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Issue 3

Feline Conservation Federation



1001

DATE *June 8, 2013*

 Feline Conservation Federation  
141 Polk Road 664  
Mena, AR 71953

PAY TO THE ORDER OF *Small Cat Conservation Alliance* \$ *15,000.00*

*Fifteen Thousand Dollars*

FOR *Rare Species Fund Grant for small wild cat projects* *Lynn Culver* <sup>MP</sup>

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## JOIN THE FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

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A membership to the FCF entitles you to six issues of the *Journal*, the back-issue DVD, an invitation to FCF husbandry and wildlife education courses and annual convention, and participation in our online discussion group. The FCF works to improve captive feline husbandry and conservation. The FCF supports captive and wild habitat protection, and provides support for captive husbandry, breeding programs, and public education. Send \$35 annual dues (\$40 Canada, \$50 international) to FCF, 141 Polk Road 664, Mena, AR 71953.

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The Feline Conservation Federation publishes the *Journal* bimonthly. The FCF is non-profit, (Federal ID#59-2048618) noncommercial, and international in membership, devoted to the welfare and conservation of exotic felines.

The *Journal* publishes articles on exotic feline conservation and husbandry, management, and regulatory and legislative issues affecting ownership for our members. The author's point of view does not necessarily represent the point of view of the organization. Reproduction of any material in the *Journal* may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner, FCF.

Letters to the editor and guest editorials are also published.

Display advertisement space is available at the following prices: \$10 business card, \$25.00 quarter page, \$50.00 half page, and \$100 full-page ad.

Submission deadline for articles and advertisements is the 10th of even numbered months.

Please submit high resolution photos and articles to the *Journal* Managing Editor. Photos and articles may be emailed to

lynnculver@hughes.net, or send by postal service to: 141 Polk 664, Mena, AR 71953.



Feline Conservation Federation

## Letter from the President

One of the ways the FCF organization conserves wild felines is our support of in-situ conservation programs and research. There are a lot of grant proposals out there, some worthy, others not so much. The FCF relies heavily upon the expertise of our science advisor and board member, Dr. Jim Sanderson, to advise the Conservation Grant Committee on these matters. The FCF is a relatively small conservation funding organization, but when we apply our funds wisely, we can make a noticeable difference in the lives of nature's wild felines. Over the years, the FCF conservation grants have supported ocelot research, margay research, Geoffroy's cat research and public education, guigna research and public education, and funded the search for remaining populations of cats in Vietnam. Our members donated over \$10,000 to build an Andean Cat Conservation Center.

In 2008, the FCF expanded its conservation role by teaming up with the Rare Species Fund, started by Doc Antle, founder of The Institute of Greatly Endangered and Rare Species. The FCF has given away over \$22,000 from the RSF to projects, mainly in Africa, that support the conservation of lions, leopards, and cheetah. The FCF also gave another \$5,000 from its Rare Species Fund to the Andean Mountain Cat Conservation and Research Center. The project is being overseen by Dr. Jim Sanderson, who understands that having a permanent, on-site building will greatly increase the ability for research and protection projects to be launched in the high Andes Mountains, where these cats and other endangered creatures live. The project plans have undergone several revisions since first proposed, but finally a center exists and the FCF has helped make this a reality.

I am pleased to announce that a new grant for small wild cat conservation has been awarded by the FCF to the non-profit organization, the Small Cat Conservation Alliance. Fifteen thousand dollars of the FCF-managed Rare Species Fund were awarded for the conservation and protection of small cat species. During the Annual Convention Board of Directors meeting, everyone agreed this was the best possible use of the remaining Rare Species Fund. Small wild cat species are in need of conservation and it is high time that they get equal support, especially

from an organization founded by people who pioneered the husbandry of small wild felids. The cover of this Journal issue depicts this donation, awarded during the Saturday evening banquet in Nashville.

The FCF is proud to make such a contribution to small cat conservation, and truly we are living proof that our husbandry of captive cats, and the joy they bring to our lives, compels us to care for their wild brethren. It mobilizes us from passive to active. As this issue of the Journal clearly illustrates, we

**The new Andean Cat Conservation and Research Center is a building at the Universidad de Chile research center in Putre. The FCF magnetic sign advertises our organization's support for this project.**



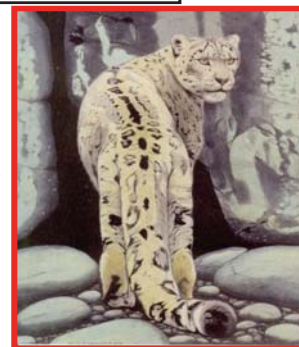
cannot look into the baby blue eyes of a clouded leopard cub, or hear their plaintive vocalizations, or stroke their soft, thick fur without being overwhelmed with love for the species and a deep willingness to make sure that such magnificent feline creations continue to be part of the web of life and nature.

Kevin Chambers

### FCF NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



**Meet the  
Wildcat  
Safety Net  
Challenge!**



A \$500 matching grant  
has been donated  
specifically to help the

Riverglen Tigers reach a new home at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Sanctuary. Your \$10 donation will become \$20. Your \$100 donation will be matched with another \$100. When members support a specific project, these donations will be added on top of the Safety Net Committee-approved grant.

For each donation of \$30 or more, choose one of three thank you prints by artist Teri Zucksworth. These 18" x 24" colored pencil drawings are ready for matting and framing.

Pick the black leopard, "Hanging Around," the lounging white tiger, "Paying a Visit," or the snow leopard, "Standing Guard."

Go to the FCF website to make a donation with PayPal today. Or call the treasurer to use your credit card to support this worthy cause at 479-394-5235.

**Do your part to help transport captive felines out of harm's way—support the FCF Wildcat Safety Net with a donation today.**



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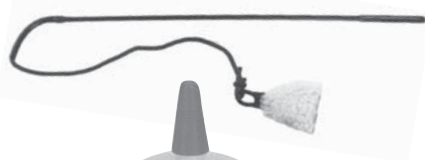
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## From the Executive Director

By Lynn Culver

The most highly anticipated FCF event of the year is certainly the Convention, and this year was no different. A lot of planning went into creating great opportunities for fellowship and networking, attracting interesting speakers, arranging for the presence of small wild cat ambassadors, and getting special treatment from the local feline attraction. Based on the feedback from attendees, the FCF scored a home run on all accounts.

We are especially grateful to Grégory Breton, of the Parc des Félines, in Paris, France, for agreeing to be a part of our convention and speak to our members about his zoo park. The FCF could not have accomplished this feat without the help of Jim Sanderson, who contacted Grégory about speaking to the FCF, and Thierry Plaud, who graciously arranged for Grégory's flight to the U.S.

Having international speakers helps connect the FCF with feline enthusiasts around the globe and gives us insight into husbandry and different feline species kept in other collections. It helps connect our breeders and exhibitors with other captive husbandry operations, which can give rise to future cooperative breeding arrangements.

The AZA has acknowledged that their association cannot maintain species survival with such small gene pools and is now working with associations in other counties to combine genetics and create global breeding plans. The same is true with the FCF members in the larger feline community as well.

Grégory shared with FCF attendees the approach his park uses to be both productive feline breeders and public educators, all the while giving the resident cats the best possible life in captivity. The first ingredient in this recipe for success is creation of very large enclosures for the animals' welfare. The director and curator design each enclosure with the species in mind, keeping them simple and effective for maintenance. The park uses no concrete; only grass, soil, sand, and humus. Many natural elements, such as bushes, logs, trees, rocks, water ponds, and hills, are inside the open-topped enclosures for all the big cats, including the climbing big

cats; i.e. lynx, pumas, and cheetahs. Fence heights are between three and three and a half meters, with one to two foot overhangs. For the smaller species and clouded leopards, enclosures are roofed.

These natural habitats encompass acres of land, so one cannot take in the park quickly, but, instead, visitors must spend time before each habitat to find the feline occupants. Visitors are invited to become active observers. To educate the guests, the park uses educators, employees whose job is just that, to give guided tours, or travel by bike down the paths and talk to the private individuals. Unlike the U.S. zoos, where keepers often do the educating with keeper talks, at this park the feline keepers are specialized and only perform feline husbandry and enclosure cleaning, and the educating is left up to the educators.

It takes six full-time keepers, including two head keepers, one part-time veterinarian, and an extra local vet and vet hospital, a scientific trainee, as well as a curator with long-term interest in felids and in-situ experience, and a very involved director to keep the park running smoothly.

The FCF organization serves the needs of captive cats and those who care for them, regardless of whether they are commercial business or not. The FCF is not a trade association, but an organization dedicated to the cats and for the cats. The FCF does not have a paid lobbyist, like the two commercial zoo associations, AZA and the ZAA. The FCF does not discriminate against private, non-commercial owners or the facilities that provide feline offspring to these legal, permitted folks. If the feline's welfare is met and the public is protected, the FCF supports the habitat created. However, animal rights fanatics have the opposite view and



they want no animals in captivity. They have the money to buy lobbyists to influence the legis-

lators, and to bombard the public with their propaganda. We are still seeing outdated estimates on the number of "backyard tigers." World Wildlife Fund is running print ads on public transit in big cities, pushing for the passage of the Big Cats and Public Safety Protection Act (H.R. 1998). Somehow, this crazy piece of legislation has managed to gain 50 cosponsors. Now, Born Free USA is pushing for a hearing in the House Natural Resources Committee.

This bill will impact the seven species of large cat, and it is being advocated on the grounds that this legislation is necessary to end exotic "pet" ownership and the big cat trade, which, according to these extremists, involves tremendous suffering and grave dangers to human health and safety. Once again, the incredibly false statement that 10,000 to 20,000 big cats (or more!) are held in private ownership in the United States is put forth as the reason for this bill.

We may not be around much longer, but as long as the FCF exists, it will continue to provide husbandry assistance to members and educate the public and the legislators on the good works we do. Won't you please consider helping out in this mission by writing your elected officials and asking them to vote against H.R. 1998? Please get out and volunteer for FCF projects. Show your support by purchasing new items on the FCF website store, shown in this Journal on page 13.

Have a safe summer and be careful out there. Another tragic accident involving human error has put a trained intern working at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center into the hospital. A slide gate was left open and a tiger was allowed to reach the keeper. Fortunately, well-rehearsed contingency plans worked, saving the lives of both the keeper and the big cat. A few years ago, the AZA-accredited Denver Zoo lost a keeper to a jaguar after the gate was mistakenly left open. And the feline community is still saddened by the death of an experienced intern, who worked at the Cat Haven wildlife park, when she accidentally left a slide gate open, allowing an adult male lion to reach her. Check gates and latches twice before entering; the life you save may be your own!

**Jim Sanderson holds one of the Nashville Zoo clouded leopard cubs. Behind him on left is Thierry Plaud, on right is Gregory Breton.**

## Convention Review by Della Jacot

By Della Jacot

As we stated in articles leading up to the event, the 42nd Annual Feline Conservation Federation Convention was indeed exciting and fun. Let's start with the pre-convention activities. As with every year, the Exotic Feline Husbandry and Wildlife Educator's courses were both well worth the time and cost to attend.

Thursday's registration went well. This year, we added a few new activities to add more meat to the convention. Registrants were able to buy bingo sheets for a chance to win a coveted behind-the-scenes look at the clouded leopard and anteater breeding facilities at the Nashville zoo. There were only nine positions and the competition was fierce. There were also standard games played in order to win FCF items such as coffee cups, embroidered patches, and t-shirts. There were 17 games played in all. We played into the late hours of the evening. Although we were all tired, we had some good healthy competition and loads of laughs.

We also added a 50/50 raffle where there was a win for an individual and a win for the FCF. What a blast that was!

The suspense could be cut with a knife when Patti Beckleman pulled the winning number out of the box and Bobby Bean came forward to collect his prize!

Prior to all the gaming activities, the membership meeting went off very well. The discussions concerning FCF accreditation, and other membership activities, were insightful and informative. Everyone was able to give their input. Even though not all individuals agreed with one another, all opinions were respected and considered. What a very healthy, productive and non-combative collaboration! A breath of fresh air!

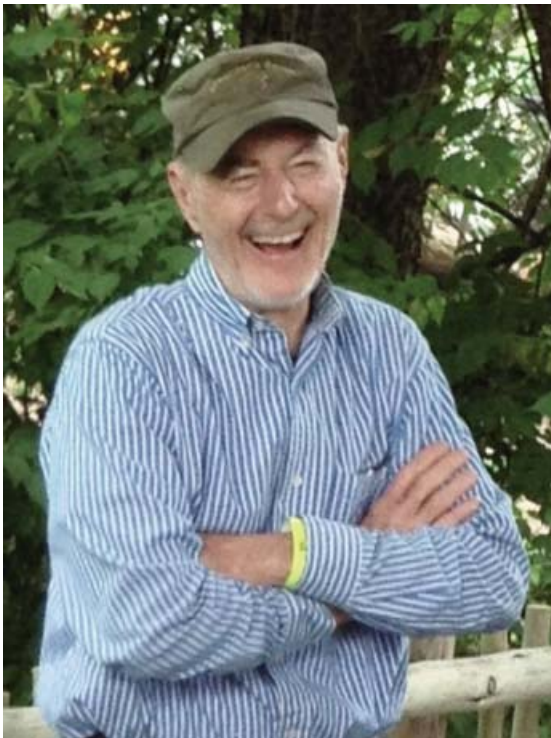
Oh, and let us not forget the exquisite meal! Wow! What a way to start off a convention! Great job, Lynn!

