



Feline Conservation Federation

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JOIN THE FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

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

The third quarter FCF Board of Directors meeting concluded and I am happy to introduce our two new members of the FCF Feline Facility Accreditation Board, filling vacancies created by the resignation of Brian Werner and Doc Antle last summer. While accreditation has yet to receive the level of member participation hoped for, the program was verbally supported by the members during the Convention general membership meeting. The board has now filled the empty seats and will focus on making accreditation meet the needs of our feline facilities.

The Accreditation Board appointees are Christa Donofrio and Rebecca Krebs. Both of these ladies offer new experience to the accreditation committee and I am confident they will contribute much to its success.


Christa has worked at both Carnivore Preservation Trust and Conservators' Center in cage construction and design for species ranging from kinkajou to jaguar. Her main employment has been in the pharmaceutical industry, where she is a supervisor and troubleshooter. Christa is a long time FCF member and a graduate of both Husbandry and Wildlife Educators courses.

Rebecca is a knowledgeable animal caretaker with plenty of zoological experience and a strong history of animal husbandry, including Bengal tiger, snow leopard, clouded leopard, serval, and mountain lion. She has veterinary technician experience and has worked at three zoos, where she gained experience with exhibit/habitat maintenance, construction, and repair. Rebecca has designed exhibit modifications including animal shift areas, animal denning areas, and formulated ways to place animals at the forefront of exhibits that appeal to visual esthetics. Rebecca is presently employed at the American Eagle Foundation in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, where she is the assistant curator of birds.

I would also like the members to welcome our newest member of the Professional Membership Review Committee, Shelleen Mathews. Shelleen operates the Wild Feline Advocacy Center, a mostly small cat species sanctuary in the state of Washington. She is a long time feline owner, having served this organization decades ago when it operated under the LIOC name.

The professional membership review

process underwent revision by the board. The committee has been streamlined to just three members, and the application has a few more questions that will enable the committee members to vote with more information. Professional membership is something all USDA-licensed members should strive for. Admittedly, the program temporarily fell by the wayside, but, with a full committee appointed, I expect the backlog of professional applications to be processed shortly and hope that more



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members will log in to the members-only website and apply for this level of membership. Finally, I wish to welcome the latest FCF Professionals; Kathrin Stucki, Julia Wagner, and Julie Walker. Congratulations, ladies.

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From the Executive Director

By Lynn Culver

2013 has been a bad year for safety in the feline community. News has spread that a puma, or pair of pumas, attacked and killed an experienced employee at Wildcat Haven Sanctuary in Oregon. Founded by former FCF members, Cheryl and Mike Tuller, the facility once helped others by hosting an FCF Feline Husbandry Course. But Cheryl evolved into one of the sanctuaries which believe wild cats do not need to be bred and maintained in captivity. The Tullers joined with other extremists in the HSUS community and became a Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries-accredited facility. This organization is working hard to make it impossible to breed, exhibit, or allow public contact with wildcats by lobbying Congress, pursuing state legislation, and petitioning USDA to enact new restrictive regulations. The main argument behind these efforts is public safety and it is incredibly ironic that the latest death should occur at one of these GFAS-accredited facilities.

The cat keeper killed on the Tuller's property was apparently working alone that day. Initial reports indicate that at least one puma was in the exercise area with her. It has not been reported whether she had a special relationship with this cat and believed it was safe to enter with it, or if it was another case of inattentiveness that led her to believe the area was empty and the pumas were confined. The Tullers were gone for the day, visiting their new 80 acres of donated land that was to be the expansion site for the sanctuary, creating more room to take in more confiscated and relinquished cats.

This is indeed a sad day for the feline community. Anytime something like this happens, one can expect lawsuits to follow, government investigations

to lay blame, and irreparable damage to a facility's reputation. Wildcat Haven will be known forever as the facility where pumas killed someone.

Just this spring, an experienced intern at Cat Haven, in California, was killed by a male African lion. She entered the large exercise area when the connecting slide gate to the lockdown cage was open at the time. A momentary lapse in attentiveness led her to enter an area that was not secured and she paid with her life.

