuttle service is available.

We have made special arrangements enabling us to bring along our cats under 25 pounds. Contact Kevin Chambers at [zoarc@att.net](mailto:zoarc@att.net) or 812-397-2302 if you are thinking of bringing animals with you.

There are three important facts you need to be aware of regarding your stay:

- **The room block for the villas will only be held until June 22, so you need to book early! It is very likely that you will not be able to book a room after our block expires.**

- The hotel has agreed to honor our special price for three days prior to and after convention, so you can add on extra days at our reduced rate. If you plan on taking advantage of this, it is even more important that you book early since this is the high tourist season in Myrtle Beach and the villas will be booked solid.

- Finally, please be aware that the reservations are for complete villas and not per bedroom. There are more two and three bedroom villas available than ones, so this makes it great for sharing and reducing the cost!

Carolyn Clendinen will be helping to coordinate roommates. If you are reserving a villa and have an extra room or are looking for a room or roommate, please contact Carolyn at [clendinens@hotmail.com](mailto:clendinens@hotmail.com) or 571-292-0118. She will be keeping a list of

those looking for rooms, roommates, and those who have villas reserved with space to share. Carolyn will put people in contact with each other to work out their own details. Please let her know your arrival and departure date, how many people in your group, and how many rooms (beds) you will need. If you are reserving the villa, let her know the number of rooms (and whether you'll be using the master bedroom or one of the two double bed rooms).

Carolyn will only be assisting you in locating someone to contact to make your arrangements. You will be responsible for reserving the villa with the hotel and making financial arrangements with those with whom you are sharing the villa.

Reservations can be made by calling the Kingston Plantation at 1-800-876-0010 and giving them our special rate code...FCF. •



## Convention Room Rates:

The rates for the villas per night are:

One bedroom villa \$155.00 (1 queen or king bed, possible sleeper sofa)

Two bedroom villa \$225.00 (1 queen or king bed, 2 doubles, sleeper sofa)

Three bedroom villa \$285.00 (1 queen or king bed, 4 doubles, sleeper sofa)



## tiger, tiger, burning bright

*By Bart Culver*

Billions of years ago and billions of light years away, on the far side of a young cosmos, an massive star died in a supernova explosion, emitting gamma ray bursts of high-energy particles. This powerful beam of photons began a journey across space and time at nearly the speed of light, aimed at a target that did not yet exist.

On the other side of the universe a swirling cloud of gas and dust congealed into a sun and planets and moons. And one planet had water and carbon and nitrogen, and soon life was simmering there, cooking up all manner of wonders. The drama unfolded as evolution changed the scenery and the players over and over, until finally the time was right for one of the most majestic and wondrous creations to step

onto the stage. The tiger, a creature of awesome power and beauty was now the predator supreme of planet Earth.

It was the early 1500s in Rewa, India, and a sultry feline form settled down to rest in summer grass, observing the stars of the night sky. Her estrus had just ended. For three days she had been pursued and bred by the emerald forest's dominant male tiger. Now she lay in peaceful contemplation, her feminine hormones changing in response to her now pregnant state. As she gazed at the stars above, a comet streaked across the horizon, its long tail ablaze.

At the same moment, cosmic rays that had traversed the vast emptiness of space to finally reach the Solaris system of the Milky Way Galaxy were raining down upon planet Earth, penetrating everything

in their path; the ocean depths and the plant and animal inhabitants, including the resting tigress.

As the photons penetrated this tigress's womb, one of the genes in her zygote was gently nudged into a new configuration that caused a morphological mutation that would alter its outward appearance.

One hundred days later the single cub was born snow white instead of golden. He was also much bigger than normal. His tigress mother groomed and nursed him and he grew up strong. When he walked in the sun he seemed to glow with a special aura. When he left his mother's side to claim a territory of his own, all the tigresses admired him. His immense size and great strength earned him the largest territory, and he reigned supreme over all the other

male tigers, and won the right to breed every female near and far. His mutant gene, the chinchilla gene, which had switched off his orange genes and made his coat white, was inherited by all his offspring.

Occasionally his descendants would find each other and mate. Sometimes each would pass on their single chinchilla gene. Cubs that possessed a double dose of this mutant gene would be born white. This brilliant coloration mysteriously appeared and disappeared, swallowed up in the vast heterozygous gene pool, kept in reserve like a hole card in the game of survival. For hundreds of years the Indian forests had two colors of tigers, golden and white.

Indians believed the white tiger was the incarnation of the Hindu deity and anyone who killed it would die within a year. This random mutation, this cosmic gift sent from the other side of the universe protected the white tigers from human harm.

But all things change over time and the balance of nature began to shift. Humans developed technologies that whet their appetite for killing tigers. Other cultures traveled to India and the religious beliefs that once protected the white tiger from harm had no place in their hearts so they hunted and killed them for sport.

400 years after the miraculous birth of the first white tiger, there were 100,000 tigers on our planet; most of these great predators lived in India. Just fifty years later, the population was reduced by 90% and nearly all the white tigers of the forests were gone.

In 1951 in Bandhavgarh, central India, a tigress and her four cubs were running for their lives. The Maharajah of Rewa and his hunting party were in pursuit when they noticed one of her cubs was white. He shot the mother and her three golden cubs. He offered the white cub to his guest Maharaja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur, but he declined, perhaps because of its rare beauty, perhaps because of the ancient legends. In any case, Maharajah Singh's mercy that day would prove crucial to the survival of the tiger species. Just eight years later, the last white tiger was shot and killed and the cosmic miracle no longer shined in the Indian forest.

The Maharajah of Rewa captured the lone white cub and brought him to his palace. Mohan, the enchanter, grew up in

this strange land away from his jungle home. The mutant genes he inherited had saved his life. His unusual beauty earned him many admirers. He was pampered and offered golden tigresses to breed. He sired many offspring that carried his chinchilla genes.

The mega predator of planet Earth, deprived of habitat and prey, and reduced to prey itself by a dominator species, played its hole card. Having lost the competition, it befriended the winner. It became, in the eyes of the dominator species, too beautiful to kill—too beautiful to ignore. There is no other way to make yourself fit for a world where everything lives or dies by the whim of man.

In a time when the planet is overburdened with billions of humans with billions of desires, only the most special of creations can capture and hold our attention, can make us turn from our personal affairs and notice the needs of animals. The

mutant gene serves a cosmic purpose to save the tiger from extinction by making us love them and care about them and work to protect all tigers in nature.

The battle is not over, and the outcome is far from certain. Human population continues to grow and the tigers' continues to shrink. It will take a miracle for the tiger to survive into the next century. It will take a miracle from heaven, from the cosmos, from the other side of the universe, to wake us up and see the light. And that miracle is here now. It is staring us in the face, glowing in the sunlight, reminding us that all life is beautiful and precious and wondrous, and more complex than we will ever know. Every living creature has value and a purpose on our blue planet. We can never create anything so marvelous as nature's tiger. We must open our eyes and our hearts and do what is right. We must listen to our inner voice that is telling us, 'save the tiger.' •



Paintings created for this story by Laura Walker

# Building a Refrigerated Commissary

After last year's FCF convention, several people took up Brian Werner on his offer to tour Tiger Creek, his tiger sanctuary in Tyler, Texas. There was evidence of new construction in the form of a new visitors'/administration building plus a new natural-looking tiger habitat. The newest of the new is a long-overdue animal food preparation (commissary) building.

While most large commissaries will have both a refrigerator and freezer section, Brian was inspired to make the entire food preparation area refrigerated. This has several advantages: Food can be left on the counter without fear of spoilage, insects are never a problem, and food can be prepared over the course of hours or days. Possibly even more important: volunteers appreciate escaping the heat and humidity of the Tyler summer. •



This is how the cats were fed prior to the construction of the commissary.



The site after grading.



Concrete slab and first support poles.



Framework done.



The walls go up...



...and the roof goes on.



Building completed!



Food preparation area. Note refrigeration units and environmentally-sealed fluorescent lights.



Sink area to the left.



Dinner for dozens defrosting.

# Wildcat Safety Net Fund Guidelines Approved

By Mindy Stinner

For many years, the membership of FCF has expressed an interest in helping wildcats during crises, including rehoming animals, assisting with urgent rescues, and stepping up to help deal with all kinds of emergencies involving wildcats.

Without fanfare, many members have assisted over the years with moving animals to new homes, taking in animals whose owners have died or have become unable to care for their beloved charges, or helping raise funding for cats who are being seized by government agencies so they can get the best of care at a sanctuary or other new home.

After FCF members began fundraising in a more formal way over the last few years to help support cats in need, the board decided that it would be good to put in place a set of guidelines for the use of funds raised by our membership and allotted by FCF to help these cats. In the recent meeting, we discussed the issues surrounding raising money for this purpose, how to share it fairly, and even what to name the fund. We wanted the name to reflect the purpose of the fund without hyping the idea that these cats are in crisis all the time, or that rescues are an everyday event, as some sanctuaries would have the public believe. It is especially critical at this time, when so many states and counties are debating the merits of ban laws, that the name reflects

our desire to deal with any problems ourselves. We decided that “Wildcat Safety Net” is an accurate name—avoiding being alarmist, but describing the purpose of the fund accurately.

The following is the text of the guidelines for the fund. *Italicized text below each paragraph is my additional information.*

In the case of animal abandonment, seizure by a legal agency, illegally owned and surrendered animals, or an animal owner no longer being able to provide adequate care due to changes in circumstances,

Funds from this account may be used for any of the following purposes:

- provision of emergency veterinary care and medications
- provision and storage of appropriate food and water for animals at risk
- transport of the animal(s) to a new, permanent home or approved temporary home
- emergency repair of caging/shelter to ensure human safety, animal containment and welfare
- transport container construction, providing the transport cage remains the property of FCF
- construction of temporary housing at an interim or receiving location—subject to a written agreement that FCF supported rehoming has priority use of the caging at later dates
- provision of housing and basic expenses

for a volunteer(s) to remain on site in a situation where human safety or animal welfare may otherwise be at risk

Funds from this account may not be used for any of the following purposes:

- temporary care and support of an animal that will remain in the same circumstances
- veterinary care or medication for an animal not being rehomed
- repairs to caging or shelters for an animal not being rehomed
- permanent housing construction at a receiving location
- long-term support of a rehomed animal, animal owner, or caregiver
- fundraising to directly benefit a specific owner or receiving location

*We thought it important to establish under what circumstances this fund may be used. For example, we did not want to use this emergency fund to pay for food for animals whose owner chronically could not afford to pay for their care, but who did not plan to release them to a new home. We also wished to define what constitutes an emergency/rescue expense versus a less critical need, and to differentiate temporary care needs from long term commitments that should be assumed by a new owner.*

Funding for this program shall be part of FCF’s annual budget, supplemented by designated fundraisers and donations. Grants will be awarded from this fund upon approval from the FCF board of directors.