There was a buffet of finger foods that were tasty and plentiful; coconut shrimp (SORRY ABOUT THAT, Jim – hopefully it

was good old U.S. Gulf shrimp), Swedish meatballs, fruit bites, spinach dip, aspara-



**Della Jacot was emotionally overwhelmed by the soft beauty and sweet innocence of the clouded leopard cub.**



**Jim Sanderson has a good laugh at all the fun at the Nashville Zoo.**



**Rick Schwartz leads the tour of the offsite clouded leopard breeding complex for ten lucky bingo winners.**



**Vicky Delby had her hands full of baby Geoffroy's during the Thursday evening bingo.**

gus wraps, marinated chicken, etc., etc. The drinks were not bad either. I ate so much, I thought I would pop!

Not to be outdone by the opening business of the convention, Friday's events were even more exciting. After an excellent breakfast at the hotel, we all jumped on the bus and headed to the Nashville Zoo. The registered handlers met with Karen Rice, who gave a wonderful presentation regarding her very successful practice of hand-rearing clouded leopards. I have to say Karen has changed this member's outlook on breeding practices and the power of human interaction with these big cats. I surely would like to hear more about Karen's future successes.

Our next event was "mind blowing" and totally unexpected. Yes, I knew we would "see" some baby clouded leopards, but Ricky took things a major step forward. After discussions and demonstrations on handling the beautiful cubs, Ricky kindly handed them over to us one by one. I really thought I was going to hyperventilate! To actually hold and kiss the head of a clouded leopard cub was far beyond anything expected or even imagined. Thank you so much, Ricky! You are our hero! Socializing these amazing creatures technically saves their lives and ours. Their lives are saved



**Dolly and Dan Gluck fill their plates with delicious food at the Nashville Zoo lunch buffet.**

because they feel more confident and less fearful of humans and will allow for better care throughout this life in captivity. We as humans are enriched because studies show holding a warm furry creature calms us and helps our heart rates. I would say this event was definitely a win-win for everyone involved.

The lunch provided by the Nashville Zoo was awesome! We had cold cuts, veggies, cookies, and drinks. Notice all the food during this convention! I refuse

to check my weight because I know I will not like what I see.

So, you think the animals at the zoo were wild? Oh, no! This writer believes the night at the Wildhorse Saloon could give those animals a run for their money! We kicked up our heels, got on the dance floor, and did some line dancing! Yeeee haaaaa! A mighty good time was had indeed! And, yes, there was more excellent food! The barbeque was grrrrreeeeat!!! Certainly one of the best times I have had at an FCF convention .



**Friday night was wild at the Wildhorse Saloon. Lynn Culver, Mindy Stinner, Reva Anderson, and Shelleen Mathews pose for the camera.**



## Hand-Rearing of Felid Neonates

By Karen Rice, Supervisor of Carnivores and Anteaters  
Nashville Zoo at Grassmere

While each cub or kitten of any species is very different, there are many similarities in the process of hand-rearing. This article is meant simply to be a guide. Anyone taking on this challenge should consult other resources and individuals having experience with a particular species.

### *First Care*

At whatever stage a cub is pulled, the first thing that should be undertaken is a physical exam. The cub should be examined by a veterinarian, who should check the cub's heart and lungs, weight, temperature, umbilicus, eyes, ears, and mouth for signs of a cleft palate. The cub should also be assessed for signs of dehydration or malnutrition. It is imperative to rehydrate the cub if it is determined to be dehydrated and to get the body temperature up if it is low (around 101° F is normal). This is also a good time to sex the cubs and otherwise determine how to tell the cubs apart if there is more than one.

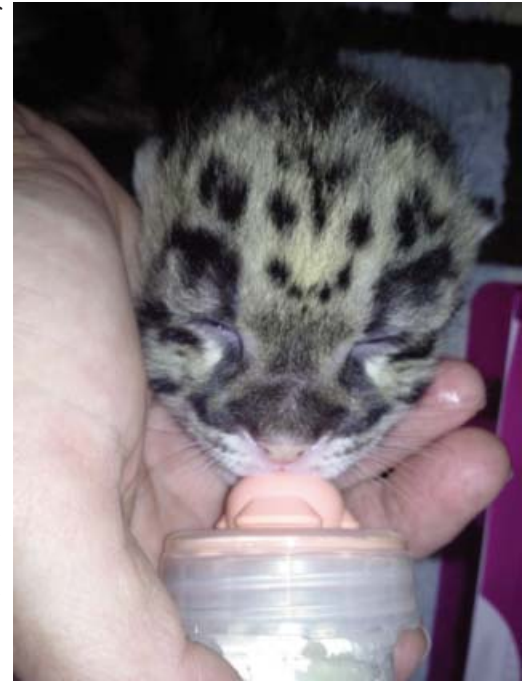
Next, the cubs should be placed in an incubator or crate with a heat source. Cubs older than three weeks might not need a heat source if they are not compromised. If a heating pad is used under the

crate, the crate should be placed half on and half off the pad, so the cub has the option to move to the warm or cool side. The heat source can be discontinued when the cub chooses to stay off of it, usually at a few weeks old. The best bedding for the crate is flannel or fleece, since neither tend to fray or unravel. If towels are used, make sure that they do not have holes or strings the cub can become caught in. Bedding should be checked at each feeding to make sure it is not soiled.

### *Feeding*

When it comes to feeding cubs, it is imperative that you listen to the cub to determine if the schedule is sufficient. For the first week, cubs should be fed about every three hours – usually between 6am and midnight. Most cubs will sleep through the hours in between; if yours do not, you can adjust the schedule. For weeks two, three, and four, you can drop to six feedings spread out between the same hours. From here to weaning, one feeding can be dropped every two weeks.

So what do you feed? Many people choose to use Lactated Ringer's solution for the first feed, or even the first full day of feeds. This is an excellent option with compromised cubs. I have had good luck



**Regular sized, or shorter, baby bottles work fine for *Drupada*, one of many clouded leopard cubs born at the Nashville Zoo.**

starting healthy cubs off with a more diluted formula. The most common formulas used for felids are KMR (Kitten Milk Replacer) or Esbilac (puppy milk replacer). The company that produces these products, PetAg, also makes a line of exotic milk replacers. They provide an online guide to help you determine the best product for your cub.

Always read recommendations for mixing. Most formulas are made by mixing one part powder to two parts water (1:2). You want your "parts" to be a measure (e.g. one cup), not by weight. Hint: Using warm water when mixing the formula will help to eliminate lumps. A blender or smoothie maker is helpful for mixing, but be sure not to over mix the formula. For the first day or two of feeding formula, I start by mixing one part powder to three parts water (1:3) to allow the cub to adjust. Once this is not satisfying the cubs, I go to the 1:2 mixture. The formula should be warmed to around body temperature prior to feeding and may require reheating during the feed. If you use a microwave to heat the bottle, make sure to shake the bottle well to eliminate any hot spots in the milk.

The general rule for amount to feed is



**Ullric, a baby Siberian lynx born at the Nashville Zoo, plays with a toy after her morning bottle.**

15% - 20% of body weight per day. Cubs should be weighed every morning prior to the first feed. Multiply the body weight by the percentage you want to feed (generally 20% in the beginning) to determine the amount the cub should receive that day. Then divide that amount by the number of feeds the cub is to receive that day. It is better to round up rather than down, so you are assuring the cub remains satisfied. A cub will let you know if it is not getting enough (not sleeping through to the next feed or fusses for more food) or if it is ready to eliminate a feed (consistently refuses a bottle at feed time).

Once a cub's teeth start to erupt, baby food can be added to the milk to introduce the taste of meat. Strained turkey or chicken flavor should be used. Start by adding a teaspoon to at least eight ounces of formula. If the cub tolerates this with



**Karen and assistant demonstrate proper cub feeding positioning; body sternal, head facing up reduces the chance of formula going "down the wrong tube" and entering the lungs.**

little or no change in bowel movements, after 3-4 days the amount of baby food can be increased to one jar per quart of formula. Hint: It is best to mix the baby food in while making the milk. If you have issues with lumps, you can strain the mixture to remove them. After the cub has been on the "meat" milk for 2-3 weeks they can usually be started on a raw carnivore diet. Continue to offer the nor-

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mal bottles through this process. Start by mixing the raw meat with warmed milk to a thick “pudding-like” consistency. Do not cook the meat; simply warm it. I have had better success offering the meat at room temperature without the milk. It may take several attempts before the cub accepts the meat, so keep trying. Once the cub eats the meat reliably, offer it at each feeding along with the bottles. Cubs may tend to prefer the meat over the milk and wean themselves. Or, it might be necessary to increase meat and reduce bottles to wean a cub. Either way, weaning should be complete by around three months of age.

Regular sized, or shorter, baby bottles work fine for all stages. For smaller cats, you might have to start in the early days feeding with the elongated PetAg nipples and bottles or preemie nipples. Larger species usually do fine with regular sized nipples from the start. Make sure to watch for tears as the cubs develop teeth and replace the nipples as needed. Cubs should be placed in a sternal position while feeding, as close to flat as possible. This will help avoid the milk going “down the wrong tube” (as we say in the South) and aspiration.

#### *Stimulation*

While young cubs may urinate on their own from an early age, they will need stimulation to defecate. At some point during each feeding session, either before or after, you will need to stimulate your cub. You should start with a cotton ball moistened in warm water and gently rub around the anal region. This should be enough to start a bowel movement and you should continue rubbing until they are finished. They will often urinate at the same time. As the cubs grow, you will find it useful to switch to soft paper towels to start stimulation and baby wipes for cleanup. For the first couple of weeks, the cubs may defecate at every feeding. This will become less frequent as they grow, with the cubs defecating only one or two times a day as they are weaned.

Diaper rash cream should be used if a cub’s anal area becomes red or irritated or can be used as prevention for such issues.

#### *Problems*

\*If the cub is fussy and does not sleep between feeds – consider upping the amount fed, even if it exceeds 20%.

\*If a cub refuses the entire amount at a feed, do not force them and do not up the amount at the next feed. But, be prepared for the cub to want to eat early at the next feed.

\*Do not let your cubs get too hungry, as they will become frantic and hard to feed.

\*If the cub aspirates during a feed and the milk comes out its nose, remove the bottle immediately and wipe the milk from the mouth and nose. Firmly pat the cub on the back while holding it with the tail end higher than the head. If you are familiar with “slinging” for an aspirating cub, you can do this.

\*Diarrhea: overfeeding is one of the many things that can cause diarrhea and one of the easiest to fix.

\*If the cub has not defecated, try adding a drop of mineral oil to the next bottle. If the problem persists, your veterinarian may have to do an enema.

#### *Vaccinations*

Vaccinations should be started at 6-8 weeks of age. Your vet can determine when the time is right to begin these and

what vaccinations are appropriate.


You should know the role your cub is to play (education, reintroduction, etc.) and you should socialize it accordingly. Age appropriate toys should be rotated and independent play encouraged. In addition, you should extinguish bad behaviors early through consistent, but gentle, discipline.

Success in hand-rearing can be determined by satisfaction and contentment between feeds, good stool and consistent weight gain. Hand-rearing is an art, not a science. You need to listen to your cub and learn to trust your instincts. And never be afraid to ask others for advice or assistance!

My personal experience is mostly with clouded leopards – somewhere between 40 to 50 cubs from around 20 or so litters. Other neonate species I have worked with to some degree are tigers, snow leopards, cougar, and Eurasian lynx. While clouded leopards can be challenging at times, they are my favorite to work with. Clouded leopards have wonderful personalities that really seem to develop at about one month old. They become very interested in their caregivers, but all the time maintain an independent streak. Cloudeds are very vocal and greet you with chirps and chuffs at every meeting, which can be very endearing to those of us in the human species.

The larger cats like tigers are usually very food motivated and take to bottles well and seem eager to feed just about any time. Some of the smaller cats can be hard to get started on a bottle. Cloudeds usually take to a bottle easily and eat relatively well until about the two-month mark - when they often times would rather play than eat, making feeding time a challenge. They are agile climbers and jumpers and develop these skills at an early age. By two and a half months, you can find yourself batting a cub out of the air to avoid a direct landing to the back of your head, all while trying to feed another cub. Not until they are around three months old do we ever see any aggression between litter mates; if we

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do see any at all, it is around food and not very escalated. They are very personable cats and quickly win over most everyone they meet.

#### *The Hold*

Rick Schwartz, Nashville Zoo President, has taught us a hold that works to calm and soothe the cubs. With smaller cubs, you can use one hand. Grabbing the cub around the back, you place the thumb under one front leg and the ring finger under the other. Do not hold the cub too firmly; just use enough pressure to hold the cub. By gently swaying or bouncing, the cub will usually go into a sleep-



like state. With larger cubs, two hands are usually necessary. Place one hand around the back in the same position as with the smaller cub and use the other hand around the chest to support it. Do the same sway or bounce to calm the cub. As an added element, we often place our lips on the cub's head and blow lightly or make a soft, clicking sound. Using this technique, we have been able to vaccinate, draw blood, and calm a frantic cub.