In midsummer, an employee of the Exotic Feline Rescue Center made this same mistake and entered a habitat where tigers were not secured. She barely escaped with her life, thanks in large part to well-rehearsed contingency plans and a fast response from the facility staff.

One day we are happy and minding our own business, the next day we are facing the aftermath of another deadly situation. Safety has to always be number one in our minds. The feline community relies heav-

ily on hands-on husbandry and bonds of love and trust, but these can fail us, and we must not become complacent.

Many facilities have great relationships with adult big cats and seem to have no fear of being attacked. They are even referred to as "friends" by the facilities. Captivity removes the need to hunt and kill and enables the intelligence of big cat predators to focus on other activities, like developing relationships and communicating with other species. The *FCF Journal* often publishes photos of experienced keepers interacting with adult big cats. These images capture our hearts by painting a picture of love and trust between species. It is what we strive for, but it is not easy to come by. It is by no means guaranteed. It takes a special animal and knowledgeable, dedicated staff to reach this kind of understanding. In the FCF membership, we definitely have professionals who have reached this point. And FCF members will have an incredible opportunity to learn more about how to reach this stage of understanding and see such relationships at our January Wildcat Weekend at Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary in Sarasota, Florida. (Read more starting on page 10.) FCF instructors will be teaching basic husbandry and wildlife conservation and how to exhibit animals in public venues. Also, in June, the FCF Convention in Scottsdale, Arizona, includes a day at Out of Africa Park, where keepers are encouraged to build close relationships with the animals so that swimming and playing can be demonstrated for the audience. Park founder Dean Harrison has written an interesting account of animal behavior and how to build these kinds of timeless relationships starting on page 6 of this *Journal*.

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Photo: Yoda Jaguarundi cub as seen through the lens of National Geographic's Joel Sartore.

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Out Of Africa Wildlife Park's Orientation Regarding Our Captive Animals

By Dean Harrison

Because we live together, our primary emphasis is on behavior; both of the animals and ours. In order to preserve them, we must understand them. They have needs that must be met in order for them to be fulfilled as individuals. If they are not met, frustration, fear, and boredom give way to psychological escapism. They want to be free; free to eat, roam, choose a territory, choose a mate or companion, free to explore and investigate, using all their senses. And in all this they wish to make their own decisions concerning their own lives on a moment-by-moment

basis. To the extent that we can accommodate their quest and purpose in life, we can cohabitate with them. To be a team, we must view life not only from our point of view, as humans, but from the animal's point of view. We have the ability to adjust to them, so we must see from their eyes, too. We must learn to communicate, which is the beginning of any interpersonal relationship.

In order to form this timeless relationship, we must determine why they do what they do as individual living beings. During almost 50 years of research, certain identifiable variables of motivation have emerged. Animal behavior is motivated through three general capacities: instinct, intellect, and feelings. Instinct, which is an unlearned orientation to behave toward the goal of survival, is related to the actual design of the animal itself. The tiger is a tiger due to its instinctual, physiological, and inherited genetic make-up as a predator. Instincts cannot be removed from the tiger while the tiger is alive. If there is no life, there is no instinct; it is dead. Therefore, a tiger is not a pet, it is not fully tamable, nor is it able to be domesticated, as we think of in terms of a dog, horse, cow, or pig. These



Akasha, a female Bengal tiger, with Dean and Prayeri Harrison. Photo by Prayeri Harrison.

animals are breeds, not species. Tigers, elephants, and gorillas are species, in which man had no part in their making, and they have a natural geographical place of origin on the planet.