## Meet the New Board Members



### Deborah Rabinsky

I was a member of the Long Island Ocelot Club in the early 1970s. I saw my first ocelot in New York City pet store at the age of 5 and fell madly in love. That was 1957.

I saw the law start to change in New Jersey on private ownership in the 70s. At that time I was working with a zoo veterinarian part time. He had a tiger and a leopard living in his home, cougars, lions, and many small cats—leopard cats, ocelots, all a part of his farm and animal hospital. I did a lot of bottle-feeding, caring, and cleaning and more cleaning.

I interviewed with Robert Baudy to work at his compound. We talked about me working with the snow leopards but this never happen. I

got an offer to design art glass for a gallery and my life took another turn.

Today I work in the arts. I have owned a gallery, worked for Lafayette College as an art curator, and done cultural and city development. I have been on two city’s mayor art councils and have worked in the Pennsylvania State Elm Street program as design chair.

What I would like for FCF is to share some of my knowledge in development, and help us set up ways of working where can start to get funding for programs we are already doing. I will work to develop outside partnerships for greater funding. Oh yes, many of you have met me at last year’s convention. I gave you your first art show. •

Earmarked donations may be reallocated to other beneficiaries if the original situation is resolved. Funds from this account may be invested to self-propagate/replenish as approved by the board. Each location from which an animal is removed is limited to a \$1000 benefit from this account unless these funds are supplemented by donations made for this specific cause.

*We plan to fundraise for this program through the FCF eBay store and by other promotions like note card sales. We limited benefits at a single location so one person could not repeatedly acquire animals and then ask for help. We encourage our members who think this is a worthy cause to donate to the fund!*

Each separate situation will be appointed a board liaison, who is responsible for assessing the needs of the individual circumstances, keeping the board informed of developments and making recommendations for board actions and funding requests. This liaison is not necessarily directly involved in the care of the animal, but must be in direct and regular contact with any and all authorities involved in the situation, and with any and all caregivers and legal owners of the animals at issue. This liaison is the coordinator for all action taken by FCF and its members/volunteers, from coordinating care and transport, consulting with qualified individuals regarding diet and housing, to arranging the dispensa-

tion of funds with the treasurer. The liaison must confer with the board regarding determining any rehoming location approval, financially supported volunteer assistance, press interviews/promotions, and all budget considerations. The liaison is responsible for confirming the legality of FCF funded removal of an animal to a new location in any situation involving authorities, and for obtaining a release from the legal owner at the time assistance is provided.

*One of the toughest problems we have encountered in past situations is coordinating our response among the members, with other agencies and with the press. We determined the easiest way to consolidate our efforts was to assign a specific liaison whose role is to coordinate with all the involved people and agencies. That way we insure we have one person assessing the issues, reporting to the membership, recommending the level of our involvement, and coordinating with legal agencies regarding the animals' care and placement. This will make a more professional impression, and will allow us to capitalize on our involvement, where appropriate, to raise additional funds.*

Emergency drafts from this account may be approved by unanimous consent of these three board members: Director of Development, Director of Marketing and Director of Conservation, with the treasurer or president serving in place of any of those three

not available for consultation. Emergency funds are limited to \$500 and are subject to full board notification within 24 hours.

*We chose to create a small core committee of board members who could act rapidly in times of need. We chose these three positions to serve as this committee because it is critical that FCF build its reputation as a community that can be relied on to take care of its own and who will step up when needed to manage problems without all the hype that comes with some sanctuaries who exploit these events in the press to fundraise and pass ban bills at the same time. The Marketing and Development Directors will be in the best position to spin any events to help us raise awareness of our involvement and our role as experts in working with wildcats. When a state wants to regulate ownership of wildcats, we want them to contact us, not the animal rights activists, as consultants.*

*These three people are going to need a good deal of support from the membership in fundraising and spreading the word about this program. If you are passionate about rescue work, believe in supporting our cat owners in need, or want a great cause to help plan fundraisers for, we need your help. Please email me at [mstinner@mindspring.com](mailto:mstinner@mindspring.com) to let me know if you are interested in serving on the Wildcat Safety Net committee. •*

### Robert Bean

I have been a member of LIOC / FCF since 1987. I've been dealing with wild animals for 46 years and non-domestic felids 22 years.

Our facility has had as many as 55 non-domestic cats comprised of over 13 different species. We specialize in non-invasive research. Simply put, we are interested in anything that helps us learn more about these magnificent creatures that in turn helps them reproduce and live long and healthy lives.

In 2003/2004 I served on the FCF board as Director of Advertising and Publicity and Chairman of the Convention Committee. In 2005/2006 I served as a Life Director and Chairman of the Convention Committee.

I have remained active with FCF helping FCF become an organization known to pro-

mote conservation of non-domestic felids through private possession.

I served on the Accreditation Committee helping lay the foundation for an accreditation program for FCF.

I still serve on the Conservation Committee helping support conservation of non-domestic felids in captivity (ex-situ) and in the wild (in-situ).

Let's face it, in this world we live in, numbers + \$\$ = POWER. FCF has to have POWER to fight for our rights to have these animals and reject the Animal Rights agendas. FCF is at a critical junction. FCF has to grow in POWER by increasing membership and increasing donations. I hope to continue helping FCF grow as a non-profit organization dedicated to protect, preserve and propagate wild felids. •



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AMERICAN ZOO AND AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION

# How are the Margays Doing?

## An Interim Report from Brazil

By Anne-Sophie Bertrand

First of all, my best wishes for all of you for 2008. May 2008 brings lots of unforgettable moments for you and your cats. A new year is starting so I thought it would be interesting to look at the news from Brazil and its margays. Research in South America is definitely challenging but the margay project developments are encouraging. We keep heading to the field to look for cats. We have also recently extended our study area to nearby Argentina, where margays also occur and where there are less political pressures. Indeed, Reserva Brasil is now strengthening cats' conservation efforts by creating partnerships with the Argentinean Ministry of Environment, and ITAIPU wildlife refuge, one of the most impressive wildlife refuges I have ever visited (ask Jim Sanderson or Fred Boyajian and Bobbie what they thought of it). Both institutions showed great interest in participating in our work.

I must say we have unfortunately lost track of our little margay Phoenix we monitored from June to October 2007. We have combed the entire region several times in cars, climbing up towers, and we could not get signals from it. The only thing we have not tried is a helicopter overflight because it is prohibitively expensive. I cannot believe Phoenix has simply vanished from the place. None of the people involved in the project accepted this loss, of course. We suspect that he might have been killed as he was hunting hens and chicks in the chicken husbandries of his territory. Phoenix was living in a highly fragmented area on the national park's edge going northward. He was doing fairly well, roaming in a 100 km<sup>2</sup> area, making himself at home there. See map: yellow dots correspond to Phoenix's locations. He made it through the harsh winter (yes, it can be really cold in Brazil too!). Phoenix has been seen several times during winter months and he was fine. But the area is difficult for our kitties as chicken husbandries are an attractive (and easy) food source in the agricultural context of the region. So, everyday, with habitat reduced to little thickets of forests and chicken husbandry for food supply, the chance for our margays to survive there is like flipping a coin. Our scat analyses should shortly tell us what our mar-

gays are actually eating in this context. Also, talking to people living there is information-rich. All kinds of little cats are seen daily in the area, coming back and forth to those fun chicken buckets. It seems that some people are just happy to see them (cats are charismatic creatures), but some people try to get rid of them by all means—and some of these means are nasty. As most of the reactions people have are generated by the lack of information and fear, great efforts will be made to improve their knowledge of the cats occurring in the region, using folders, nice pictures, and



interesting stories on those gorgeous creatures.

My heartfelt thanks to Fred and Bobbie Boyajian for coming over to Brazil, taking the time to teach me all that 40 margays can possibly teach to loving owners. Thanks also to Tony Richards and Tina Thompson for their donation, and my special thanks to Dr. Jim Sanderson for his unconditional support to the margay project and other on-going cat research activities.

If you want to support the project activities, please consider making a donation to the Feline Conservation Federation conservation fund and take advantage of the tax-deductible status of your donation. The FCF can then forward the support to me in Brazil, helping everyone in the process. Donate by PayPal to [treasurer@felineconservation.org](mailto:treasurer@felineconservation.org) or by mail to Margay Project c/o Kevin Chambers, 7816 N CR 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879.

Thanks from the margays; your help is making such a difference! •

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# Ulcers in Cougars

By Mary Roberts

It just wasn't normal to come home from work and not hear those familiar high-pitched chirping sounds from our two year-old female Florida panther, Nila Bindu. The silence was downright eerie, especially since she had just ended a two-week heat. Hmm, maybe she's sleeping, I thought, but that would be highly unlikely at six in the evening. I became more concerned when she didn't even come into her house, an 18 foot x 24 foot, wooden house complete with A/C, tile floors and metal roof.