**Rick Schwartz has just used his special technique to relax this cub and demonstrates its soothing effect. To see the actual "hold," view photo on page 23 of this Journal.**

## Educator's Course Review

By "Jungle Josh" Remenar  
Animal Exhibitions Manager, Branson's  
Promised Land Zoo

My family has had a park called "The Promised Land Zoo" in Eagle Rock, Missouri, since 1999. Last year, my mother and father-in-law, Jeff and Diane Sanders, felt that they were called to open a second location in Branson, Missouri, called "Branson's Promised Land Zoo." It was decided that, with Branson being a show town, we should have live animal shows where we could promote conservation and education about the numerous rare and

endangered species exhibited in our parks. It sounded like a great idea, but none of us felt completely confident on how to set up and execute these live animal shows!

After some research and talking with other park owners, my wife and I decided that I should attend the Feline Conservation Federation's Educator's Course to make sure we could perform the shows to the best of our ability. Days before our grand opening in Branson, I attended the educator's course in Nashville, Tennessee, that was hosted by the FCF. I went into the course thinking that I already knew most everything that they were going to

go over, but, boy, was I wrong! Not only did the instructors, Debi Willoughby and Kim Barker, teach me things I did not know, but also I found that there were things I had already been doing that could be improved upon. I learned many important points on how to make a show more exciting and memorable, safe for the animals and our audience, and how to have the audience leave happy and more knowledgeable about these animals that we love so much.

Since attending the FCF Educator's Course, our new park has opened and the live animal shows are our biggest hit! We



**Lead instructor Debi Willoughby and instructor-in-training Kim Barker taught the class how to create and operate a successful wildlife conservation education business.**

provide multiple shows throughout the day and they are packed! I truly believe that without the course, and Debi, Kim, and Lynn Culver's advice, we would not be doing as well as we are now!

## New Items in the FCF Web Shop!



The FCF is proud to offer FCF logo coffee mugs. These high gloss, black, 11-ounce mugs are listed on our FCF website store and can be purchased for only \$5.00 each, with \$5.00 shipping and handling to U.S. addresses. FCF coffee mug profits benefit the Wildcat Safety Net Fund.

Also new to the FCF website store are full color FCF logo embroidered patches. These four-inch patches are ready to stitch onto your polo shirt, safari shirt, jacket, travel bag, or anything else you can think of. Show your support by purchasing them online at the FCF website store for only \$5.00 each. Shipping for one to four patches is only \$3.00, making this a great,

affordable way to outfit all your employees and volunteers.

Plan ahead by stocking up on the beautiful and original full color feline photo 2014 FCF calendar put together by our youth. Photos of felines were taken by FCF members. Calendars are \$20 each, with \$4.00 shipping to U.S. addresses. All proceeds will go to the Youth Education Fund.

Need to protect your iPhone 4, iPhone 5, Galaxy S3, or iPad? The FCF is offering custom cases depicting the FCF logo and your personalized cat image actually tattooed into the durable plastic resin so they will not scratch off. The iPhone cases come in 2 styles; slim and tough. The FCF is offering these beautiful and functional cases for \$35 for the slim style and \$40 for the tough models. So pick out



your favorite feline photo and design your own custom case. Check them out by visiting the FCF online store.

New FCF logo t-shirts are here! These beautiful, full-color printed shirts feature the FCF logo on the front and the paw prints and message "What will you leave behind?" on the back. This year's shirt colors are sports gray, yellow haze, and pebble. Shirt sizes are small, medium, large, extra-large, and double extra-large. Shirts are \$20, with \$5.00 shipping to U.S. addresses.

We appreciate your purchases. You help make the FCF grow stronger!



## Educating the Educators – A Fun Filled Day of Learning

By Vera Chaples  
Mystic Jungle Educational Facility Inc.

As one who has lived a lifetime around animals as well as making them my career of choice, I jumped at the chance of learning yet more. The Wildlife Conservation Educator's Course was a choice on taking that I have not regretted. The coup de gras was at the end of the day, when we got a bonus of seeing the course in action!

I have never been a good student, as I am ADHD. Therefore, you must constantly keep my attention; otherwise my mind wanders. Similar to someone changing the channel on the TV with a remote as you are trying to watch it. It is VERY frustrating. But Debi really got my attention and held it. She did it in an interactive way that kept my mind focused, yet I was also having fun. She did such a great job that I only missed two questions, and of those it was my own fault for not thinking it through.

As an FCF member, I highly recommend that if you ever get the chance, you should take the course. Even if you are a veteran, as I am, one is always learning and evolving in that educational journey, and this is a course you should mark as mandatory for your learning.

The bonus part was at the end of the evening. Debi gave a public show. Her

“Wildcats Presentation” was advertised by the front desk and several hotel guests took advantage of this free and fun educational show starring a couple of the furry felines in attendance at convention. Of course, plenty of FCF members who had arrived early for the husbandry and educator's courses were also in the audience. Debi's students saw in practice what we had learned during the day. She implemented not only her slide show, her oral presentation, but also brought out a selection of small wild cats, up and coming ambassadors which people were able to see, hear, and touch. She opened the show with a Eurasian lynx, followed by a tiny, spotted Geoffroy's kitten, and concluded with the African caracal. Each species was allowed to walk upon a table, and their owner, Lynn Culver, gave them a bottle to keep them occupied.

As one in the field of education, I can tell you that you can give talks, slide shows, and book readings until you are blue in the face, and the lessons presented may or may not make an impression. But the implementation of a living, breathing exhibit is what drives the lesson home.



**Vera Chaples takes a try at the “Schwartz” hold on this little clouded leopard cub during our “Meet and Greet” session at the zoo.**



**Lynn Culver brings out her Eurasian lynx cub for a bottle during the public Wildcat Presentation put on Wednesday evening at the Radisson Hotel.**

Human nature is one that if they cannot see, smell, hear, and touch it, then it is not real. How can one care about saving these gorgeous creatures in the wild if they do not know of their existence? I think that the utilization of all three tools (the oral presentation, the slide show, and of course the adorable ambassadors!) was in fact the key to being able to remember the golden lessons held within her presentation. As a BIG CAT person, I felt pulled into the small wild cat world and wanting to learn more!

Debi conducted her presentation in a professional manner that even had this veteran exhibitor sitting up and paying attention. So, if I felt this way, one can only safely assume that this would delight the unexposed and uneducated! We should all strive to be professional in our roles as educators.

I am really looking forward to next year's convention and do not think I will be disappointed at all. I found our educators to be on a level of professionalism that was beyond my highest expectations!

# Updates on Three Small Wild Cat Species

Review by Lynn Culver

Jim Sanderson gave a talk at the June FCF Convention that discussed the status of three endangered species of small cats and what we can do to help. Since none of these felids are native to North America, one may wonder how our actions may help conserve these rare cats.

Jim points out one glaring fact that is affecting everything. Presently there are 6.8 billion humans and we require a tremendous amount of resources to feed, clothe, house, and entertain ourselves. And the direct result of all this human-centered activity is climate change, ocean acidification, land conversion, fresh water shortages and biodiversity loss. This list leaves me to believe that if our species were to be graded on our planetary stewardship, we would receive a failing grade.

And with such pressing problems impacting most species on Earth, Jim focused in on three small cats and looked at their threats and how each of us contributes to the problem and how each of us can help.

First, the Problems

Threats identified for the Andean mountain cat were direct killing, loss of prey, loss of freshwater due to industrial mining, introduced species favoring competitors, loss of glaciers due to climate warming, and lack of awareness.

Threats to the fishing cat include retribution killing, loss of habitat, and lack of awareness.

Threats to the flat-headed cat are general loss of habitat, lack of awareness, and the cancerous spread of oil palm plantations.

Now, the Answers

Many of these problems listed must be addressed by the native peoples. For instance, the superstition that Andean mountain cats are good luck charms if their dead bodies are stuffed and dressed up in ribbons and bows must be replaced with reverence for the living cat. What we can do, and are doing as an organization, is supporting the establishment of the Andean Mountain Cat Conservation Center with our donations. We are spreading awareness and must continue to do so. Having a permanent station where researchers and conservationists can stay while they do work in the field will bring greater awareness of this fragile ecosystem and help governments better conserve resources.

Americans can do something about habitat loss and lack of awareness. Fishing cat and flat-headed cat habitat is being deliberately destroyed. Humans are converting native habitat for human uses, such as mining, housing, agriculture, and logging. And these resources extracted from nature are then sold to consumers around the world, including



The Andean mountain cat has evolved to live in the cold, harsh, high Andes Mountain range of South America.



Fishing cats are specialized felines that rely mainly upon fish as a food source.



The lack of knowledge and awareness of flat-headed cats hinders conservation efforts to protect this species.

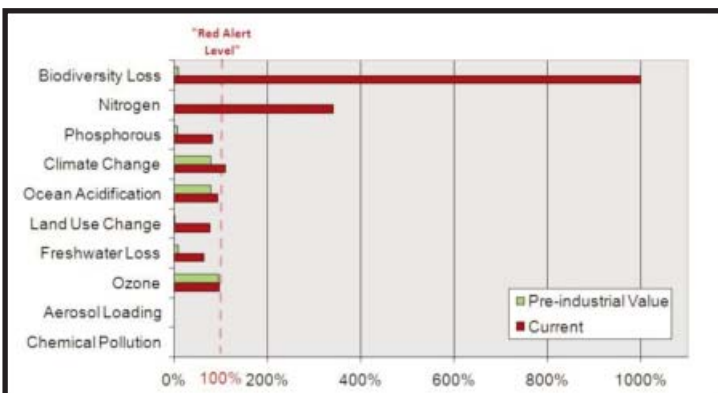


Chart ranking the global issues caused by uncontrolled growth in the human population and extraction of resources to supply the needs of 6.8 billion humans.



**Cheap frozen shrimp from Thailand ends up on the grocery store shelves for U.S. consumption.**

Americans. Our purchases are driving the ever increasing loss of natural habitat and biodiversity.

Jim illustrates this fact with some surprising information about shrimp ponds, found all over Thailand, which are a major problem. The popularity and consumption of cheap, frozen shrimp sold in big chain grocery stores like Wal-Mart, has a direct effect on fishing cats and flat-headed cats. Thousands of acres of virgin forest are being converted to commercial aquaculture farms. Both these feline species need riparian areas, but when they visit these shrimp and tilapia farms they are unwelcome guests that are killed by the farmers. And, after just six years of



**Namfon Cutter speaks with a shrimp farmer to educate him about why he should not kill fishing cats.**

production, these ponds are so badly polluted, nothing can live in them, so new ponds are excavated resulting in more habitat loss, with no habitat restoration.

Since we Americans are big consumers of these food items, we must increase awareness both locally and globally. Jim points out that we need to stop eating Thailand shrimp and go back to the old fashioned U.S. Gulf shrimp. And we need to support the restoration of wasted shrimp ponds, returning them to healthy mangrove swamps. One thousand dollars can buy and replant one acre of land.

In addition to not eating Thailand shrimp, we need to support the work of local conservationists and educators, such as Namfon Cutter. It's a problem, but there is a role for us to play in the answer.

But a much bigger problem lies with all products made with palm oil. This insidious plant is becoming a



**What was once virgin forest has now been converted into vast monocultures of palm oil plantations.**

monoculture disaster throughout Southeast Asia, especially Borneo and Sumatra, where it is replacing healthy native forests with biological deserts. And Jim pointed out that palm oil is omnipresent, so we have to become label readers. It is in products we associate as "green," like Nature Valley granola and Kashi; it's also in Dark Zone Perfect energy bars, Balance bars, Smart Balance peanut butter, Orville Redenbacher popcorn, Toast Chee crackers, Oreos, Milano Double Chocolate Cookies, Nutella chocolate hazelnut spread, Ding Dongs, and Girl Scout Cookies. It's not just in food; Jim found it in Dial Nutraskin soap and Irish spring soap. Jim pointed out that it didn't used to be in these products, but it is now because it is cheap and available. Manufacturers will not switch to a less harmful ingredient unless we consumers demand the change by using our buying power to pressure this change by not purchasing items that use palm oil.



**Aerial view of Thailand shows the extent of habitat conversion to commercial fish and shrimp ponds.**



**Collateral damage: A flat-headed cat is crushed by heavy machinery when the land is roller-chopped in preparation to convert forest into palm oil plantations.**



# RODENTPRO.COM® Wholesale Frozen Feeder Price List



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## Mice



	Size	Less than 500	500	1000	3000	5000	10000+	Length (inches)	Weight (grams)	Count
X-Small Pinkies:		\$0.25	\$0.24	\$0.23	\$0.22	\$0.21	\$0.20	0.50 - 1.00	1.30 - 1.89	100
Small Pinkies:		\$0.25	\$0.24	\$0.23	\$0.22	\$0.21	\$0.20	0.50 - 1.00	1.90 - 2.49	100
Large Pinkies:		\$0.25	\$0.24	\$0.23	\$0.22	\$0.21	\$0.20	0.50 - 1.00	2.50 - 3.09	100
Peach Fuzzies:**		\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.28	\$0.27	\$0.26	\$0.25	1.00 - 1.25	3.10 - 4.49	100
Fuzzies:***		\$0.30	\$0.29	\$0.28	\$0.27	\$0.26	\$0.25	1.25 - 1.50	4.50 - 6.99	100
Hoppers:***		\$0.45	\$0.43	\$0.41	\$0.39	\$0.37	\$0.35	1.50 - 2.00	7.00 - 12.99	100
Weanlings:***		\$0.55	\$0.53	\$0.51	\$0.49	\$0.47	\$0.45	2.00 - 2.50	13.00 - 17.99	50
Large Adults:***		\$0.65	\$0.63	\$0.61	\$0.59	\$0.57	\$0.55	2.50 - 3.00	18.00 - 25.99	50
X-Large Adults:***		\$0.95	\$0.93	\$0.91	\$0.89	\$0.87	\$0.85	3.00 - 3.75	26.00 - 45.00+	25

\* We offer combined quantity discount mouse pricing. \* Measurement does not include tail length.