The instinctual aspect of animal behavior consists of a series of automatic inclinations to behave toward a specific goal, and it emanates from the subconscious mind. It is the dangerous part of the animal, the part that we generally think of as "unpredictable." But this is not necessarily so. The instincts, which are genetic feelings, are in order of importance to the animal's survival and they can be referred to as primary instincts, needs, or goals. They are:

1. Self-preservation.
2. Acquisition of food/water.
3. Territory.

4. Marriage and family relations (not to be alone, but to be part of something greater than oneself).

These primary instincts are supported by nine secondary instincts (manifested behavior), which are the automatic procedures to reach one or more of the four natural goals of physical life. They are:

1. Seasonal change.
2. Possession.

3. Protection.
4. Play/hunting.
5. Chase.
6. To take advantage.
7. Holding and biting.
8. Exploration and adventure.
9. Courting.

There are also assisting, supportive instincts, which are often specific to certain species, such as swimming, flying, digging, scenting, catatonic positions, hunting, killing, and many more.

The primary instincts are multifaceted and contain both offensive and defensive behaviors, designed to extend the quality of life of the species (and sometimes group), which, of course, perpetuates the species.

The second general component is intellect; the capacity to consider alternatives, to

weigh consequences, and to make a choice or decision. This process, which is centered in the conscious mind, is something of a buffer zone; it cushions what the instincts would otherwise do. It keeps a leopard from attacking a lion, it cautions a zebra to be alert around a water hole, and it allows a tiger to consider not eating us, its friends, who love and care for him. Intellect is the balance in which life and death are weighed in the kingdom of animals. It perceives its influences in sight, sounds, touch, smell, taste, telepathy, imagination, instincts, preferences, and memory, both present and inherited. The higher the life form, the greater the intellectual capacity. That is, if one's successful behavior is more influenced by choice of consequences, the more one is acting intelligently. If one's primary concern is focused on personal safety, starvation, or shelter from a harsh environment, then a more instinctual behavior is seen.

Intellect allows us to balance between fear and love, between a perceived unsafe state and a state of acceptance and worth. The only weapon against fear is love, which brings us to the third general component of behavior – feelings. Feelings are likes and dislikes, both physical and

may be caught and killed for his insolence.

When a tiger is eating a deer he has just killed and another, smaller tiger accidentally chances upon the more powerful creature, the offender turns his eyes away and exhibits submissive behavior, so the stronger animal will not be offended to the point of attack. The dead deer has survival value and where there is value, there is also protection, and where there is protection, there is also the law – the survival principles that give remedy to the immediate problems. The situation is based on fear to a greater or lesser degree, affecting one or more of the four primary instincts – self-preservation, food, territory, or marriage and family relations, which trigger both offensively and defensively.

There are many principles of survival, but they all point behavior toward one goal – respect. Respect is the essential concept between any two life forms. Respect is the demonstration of the mixture of love and fear that keeps one from taking advantage of another. It is a standard that our morality is based upon and the foundation for all interpersonal contact. It is also the mortar between the bricks of a relationship and a need we all desire for personal achievement and fulfillment. Respect is the evidence of

worth. In endothermic animals, it frequently couples with the secondary instinct of play, that fun, flexible behavior that favors oneness.

These are the factors affecting animal behavior. They are inherited and designed; complicated, yet simple. They are organized and prioritized, and they are as real as the laws of physics. They are the cords of life. This is the Out of Africa way, which focuses on a single-goal oneness. In this way, we all have free choice to live our passion, to be who we really are, and to do it together. Additional, more detailed information can be obtained in the book *Return to Eden*.



Tundra wolves pose with Dean Harrison. Photo by Kathleen Reeder.

psychological. They are preferences based on experiences and life forms or body types. They are emotions about anything perceived in the environment viewed from a position of peace. Environmental feelings are learned and are changeable if new information is allowed to be considered to form a fresh conclusion. Feelings learned first in life are more difficult to change and, like all emotions, require conscious thought and a decision to alter behavior. Peaceful feelings make peaceful behavior and vice versa. As they say, “attitude is everything.”

So these are the three general components of animal behavior – instinct, intellect and feelings. In order for animals to coexist in large numbers, both with their own kind and with others, a system of laws must be established so they do not just kill one another upon each chance meeting. These laws can be referred to as “long-term survival principles.” They are traffic laws and they are tied to dangerous instincts. Just

as we have agreed to drive our cars in a particular way so we do not run into each other, so, too, animals must learn lesser offensive ways of acting so they will not offend others and perhaps lose a life unnecessarily. A cheetah who claims his established and well-marked territory over an incoming lion pride is behaving within a low probability of survival success. He



Akasha the Bengal tiger is a very special lady, afforded much trust by Dean. Photo by Prayeri Harrison.