I quickly changed into my grubby clothes and went in search of Nila. I found her way in the back of the yard lying in some tall grass. She was eating the grass and then vomiting. She obviously had an upset stomach but what was causing it? I scoured the ground for clues as best I could at night with a flashlight. After much coaxing she finally got up and came inside. She drank a little water and flopped down on her blanket. I checked her body all over as she ran from the yard into the house and then back outside again. This was her typical MO. Nothing appeared out of the ordinary. I prepared her dinner. Nila ran in, grabbed a hunk of meat and ran back outside again. She looked and acted perfectly fine. However, the next morning I found the meat on the ground outside, untouched, and covered in ants. Evidently she wanted to eat but couldn't. This pattern went on for a few days so I called the exotic animal veterinarians, Dr. Scot Wouk and Dr. Dieter Ruedi. The soonest they could come would be in a few days. They are two counties away and are the only exotic animal vets in the area. They told me to keep a close watch on her water intake as she could go a few days without food but hydration was crucial. By the fourth day she wasn't interested in drinking water anymore. I called the vets again and they agreed to come that evening after work. I also called Lynn Culver whose knowledge and expertise with exotic cats I greatly respect. Lynn told me of three conditions that could cause Nila's behavior:

1. an intestinal blockage
2. an intestinal infection, caused by either bacteria or virus



**Nila**

And if X-rays did not find a block, and blood work came back normal, ruling out bacteria or virus, then look for:

3. an ulcer

Nila's mood and behavior completely changed by the fourth day. She just sat. She didn't want to play with her toys or us, stopped talking, eating and now drinking water. She just laid in the yard and ate grass. I found regurgitated piles of grass everywhere. It had turned cold so at night we took blankets out to the yard and slept with her. It was such a good feeling to be able to do this; too bad she felt so crummy. If I attempted this while she was feeling good she'd be all over us. We play with Nila all the time and while she's very sweet and never bites or uses her claws, she loves to jump and body-slam us right down to the ground just because it's so much fun. Since she was feeling poorly, we spent a lot of time laying down with her and covering her up with our arms and blankets. It seemed to comfort her and she purred so loud it sounded like a little engine.

It was nighttime when the vets arrived. They had a full patient load that day but drove the 1½ hour trip anyway to see Nila. I felt very fortunate to have two great doctors to treat the animals. After blow-darting

Nila with a combination of Xylazine and Ketamine, they set up a mini hospital room right there in the yard utilizing a wood platform as an exam table. (Dr. Ruedi actually developed the blowgun dart system many years ago.) The Xylazine and Ketamine combo is old-fashioned but safe. The correct dosage is crucial as every single patient is different. The sedation dosage should be evaluated according to the hydration and overall physical condition of the patient. The doctors ran the usual tests: a complete blood count (CB), took fecal samples, and a serum chemistry profile. The results were totally unremarkable. Temperature was normal. They administered one liter lactated Ringer's solution intravenously. They performed a colonic lavage with manual manipulation of the abdominal area in case of an obstruction. There were some fecal contents in the colon. We hoped when the blood test results came back, they would shed some light, but the CBC was normal, and with the exception of slight dehydration, everything else on the chemistry profile appeared normal.

Days passed and Nila still was not eating or drinking and acted very lethargic. The vets came back and after another blow-dart sedation abdominal palpitation

revealed no fecal material this time. This time they took X-rays but they did not reveal the reason for her anorexia and lethargy. They administered two liters of Ringer's lactated solution IV and injectable penicillin and Reglan - an intestinal relaxant and anti-emetic. This addressed her dehydration, her apparent nausea and vomiting and any undetected bacterial infection.

Then they performed an endoscopy and the cause of Nila's illness was finally revealed: pyloric and duodenal ulcerations. We treated Nila with sucral Carafate, a human medicine for ulcers, the same medication Lynn Culver had previously mentioned for the treatment of ulcers. We

administered one gram Carafate twice daily by mouth. Since she wasn't eating, putting pills in food was out of the question. We tried the liquid form but she spit it out no matter how we tried to inject it in her mouth. So I changed to the pill form of Carafate. I bought a pill dispenser at a local pet store and lathered both the pill and the end of the dispenser with butter. The pill slipped right down just like magic! After just one dose we saw a great improvement in her condition. After two doses she slowly began to drink water. The next day she actually ate. We fed her only boneless meat for a week so her stomach could heal. She was ravenous! We couldn't believe how

fast the medicine worked—amazing!!

What caused the ulcers in Nila we may never know. Was it the stress from her recent heat? She had been in heat three times in two months. She lived a happy and healthy life with lots of love, activity, and attention. She had big spaces to run. Was she missing a mate?

I don't think I will ever really know what caused the ulcers in Nila. It's been six weeks since her ordeal and she's back to her vibrant, happy, and talkative self. Interestingly enough, she does seem a little bit sweeter and loveable than before. I think she knows now just how much she is loved. •

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# What is Wild and Free?

Karl Mogensen, *Natural Bridge Zoo*

To the suburban, couch-potato, wannabe animal authority, we who exhibit, propagate, and keep animals or birds in captivity are nothing more than glorified jailers. Influenced by PETA, HSUS, and other self-serving, money-grabbing animal rights organizations, many feel that all captive animals long for the wilds in which their ancestors originated. What they fail to realize is that with few exceptions, in this day and age, all of these animals have been born in captivity and are acclimated to a semi-domesticated life style. We have modified the feeding habits, spatial requirements, and temperament of most of our long-term zoo or game farm inhabitants. We carefully select for propagation purposes for those that exhibit the gentlest dispositions and adaptability to a semi-domestic lifestyle. Animals that have been born and reared in a zoological atmosphere would find it difficult, if not impossible, to adjust to a release program without a long and tedious training period. This can be documented by zoological publications, which describe the extensive training and acclimation time that must be taken to reintroduce certain selected species to their former habitats. Most captive raised animals would not recognize their normal food items in a native habitat nor have the ability to procure it.

The uneducated but well meaning city dweller has this childlike vision of the care-free animal romping through the beautiful Disneyesque forest atmosphere, enjoying the company of other inhabitants and wander-



ing freely throughout its natural habitat. They have no concept of the daily struggle that most species must endure to maintain their territories, seek out food items without becoming one, and in general maintaining a state of high alertness at all times.

I had a rather interesting session several years ago when a well meaning but severely anthropomorphic college age girl was visiting our zoological park with her patronizing parents. It was in the evening approaching closing time, when I was, unfortunately trapped by this young lady as I was doing my routine leisurely walk around the zoo. She was standing in front of one of our big cat exhibits, mourning over the plight of one of our two-year-old Bengal tiger cubs that was playfully jumping around its spacious enclosure, eagerly awaiting my arrival and anticipating a special treat. Totally ignoring the superb condi-

tion of the tiger cub and indifferent to the pool, huge boulders and logs which the young cat was enjoying at the time, she proceeded to lecture me on the deplorable existence of this unfortunate creature. Her parents stood back enjoying their daughter's newfound animal rights, zoological expert attitude.

I sat down with this well meaning, but totally uninformed family and told them some of the details of tiger existence under natural conditions. This 2 year-old tiger, I explained, would just be leaving or have recently left its mother's territory. He would be attempting to perfect his hunting skills, scavenging and desperately trying to avoid all other adult tigers, especially territorial males. It certainly would not be as heavy, well fed, and relaxed as the captive specimen playing in front of her. Our wild cub would be subject to both internal and exter-

## SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman



nal parasites, hunting pressures from poachers, aggressive if not fatal encounters with other tigers, and desperately seeking an uninhabited territory. Due to the ever-increasing human population and decreasing habitat for large predators, it is very unlikely that our young tiger would survive his first year on his own. He would have a very slight chance of finding a suitably unoccupied territory and while striving to secure prey and living a nomadic existence, he would possibly kill a domestic goat or cow and be shot.

I asked the young lady if she missed Australia or Indonesia. She asked how could she miss them if she had never been there? I told her that it was the same with the tiger cub in the enclosure in front of us. He had been born in captivity and never having experienced life in the wild, certainly did not miss it. Having been bottle raised and totally acclimated to humans, his spacious enclosure was his territory. All of his nutritional and health requirements were more than adequately provided for. He had his own territory and was enjoying superb health. I explained that this tiger would probably live to its late teens and possibly into the twenties. If and when it developed age related health problems and was unable to function properly, a veterinarian would mercifully euthanize it. I stated that no animal ever dies a peaceful death under natural conditions. The final demise of all-wild birds or animals is from starvation, injuries, predation, poaching, parasites, and disease. The young lady and her parents listened to me and afterwards stated they had never thought about the things that I had mentioned. When they left, I felt that they had a different attitude about captivity and how responsible zookeepers care for and nurture their birds and animals. Hopefully they will retain some of the information provided and possibly pass it on to others.

Suitable territories for many species, especially large predators, are severely limited by the expanding human population. If and when large animals have a conflict with humans, the animal is ultimately the loser. A very low percentage of animals and birds born or hatched in the wild, make it through their first year. Nature creates in abundance, but also culls severely. Our captive-raised animals, while not living in their natural habitats, enjoy an easier and less stressful existence than their counterparts living in

the wild. Many humans live in suburban or townhouse environments with little or severely limited backyards. Would they be happier as hunter-gatherers in a primitive tribal group with no territorial restrictions and subject to all the life limiting conditions, which these people must endure?

We humans are constantly depleting the wilderness areas of the world with our logging, farming, and population growth while complaining that all animals should be wild and unrestrained. Are we willing to compromise our constant degrading of wilderness areas to allow more habit for wildlife? We all enjoy watching the nature shows and seeing the wild creatures in their native habitats, but we just do not want those same animals anywhere near our homes. We build our homes in newly cleared land areas and then complain that it is infested with reptiles or animals. We totally disregard the fact that these reptiles or animals had been living there for generations and have been displaced by our clearing and invasion of their personal territories. We quickly demand that nuisance trappers remove these offending creatures from our newly built home sites and landscaped yards. How dare these alligators in Florida, these Gila lizards and rattlesnakes in the southwest and the black bears and cougars in the northwest remain on their own territory after we have physically invaded it with our financial land purchase?