## Rats



	Size	Less than 500	500	1000+	Length (inches)	Weight (grams)	Count
Pinkies:		\$0.50	\$0.45	\$0.40	1.50 - 2.00	3.00 - 8.99	100
Fuzzies:		\$0.75	\$0.70	\$0.65	2.00 - 2.50	9.00 - 19.99	100
Pups:		\$1.00	\$0.95	\$0.90	2.50 - 3.50	20.00 - 29.99	25
Weaned:		\$1.25	\$1.20	\$1.15	3.50 - 4.50	30.00 - 44.99	25
Small:		\$1.50	\$1.45	\$1.40	4.50 - 6.00	45.00 - 84.99	20
Medium:		\$1.75	\$1.70	\$1.65	6.00 - 8.00	85.00 - 174.99	10
Large:		\$2.00	\$1.95	\$1.90	8.00 - 9.00	175.00 - 274.99	5
X-Large:		\$2.25	\$2.20	\$2.15	9.00 - 11.00	275.00 - 374.99	3
XX-Large:		\$2.50	\$2.45	\$2.40	11.00 - 13.00	375.00 - 474.99	2
XXX-Large:		\$2.75	\$2.70	\$2.65	11.00 - 13.00	475.00 - 600.00+	2

\* We offer combined quantity discount rat pricing. \* Measurement does not include tail length.

## Quail



	Less than	500	500	1000+	Grams	Oz.	Count
1 Day:	\$0.75	\$0.70	\$0.65	7.50 - 10.00	.25	100	
1 Week:	\$1.00	\$0.95	\$0.90	30.00 - 49.99	1.0	25	
2 Week:	\$1.25	\$1.20	\$1.15	50.00 - 75.00	2.5	10	
3 Week:	\$1.50	\$1.45	\$1.40	100.00 - 129.99	4.0	10	
6 Week:	\$2.00	\$1.95	\$1.90	130.00 - 154.99	5.0	5	
8 Week:	\$2.50	\$2.45	\$2.40	155.00 - 189.99	6.5	5	
10 Week:	\$3.00	\$2.95	\$2.90	190.00 - 229.99	8.0	5	
Retired Breeder:	\$3.50	\$3.45	\$3.40	230.00 - 260.00+	9.0	5	

\* We offer combined quantity discount quail pricing.

## Rabbits

	Less Than	100	100	250+	Weight (lbs.)	Count
X-Small:	\$5.00	\$4.75	\$4.50	0.50 - 0.99	1	
Small:	\$6.00	\$5.75	\$5.50	1.00 - 1.99	1	
Medium:	\$7.00	\$6.75	\$6.50	2.00 - 3.99	1	
Large:	\$8.00	\$7.75	\$7.50	4.00 - 5.99	1	
X-Large:	\$9.00	\$8.75	\$8.50	6.00 - 7.99	1	
XX-Large:	\$10.00	\$9.75	\$9.50	8.00 - 9.99	1	
XXX-Large:	\$11.00	\$10.75	\$10.50	10.00 - 12.00+	1	

\* We offer combined quantity discount rabbit pricing.

## Chickens



	Less than	500	500	1000	3000	5000	10000+	Oz./Lbs.	Count
XSmall:	\$0.30	\$0.28	\$0.26	\$0.24	\$0.22	\$0.20	\$0.20	1.00-1.99 oz.	25
Small:	\$1.00	\$0.95	\$0.90	\$0.85	\$0.80	\$0.75	\$0.75	2.00-5.99 oz.	10
Medium:	\$1.50	\$1.45	\$1.40	\$1.35	\$1.30	\$1.25	\$1.25	6.00-9.99 oz.	5
Large:	\$2.00	\$1.95	\$1.90	\$1.85	\$1.80	\$1.75	\$1.75	10.00-13.99 oz.	4
XLarge:	\$2.50	\$2.45	\$2.40	\$2.35	\$2.30	\$2.25	\$2.25	14.00-17.99 oz.	3
XXLarge:	\$3.00	\$2.95	\$2.90	\$2.85	\$2.80	\$2.75	\$2.75	2.50-4.49 lbs.	1
XXXLarge:	\$3.50	\$3.45	\$3.40	\$3.35	\$3.30	\$3.25	\$3.25	4.50-6.50+ lbs.	1

\* We offer combined quantity discount chicken pricing.

## Guinea Pigs

	Less Than	500	500	1000+	Inches	Grams	Count
Medium:	\$1.75	\$1.70	\$1.65	6.00 - 8.00	85.00 - 174.99	10	
Large:	\$2.00	\$1.95	\$1.90	8.00 - 9.00	175.00 - 274.99	5	
X-Large:	\$2.25	\$2.20	\$2.15	9.00 - 11.00	275.00 - 374.99	3	
XX-Large:	\$2.50	\$2.45	\$2.40	11.00 - 13.00	375.00 - 474.99	2	
XXX-Large:	\$2.75	\$2.70	\$2.65	11.00 - 13.00	475.00 - 599.99	2	
XXXX-Large:	\$3.00	\$2.95	\$2.90	13.00 - 15.00	600.00 - 749.99	1	
XXXXX-Large:	\$3.25	\$3.20	\$3.15	13.00 - 15.00	750.00 - 900.00+	1	

\* We offer combined quantity discount guinea pig pricing.

- \* Frozen feeders only.
- \*\* Available as white or dark.
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## The Barker Boys Hit a Milestone Birthday

By Kim Barker

As I have gotten older, I have caught myself reflecting on moments and becoming increasingly sentimental about those moments more and more. Though I enjoy building some new relationships, the ones



**Sammy saying he's ready for his close up. He knows he's a handsome fella!**

that are withstanding the test of time are turning into valued treasure. As many of you have read, an important component of many of my past *Journal* articles involves this topic. As mom to the Barker Boys, their fifth birthday has caused me to reflect on the journey thus far with these four still rambunctious, and completely lovable, servals.

The boys had their fifth birthday this past May. Though it did not escape notice, celebrating anything with these four can be more excitement than needs to be experienced. Those of you who work with or own servals know what I mean. Though they have mellowed ever so slightly, they are still bouncy, fun-loving felines. Over the past year, they have been introduced to many more people who come to tour the Conservators' Center and even met some FCF members last fall during classes held at the Center. Staff, interns, volunteers, and adopters bring lots of enrichment and opportunities to play. The brothers love the attention.

Though they have long since settled into their personalities, it is such a joy to watch their relationships with each other and we continue to mature and evolve as they grow older.

Sammy is still the outgoing and handsome serval he has always been. This past February, he once again made a visit to the North Carolina Museum of Natural Science in Raleigh, and wowed the crowd with his personality and talent as he worked with Carolyn Hinshaw, one of our keepers and Sammy's human mom. Carolyn demonstrated Sammy's talents and what makes servals such incredible hunters through target training sessions throughout the day. Carolyn has maintained her relationship with Sammy since she first met him when he was two weeks of age, and her diligence with target training Sammy combined with his personality has made them a great team for educational visits. Though not very fond of the actual travel in a vehicle, he still enjoys the trips immensely, and people who

see him are immediately taken with his handsomeness and charisma. He still carries on conversations with anyone willing to talk to him. All it takes is a single "meh" to get things started. He will call to Carolyn the moment he hears her voice, and she always obliges with a response. It is a sweet interaction.

William is now the largest serval, though not by much. He is still very easy to pick out with his striking profile and mostly black nose. He is not as outgoing as the other three brothers and mostly keeps to himself when it comes to humans. He hisses more than his brothers, and it is usually not aggressive, but more about him being assertive with someone being in his space. Though servals are basically solitary creatures, he still has a strong bond with Sammy, Mojo, and Obi. It is

not uncommon to walk by their enclosure and see a pile of ears and legs crammed into a hammock or a den box with him in the middle of the bunch. Every now and then, however, he cannot resist the temptation to visit with humans he has known since he was young and he will come by with a spray and ask for a pat. He also still loves to play and can be tempted to show his playful side when there is new enrichment to explore.

I fully believe that Mojo will always be the sweetheart and clown of this bunch of boys. He still has an interesting hitch in his gate due to some lingering effects of a broken leg from the metabolic bone disease experienced by the boys as youngsters, but it has not stopped this serval. Almost every single time there is a visit, he is the first one to greet visitors to his enclosure. You can almost see the smile on his face when he sees one of his human friends. He takes great pleasure in spraying and you can see the joy on his face when he is successful at getting someone wet. When Christa Donofrio, our Director of Construction Operations, visits, Mojo is the first to greet her and makes sure he gets all of her attention. It is a mutual friendship, as you can see the joy on her face when it is apparent that Mojo is coming to visit his person.



**Here's my handsome serval child Obi posing while lounging up high on a platform.**

And, as always, there is Obi. Obi is still my serval child and I am still very much his human mom. He will most likely always be the smallest of the group, but I have loved watching him become such a confident, healthy serval. His health issues as a kitten are a distant memory and I am grateful for every moment I get to spend with him, including those that include spraying and endless amounts of drool. The week after the FCF Conference in Nashville, I was once again at the Center. At the end of the day, I finally got a visit in with the boys. Visits after being gone for a week usually go one of two ways. You are either ignored because you missed a week or you are showered with affection because you were missed. Upon entering their enclosure, Mojo immediately came up and greeted me with a chirp and an invitation for a pat. Sammy, William, and Obi acknowledged my presence, but looked very comfortable where



**Obi enjoying a favorite pastime: a nice nap in the sun.**



**William keeping an eye on everything.**

they were napping. Mojo followed me to a platform and drooled on my boots, chirped some more, and asked for more pats. After about three minutes of this, it was too much for Obi. He got down from his hammock and headed my way. My boots got a sniff and before I knew it, there was a very happy serval sitting in

my lap, drooling profusely and chirping. This went on for 20 minutes and then I was sprayed! I was missed by him and it was a wonderful welcome back. I missed him too! I love hearing the words, “Do you know what your son did...?!” after someone has been in the enclosure with him for more than 5 minutes. It usually involves a lot of drool or a lot of spray, and sometimes both. He can be a mischievous little guy. Though we had worked with him in the past, we recently discovered Obi still has a desire to target train. I’m looking forward to finding ways to work with him on this and strengthen our bond even further. If you had asked me the day before I met him when he was two weeks old if I thought I would be bonded to a wild cat like this, I would have said that there was no way.

I’m glad I would have been wrong.

The boys and I are still early in our journey. I look forward to many more years of stories to share about these amazing servals that I have now known for over five years. My experiences at the Conservators’ Center and with FCF

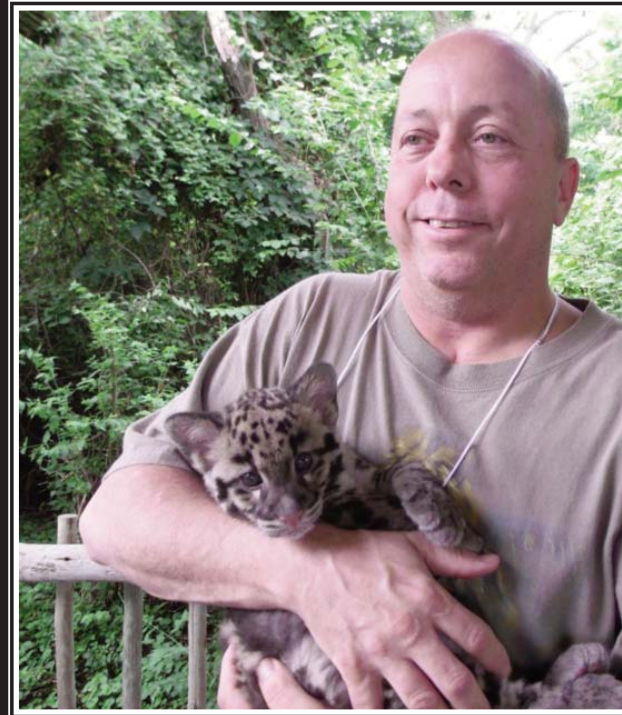
have allowed me to interact and learn about so many species of feline, but as my experiences and relationships grow, I can’t imagine another species captivating me quite like the serval, or lion (wink, wink) has. As I watch them and spend time with them, I am in awe of what servals are capable of and how wonderfully they fit into their ecosystem. I am also in awe of how a lot of work, time, and a lot of love can create a bond with our feline friends. It makes it that much more special the relationships I am privileged to have with the Barker boys as well as my other spotted and striped serval friends at the Center.



**Mojo enjoying the scent of a Frasier fir tree. All of the boys are huge fans of scent enrichment!**



Ten lucky winners got to tour the offsite breeding centers for clouded leopards and the giant anteaters and tamandua. Here Thierry Plaud gets his ears cleaned by a tamandua. Photo by Victor Rogers.



Robert Hohn cradles one of the clouded leopard cubs in his arms. Photo by Sandra H.

# Your Convention Show



Kurt Beckelman gives the cloudie a kiss. Photo by Robert Hohn.