A Few of Our Favorite Cats

By Robert & Sandralee Hohn

The lion in the first picture was one of my two favorite big cats, from when volunteering at the Asheville Game Park in 1998. This was prior to our learning of the FCF. The lion's name was Mufasa and his story is a sad, but loving one. He was such a gentle giant; when it came time for feeding, you would have to put the chicken in his mouth because, if it hit the ground, he would not eat it. But the tiger, named Tigger, which shared the same enclosure with Mufasa, would love if it dropped, because that was more food for her.

I had grown to love these big cats, but sadly one day I arrived to find that they and others I knew and loved were leaving the park. Shadow, a black leopard, Viper, a spotted leopard, and Cali, the white tiger, now live under the capable hands of an FCF member who truly loves them and has provided them a wonderful environment for them to live in. I visit them from time to time and they still remember me. It is an awesome feeling.

As for Mufasa and Tigger, well, that is not such a good ending. About a year after they left the park, I went to visit them in their new home in Ohio, and it was not grand. When I talked to Muffy, which was my nickname for him, he cried and so did I. Both he and Tigger are gone now, having been shot by the police. The owner lost his mind, opened the cage doors to his big cats and bears and wolves,



Robert met this gentle giant, Mufasa, when he lived at the Asheville Game Farm.

setting them loose, and then shot himself. This is the infamous incident in Zanesville, Ohio. I mourn their death, but have a strange sense of peace for them, because where they were was a hell compared to the beautiful place they originally lived.

Most animal lovers have the best interest at heart for the animals they love and know how many they can properly care

for. Then you have others who are not rational and they make a bad name for all of us who do such good with our cats.

Even though I worked with big cats, when my husband and I decided to get our state and federal licenses for cats, we knew that we were much better prepared for small cats. Our first baby was Sebastian, our bobcat. When he was a baby, we got along wonderfully. I have many pictures of us together and I am grateful for that, because when Sebastian matured, he only had eyes for Robert. I have learned through the years to give Sebastian his space. I keep my distance and love him from afar. Our second most loving cat was my Jana. She was a Geoffroy's cat. I got to love, cherish, and play with her, and she also traveled to schools and area



Robert's first exotic cat was Sebastian, a bobcat.

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Sandrilee and her second Geoffroy's cat, Giana, had a special bond prior to Giana's maturation.

events and allowed me to show her to children and educate them about her. I had her for a little over year. She passed away far too young and took half of my heart with her. She was so sweet and loveable. I remember that the first time I ever saw a Geoffroy's cat was when we were at the FCF Convention in Dallas, Texas. This little tiny thing took a chicken neck out of the mouth of baby cougar. That is when I told my husband I wanted a Geoffroy's cat. It took me three years to get Jana and I wish I could have had many more years with her.

After Jana passed, my husband thought it would be a good idea for us to get another Geoffroy's cat. I did not want another one, because no other Geoffroy's could take my baby's place. After a couple of months, though, he talked me into getting another Geoffroy's cat. We brought her home and named her Giana, and she loved me until she matured. Now my husband has two cats and I love them both from afar. Whenever I get close to her, she freaks out. I tried to have a relationship with her, but she wants no part of it. Like Sebastian, Giana acts like a regular house cat, all lovey and cuddly with Robert, purring and head butting, and if it sounds like I am jealous, it is because I am!

Robert and I are so grateful to be a part of such a wonderful organization as the FCF. We have had some of the most rewarding opportunities, such as the incredible chance to hold the clouded leopard babies at the last Convention and to go to all the different zoos and private facilities featured and have experiences beyond our wildest dreams. The people in the FCF have become not just friends, but



Cali the white tiger cub is leashed up for a walk with Sandrilee.

there are some we consider family.