Those among us who truly enjoy and appreciate our captive animals would love nothing better than to realize that there is a place for them in the wild and will always be. For many animals, time is running out. We are destroying our closest relatives, the great apes, at an alarming rate. Threatened bears and large cats are being poached in the misguided belief that

their body parts yield aphrodisiac powers. Japan is killing whales under the guise of scientific study. I feel that captive husbandry and reproduction of wild animals, if done by responsible and knowledgeable individuals is beneficial, not only for the animal involved, but for humans as well. Many children would never get to see the actual animal or bird if it were not in captivity. While television programs are educational, there is nothing like standing next to a live giraffe, looking into the eyes of a tiger, riding an elephant, and bottle feeding a baby camel to really acquaint children with our natural world.

We have a program at our zoological park where select children spend time actually living at the zoo and participating in the daily care of our birds and animals. These young people develop an understanding of wildlife and of the time and care that goes into the captive husbandry of a large and varied collection. Only through education and hands-on experiences can we hopefully prepare our next generation of young people to appreciate both the wild animals and the properly managed captive specimens that are entrusted to our care. •

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

# *Meeting Report: Cascade Branch, May 1972*

### *Long Island Ocelot Club*

*January/February 1972—Volume 16, Issue 4*

"An Initiative Proposal to Regulate Wild Animals" Be it enacted by the people of the State of Washington:

"It shall be unlawful to purchase, sell, attempt to sell, transport, or import any live wild animal of a species that is not native to the state of Washington. The prohibitions of this section shall include reptiles, amphibians, birds and the eggs thereof, provided that the provisions of this section shall not apply to:

1. Institutions of higher learning 2. Publicly owned zoos, bodies, or agencies 3. Gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, chinchillas, mink, nutria, beaver, or rabbits 4. Canaries, parakeets, and myna birds"

The above proposal is the reason for the tardiness of Cascade meetings and reports and is at the same time the reason for this particular meeting.

As you may have gathered from recent Cascade Branch reports, attempts to legislate exotic animal owners here have been a constant pain. I have probably said more than most care to hear about the need to get something in writing that we can live with before some well meaning but uninformed klutz does the job for us, and I intend to do more in this report, but I first wish to point to the proposal above as an outstanding example of the sort of thing I have been warning against. Should this initiative pass, it will open a can of worms which has the potential to hurt everybody concerned with animals, and many who are not. For example, you will note that there are no exceptions to the transportation and importation ban in the initiative. This means no veterinary care, no breeding programs, should an exotic owner change residence he may be required to have his animals destroyed—even a circus may not play here. The sponsors of this bill did not, I am certain, wish such effects, but in their zeal to get something on the street they simply wrote first and thought afterward.

The meeting was held at the home of Bea Lloyd and Mary Seyersdahl in Everett, Washington. About 30 people attended. As



noted, the discussion was limited to the petition, its potential effects, what is being done to fight it, and what alternatives to it exist. Some of its harmful potential has already been discussed, so I will not go into it further. As to what is being done to fight it, a group has been formed, composed of all exotic animal clubs in the area, boarding kennels association, the pet dealer's association, hunting clubs, pheasant breeders, ornamental bird breeders, etc. The group intends to (hopefully) stop the initiative from obtaining the signatures needed to place it on the ballot. Should that fail, it hopes to defeat it at the polls. The campaign is, at this time, being kept at a low level. This is because we want to stop the drive as effectively as possible without attracting potential signers' attention, and because we do not want to blow all out effective publicity now, and have none left should the sponsors obtain the needed signatures. If we must fight this thing at the ballot box, we will need to run a carefully planned campaign which starts as a murmur and rises to a shout about two

days before the election. This is because if our efforts peak too early, the measure's supporters may gain back votes. The campaign at this time is largely one of locating areas where the petition is being circulated, and taking the truth into those areas, and making certain that publicity favoring the initiative by the news media is answered by our group. Where its sponsors advertise, we arrange to run a counter advertisement next to theirs. As I see it, we have two alternatives, should we successfully dump this measure. The first is the easiest: we simply go on as we have and hope that some other well-meaning nut does not crusade us all into a similar situation... or a worse one. Since this type of thing has been going on, and increasing in strength for about three years now, I have little doubt that we will be into another of these very shortly, unless we cure our own problems ourselves. This of course, is our other alternative. I realize



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**U.A.P.P.E.A.L. has retained The Ferguson Group lobby team and is currently opposing Haley's Act (SB1947), the Captive Primate Safety Act (SB1498), and Technical Amendment to the CWSA HR 4933. Your membership and donations are greatly appreciated.**

## From the Blast to the Present

### A Commentary on the Featured *Blast from the Past*

By Shelleen Mathews

*Wild Felid Advocacy Center of Washington*

that many members will hit the roof over such proposals, but I can only refer them to the measure at the top of this report, and point out that if we all had been a bit more inclined to put the finger on bad importers and dealers, and actively hunt for potential trouble makers who own exotics of all types, we might not be in this position. I feel that this may be our last chance to write a law which will still allow those of us who love our animals to enjoy them, but which will also answer the problems which bring these attempted bans before us. I personally (I cannot speak here for anyone but myself) favor the following;

1. Place all wild animals under the supervision of the game department.
2. Establish minimum care and facilities standards for these animals.
3. Establish a two class game farmer's license (commercial and hobby).
4. Establish procedure to obtain licenses (facilities inspection, etc.) and make it mandatory that permit is issued before animals are obtained.

I do not mind having my place inspected, and I do not mind paying a license fee, or maintaining records which go with a game farmer's license if it will keep cats out of the hands of screwballs, and give our well meaning friends reason to find some new garden to raid. Again, I know that the very thought of this sort of thing is appalling to lots of us but, again, we should admit that by not trying to control problems which brought us to our present position, we should consider ourselves fortunate to have any say in this.

After the debate concerning the proposal, the meeting was adjourned. Our next meeting will be held at Bill Boyle's on Sunday, 11 June 1972. At this meeting, a new coordinator for the Cascade Branch will be named.

—John Paramore

Reading John Paramore's 1972 meeting report brought back so many memories of exotic ownership in Washington State over the past 35 years. At the time I was a young novice owner with my first bobcat, Demetreus. I was a member of LIOC and the Cascade Branch.

Fast forward to the legislative session of 2007 and I am still involved in opposing unreasonable bans in the state. Although sessions for the past eight years have attempted to ban all exotic felines, the bill that passed banned larger species (cougar and above). A major frustration has been that these bills are not brought forward by citizens of the state—rather outside Animal Rights organizations forcing their agendas. These organizations have financial means and lobbyists to further their goals. Those of us opposing—and trying to speak the truth—do not have the well-oiled machine backing us. We spend hours of our time and money trying to educate legislators, time and money that could be spent actually caring for our beloved felines.

There were few exemptions given from the ban that passed. Being an AZA facility, or affiliation with one, was about the only grace given. This affiliation/accreditation is not available to the average owner or facility. I was recently attending an event when I was approached by an agent of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Department. He inquired if we were "AZA." I explained that this was not an option for reasons of cost, etc. He was baffled. It was obvious that they had no idea this was not an attainable (or wanted) affiliation. The agent confided to me that they have run out of options for placing orphaned cougar kittens. Sadly, we know the result.

Animal Rights will not rest until they have achieved their goal: *No* exotics in captivity. Zoos are deluding themselves if they believe they are above scrutiny. In the long-range planning of Animal Rights I am sure zoos are in their sights.

How pleasant the past 35 years could have been if we were able to simply care for our felines and educate the public regarding the wonders of these animals. •



The bobcat that started it all for Shelleen in 1971: Demetreus

## An important announcement to FCF members concerning Uniting a Proactive Primate and Exotic Animal League

Mark McDaniels, U.A.P.P.E.A.L. president has signed a contract to retain the services of the Ferguson Group lobby team for 2008. This year is crucial. U.A.P.P.E.A.L. must now raise a minimum of \$18,000.

The president and vice president of U.A.P.P.E.A.L. have worked diligently to insure that the exotic animal community gains the ultimate professional federal representation against Animal Rights backed legislation. This contract is like an insurance policy and works out to less than the hourly billing fees covered last year.

U.A.P.P.E.A.L. needs to increase membership along with donations. Numbers do count. This is a personal plea to all FCF members to support this effort—join today or send a donation by PayPal or by check to help pay a portion of this service and share in the benefit of professional representation.

When you send a donation, please make a notation that is for the feline element share of the lobbying expenses. You can send it by PayPal using the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. site, at <http://uappeal.org/donate.html>, or you can send a donation to the FCF by PayPal to [treasurer@felineconservation.org](mailto:treasurer@felineconservation.org) or mail a check to our treasurer. Include a notation for it to be sent to U.A.P.P.E.A.L., and FCF will forward all funds received. When you send donations through FCF it increases our total annual income and increases how much we can donate to U.A.P.P.E.A.L. and still abide by federal guidelines for non-profit organizations. All donations to FCF are tax-deductible.

What is U.A.P.P.E.A.L. doing and why should I help?

U.A.P.P.E.A.L. is currently working on three federal bills that will impact exotic feline owners. One, the Technical Amendment to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act will affect every animal that is listed or gets listed to the Captive Wildlife Safety Act.

The technical amendment has been pre-

sented to correct flaws in the original Captive Wildlife Safety Act that make the prohibitions in the act unprosecutable. This is a golden opportunity to present amended language that would remove the prohibition of individuals owning “prohibited wildlife species” to relocate to a new state or seek medical care outside their home state as long as there is no change in ownership. U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobbyists are pursuing this aggressively. If you have a cougar or larger feline and worry that someday you may need to travel to another state, this would make such interstate travel legal.

Another bill being fought is the Captive  
P r i m a t e



Safety Act. There will be a hearing scheduled in the very near future and U.A.P.P.E.A.L. has lined up excellent representation to express the concerns of primate owners. This bill adds new species to the prohibited big cats list. It includes all primates, including species like marmosets. If Congress will add a two-pound monkey to the prohibited list, they could someday be talked into adding a 30-pound serval. We have to draw a line and beat back this erosion of American liberty and private conservation efforts. If you have any exotic felines, or hope to someday own them, you have a stake in the outcome of this legislation.

The third bill in Congress is the Haley's Act, another ludicrous bill that uses the

death of a teenager by an adult tiger to push forward a law that would supercede all the USDA regulations on safe handling of young exotic felines and would criminalize any contact between a citizen and a baby big cat.