Pat Callahan gets his cloudie kiss during the meet at the Nashville Zoo. Photo by Lynn Culver



clouded leopard  
Hohn.



Mindy Stinner admires the baby clouded at the Nashville Zoo. Photo by Rebecca Krebs.



Alexis Francisco came to convention to learn more about cats and the little Geoffroy's kitten fell asleep in her arms. Photo by Robert Hohn.

# ots



and greet at



Fred Boyajian has owned and bred many species in his career, and it looks like he would be a natural with clouded leopards. Photo by Lynn Culver.



Looks like we wore out these kittens during the hospitality ice breaker. Eurasian lynx, caracal, and little Geoffroy's line up for a well-deserved cat-nap. Photo by Rebecca Krebs.

## Feline Husbandry and Then Some!

By Tina Bayer

Convention, \$200; Exotic Feline Husbandry Course, \$95; Hotel, \$200. Education, new friends, memories, and babies leaving paw prints on my heart: PRICELESS.

I came to Nashville with \$700 in my pocket to pay for everything. Let me explain what I got for my money.

I only learned about the FCF a couple months ago. I either found it on Facebook or in a book, I cannot remember. Their mission and views were the same as I believed. I have been passionately in love with exotic cats all my life. I knew the common big cats, but not the small cats. I had domestic cats, and many years ago I got a general book on cat breeds. There was a section on wild cats. The book described every cat species in the wild. The sand cat dug, pardon the pun, its way into my heart and mind. I had to have one, but that proved impossible. That book was the introduction to the small felids I never knew existed. I became a frequent visitor to the cat house at the Cincinnati Zoo. I bought every book and documentary I could get my hands on. But it has not been enough.

Working with exotic cats has been a hard field to get into. No one would talk to an outsider. When I graduated high school 20 years ago, I did not think about working with wild cats, so I am very much behind on the career path. I went to



**One of the highlights for many attendees was the opportunity to try their hand at feeding the kittens.**

work at a vet's office that handled exotics and I gained some valuable experience. But it still was not enough. I have tried to talk to wild cat owners over the years, but it has been like a secret society I could not get into. That all changed on June 4, 2013.

The FCF newsletter kept talking about the convention and sending the registration papers. The trip was originally out of my budget and getting to Nashville would be a problem, since I am terrified to drive on the highway. The people that know me know I would rather be stung by a stonefish than drive on the highway. When the clouded leopard "Meet and Greet" was announced, I decided, come hell or high water, I was going. On Tuesday, June 4, I hopped in my truck and white knuckled it down to Nashville. I had talked to two other members about sharing a room. I had only talked to Eden Tran the week before. I had been conversing with Vera Chaples on Facebook for many months previously. Vera was the first person who would talk back to me about wild cats. I was so appreciative, because she ran her own facility and still took the time out of her schedule to talk to me.

I survived the drive down. When I walked into the hotel, I was first greeted by Vera and Shelleen Matthews. There was another group of ladies from the FCF in the lounge chatting, so we joined them. The reception I got was so warm and welcoming. They made me feel better after my drive down and made me feel like I belonged. I could wear my cat t-shirts, talk cats, and not feel like a freak. I was in heaven.

The bliss started when Lynn arrived that night. Vera and I helped her to her room and Lynn let the babies out. This was the first time I met Lynn and she was letting me play with her babies. She had me watch the babies for a few minutes while she attended to a few



**Tina Bayer finds true love with a Eurasian lynx kitten at the FCF Convention.**

things. She had only met me 15 minutes before and she was trusting me to watch the babies! Crawling around the floor with them was unbelievable. The adrenaline was flowing and I knew I was not going to sleep.

Wednesday was class day. I took the Exotic Feline Husbandry Course taught by Mindy Stinner and Christa Donofrio. There were only five people attending, so I was excited for the personal attention ratio. The class was great. The section on the regulatory agencies, nicknamed "alphabet soup," had my head swirling. I have a solid education on the cat species and health care, but I was very weak in the agencies and enclosure areas. I definitely improved my knowledge. Lunch was provided and we tested at the end of the day.

Thursday included some free time before the convention officially kicked off. The icebreaker started at 6pm, when we mingled with fellow members and cuddled with babies. Then we proceeded with Big Cat Bingo, led by Della Jacot. We had regular bingo with prizes, but also special bingo with the coveted prize of a behind-the-scenes tour of the breeding compound at the zoo. There were nine available spots for the special tour. The stakes and excitement rose quickly for those spots.

Friday morning was the anticipated



**Lynn Culver sits in on the Husbandry Course and demonstrates how she feeds her kittens, as Shelleen Mathews looks on.**



**Friday night at the Wildhorse Saloon, the barbeque banquet was on the third floor overlooking the dance floor below.**

Nashville Zoo adventure. This was what I was waiting for. First was the “Hand Raising Clouded Leopards” presentation for registered handlers. This presentation was given by Karen Rice. It covered male aggression, bottle feeding schedules, and more. The presentation was very engaging, since the clouded leopard is a challenge to breed in captivity. The male aggression and size of the teeth cause some serious complications. The Nashville Zoo has beaten the odds on successful breeding. The usual mortality rate is 48%; Nashville's is 17%. So when they are giving tips on their success, I sit up straight and pay attention.

We then moved behind the scenes for our private meet and greet. Our host, Rick Schwartz, demonstrated some things and then the cuddling started. When the cubs got too excited, Rick showed a particular way to hold them and lightly shake (not stir) them to calm them down. I was mesmerized. The stars were three three-month-old cubs. When a cub was placed in my arms, I wanted to cry. There are no words to describe how I felt at that moment. I was holding a clouded leopard cub in my arms and she fell asleep like a baby. I could not stop kissing her. If the convention ended right then and there, I was complete. Holding that baby in my arms made everything worth it. Looking at the

pictures even now, it is hard to believe I was holding a clouded leopard cub. How many people can say they have kissed a clouded leopard cub? I certainly can now!

Friday night, we were bussed to the Wildhorse Saloon for a few hours of music, line dancing, and barbeque. Nashville was packed due to the Country Music Association festival, but the FCF group had our own party area reserved on the third floor. How cool was that?! We had a buffet of barbeque, chicken, slaw, beans, and sauces. The streets of Nashville were alive and inside this giant restaurant the electric atmosphere kept everyone jazzed up.

Saturday morning started our guest

speakers' presentations. Kevin Chambers kicked it off with “Analyze the Attack.” It was a video he found about a “lion that mauled a reporter.” I think *maul* is one of the media's favorite words. We had an informal and interactive discussion regarding the mistakes that were made by owner and visitor. Hearing the ideas of Kevin and everyone else was very interesting. One major point I learned was to be careful what words you use in training big cats. Do not use a word you use in everyday life or one that even rhymes with something common. We all agreed this particular lion was playing, but, as usual, the media over-dramatized it, adding more fuel to the fires we fight trying to keep our cats.

Gregory Breton was up next. He is curator and assistant director of Le Parc des Felins in Paris, France. He is also a Sand Cat EEP Coordinator, which peaked my interest, since *Felis margarita* is one of my favorite kitties. Le Parc des Felins is a financially autonomous facility that houses 150 cats in 51 enclosures. It exhibits 26 of the 36-37 feline species. The park does things a little differently. They use no concrete and they use open top enclosures. The natural settings and large enclosures promote the happiness of the cats and discourage climbing out. The setup of the park



**Rick Schwartz was a gracious and generous host allowing everyone the opportunity to hold and cuddle the three clouded leopard cubs. Here he demonstrates how he keeps the young felines relaxed and stress-free by gently swaying them to simulate the feeling of being carried by their feline mother.**

influences visitors to “actively observe.” Security lock downs are practiced for weather emergencies and can be done very quickly. The park also uses contraceptives on some cats. Gregory defended his position on the subject and backed it up with numbers and facts. There is very limited contact there and some natural predation. Their successful breeding has allowed them to send 200 offspring to facilities worldwide. One fact I found entertaining was that the park has to separate males from nursing females in the Geoffroy's, margay, and rusty spotted cat species. They are so small, I have to chuckle at the thought of them being crazy. Gregory's presentation was so educational, which I liked, I could not take notes fast enough. I want to thank him for sharing his knowledge and experience.



**Gregory Breton describes how Parc des Felins has successfully housed 26 species of wild cats.**

Dr. Jim Sanderson followed with his presentation, titled “Don't Eat the Shrimp and Pass on the Girl Scout Cookies.” I have admired his work for a long time. His book which he graciously signed for me, *Small Wild Cats: The Animal Answer Guide*, is an easy-to-read work on small cats. He specializes on small cats with his Small Cat Conservation Alliance foundation. He has done ground-breaking work with the guigna and Andean mountain cats in South America. His presentation concentrated on three small cats and how we can help save them, specifically the Andean mountain cat, the fishing cat, and the flat-headed cat. Jim covered issues contributing to the decline of those species, such as direct killing, fresh water loss, habitat destruction, retribution killing, and lack of awareness. Fishing cats are in trouble in Thailand, due to

habitats converted to shrimp ponds. The flat-headed cats, which Jim said are in the most trouble, are declining due to the cancerous spread of the palm oil industry. The Andean mountain cat's downfall is lack of awareness, its total lack of fear of people, and the local superstition, like the titis, which is what local villagers call the dead, dried, and decorated cat. Openly displaying this titi is supposed to bring good luck. There are many more reasons contributing to the decline of these species; I just highlighted a few. The tips he gave to correct the wrongs are simple and practical. Do not buy Thai shrimp, do not buy products containing palm oil, and the easiest way is to help spread awareness. Most people do not know

some of these small cats exist. How can we help save something if we do not even know it exists? Thank you, Dr. Sanderson, for your time and tips, and also for signing my book.

The annual banquet started at 7pm, Saturday night. The banquet was more formal than I was used to. I have never been served a salad like that, and why the heck did I need three forks? I guess I will have to refine my dining etiquette, like Julia Roberts in “Pretty Woman.”

After the banquet, the live auction began and was the convention wrap-up. Christa Donofrio was an



**Meeting and listening to Dr. Jim Sanderson was one of many highlights for new member Tina Bayer.**

excellent auctioneer with her jokes and descriptions. I believe she really helped bring in more money for the FCF.

Sunday morning I had to say good-bye to the babies and my new friends. It was time to go back to reality in Cincinnati, but I took back with me the experience of a lifetime. This convention was way more than I expected. My feline education addiction was filled and my heart is filled with babies. What I got for my money far exceeded anything I had expected. Thank you all for helping my dreams come true!



**Saturday night's auctioneer was Christa Donofrio, who used humor to keep the bids coming. Here, a painting from India brought over \$300.**



## A Safety Suggestion

By Bart Culver

Two recent accidents resulting in fatal and serious injuries to big cat keepers have us all discussing how to prevent them. It troubles me that the exact same thing has now happened at a sanctuary and a conservation breeding center, as well as an AZA municipal zoo. They are all USDA-inspected and well-respected institutions where the keepers are well trained, dedicated professionals. Yet they still forgot to close a shift gate before they entered through the main gate for cleaning. Efforts to improve training and protocols are ongoing and appropriate, but I think we are seeing evidence that professionalism alone cannot eliminate human error, so my contribution to the discussion is an interlocking device that can be easily made with simple tools and materials and retrofit to a variety of enclosure geometries. My engineering drawing of it is an unintelligible clutter of dotted lines, so I will resort to words and pictures. The cable that opens the shift gate must be routed near the slide bolt that locks the main gate. The cable is modified so that it can block the movement of the slide bolt by the following method.

Select two sizes of square tubing, such that the smaller is a slip fit inside the larger and the slide bolt for the main gate is a slip fit inside the smaller tubing. For the model shown, I used one inch for the larger and three quarter inch light gauge for the smaller. The smaller tubing is made a little longer than the full vertical travel of the drop gate. The larger tubing can be a foot shorter.

Using a drill, preferably a drill press, make a hole completely through the larger tubing several inches from one end. With a file, shape this hole into a square the full size of the tubing's inside diameter. Similarly, make a rectangular hole in the small tubing, whose lateral dimension is the tubing i.d. and whose longitudinal dimension is that of the square hole you made in the larger tube. Cut about a one-foot-long piece of the larger tubing and sleeve it so that the main gate bolt will be an accurate sliding fit inside. This is the horizontal frame member. Weld one end of this perpendicular to the larger piece, exactly covering the square hole so you can look through the hole and see straight through the assembly. Clamp and carefully check

the alignment before welding. File off any burrs or slag through the open hole. The frame is done. Now tie a knot in the cable and stuff it in the end of the thinner tubing, which does not have the hole in it. Weld a small tab across the end of the tubing to hold the cable in place so it can hang like a wind chime. With the two sets of square holes at the bottom of their respective tubing and aligned in the same direction, drop the smaller tubing into the large until it protrudes from the bottom of the frame and attach about a foot of cable to it as you did before. To the end of the cable, attach your hook or clip and some weight to keep slack out of the cable. Have an assembly consisting of a frame and a vertical sliding "blocker bar." Modify the length of your slide bolt as needed. Slip the horizontal frame member onto the free end of your slide bolt and align the assembly so that when the main gate is locked, the free end of the bolt is close to, but not touching, the blocker bar. Adjust the cable length and pulley location, so that the cable is vertical and the square holes you made in both tubes are aligned when the drop gate is completely closed. Firmly attach to the main doorframe. Now, if the shift gate is not closed all the way, the blocker bar will prevent the main

**Components ready to assemble showing square holes, sleeve ready to be inserted and plug-welded.**



### Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The FCF board of directors congratulates the following individuals for being accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program since the past *Journal* issue.