We have a business called Paradise Conservation Center, and we go to schools and teach children about the conservation of animals; not just the cats, but all animals. It is so vital that they learn about wildlife and the habitats they need and how we can protect them and their environment. They are, after all, the next generation to take over where we leave off.

HAVE YOUR MORNING COFFEE WITH THE FCF!

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. You can also use the Membership form/Product order form included in this *Journal* issue. FCF coffee mug profits benefit the Wildcat Safety Net Fund.

Wildcat Weekend in Sunny Sarasota, Florida!

The FCF is holding another WILDCAT WEEKEND! This means you have another opportunity to gather with other people interested in owning, or working with exotic felines, or wanting to improve their quality of care and conservation. It's fun! It's in the sun! And it's scheduled for Friday, January 10, through Sunday, January 12, 2014, and it's happening at Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary, 7101 Palmer Boulevard, Sarasota, Florida.



Attend the FCF Basic Exotic/Wild Feline Husbandry Course Friday, January 10, from 8:00am to 6:00pm.
Take a specially designed guided tour of Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary Saturday at 12:30pm.
Attend the Wildlife Conservation Educator's Course Sunday, January 12, from 8:00am to 6:00pm.

Registration fee for either course is \$125 FCF members, \$160 non-members.
Saturday's special guided tour fee is \$15.

Register for both classes and your Saturday tour is free!

Use the registration form included in this Journal, or register online and pay with PayPal. Visit the Upcoming Events page of the FCF website.

Lodging: Stay just 2 miles away at the AmericInn, 5931 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, FL 34232. Travelocity has a monster sale right now – pay only \$76 per night. Or save even more by combining your flight with AmericInn Hotel reservations. Check it out!

BASIC EXOTIC/WILD FELINE HUSBANDRY COURSE –

This instruction helps attendees provide better quality of life for their animals while also making them aware of larger issues in the feline ownership world. The Husbandry Course includes an introduction to all the species of wild cats, and specifically covers nutrition, health care, habitat construction and enrichment, laws and regulatory agencies, contingency planning, behavior conditioning and much more. The recently updated student textbook includes demonstrative photos and notes to provide reference for years to come. A special feature of this year's event will be a one hour, live animal show at 2:00 pm. Watch as a variety of felines are given a daily training class that uses positive reinforcement to shape natural behaviors. See firsthand how professionals handle and work around big cats. Students receive a textbook, test, and certificate of completion. Lunch is provided.

BIG CAT HABITAT and GULF COAST SANCTUARY

On Saturday, you can recharge from the prior day of course work by returning to Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary for a very special guided tour of the facility, which houses lions, tigers, and ligers, as well as bears, chimpanzees, birds, and other animals. Attend another training demonstration. Kay Rosaire will give us special treatment as she points out how this facility operates, with special emphasis on topics taught and practices learned in the husbandry course.



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION EDUCATOR'S COURSE -

A "how to" course that covers all the basics of developing a safe, informative, entertaining, and successful wildlife conservation presentation. You will also learn how to manage different types of audiences and how to speak and act professionally. And, of course, the class covers federal licensing required and how to choose and train animals for outreach ambassador rolls. Already working as an educator at a zoo, sanctuary, or nature center? Let the FCF help you stand out and be more valuable to your employer by showing you creative ways to present wildlife programs. Attend a one-hour feline training show put on by a professional animal trainer. This is a unique opportunity to actually see how professionals shape desired behaviors and condition and ready animals for public display. Students receive a textbook, test, and certificate of completion. Lunch is provided.

Big Cat Habitat

Kay Rosaire is an eighth generation animal trainer from one of England's most respected families of animal trainers. The Rosaire family is known worldwide for their gifted animal training ability, for their work within the entertainment and film industry, and as animal educators who use "Positive Reinforcement Training." The Rosaire family are among the founders of this kinder, gentler style of animal training which has only in recent years become popular. Their unique and remarkable relationship with animals demonstrates that the strongest bonds between humans and animals are based on kindness and compassion.