Most alarming is a USDA executive comment to the Congressional Wildlife Committee supporting Haley's Act. USDA is urging additional language to extend the prohibition of public contact to those who are not USDA licensed. If this passes, no one will be allowed to socialize young big cat species, whether they are professional educators, private owners, sanctuaries, or AZA zoos. The social schooling of big cat species will be severely constricted and the resultant personalities and confidence levels of our hand-reared felines will suffer as a result. Also, USDA is requesting that there be no exemptions from the act, including any for AZA zoos.

These bills are being sponsored and promoted by over 50 Animals Rights activist groups. These extremists have nothing to lose, but the exotic animal community does!

We can stop this in Washington D.C. if we all work together financially, and when asked to write letters and make calls, do our part for the most effective impact. Bill Hanka, the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobbyist, has a specific strategy we all need to follow.

I ask you to spread the word and encourage memberships and donations from all animal owners and aspiring owners, especially those with exotics!

You may also donate items and buy and sell on the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. auctions web site, [www.uappealauctions.com](http://www.uappealauctions.com). It is open to the public.

Thank you in advance for your support!

*Barbara Doherty*  
Vice President, U.A.P.P.E.A.L.  
*Lynn Culver*  
Feline Element Representative

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# Meet the New State Reps

## Becky Barker Kentucky

My fascination with exotics began as a young child. I was fortunate enough to live in an area with forests, caves, waterfalls, and wild bobcats. I can recall hearing them every once in awhile from the forest and it always gave me such a thrill. Wintertime was always my favorite time of year growing up, because after a good snowfall, I would always dress in my warmest clothes and set out to find the tracks in the snow. And every once in awhile, I would hit the jackpot and see their paw prints in the snow and after tracking them for awhile, I always got the feeling that I was the one being watched and would usually scare myself into returning home instead of tracking the prints until I found the den. And considering my very young age (I don't want to get mom and dad in trouble), it was probably always the best idea. And even though I would track those prints every winter for years, I never did see one in the wild, but I am sure that they saw me. Which only leads me to the assumption that they must be very aloof creatures in the wild.

Although my dream of one day owning or working with exotics has yet to be fulfilled, I have made animals in general one of my high priorities in life. I began volunteering at a local humane society in 1998, where most weeks I contributed 40 hours or more. After a falling out with the board of directors over whether or not they should continue to accept cats into the shelter anymore, many of us left and organized our own small cat rescue organization in 2002. I served as secretary and treasurer of that organization, but due to the death of the organization's president and loss of foster homes, I am currently in the process of shutting this organization down.

The laws in Kentucky regarding animal cruelty are minimal, although we recently have made some minor improvements. I am

for private ownership, but I support regulations having minimum criteria for persons wanting to own exotic animals. I can still remember a case in Kentucky several years ago where a family owned a lion, called him their baby and expressed so much love for him yet, all I saw was a lion that lived in an outside dog kennel on a concrete pad. My stance would be to look at the criteria of each person applying, including their education regarding exotics, the business they run (such as sanctuaries, education centers), financial means to take care of such animals, and reason for wanting an exotic.

We have a long way to go with animals in general in this state, but I can see some progress being made. I hope by working together with responsible owners in this organization, we can make much more progress in keeping these beautiful creatures on earth a lot longer.

## Marsha Hague Wisconsin

I have been a member of the FCF since 2004. Back in the seventies, I read an article about the Long Island Ocelot Club and being a born cat lover, thought to myself that I would join one day when I had my own house. Some 30 years later, I rediscovered the world of exotic cats through the internet, first joining Phoenix Exotics, then the FCF, and LIOC after the split, not realizing that they had the same origin.

What rekindled the fire for me may be a bit of a surprise. In 2000, I visited Wildlife on Easy Street, where I directly interacted with bobcat, serval, and caracal, and hand-fed chicken drumsticks to tiger and leopard from outside their enclosures. As many of you know, that facility has changed its philosophy as well as its name.

I have evolved in my thinking as well, but in a different direction. I believe the connection between exotic feline and human is a special one, and there is no good reason to

deny it to those who are responsible and willing to make the commitment. Sadly, our right to own the animals of our choice is being challenged across the country. I'd rather just sit back in a club-type atmosphere and enjoy the cats, but we have been making laws in this country for well over 200 years, and the logical progression of that is towards a police state. To counter this we need to educate people and actively fight for our rights.

The FCF has developed a number of programs which will help us do this: the Basic Exotic Feline Husbandry course, the Accreditation Program, the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program, and the Regional/State Representative Program. Even though I currently own no exotics, I volunteered to represent Wisconsin to help protect my rights to own them in the future.

I was born in Minnesota, and lived the first 35 years of my life there, but the last 15 years and future will be spent in Wisconsin. I am building a house on six acres, and plan on moving in later this year.

After that, I would like to travel to the Savannah Cheetah Foundation in South Africa before I get my serval. Bobcats, lynxes, caracals, and sand cats appeal to me also. If I were younger, I'd consider getting a cougar. For a while (after watching the movie "Bringing Up Baby"), I wanted a leopard, but after learning more about them, I decided that was not such a good idea. In the meantime, I share my life with five domestic cats, three of which had been dumped by other humans to live the feral life. They survived well, but now have no interest in the "great outdoors," having had their fill of it.

Bobcats, lynxes, and cougars are currently regulated by the Wisconsin DNR, and you need to obtain a permit and submit a written enrichment plan. They are not allowed indoors except for medical reasons. Other felines are not regulated, but there is a bill in the WI Legislature (AB-342) which seeks to

<b>California:</b>	Tina Thompson
<b>Kentucky:</b>	Becky Barker
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require people to register the larger species.

Its purpose is supposed to be to protect first responders who enter a property in response to an emergency, but the list of owners would be available to the public via the Internet. I have no problem with emergency personnel knowing what they're walking into, but I feel a public database endangers the animals as well as the public. Recently, there have been cases across the country where people have used such public lists to locate a property and cut open enclosures to release animals, always resulting in extreme distress for both owner and animal, sometimes resulting in tragedy. In Florida, a list of exotic animal owners was used to send inflammatory letters to all of their neighbors.

Other animal-related legislation in Wisconsin: in 2003, Wisconsin voters approved an amendment to the state constitution making hunting, fishing, and trapping a guaranteed right. By January 1, 2006, Wisconsin became the first state to make Livestock Premises Registration mandatory, even if you only have one horse. At the present time, only livestock animals are covered by this requirement. From the APHIS website: "USDA strongly believes that the best approach to premises registration is a voluntary system led by the states." What part of "voluntary" did somebody in this state have a problem with?

## Laura Jeffries Missouri

I own a pair of Geoffroy's cats, and many domestics, mainly Bengals and Serengetis. I have always loved animals. While I was in college I had my first exotic pet, a panther chameleon named Flash. Flash taught me so much. He taught me the critical role of recreating the environment, temperature, humidity, full spectrum lighting, water dripping systems, misting, foliage, and diet. I also had to learn that stress plays a major role in an exotic pet's happiness and health.

After graduating in 2003 with a BS in biology and a MS in chemistry, I took a job as a research chemist at a pharmaceutical company. I liked my job, but I still loved animals above all else. While surfing the net, I learned about hybrid cats, and I was hooked! We bought a couple of hybrids, and I love them dearly, and in time I was looking for more of a challenge. I found the FCF, and it has been a whirlwind ever since. My daughter and I both took the husbandry course, and we drove around the country meeting other people that had exotic cats. On one trip we went to Arkansas and met with Lynn. At that time she had a 6-month-old Geoffroy named Stuart, and I was in love! Since then I have been fortunate to find my two Geoffs. Bella is my melanistic girl and she is the love of my life (next to

my daughter of course). Sonny is my beautiful, but a bit feisty spotted boy. They are such a joy! Sonny can be a handful at times, but he has taught me the rules well, and as long as I follow the rules, we have a great time together. They are both still young, but we are hoping that someday soon we will have babies.

I was never interested in politics, and I wish that we were not in a situation that we had to worry about ban laws, breeding bans, or crazy regulations. But, the reality is we do have to worry about them, and I will do all I can to educate and work with legislators to see to it that we can all follow our dreams.

### *What legislators need to know.*

As I've been working on Missouri issues, and learning the ins and outs of the legislative process, it occurs to me that there are two things we need to address when dealing with the legislators, or anyone: safety, for the public, the owner and the animal, and the important role of private conservation, hence the reason private individuals need to be allowed to continue to keep their animals. If a bill is written so that owners maintain their rights to keep their animals, and the safety of the public, the owner and the animal are assured, then it's a good bill. When I read through a bill, I ask myself those questions.

We had two bills introduced here in Missouri, one in the Senate and one in the House. The Senate bill modifies the current law that requires owners of certain dangerous animals to register with the chief law enforcement agency in their area. The new bill would allow people to continue to keep their animals—so check on that point. The bill requires the sheriff to post the names and address of owners on a public website. That does nothing to protect the safety of the public and actually endangers the animals, owners, and possibly the public as well. Overall, this bill fails my test on the safety issue; it does nothing to ensure the safety of the public, and actually has provisions that would endanger the safety of everyone.

The second bill we are facing is in the House. It is basically a ban law, owners of all exotics from big cats and bears to pet shop birds would have to be licensed, inspected, insured, and absolutely no breeding allowed. This bill addresses the safety by ensuring that everyone is inspected and caging is adequate. However this bill makes sure that no one will be able to afford to

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keep their animals, and it stops all private conservation efforts, including USDA licensed breeders. This bill also fails the test, and we will be fighting this bill.