**Rebecca Krebs – Basic**  
**Michelle Ashton – Advanced**

**John Wallace – Advanced**

Basic Feline Handlers have documented at least one year of experience, Intermediate level is at least five years of experience, and Advanced handlers have more than ten years experience. Update your registration when you obtain additional handling experience or new species experience.

The online registration form can be filled out directly in the members-only section of the FCF website. The \$30.00 registration fee can be made through PayPal.

Being a registered handler is the first step to becoming a Professional Member. Professional Membership application is also online on the Members-Only website.

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

Debi Willoughby, FCF Secretary



**Assembled interlock with shift gate partly up, main gate bolt is blocked.**

**Assembled interlock with main gate unlocked, protruding bolt shows shift gate is closed.**

gate bolt from being slid open. When the main gate is open, the free end of the slide bolt will protrude through the blocker bar

and prevent the shift gate from being raised. Both gates cannot be opened at the same time. And the protruding end of the bolt serves as a telltale

sign informing you of the status of the shift gate, even if you cannot see it from the main gate.



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## Jaguarundi Husbandry: Keep an Eye on Your Coffee Cup!

By Jim Broaddus  
Bear Creek Feline Center

If you are reading this, chances are that I have made a last minute deadline after Lynn discovered that she had a page or two to fill. Drawing on my experience as a journalist, I have hacked out this brief thesis: “How to survive the new paradigm” or, if you prefer a little more grounds in your morning coffee, we will call it “We do not sell cats, so how can we sustain this blasted operation?”

*In the beginning:* I remember it well. It was April of the year 2000. Bertie and I sold our advertising/PR business down on Panama City Beach. We speak of that experience softly and very seldom. Hav-

ing been brought up on a horse farm in Tennessee, I was, of course, imminently qualified to launch a new career breeding servals. I saw a great potential to sell the young ones to carefully selected individuals who promised to dedicate their lives to give these cats forever homes (tisk tisk or, in the modern vernacular, LOL!). Several seasons later and after several serval fatalities with non-viable neonates, we were asked to take some of these cats back. Can you imagine that? Their forever caregivers went from “they are so cute and I want one” to “this cat is sitting on my picture frame while it is still on the wall and the damn thing just bit me!” We figured it out. We were being asked to rehome cats that looked just like the ones that we just

sold. So, I put my thinking cap back on and called old friend Dale Anderson, who at the time had just successfully bred some little brown cats with no spots that had a neat name, jaguarundi! Being a jaguarundi expert not, Dale brushed me off after I failed his litmus test, explaining to me in no uncertain terms, “You are not worthy; you sold cats as pets and your website sucks!” He told me, and I will never forget his words, “My staff told me to drop you like a hot potato.” But he did not. Instead, he was kind enough to give me these words of wisdom which I heard later from Jim Sanderson almost identically, “Decide what you are going to do and stick to it!”

*Background:*

Being a hard-nosed ad man in a fast buck tourist market gave me the intestinal fortitude to buck up and keep going. No one in America would work with me. Either they could not or would not (and still do not), I discovered, because they had no little brown cats. I learned quickly that I needed to go beyond our shores if this project was to come to fruition. David Sparandara, in Prague, hooked me up with the European Small Felid Consortium and a mere 15 months later, after a trip to schmooze the zoo keepers in Central Europe, we received our first pair of jaguarundis from the Czech Republic. I think I am safe now, because we are protected by the statute of limitations. These cats were of an “indeterminate sub species” which was at the time okay with USF&W. Try that now and you will probably end up on the “Group W Bench” sitting next to a drug smuggler, while awaiting first appearance before a Federal judge!

*People behind the project:* David introduced me to Thierry Plaud, and we became fast friends. We assisted Thierry in gaining experience hands-on here at BCFC with jaguarundis, servals, high percentage Florida panthers, bobcats, Siberian lynx, and a caracal. Now, he has zoomed past us as he keeps clouded leopards at his facility near Paris. He has a tremendous advantage over many of us, as he can go wherever he wants, piloting Boeing 747s for Air France. I think they cut him good deals on tickets to Thailand, where he studied and paid dues. Long story short...we gained standing with European zoo curators, trainers, and keepers, and we were eventually introduced to a young man whom many of you met last month in Nashville, Mr. Gregory Breton! I believe he should appropriately be renamed Sir Gregory, now that he has gone the extra mile to allocate a viable female and two males of this species to BCFC, which have become the backbone of our jaguarundi breeding colony.

*Early observations:* Yoda Jaguarundi's birth on January 28, 2013, was totally unexpected. His first-time mother was young and failed to assume responsibility. Luckily, I found this little guy abandoned, before he was even cleaned, on the concrete slab within the jaguarundi general population enclosure. I found two neonates; one was not viable, while this



The tiny feline officially enters the world at Bear Creek Feline Center, and represents hope for the future of jaguarundi husbandry in the US.

fellow was strong and he was obviously fighting for life. Here in North-west Florida, late January temps can be extreme, but on this particular day it was bright and sunny with outside temps in the low 70s and no rain. Bertie took charge immediately and placed him in an incubator within our temperature/moisture-controlled nursery.

*Behaviors:* At the onset, he was noted to have a strong will, and after we cleaned him up, he readily accepted his first bottle consisting of a milk replacer enriched with colostrum/Pedialite mixture. He weighed in

at three ounces when first weighed after birth. In two weeks, he was up to five ounces and he was moving around in the incubator as Bertie carried him back and forth to Waller Elementary School, where she is a teacher. At one month, he was introduced to a small cage and to lightly browned ground turkey. At three months, trash cans needed to be locked and fastened to the floor. We carefully checked the dishwasher and refrigerator before closing the doors. He became fond of paper towels and incisively shred them. At four months, he became curious; food, clothes, keys, glasses, and cell phones were found under beds, behind sofas, or other hiding places. Living with this bottle-fed jaguarundi kitten might be compared to rearing a child in their terrible twos. If I did not know better, I would say that he is a dog/cat/monkey hybrid. This kitten makes whistling calls when he is lonely. He calls using bird-like vocalizations. He recognizes Bertie's voice and obediently responds, much like a puppy dog. He is bonded to her, but tolerates me. He is quick to hiss, showing passive/aggressive tendencies. When strangers are present, he more times than not becomes agitated and hides. Nips and scratches are expected. He may be the fastest feline I have seen from zero to 60 feet. Greased pig wrangling skills would be helpful when trying to catch him. He squeals like one when he does not get his way. Food aggression at five months, at a



**Pulled shortly after birth, Yoda fits in the palm of Bertie's hand.**

mere eight pounds, five ounces seems a bit unusual to me, but then again this is a spoiled, bottle-fed jaguarundi. He has an unusual appetite and has been known to eat butter, eggs, cheese, fruit, or cottage cheese, sometimes stolen from Bertie's plate. Get this; he seems to like strong coffee! He will jump head first into our morning cup and, after stealing a few drops, he races around like a low grade speed freak. The main stay in his diet is chicken and occasionally he eats small quantities of deer meat. He does not like his litter box, favoring rugs or the bathtub. If he becomes nervous, he wets like a nervous puppy. At bedtime, once the lights are turned off, he will lay with us on our heads or faces as he remains motionless for long periods of time, unless bathroom urges hit him. Then, he will opt to wet the bed without hesitation. Most recently, we have found it necessary to cage him at night for his and our safety. Side note: Wearing socks around him is out of the question, as he will not let us have anything on our feet once our shoes are off.

*Projections:* I project that this individual will continue to show affec-

tion to a select few humans, but once he reaches sexual maturity, all bets are off. We expect some degree of "male insanity disorder," since intact jaguarundi females will be housed near him. I will go out on a limb to predict that he will not exhibit well and will probably not become a good choice to serve as a Bear Creek ambassador with tour groups present. It will be interesting to compare this bottle-fed cub to our newest jaguarundi colony member, a young female now five weeks old, who is being mother-reared. Mother did not immediately assume responsibility of this neonate either, so I

scruffed her, forcing introduction to her kitten. She immediately became responsible and remains so at the time of this writing!

*How to do it:* Mind you, these little brown cats are probably not for sale, here, there, or anywhere known to me. So, that said, allow me to share a few thoughts on how you might start a niche project. If you could work 50/50 in situ/ex situ, that might be a good way to start. I do not think that "species specific" work "off the concrete," using a Jim Fowler expression, is completely necessary, but showing your willingness to help with species conserva-



**A bit older, you can see the unique jaguarundi features in Yoda.**

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tion/preservation is vital as you build your resume. I spent considerable time working in the Republic of Panama, for example, first to assist moving ocelots from a small rabbit hutch in an unlicensed facility to an approved facility, designated by ANAM, which is the Panamanian equivalent to the US Fish & Wildlife Service. Most recently, FCF member Craig DeRosa traveled with me to Zoo Summit, Gamboa, Panama, to establish lines of communications with their government for the movement of three jaguars, which were flown by a DHL cargo jet to their new home,

north of the Rio Grande last April. Kudos to Alan Shoemaker, who wrote the CITES I permit to import them into the United States. Stacey Johnson, CEO of the Living Desert Zoo, king pinned the project, allowing us to take the initial shopping list to Panama, which served to create detente. We were totally out of pocket on these trips to Central America, but our dear friend Lynne Hawksworth gave us “three hots and a cot” to ease financial tensions. True enough, this is not really in-situ conservation, so I entered it in my log book as “semiprofessional brown nosing.” But we do log time in-situ right here in our own back yard, as we work with Cal Allen, a self-taught conservationist, ex-preacher man, who serves on the City Council in Carrabelle, Florida, at the entrance to Tate’s Hell. Google “Carrabelle Cat” for more on that, if you wish. So, my point: you, too, can volunteer on a limited budget. If you want the cool cats, you are going to need to do this!

*How to pay for it:* How do you sustain your operation while you finance your

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fancy feline expansion program? That becomes your big challenge! Here is what we do/did. We currently produce low budget TV commercials. Contracting with Bob Pforte, a car dealer friend up in Marianna, Florida, renaming him “Bobcat 40” and showing him with a friendly bobcat as he sells Ram Trucks; if you come to the “World’s Most Beautiful Beaches,” you may see these commercials on regional Comcast channels. Then there is our adrenalin junkie work in progress, which began when we acquired video while down in Central America, being crafted into a documentary as we relay the story of how Panamanian drug lords clubbed a mother jaguar in the head to steal her cubs, complete with footage to be acquired in the Darien Province on the Colombian border. Gratuitous name drop, if I might, as I credit Robert Young Pelton, who is our new best friend. He advised us as to how one might safely return from their “no go” zone. We will see how that works out and hope to see you when we return.

*Right now:* We continue to slave over a hot computer to build affordable interactive streaming video systems, which I must credit to the expertise of ex-Boeing IT Specialist, Jim Lindley. Jim is one of BCFC’s directors, who knows absolutely nothing about cats, but is building our jaguarundi cam system. See it at [www.bearcreekfelinecenter.org](http://www.bearcreekfelinecenter.org) as we develop it. Please remember that it is a work in progress. We will take this baby on the road to other facilities near you very soon. Alms for the poor!

*My conclusions:* Raising a jaguarundi cub from one hour old is not recommended for inexperienced handlers, new interns, or keepers with casual interests. As for jaguarundi zoo exhibits, it would be presumptuous of me to express my opinion. We have four adults, all former European zoo cats, which would support that exhibition if possible. Since they seem to stress easily when



**Blue Jean baby. Yoda poses next to Jim’s work shoes.**

humans approach, keeping them behind one-way glass might be the best solution. We do not advocate keeping these or other

exotic felines as pets.

*Invitation (or cry for help):* If you want to help us as we move on to bigger and better, drop us a note. We still take donations to sustain the BCFC jaguarundi project. We have been donated a tract of land for an eco-park and we just may leave this tiny little place for much larger quarters very soon. Our unique selling proposition: “Florida’s Wildlife Treasures!” Panthers, bobcats, and jaguarundis. Although biologist say jaguarundis are not indigenous to Florida, we know there is something cat-like rummaging around in our swamps and woodlands. Unofficial sightings would suggest that this mystery cat is too small to be a panther and the tail too long to be a bobcat. Could it be a Florida jaguarundi?

And, last but not least, we submit our version of a “Got Milk” photo. Look carefully and you will see that jaguarundi cubs have built-in milk mustaches. If I do not credit BCFC intern, Volker “Blue” Firmkes, he will never work for nothing for us again!