During Kay's teenage years, she had the good fortune of working at the Erie Zoo in Erie, Pennsylvania, at which time Derrick Rosaire, Sr. (her world-renowned animal training father) was curator. This afforded Kay a unique opportunity to work with a vast array of exotic and domestic animal species as the family presented a zoo show featuring a wide variety of animals including chimpanzees, horses, llamas, elephants, and more.

In working closely with these animals, Kay soon discovered her particular love for and training talent with big cats. In the 1980s, Kay started taking in exotic big cats that for a variety of reasons needed to be re-homed. As the number of needy animals increased, it eventually led to her becoming the president and founder of Sarasota's "Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary," a safe, permanent home



Providing room to run is important for the tiger's well-being. Photo by Richard Zina.

for wildlife and an amazing educational sanctuary that is one of the Sarasota area's top ten family attractions.

The Habitat boasts three large indoor/outdoor housing complexes with adjoining exercise habitats with expansion projects ongoing. Each habitat has a swimming pool, toys, and palm trees to provide the emotional enrichment that maintains optimal mental and physical health. Big Cat Habitat is a perfect location for students to tour and see proper enclosure designs and construction, as well as enrichments and safety protocol.

In the family's tradition, Kay's son Clayton Rosaire is not just an amazing big cat trainer, but his training demonstrations delight, enlighten, and entertain his audiences. Kay and her son Clayton use positive reinforcement techniques based on gentle handling,

praise, and treats to encourage natural behaviors on cue and in a sequence of the trainer's choice. The Rosaire's special relationships with the animals make every training demonstration thrilling to watch.

During Wildcat Weekend, students of the FCF Basic Wild/Exotic Feline Husbandry Course and the Wildlife Conservation Educators Course will break from the studies to watch these amazing demonstrations and take away a fresh perspective on unique husbandry styles and listen as professionals deliver conservation messaging in an unforgettable manner.

The FCF Wildcat Weekend is Friday, January 10th, through Sunday, January 12th, at the Big Cat Habitat. We will assemble in the area to teach courses Friday and Sunday and everyone is invited to return Saturday at 12:30 for an afternoon tour of the facility and to watch a training demonstration. This promises to be one of the most interesting instruction sites and a tremendous opportunity to ask questions and learn from highly experienced animal trainers and conservationists. Be sure to sign up online at the FCF website under "Upcoming Events," or call FCF Treasurer Lynn Culver to use your credit card. FCF Basic Wild/Exotic Feline Husbandry Course is \$125. FCF Wildlife Conservation Educators Course is \$125. Saturday guided tour of Big Cat Habitat is \$15. Sign up for both courses and your Saturday tour is free!



Clayton Rosaire directs a tiger jumping demonstration for the audience. Photo by Richard Zina.



Brutus, the 900-pound liger, enjoys a pool and expansive habitat to roam. Photo by Richard Zina.

Jasmine and Sebastian Get Ready for Halloween!