I discovered while researching the House bill that it made an unusual reference to zoos being accredited by the AAZPA (the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums), not AZA. So I did some research. What I found is that the AAZPA has not existed since 1994. In 1994 the AAZPA officially changed its name to the AZA. I found that the only place that refers to the AAZPA is the Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition. This coalition is an umbrella group formed of extreme Animal Rights groups, including PETA, API, Fund for Animals, and HSUS. They have a list of states they are targeting and Missouri is on their list. My thoughts are that all of these groups have become exposed for what they are, and so they needed to find a new, innocuous name to try to gain credibility. It is therefore important that we make legislators aware of who is behind this group. This should not be hard, because they put it right out there on their website. If you have not learned about this group yet, it would be beneficial to explore their website. <http://www.cwapc.org>

## Greg Lyons Nebraska

I joined the FCF in April 2005, and attended the FCF husbandry class in Indiana in early 2006. I have four domestic cats, but no exotics—yet.

In early 2007 LB25 (the so-called “wolf-dog hybrid” bill) was introduced in the Nebraska Legislature and initially included both dog and cat hybrids. I wrote several batches of emails to the state legislators trying to help kill the bill. I launched my website, NebraskaServal.com, in February of last year to try to get people to oppose that bill.

I feel that private individuals ought to be able to own any kind of animal they want, provided:

- a) they have the means and knowledge to properly care for it,
- b) they house and care for it in a way that is both good for the animal and secure for the public, and
- c) they are committed to being responsible for that animal for the rest of its life.

I believe it is fair for the government to try to look out for the welfare of animals

(just like for children’s welfare), but dictating to us what kind of animals we can/cannot have is overstepping their bounds, and none of government’s business beyond what is required to address the three issues just listed above.

With that said, the position I have taken on my website for Nebraska is to relegalize just the small cats (e.g., those 50 pounds and smaller) and their hybrids in Nebraska. That probably needs some explanation.

Nebraska has been a ban state since 1986. I think it is safe to say there should be almost no one in the state that currently privately owns any large cats—not legally, anyway. (I say “should” because there were several tigers confiscated here last year.) Therefore, trying to make just small cats legal is neither fragmenting the exotic cat community in the state nor giving some of them preferential treatment at the expense of others. There essentially is no exotic cat community in the state right now to fragment.

In my opinion, it would be an extraordinarily hard sell to get Nebraska to re-legalize big cats in that the general public and the media often view as inherently dangerous. I believe we can legitimately and honestly argue that small cats are not dangerous to the public, even though some of them can sometimes be dangerous to the individuals handling them.

When doing my website, I debated whether I should support relegalization of just servals, or go for all small cats. I decided to go for all of them for two reasons:

- 1) If we argue re-legalization species-by-species, the lesser-known small cats are never going to be considered, and
- 2) We make a stronger and more credible argument for private owners contributing to conservation of species if we go for all the small cats as a group.

The way Nebraska law is currently written (and being interpreted by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, whose responsibility is to enforce that law) hybrid cat breeds (i.e. bengals, savannahs, chausies, etc.) are also banned. That may actually be a “good” thing in a perverse sort of way, because it makes the pool of interested people larger than it would be if it was just people wanting to own exotic species. My goal is to get hybrid-breed cat people on our side to help change the law.

Those are my basic thoughts on Nebraska exotic cat law politics—they probably

will not apply to any other state. In my opinion, in a state where there are currently big-cat owners, both big and small cat owners should fight together to keep *all* their cats legal. We cannot afford to fragment ourselves when opposing new ban legislation. In states where new bans have been passed more recently, the proper way to approach re-legalization is going to vary with the individual states’ circumstances.

I feel the idea of having an individual in every state be the local contact, and responsible for watching that state’s legislative activity is very good idea. Bill introductions pop-up literally overnight unless you somehow have inside information on a particular bill that is going to be introduced. To expect one person (or even a committee of 5-10 people) to keep an eye on developments all over the country would be an overwhelming task if you had paid staff doing it—let alone if you’re depending on volunteer labor. So FCF needs a member in every state who’s willing to take the time to watch their state and report back to the organization.

We need to “take the battle to them” in the sense of people in current ban states organizing to introduce re-legalization bills. I am not saying the FCF should necessarily spend its money and effort on this initially. It would be good if individuals interested in cats would step up on their own and start things locally. Make the AR (animal rights) people have to watch their backs for a change. Make it so they cannot just write off states as being “done.” Make it so they always have to feel that they have to safeguard any gains they have made.

Somehow we need to get to domestic cat people and get them on our side en masse. I cannot believe it should be that hard if we can find the right approach and medium. If we could convert even a small percentage of them to support us, we could walk all over AR when they try to take our animals away.

## Tina Thompson California

I have been an FCF member since 2004, and became interested in legislation affecting exotic animal ownership when my husband and I partnered with another individual to develop a cougar education program centered around a live animal. We eventually overcame the hurdles and had the opportunity to hand-raise an infant cougar. I was struck by the myriad regulations, jurisdic-

tions, and conflicting information that owners of exotic cats must face. I was also amazed to learn that those regulations, requirements, laws, forms, permits (in California), are designed only to discourage private ownership; there is very little protection for these animals once they are acquired. Legislation is usually misdirected and only through the vigilance of exotic animal owners can we hope to keep it on the right track.

In my former life I worked in communications for a large aerospace firm. I managed advertising, wrote executive speeches and marketing materials, developed trade show presentations and video scripts. After taking early retirement, I interned as a veterinary technician at an animal hospital. I have been an active volunteer at our local zoo for five years, assisting with the care of two cougars, two bobcats, and an ocelot. Exotic cats are my passion.

There are 27 pages of regulations governing the ownership, care, housing, and transportation of exotic animals in California. These are compounded by scores of amendments and subtexts that only a legal scholar could wade through. This state's laws are supplemental to the 137 pages that USDA has amassed on the same subject.

The purpose of these myriad restrictions and controls is, presumably, to protect the health and welfare of the animals and protect the public from injury.

Unfortunately, the laws on the books today offer no guarantees. Witness two well-publicized cases in California. A man in Colton was arrested for housing tigers in squalid conditions and keeping some 58 dead cubs in a freezer. In Simi Valley, a Bengal tiger was found roaming loose near a housing development. It was shot and killed.

The individuals responsible for these abuses were both licensed by California Fish & Game. Neither of them, despite the appearance of following the rules, were protecting the animals or the public.

#### *Enactment vs. Enforcement*

The knee-jerk reaction to these events is to pass more stringent legislation. But it seems pointless when Fish & Game and USDA are already understaffed, overworked, and hard-pressed to enforce the laws that exist. Even the recent tiger attack at the San Francisco Zoo would not have been prevented by tougher laws. Police declined to press charges because the zoo did nothing wrong. The "victims" were drunk and clearly provoked the animal. You cannot legislate common sense.

Enter the Feline Conservation Federation (FCF). We are private conservationists with a passion for exotic cats and a desire to see them thrive in safe and healthy environments. We contribute to research projects that focus on endangered cats that live in the wild and we advocate responsible private ownership of cats that do not.

The public hears very little about us because our tigers, lions, servals, caracals, and cougars live quietly and peacefully on farms, private reserves, sanctuaries, and rural properties. These un-newsworthy animals do not come into contact with the public for "entertainment." The neighbors do not ride them, pose for hands-on pictures, or enter their enclosures. These animals that never make the headlines are well cared for ambassadors for their cousins in the wild.

#### *Voluntary Self Controls*

Much like the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) sets policies and polices its members, the FCF sets standards that mirror state and federal requirements and our members follow them. FCF accredits facilities and registers experienced animal handlers. We offer animal husbandry courses nationwide that teach owners of exotic cats how to properly care for their animals and handle them safely. We support public



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education programs. We undertake independent feline nutrition and behavior studies to keep our animals healthy and enriched.

Unfortunately, FCF cannot spend all of its time promoting and ensuring responsible ownership of exotic cats because it spends a great deal of energy fighting over-zealous legislation that every front-page animal incident provokes. Most restrictive legislation is promoted by well meaning animal rights groups who believe that all wild animals belong in the wild and that only a select few human beings should have contact with them. Unfortunately, there is not enough wild left to accommodate them and they are dependent on organizations (select or not) like the FCF for their continued survival.

Restrictive legislation casts a wide net. And it often misses its target. Laws aimed at the irresponsible hit the responsible the hardest. People who house 600-pound tigers in one-bedroom apartments, indiscriminate breeders, casual “pet” owners who abandon animals once they get too large to handle fly below the legal radar. More stringent legislation or outright bans on private ownership will not stop them. It will, however, block the conservation activities of dedicated preservationists.

#### *Same Page, Different Outlook*

Many FCF members already have a good working relationship with government agencies. We keep our paperwork up to date. We open our facilities for inspection and take corrective action when needed. We foster abandoned exotics for overwhelmed local authorities. When we see abuses we report them.

We are not the bad guys. FCF asks state legislators to ponder the results of ever more restrictions in relation to their intent. Remember: prohibition did not work. It simply drove the activity underground. What did work was rational regulation, education, partnerships with the public, and voluntary self-governance. The FCF advocates a similar approach to restricted species. We ask legislators to consider whether more volumes of regulations will curb abuses or just turn responsible conservationists into law-breakers.

The wild places that exotic felines call home are shrinking. Unfortunately, so are the legal ones. •

## Update from Fauna Andina

Fauna Andina has just rescued a Darwin's fox. With only 500 individuals remaining, it is one of the most endangered canids around the world. It is listed by IUCN as Critically Endangered.

The fox is endemic of Chile and it lives on the island of Chiloé. Only few of them live off of the island at the mountains of Nahuelbuta.

This fox is a real beauty that is on the fast track to extinction.

A new guiña has arrived. Born in the wild the middle of January 2008, this guiña was orphaned when dogs killed its mother. It arrived safely at Fauna Andina at the recommendation of the Chili government and is assumed to be about 15 days old.

This young orphan brings the captive population of this endangered feline up to four individuals. The orphan will be the second hand-raised feline at Fauna Andina Center, who will join with Tala, the other tame guiña to serve as both an educational ambassador and participate in future breeding programs. What is particularly exciting is that the orphan came from another geographic location and will contribute new genetics for the breeding program.

FCF shipped WildTrax vitamins, donated by Tracy Wilson, to Chili to the facility and Fernando reports the resident felines are responding well.