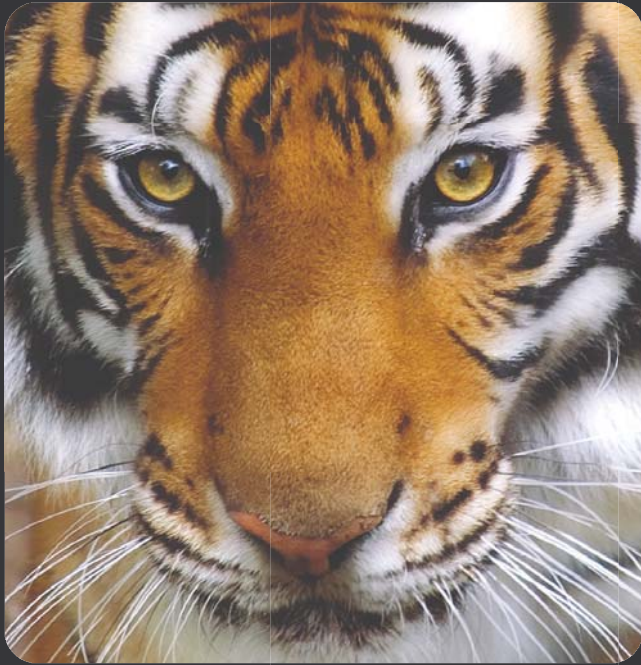
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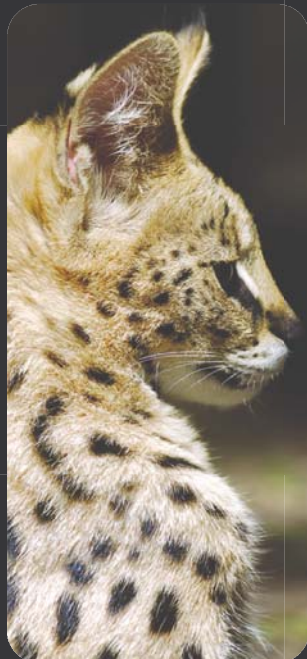
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## FELINE CYTAUXZONOSIS IS A GROWING PROBLEM IN THE SOUTHERN STATES!!

Blast from the Past  
*Feline Conservation Federation Journal*  
March/April 2006

By Gordon McDonald, DMV

For those of you who are not familiar with the disease Cytauxzoonosis, I urge you to learn more. This devastating disease in domestic cats has been shown to affect some exotic species as well. *Cytauxzoon felis* is a hemoprotozoan (blood parasite), which is almost always fatal in domestic cats. This disease occurs mostly in Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, and Florida. In 2005, I saw many more cases of this disease in my practice in western Arkansas than in previous years.

It is known to be carried by bobcats and has also been documented in blood samples of the Florida panther. In a 1990 paper published in the *Journal of Wildlife Diseases*, it was noted that the prevalence of Cytauxzoonosis in the Florida panther and introduced Texas cougars in Florida was 39%, and the study documented the presence of this parasite in the blood of an eight day old kitten. It further suggested that the Texas cougars were infected in Florida, as they tested free of the organism prior to their release in Florida. These

chronically infected felines did not appear to be suffering any negative effect on their hematologic parameters. Both bobcats and cougars have evolved to co-exist with this organism and can be infected but show no clinical signs. When blood was drawn from the infected Florida panthers and injected into a pathogen-free domestic cat, it subsequently died of Cytauxzoonosis 11 days later.

Cytauxzoonosis is transferred to other species via the Ixodid tick. Sporozoites are injected into the animal along with the saliva during a tick bite. Groups of these organisms develop within the lining of the smaller blood vessels. These groups are later found in the erythrocytes (red blood cells), and later sexually mature organisms are found within the erythrocytes. When another tick feeds on these erythrocytes, mating occurs within the gut of the tick. Then the sporozoites migrate to the mouthparts of the host tick and are injected into another animal during feeding, thus spreading the disease.

The organism invades and parasitizes red blood cells and macrophages resulting in hemolysis and anemia. As the organisms multiply and the disease progresses, there is enlargement of the spleen and lymph nodes. Occlusion of major vessels

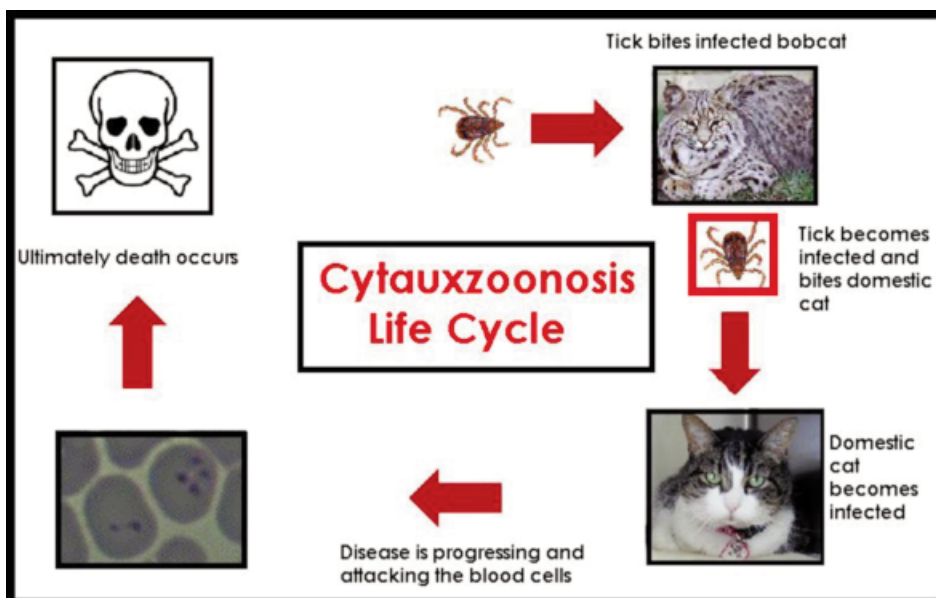


of the spleen, lymph nodes, lungs, and other organs occur. Clinical signs associated with Cytauxzoonosis in domestic cats include: high fever (103 to 107F), anorexia, labored breathing, dehydration, jaundice, anemia, and lethargy. The parasite attacks blood vessels in all organs; heart, lungs, liver, kidney, and spleen; the kidneys and liver quickly overload with damaged blood cells, and the ears and eyes and gums take on the telltale yellow coloration of jaundice. In less than THREE days from the onset of visible symptoms, more than 99% of infected domestic cats will die.

Although the bobcat and cougar seem to be carrier hosts and usually manage to avoid any clinical disease, there is serious concern that exotic wild feline species have not evolved a defense against this organism and are highly susceptible. The first documented case of Cytauxzoonosis in an exotic feline was a white tiger in Florida that died of the parasite in 1996. Since then, there have also been documented cases that resulted in fatalities in African leopard, lion, serval, Pallas cat, Siberian lynx, and Canadian lynx.

Tick control of all exotic and domestic felids is very important. Frontline products (produced by Merial) are the tick prevention products of choice. It is recommended that this product be used at least every 30 days. Treatment of the environment is also very important.

Veterinarians and researchers at Oklahoma State University, in Stillwater, Oklahoma, are currently working on a vaccine to help prevent this disease. There is no other vaccine available at this time.



**Cytauxzoonosis is not only fatal to domestic cats, but has been documented to kill tiger, lynx, leopard, Pallas cat, and serval as well.**

## A Breakthrough in the Treatment of the Deadly Blood Parasite *Cytauxzoon felis* in Domestic Cats

By L.A. Cohn, A.H. Birkenheuer, & J.D. Brunker

Excerpted from the 2011 *Journal of Veterinary Medicine*

A study was conducted to compare the efficacy of two treatment options for Cytauxzoonosis—a combination of atovaquone and azithromycin or imidocarb dipropionate alone. Eighty cats with acute Cytauxzoonosis participated in this study. Most of the cats were young adults with outdoor access and presented with vague clinical signs of lethargy and anorexia.

After diagnosis, each cat was randomly assigned to one of two treatment groups. One group was treated for ten days with atovaquone (15 mg/kg orally three times daily) and azithromycin (10 mg/kg orally once daily). Cats in the imidocarb group were pretreated with subcutaneous atropine and 15 minutes later received an intramuscular injection of imidocarb dipropionate at a dose of 3.5 mg/kg. The injection procedure was repeated seven days later. Treating veterinarians were at liberty to provide supportive care and other concomitant treatments. The cats

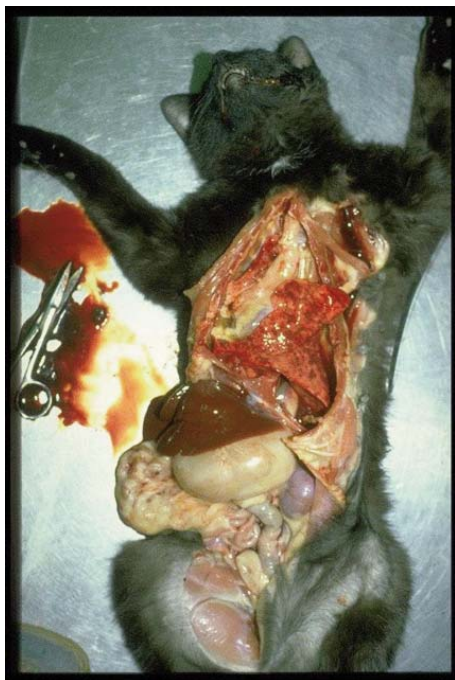
were discharged when they were afebrile and eating voluntarily.

The findings revealed that 60% of the cats treated with the atovaquone-azithromycin combination survived, as compared with only 26% of those in the imidocarb treatment group. Another interesting finding was that, regardless of treatment, cats with lower parasitemia were more likely to survive, as were cats with higher white blood cell counts and

lower total bilirubin concentrations.

The results of this study indicate that treatment with atovaquone and azithromycin improves survival to discharge for cats with acute Cytauxzoonosis, although mortality remains high.

Due to the high rate of mortality associated with this infection, domestic, and wild feline owners still need to focus on prevention by minimizing cats' exposure to ticks.



Necropsy findings in domestic cats include splenic hemorrhages with pallor and icterus. Photo from Oklahoma State.edu.

## Donations

The FCF Board of Directors thanks the following individuals and corporations who have made donations to FCF projects since the last published *Journal*, providing additional funding for educational materials for members and legislators, supporting conservation, and improving captive feline welfare.

We appreciate each donation, no matter the amount, recognizing that it is the many small gifts that, when combined, add up and make a difference in the effectiveness of the FCF. We encourage everyone to follow this example and donate funds for projects that interest you.

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Lynn Culver

Shelleen Mathews  
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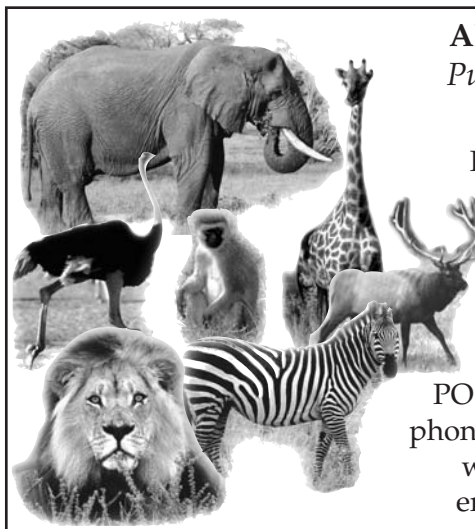
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### Conservation Grant

#### Fund:

Pat Callahan

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## Our First, But Certainly Not Our Last

By Doug Kildsig

My wife, Willa Beth, and I attended our first FCF Convention in Nashville, Tennessee, on the dates of June 6-8, 2013. It was a very enjoyable experience, in which we were able to meet, for the first time, many of the FCF leadership members, FCF Journal article contributors, and many more obscure members such as ourselves! Conservation advocates, private owners, exhibitors, breeders, and sanctuary handlers and administrators were all represented in the diverse attendance record. While this was the first time we have attended an FCF Annual Convention event in my 12 years as a member of the FCF, it certainly will not be our last!

We would like to graciously commend the FCF leadership, not limited to Lynn Culver and Kevin Chambers, for providing and executing to the agenda a very entertaining and informative program. Nashville was a particularly convenient location for us, as it was very close to our residence in Southern Indiana, but also provided an interesting platform for our extracurricular interests of early American history. For country music fans, it provided an unparalleled opportunity to tap into the CMA Week celebrations and activities that were going on during the FCF Convention dates. The Friday evening at the Wild Horse Saloon, in downtown Nashville, provided all of us



**Willa Beth Kildsig and Gregory Breton, holding Caracal kitten in the Hospitality Room of the FCF Convention.**

a good sample of the country music flavor and hustle and bustle that surrounds the country music capital of the world known as Nashville!

Gregory Breton, of Le Parc des Felins, was a special guest speaker and shared with the group how this French big cat facility is

organized and what the operating policies and objectives are. The striking difference between Le Parc des Felins socialization model and that of many American facilities and tendencies is that Le Parc des Felins does not engage in any socialization contact with their animals and prefers to keep a distinct and substantial boundary between the cats and handlers. Gregory's attendance, presentation, and regular interaction with the group added a real international flair to the event. Rounding out Saturday's pre-

sentations and topics were Kevin Chambers, speaking on big cat handling safety and responsibility, and Jim Sanderson, focusing on small cat conservation, specifically the flat-headed cat in Thailand, the Andean mountain cat in Chile, and the fishing cat in Thailand.

Friday's trip to the Nashville Zoo was a real bonus, including a "meet and greet" with three clouded leopard cubs that demonstrated the captive breeding success of the Nashville Zoo, with this species, in particular. And if one was not able to make the trip to the zoo, there was always an opportunity to interact with several kittens in attendance in the Hospitality Room! Having the opportunity to enjoy holding and bottle-feeding one of several kittens that Lynn Culver was kind enough to bring to the Convention was the

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**Convention over, Doug returns home and is greeted by IMOS, his pet bobcat, who walks up for scratches, brushing, and feeding, after his four-day absence**

highlight, of course. On exhibit were a Eurasian lynx kitten, caracal kitten, and two Geoffroy's cat kittens.