Sincerely,  
Fernando Vidal



**The Darwin's fox at Fauna Andina**



**15 day old baby guiña just arrived at the center.**

# The Sad State of India's Tigers

*Prachi Bhuchar*  
*New Delhi TV*

The number of tigers in India has gone down considerably, according to the latest census report on tigers. The latest census of tigers reported 1,411 of the great cats, a dramatic fall from 3,600 tigers counted in the 2002 census. If these figures are to be believed, the project to save the big cat has been a big failure.

The statewide statistics below show population levels in two reserves below the minimum needed to maintain a diverse gene pool:

- Uttarakhand: 178
- Karnataka: 290
- Assam: 70
- Rajasthan: 32
- Madhya Pradesh: 300

India had 1,827 tigers when Project

Tiger was started 35 years ago. The initial response to Project Tiger was good with the setting up of over 20 project tiger parks. Even the number of tigers seemed to go up.

The euphoria, however, did not last long. The latest tiger census has squarely blamed poaching and habitat loss for the decline in numbers. It brings up two uncomfortable questions as well. The first being that if the numbers stated earlier were accurate, how does Project Tiger explain the loss of over 50 percent of the tiger population in less than seven years? And secondly if the numbers were fudged, then what was the cause?


Camera traps set to census the tiger population may offer some answers. "Our cameras instead of capturing tigers have captured images of hunters with bows and arrows inside Simlipal. They have stray

dogs with them. There are images of them walking out with dead animals," said Rajesh Gopal, Director, Project Tiger.

Forest guards are ill-equipped and don't get paid on time. There are over 30 percent vacancies in most national parks. There is lack of co-ordination when it comes to intelligence gathering on poaching and massive encroachments. Inadequate buffer zones also remain a concern. Adding to the misery is the local communities being kept isolated from conservation programs.

The only response the government has had so far is to set up yet another tiger conservation authority. The much needed wildlife bureau, with a coordinated intelligence network needed to stop poaching, is yet to take off.


One thing is for certain—India's national animal is dying. •




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## FCF Board Meeting Minutes 1/7/08 to 1/14/08

Lynn Culver opened the FCF board meeting on Internet Forums with a letter outlining many of the issues to be covered. Attending were Lynn Culver, President; Brian Werner, Vice President; Kevin Chambers, Treasurer; Betsy Whitlock, Secretary; Mindy Stinner, Carol Bohning, Irene Satterfield, Carolyn Clendinen, and Evelyn Shaw.

The following agenda items were introduced: Nominate and vote on two new directors: Director of Marketing and Director of Development. Nominate and vote on a replacement for Mitch Kalmanson on the Accreditation Committee. Receive the treasurer's annual report. Ratify the minutes from the last board meeting, Review Fernando Vidal's grant request. Discuss renaming and planning for the Tiger Transport Fund, web site status, Café Press store, the FCF fidelity bond, the status of the logo design and changes to the accreditation program and policies.

**Director of Marketing:** Kevin Chambers nominated Robert Bean as Director of Marketing, Seconded by Betsy Whitlock. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

**Director of Development:** Kevin Chambers nominated Deborah Rabinski as Director of Development, Seconded by Betsy Whitlock. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

**Accreditation Committee Member Vacancy:** Kevin Chambers nominated Karl Mogensen to fill the vacancy on the Accreditation Committee and was seconded by Brian Werner in the last board meeting. 5 yes votes, 1 no vote, 3 abstain. Motion passes.

**Treasurer's Report:** Kevin Chambers presented the annual financial report.

He reported that proceeds from the sale of the cat cards have been \$357.00 to date with the cost of all cards at \$277.69 and that we still have cards in inventory making this program a successful fund raiser.

He reported that we sold 28 gift subscriptions to the journal for a total income of \$420.00 plus two gift memberships and two gift renewals totaling \$120.00

Kevin reviewed with the board the status of the FCF's CDs, which are due to mature April 5. Their value should be approximate-

ly \$39,372.91 at that time. He and Brian Werner made several suggestions about how these funds should be invested at maturity. This issue was tabled pending the addition of new board members and the next board meeting.

**Ratify the minutes from the prior board meeting:** The minutes of the prior board meeting were presented for ratification as written and reported in the January-February FCF Journal. Lynn Culver moved that the minutes be ratified as written, seconded by Evelyn Shaw. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

**Review request for a Conservation Grant of \$2,000 by Fernando Vidal:** Fernando Vidal's application for a grant to build and improve caging at his facility was presented to the board. There was discussion concerning press releases that have not been completed on prior grants. On the unanimous recommendation of the Conservation Committee, Mindy Stinner moved that his grant be approved, seconded by Kevin Chambers. 7 yes votes. Motion passes.

**Tiger Transport Fund:** Discussion was held that Mindy Stinner would write basic guidelines for this fund and the use thereof with board input. It was suggested that the two new board members along with Mindy administer this program with the help of a volunteer committee so it could work more swiftly in case of emergencies but limit the amount of money that could be granted without full board approval. The board will revisit this issue at the next meeting. Moved by Evelyn and seconded by Betsy that the fund created to aid felines be named the Wildcat Safety Net Program. 7 yes votes. 2 no votes. Motion passes.

**Website Status:** Lynn Culver asked for an update on the new website being built by Creating Flash. She questioned Irene Satterfield on the status of the current web site and its move to [www.thefcf.org](http://www.thefcf.org) to accommodate the new website and noted that the Members Only sign-in is still non-functional and that other priorities for the web site have still not been met. Irene indicated that the web site must be moved all at once and that the sign-in problems could be resolved

when that was accomplished. She indicated that she cannot move security certificates. They go with the domain name for the year.

**Café Press Store:** Kevin Chambers presented the financial status of sales versus expenses at the Café Press Store, which was upsized last year to a premium store. It was moved by Kevin Chambers and seconded by Betsy Whitlock that the Café Press store be returned to a no-cost basic store. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

**FCF fidelity bond:** Kevin Chambers presented issues with the current fidelity bond renewal. The current bond premium has gone up significantly and requires either a conviction clause and/or a very costly audit. This issue was tabled until the new board members could participate in the discussion.

**Logo Design:** Lynn asked Irene to report on the status of the FCF logo-revamping project she initiated in September 2007. Per Irene on January 8, the creative director confirmed the instructions again via email and said he would have something shortly. She does not know what "shortly" means.

**Accreditation Program and Policy change:** Moved by Kevin Chambers and seconded by Betsy Whitlock. Change the *Programs and Policies* to read:

*3.2. h. Accreditation is good for two years. After one year, a report shall be submitted to the Accreditation Committee detailing any changes in the facility, husbandry, feline inventory, policies, etc. Renewals must be submitted two months before the expiration of the accreditation period of two years. For example, if the accreditation became effective March 1, the renewal must be submitted by January 1.*

and

*6) Once the inspection has been completed, mail five copies of the video, requested documents, and the completed application form, along with the original signed inspection form, and processing fee to the FCF secretary.*

9 yes votes. Motion passes.

The meeting closed at midnight 1/14/08

*Respectfully submitted by  
Betsy Whitlock  
Secretary*

## FCF Board Meeting Minutes 1/24/08 to 1/31/08

Lynn Culver opened the FCF board meeting on Internet Forums with a letter outlining many of the issues to be covered. Her primary focus was on adopting a budget and acquiring a new web site. Several other agenda items were introduced as the meeting progressed. Attending were Lynn Culver, president, Brian Werner, vice president, Kevin Chambers, treasurer, Betsy Whitlock, secretary, Mindy Stinner, Carol Bohning, Carolyne Clendinen, and Evelyn Shaw. Irene Satterfield was not in attendance.

The following agenda items were introduced: Rescind board approval and funding for the Creating Flash web site, Adopt official FCF Committee Guides as proposed by Deborah Rabinski, annual report, fidelity bond, approve minutes from 1/7/08 board meeting, set up guidelines for the Wildcat Safety Net Program, budget, amend bylaw 7.7 Policy on Resignations, investment strategy, open board of director meetings, review the current Moderation

Policy, Field Rep update, new web site proposal, review Lotty policy and receive Sara Comstock's resignation.

Lynn Culver moved and Bobby Bean seconded that FCF rescind approval of the Creating Flash web site approved in November 2007. 10 yes votes. Motion passes.

Deborah Rabinski provided a set of guidelines to use with FCF committees. Lynn Culver moved and Kevin Chambers seconded that FCF adopt official FCF Committee Guidelines as part of the FCF Programs and Policies that are posted on the FCF web site. 10 yes votes. Motion passes.

Lynn Culver presented a 2007 annual report for review by the board.

Betsy Whitlock moved and Kevin Chambers seconded that the board approve fidelity bonding for \$50K coverage for three officers on the account with no audit required, but requiring a conviction to pay. Cost is \$233.89. 10 yes votes. Motion pass-

es.

Kevin Chambers moved that the minutes of the 1/7/08 through 1/14/08 board meeting be approved. Motion seconded by Lynn Culver. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

Mindy Stinner presented an outline for guidelines for the Wildcat Safety Net Program. After board input and changes, Mindy Stinner moved and Kevin Chambers seconded that official Wildcat Safety Net Fund guidelines be adopted. Guidelines are posted on the FCF web site. 9 yes votes. Motion passes.

Budget: Moved by Lynn Culver and seconded by Kevin Chambers that the board approve proposed budget for the year 2008. 7 yes votes, 2 no votes. Motion passes.

Betsy Whitlock moved and Kevin Chambers seconded bylaw 7.7 be amended as follows:

*7.7 Any member of the Board of Directors, or board appointee, who chooses to resign his or her position, shall do so to the President or to the Secretary by private e-mail,*

## 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!

**<http://fcfauctionstore.com/>**  
**<http://stores.ebay.com/Feline-Conservation-Federation>**



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!

*posting to any FCF Yahoo list or by US Mail. Receipt of the written resignation by the President or Secretary shall constitute acceptance of the resignation and the resignation shall become effective immediately or as specified in the letter of resignation. In the case of a verbal resignation, the President shall, within 14 days of the notification, request written confirmation by receipt confirmed e-mail or by US Mail with delivery confirmation from the resigning member. If no written response is received from the resigning member within 7 days of confirmed receipt, the person shall be deemed to have resigned and the position considered vacant. Persons appointed by a single Board Member or Committee Chair shall be subject to the same procedure, but may also resign by notifying the Board Member or Committee Chair making their appointment. Persons who have resigned their positions either on the Board of Directors or as appointees shall be ineligible to run for, be appointed or elected to another position for a period*

*of 1 year unless they ask for an exception from this bylaw stating that their resignation was a result of extreme personal hardship. The Board of Directors with a  $\frac{2}{3}$  affirmative vote may grant the exception. 8 yes votes. Motion passes.*

Kevin Chambers presented options for the reinvestment of the FCF funds currently held in CD. The board agreed by consensus that FCF should pursue a conservative strategy using high interest checking and insured investment accounts.

Betsy Whitlock moved and Evelyn Shaw seconded that the next board meeting be viewable in real time by the membership on the forum site. The members will be notified by the president of the date of that meeting one week in advance on the FCF Yahoo list and at that time and immediately preceding the meeting any members who wish to comment must do so by private email to the board members involved in any topic. Posting comments on the FCF Yahoo list could subject members to moderation. This will be a trial process and the

results will be reviewed by the board at the end of the meeting to see if it is an effective tool to open communications with the general membership or if it is so disruptive that the board meeting will be returned to private. 10 yes votes. Motion passes.

Moved by Betsy Whitlock and seconded by Evelyn Shaw that FCF establish a committee to review complaints of violations of the rules of the FCF Yahoo list and any other list owned by the FCF. The committee shall be comprised of three currently serving members of the board of directors to be appointed by the president. Any member of the Moderation Committee may receive complaints of violations. The three committee members shall select a single member to act as their committee chairperson. The chairperson may place any member on moderation for a period of not more than five days while reviewing a complaint should the chairperson deem this appropriate. If the complaint is deemed to have merit by a unanimous vote of the three-member committee, then the offending party shall be subject to moderation as follows. All subsequent complaints shall continue to be reviewed and acted upon by a unanimous vote of the Moderation Committee. First offense in any 12-month period: The offending party shall receive a written warning and a copy of the Moderation Policy by email from one of the committee members. Second offense in a 12-month period beginning from the date of the first offense: Offending party shall receive a 30 day period of moderation on the FCF Yahoo list. Third offense committed while on moderation or within 12 months following the moderation period: Offending party shall receive one year of moderation on the FCF Yahoo list. Fourth offense committed while on moderation or within 12 months following the moderation period: Offending party shall be placed on moderation for a period of three years. Should the offending party re-offend then the committee shall place the offending party on moderation for an additional three-year period. The committee shall report each finding of violation to the board secretary so that a permanent record may be maintained and questions of eligibility to return to the list without mod-

## 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**

Seth Langianese  
Murray Rakowasky

### **Special Gifts:**

Elizabeth White, in honor of her beloved lion, Griffin, who resides with Mindy Stinner at CCI in Mebane, NC.

The FCF appreciates your generosity and continued support.

Betsy Whitlock  
Secretary FCF

## 2008 FCF Budget

FCF Corporation	\$13,975.00
Journal	\$12,825.00
Member Services	\$2,140.00
Secretary	\$250.00
Treasurer	\$250.00
Vice President	\$100.00
President	\$1,120.00
Education	\$1,000.00
Conservation	\$3,950.00
Public Relations	\$850.00
Marketing	\$2,000.00
Legislation	\$1,700.00
Development	\$150.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,310.00</b>

eration maybe addressed. It is the violator's responsibility to notify the committee when the moderation period is over and ask for reinstatement to full privileges on the list after each moderation or probationary period is completed. All current FCF board of directors may act as moderators on the FCF Yahoo list for any party placed on moderation by the committee. "All list members will be given a clean start and be removed from any current or past moderation effective 2/1/08 after the new policy is posted to the list. The new policy will take effect on that date and any new infractions will be dealt with under the new policy only." 10 yes votes. Motion passes.

Evelyn Shaw announced her appointment of Wayne Sluder to chair the Regional Field Rep Program. A field director meeting in conjunction with the March 15 husbandry course at Tiger Safari Zoo is being planned.

Lynn presented six proposals for building a new FCF web site. Moved by Evelyn Shaw and seconded by Lynn Culver that FCF enter into an agreement with Chuck Bunnell and Eagle Web designs to build a new FCF web site at a total cost of \$7,000.00 including the first year hosting fee of \$450.00. The hosting fee takes into consideration the size of the website, potential growth, and up to two hours per month of free updating and tech support. Updating and support include text changes, image editing, etc, but do not include adding new pages and programming. 10 yes votes. Motion passes.

Moved by Lynn Culver and seconded by Evelyn Shaw that the Lotty policy passed at the October 2007 meeting be amended as follows: *Former Lotty winners that are currently active members of the FCF in good standing form the nominating committee and that former winners vote, all of which must be current FCF members in good standing at the time of the vote. The Lotty winners, current FCF members in good standing, should vote for a chairperson who will oversee the process annually. Nomination should be made at least 60 days prior to convention and the voting should take place at least 30 days prior to convention with results to be held by the*

*chairperson and announced at convention. The ballots shall be turned over to the board of the FCF within 14 days after convention.* 7 yes votes. Motion passes.

Receive Sara Comstock's resignation: The board received Sara Comstock's resignation from the Regional Field Representatives program.

The meeting closed at midnight on 1/31/08.

Respectfully submitted by:

*Betsy Whitlock*

*FCF Secretary*

## Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The members of the FCF board of directors are proud to announce that during the months of January and February the following individuals have made application for and been accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program. The board cannot stress enough the importance of participating in this program. It is proof positive to the legislators that make decisions that effect ownership, breeding, or exhibiting of cats, that FCF members are committed to responsible ownership and excellence in the care of our charges. It is important that every member who qualifies takes advantage of this program.

**Kathy Baird—Basic Level**

**Kim Strohmeier—Advanced Level**

Our first annual renewals in this program will begin in April. At this time individuals may sign up at the annual rate of \$30.00. In the case of couples, the FCF board of directors approved a temporary offer of dual registrations for the \$30.00 fee. Current handlers also may renew their annual registration at the same rates until May 1, at which time the board will revisit the fees for new and renewal members. After May 1 new fees may apply, so renew early and save. For your convenience, a Registered Handler application form has been included with this journal issue. Please take the time to fill it out.

Renewal notice with renewal form will be forthcoming about 30 days prior to handler/members renewal dates printed on their identification cards.

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

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

*Betsy Whitlock*  
*FCF Secretary*

# FOCUS ON NATURE®

*Insight into the lives of animals*

## ANDEAN MOUNTAIN CAT



A seemingly-barren, cold, harsh habitat, the high-altitude rocky terrain of the Andes Mountains is rich with life. From tiny, aeolian insects to agile-footed ungulates, a variety of plants and animals make their living above the tree line, where humans rarely dare to tread.

In the world of predator and prey, camouflage and speed are necessities for survival. Blending well into this extreme environment, the 7 to 15-pound *Andean mountain cat* (*oreailurus jacobita*), or gato andino, leaves his subterranean den in the early morning hours, just as the sun comes up over distant peaks. The ground warms beneath his well-insulated feet and clumps of springtime grasses and small shrubs turn golden as the sun's rays shower them. These sparsely-aggregated plants provide food for herbivorous prey such as mountain chinchillas and viscachas, which, in turn, are delicious meals for a hungry mountain cat. Listening with his large, rounded ears for these small rodents, the cat hears faint scratching and nibbling sounds from a preoccupied chinchilla. Slinking low to the ground and with flattened ears, the mountain cat flows over the rocky terrain to within a few feet of his intended prey. In the end, an impressive record of successful hunts dictates the victor and the cat enjoys his meal.

Although the temperatures are bitterly cold at night, they can be quite pleasant during the day. With long, thick fur to insulate his body and a thick, warm tail to wrap around himself, the Andean mountain cat has adapted well to life above 13,000 feet. As well, grazing goats and sheep, able to easily traverse the rocky terrain, compete with the viscachas and chinchillas for food plants, which adversely affects the mountain cat. Biologists rarely have the opportunity to see this elusive, small wildcat and therefore very little is known about its biology and population densities.

Even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century little is known about the small wildcats, weighing less than 45 pounds and comprising three-quarters of the world's 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. •

© 2008 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](http://www.Rmasonfinearts.com)



**Clockwise from top:**  
 Serval kit needs to grow into that radio collar—Teresa Shaffer • Caracal performance enhancement—Teresa Shaffer • Coogie grabs his toy mid-air—Zuzana Kukol • Estelle Kemp gives cheetah yearling a hug—Gail Laviola

# Your best Shot





Leah Aufill and her cougar, Zinnia, looking at a squirrel. Photo by Roger Stansfield.

## FCF Upcoming Events

**Saturday, March 15, 2008** FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Course. 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Class to be held at the Tiger Safari Zoological Park, Educational Building, 963 County Street 2930, Tuttle, OK 73089 (18 miles south of the Oklahoma City Airport) \$65.00 FCF members, \$95.00 non-members. After March 1, registration fee increases to \$110. Mail registration form and check to: Feline Conservation Federation, 7816 N CR 75 W, Shelburn, Indiana 47879. Or use PayPal and send to [treasurer@felineconservation.org](mailto:treasurer@felineconservation.org)

**Sunday, March 16** Return for a guided informational tour of the park, home to tiger, lion, cougar, leopard, serval, bobcat, and savannah cat. Tiger Safari is an FCF accredited facility with large habitats and high quality enclosures. Learn about park enrichments and husbandry practices. Entrance fee for special tour Sunday is \$6.00. Special guided tour begins at 10:00 am.

**Wednesday, July 23** FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Course. Brighton Towers, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Presented in conjunction with the FCF convention. See convention information in this issue.

**Thursday, July 24-Saturday, July 26** FCF convention. Hilton's Kingston Plantation, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. See convention information in this issue.