In conclusion, the Convention was a very informative and entertaining program that ran like clockwork. It provided a tremendously enjoyable opportunity to meet a diverse group of like-minded exotic cat conservation-minded individuals, members of the FCF. The location was rich in country music and early American history, providing for a real opportunity to sample new destinations during this convention. As my title suggests, concerning my wife Willa Beth and I, this convention was our first, but certainly not our last! I recommend making the next FCF Convention a consideration for your attendance!

## Snow Leopards on Top

By Chris Tromborg

On Sunday, May 5, 2013, the Snow Leopard Conservancy, under the auspices of The Wildlife Conservation Network, offered two presentations at the Pomeroy Center of the San Francisco Zoo. One talk was concerned exclusively with mountain climbing and the ultimate successful scaling of Mount Everest by Americans. The first presentation provided a context for the second; members of recent mountain climbing expeditions to Mount Everest had once again begun to detect signs of snow leopards and to occasionally glimpse them, something that had not occurred for several years. The second presentation focused on the current state of snow leopards in the wild. It highlighted the return of snow leopards to this region of the Himalayas.

This talk was delivered by Rodney Jackson, who presented an account of his work to monitor the behavior of, evaluate the status of, and to conserve snow leopards in the wild, work that he began in 1973. The trials and tribulations of his efforts in the field were presented with accompanying photographs. The most important message was that in many areas throughout its range, and despite increas-



ing pressure on snow leopard populations from the Chinese parts trade and the Russian fur trade, that snow leopards are holding their own. This assessment was based more on actual sightings and real-time photographic recordings than on records obtained with camera traps, which the cats seem to be able to elude. As long as he is physically able to do so, his work will continue.

There were several animal ambassadors.

Robin Lyon and her daughter, Lynette Lyon-Wolf (what great names!), of Lyon's Therapy Animal Ranch, brought along a serval, a Geoffroy's cat, a fennec fox, and a Bactrian camel. These animals are used in cancer patient therapy at several hospitals in Northern California.

Lynette Lyon-Wolf, 24, was the handler for the serval, Geoffroy's cat, and the fennec fox. She is working on receiving permits for 14 exotic species and has already been granted five of these. She has had difficulty in accomplishing this task and using her animals in education and therapy because of resistance from extremist groups and individuals, including Carole Baskin of Big Cat Rescue and Tippy Hedren of Shambala.

She is concerned that the public has become too disconnected from

wild animals and therefore desensitized to their plights. Robin and Lynette are distressed that most of the information about exotic animals is in the form of sensationalized coverage of the very few events involving escapes or injuries to people and excludes all of the positive work that they, and we, do. She believes that for conservation to truly be effective, people must interact with animals under conditions other than on a television or movie screen or behind Plexiglas. She



**Chris Tromborg bends down to pet the six month old serval kitten brought to the event by exhibitor Lynette Lyon.**



**Lynette with her fennec fox peeking out of her shirt. (See earlier article about Lynette's efforts to be licensed in California in the Sept/Oct 2011 FCF Journal, pg. 27.)**

maintains that nothing is more effective than a living animal to incite interest and enthusiasm in people; "When a cheetah jumps up onto a table in front of an audience, we have them!"




The serval on hand was a six month old, 16 pound female, who was beautifully socialized, giving several members of the group crowding around her extensive face washings. Later, she attempted to grapple with a white cane, well anointed with the aromas of other felines. Lynette and her family have rescued many cats, including hybrids such as savannahs. She has published in the *FCF Journal* in the past. Perhaps we will hear from her and her parents again in the future.

FCF members should note that Rodney and The Snow Leopard Conservancy, as well as the Feline Conservation Federation, will be represented at the Wildlife Conservation Exposition, to be held on October 12, 2013, in San Francisco.



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## General Membership Meeting At Convention 2013

The general membership meeting was held at the Radisson Hotel, in Nashville, Tennessee, Thursday evening after the ice-breaker, June 6, 2013. Every member introduced themselves. Afterwards, several topics were discussed:

**Accreditation Process.** Main reason members aren't applying is they don't have the time. It was agreed that there should be two options: 1 - fill out the application and all of the regular requirements as currently done; and 2 - the applicant can pay the travel expenses of an Accreditation Review Committee member to come out and fill out the information required on the application for the applicant as well as do the inspection at the applicant's facility.

**Convention location.** Suggestions were: offer the convention at the end of June one year and in September the following year, that way kids can come; make sure convention is located in a state where cubs can come. Potential sites suggested were Miami – tour Miami Zoo; Las

Vegas – tour Secret Garden, or Lion Habitat; Henderson, Alabama – tour Tigers for Tomorrow; Dallas or Ft. Worth – tour Fossil Rim; Wichita – tour Tanganyika Wildlife Park; and Phoenix – tour Out of Africa, Sedona.

**Journal printing and production.** Currently the *Journal* is printed and mailed out of Chattanooga, Tennessee, using the postal service non-profit rate. Several *Journal* issues have taken much longer to be delivered than when the *Journal* was mailed out of Arkansas or New York. Members were encouraged to contact Lynn Culver, *Journal* managing editor, for specifics on printing and mailing details if they know of a reliable and inexpensive printer that can

provide a quote to compare to the current printing and mailing service contract.



Tammy Garcia is happy to be the warm, comfy bed for the little Eurasian lynx kitten during the membership meeting.

## Second Quarter 2013 Board Meeting Report

Second quarter Board of Directors meeting was held at the Radisson Hotel, in Nashville, Tennessee, June 6, 2013. Board members present were: President-Kevin Chambers, Vice President-Mindy Stinner, Treasurer-Lynn Culver, Secretary-Debi Willoughby, Director-Pat Callahan, and Director-Jim Sanderson. Director-Chris Tromborg was not present.

**Ratify the First Quarter 2013 Minutes:** Moved by Mindy, seconded by Pat, that the approval of the minutes of the First Quarter 2013 be ratified. The motion carried with five yes votes.

**Treasurer's Report:** Reviewed and analyzed. Global assets = \$106,920.51; first six months' income = \$18,046.39; first six months' expenses = \$23,363.19.

Discussion to reduce the number of pages in the *Journal* to free up some of Lynn Culver's time, all agreed.

**Education Committee Update:** Adult & Youth Newsletters going out bimonthly, 2014 calendars created with members' cat photos to sell to generate revenue for committee, posters are now available for members to display in their facilities to promote membership, discussing idea of holding an annual fundraiser to generate revenue for printed educational materials, people are interested in advanced courses along with the husbandry and educators courses.

**Studbook:** Mindy Stinner said this is almost ready for online registration. Animals can be registered now, but we aren't ready for a big push yet. Mindy informed the USF&W Service of this studbook and they may be willing to view it at the same level as ZAA.

**Membership Report:** Our current membership is 424 memberships with 632 members.

Assignment of Board Directors to be in charge of standing committees:

Conservation – Pat Callahan,  
Education – Jim Sanderson,  
Legislation – Chris Tromborg,  
Marketing – Jim Sanderson,  
Public Relations – Pat Callahan,  
Development – Chris Tromborg,  
Member Services – Chris Tromborg.

**Rare Species Fund:** FCF Treasurer Lynn Culver has accounted for the Rare Species

Fund, and these figures are several hundred dollars greater than the total presented by David Lewis, former treasurer. Lynn requested David Lewis provide her his RSF transaction detail report so she can determine where the differences are. Doc Antle has requested that the fund be dissolved and FCF officers wish to have all parties in agreement on the amount remaining in the fund. At Doc Antle's request, a \$15,000 donation to the Small Cat Conservation Alliance from the Rare Species Fund was presented to Jim Sanderson.

### *New Business:*

Conservation Grant Guidelines submitted by Pat Callahan.

"Before applying for an FCF Conservation Grant, applicants need to know:

1. Project should include an endangered felid species or threatened species.

2. Must include local educational participants, prefer University level or community level.

3. Should include a spp of felid of particular interest to FCF members.

4. Prior to awarding a grant, the FCF must receive an article written specifically for the FCF *Journal* by the applicant, photos included. An annual or post activity report of how the FCF grant money was used for the *Journal*.

5. Should offer the possibility of FCF members having direct participation to on site activities such as field work, similar to what Earth Watch does or the Dallas Zoo used to do in Nuevo Leon. This would be at the members' own expense.

6. Must acknowledge FCF assistance in the project in any publications or media presentations for 2 years.

Conservation director will provide a written summary of grant applications and how the Committee voted on them to the FCF Board. Grants will be awarded after any quarterly board meeting.

Grants may be awarded by the FCF Board even if some of the above criteria cannot be met by the applicant."

Jim moved to accept these guidelines and Mindy seconded. The motion carried with five yes votes.

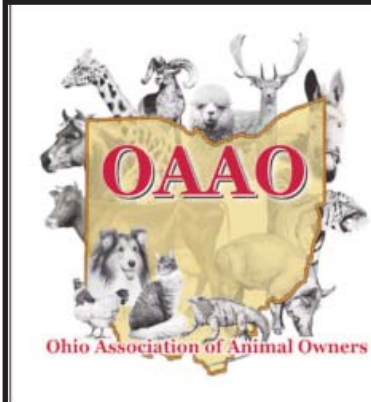
**Survey and Census –** Chris designed a survey to mail to our members a while ago. Should we go forward with this or table it? We all decided to table it. Instead, Mindy will have her intern update the USDA data of cats in captivity. Then we will email the survey to the people, whoever doesn't respond we will send a letter to.

**Professional Committee Members –** current: Karl Mogensen, Pat Callahan, and Mindy Stinner. Kevin moved to appoint Shelleen Matthews to the committee as chair, and Lynn seconded it. Their first action item is to address the old pending applications.

**Accreditation Committee –** Karl Mogensen and Pat Callahan are on this committee, three positions are open. Discussion commenced if we should continue offering to accredit facilities since few members of FCF have taken advantage of this program. It was decided to put this item in the general membership meeting to get member feedback.

New federal bill introduced – the breeding ban bill was re-introduced into Congress this year. The new version exempts circuses, which means the circus lobbyists will not be opposing the bill anymore.

2014 Convention location – places discussed were Out of Africa, AZ; Las Vegas; Colorado; Washington. Lynn will look into if AZ will let us get a temporary permit to import cubs to our convention. It was decided to get the members feedback on location at the general membership meeting.



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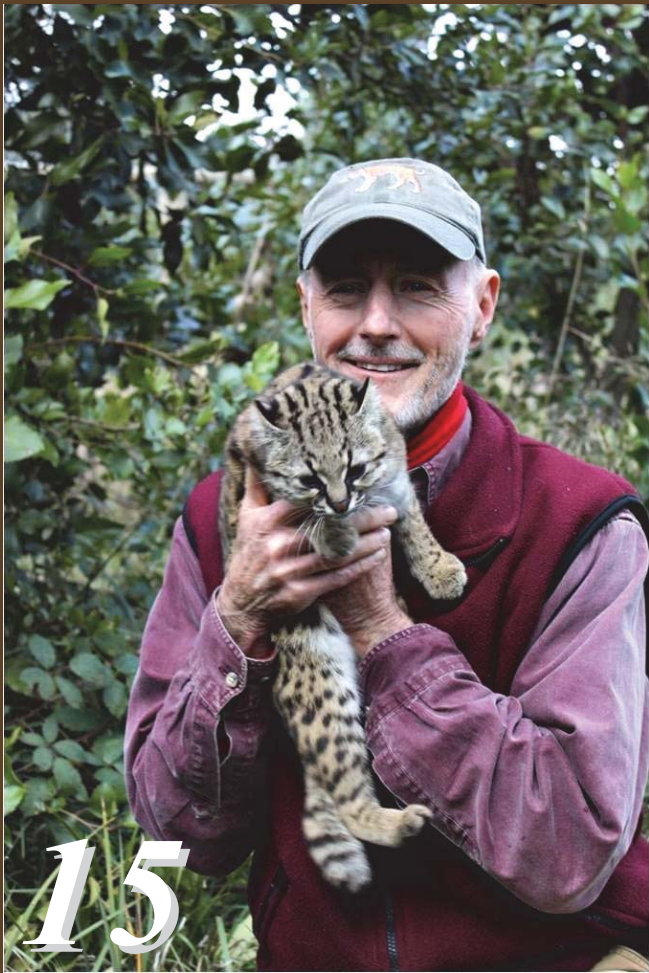
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Legislative Agent



9



20



15



35



Feline Conservation Federation

May/June 2013 Volume 57, Issue 3

The mission of the FCF is to support the conservation of wild felids by advocating for qualified individuals to own and to pursue husbandry of wild felines, providing expertise and material support to ensure the continued welfare and viability of these populations, contributing to research, and funding protection programs that benefit felids living in nature.

**Front Cover:** The grand finale to the Saturday Night Banquet was the awarding of \$15,000 from the FCF managed, Rare Species Fund to the Small Cat Conservation Alliance. Board members Mindy Stinner, Debi Willoughby, Jim Sanderson, Lynn Culver and Kevin Chambers pose with real, small wild cats that appeared throughout the FCF Convention. Photo by Eden Tran.

**Back Cover:** One of three, three-month old, clouded leopard cubs that FCF members handled during the "Meet and Greet" at the Nashville Zoo. Photo by Lynn Culver.



[www.FelineConservation.org](http://www.FelineConservation.org)