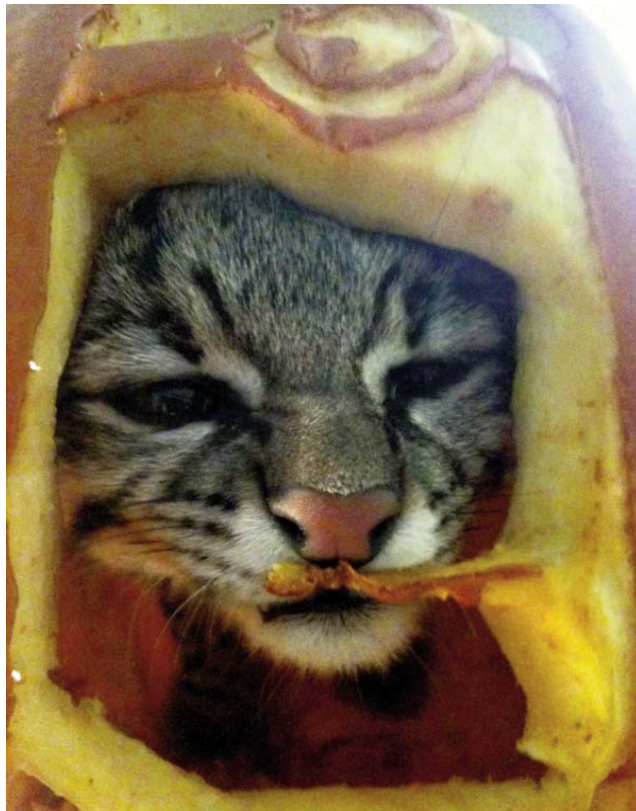
By Jennifer Kasserman

The ever cautious and curious Geoffroy's duo take time to do their pumpkins. What better than a snack that you can hide in? Not the stereotypical all black cat for this holiday. Instead, the Geoffroy's not only love to play with, get in and eat the pumpkin, they also exhibit a beautiful coat with black spots and a variety of fall colors that varies with the region. Some of them, like Jasmine, have the melanistic gene. This causes her to have an all-black nose instead of the usual red.

Jasmine and Sebastian are a year and half old now and are rarely more than a few feet apart. They enjoy the comfort of three different areas. They have their own large indoor room with all the comforts, of course, and then some. When nighttime comes, their nocturnal clocks kick in, but they still take time to cuddle in the bedroom and then engage in a nightlong tactical dance. This includes using all four corners of the room with lots of slow maneuvering and quick, stealthy pounces. They just recently got their third space; a fully-enclosed deck 14 feet off the ground and right off the master bedroom, which was built and designed just for them.

Geoffroy's are born blind, only weighing a few ounces, and do not get too much bigger, it seems, compared to the other exotic cats. When fully mature, they still only weigh somewhere between four and 11 pounds. This makes them among the smallest of wildcats and about the same size, if not still smaller than a domestic cat. Jasmine weighs 3.5 pounds, while Sebastian now weighs just under six pounds. They are about seven weeks apart in age.

The Geoffroy's cat has large, rounded ears, which is one quality that helps them to be able to endure temperatures varying from extreme heat to cold. Their ears also display the white "eye spot" we see on many animals used to help ward off predators, although, in their natural



Sebastian climbs inside the jack-o-lantern and takes a whiff of the pumpkin.



Jasmine examines the insides of the pumpkin.

regions, the Geoffroy's biggest threat these days is habitat invasion. They are extremely talented climbers and swimmers. They can climb up steep heights in high altitudes and even swim across large rivers; not to mention that they can end up on the top of my refrigerator and even some times door jambs in the hallway as they are, for some reason, trying to reach the ceiling.

It was a huge joy getting the pumpkins ready with these two. Knowing, of course, there would be many delays in finishing this project. Their playful curiosity made for a night of comedy and "Oh, how cute is that?" This actually happens daily with just their regular routine. They are high energy and play hard. But they also like to calm down for a sweet snuggle, typically followed by lots of purring and head bumps to show their affection. Now we will be looking forward to getting ready for Thanksgiving with a little help from Jasmine and Sebastian. Christmas, on the other hand, may be a different story.

European Wild Cat Adventure

Photos and article by Fred Hood

As I write this, I am on a return flight from overseas, having seen and photographed most of the world's cat species. Did I spend weeks in jungle hides or at safari camps to achieve my goal? No, I stayed at comfortable hotels in the tourist centers of Western Europe. A two week trip to Scotland, England, France, and Spain netted a wider variety of felines in captivity than even the most intrepid adventurer could see in the wild in a lifetime.

My trip begins with two days in Scotland. The first day is spent at Highland Wildlife Park, a sister facility of the Edinburgh Zoo. Since part of the park is a drive-through, I have a one day car rental for my first experience driving on the left-hand side of the road (thankfully no accidents). The park is in the Scottish Highlands and specializes in wildlife from northern latitudes. My main interest is the Scottish wildcat (*Felis silvestris grampia*), although the park also has an excellent hillside exhibit for the Pallas's cat and a large forested exhibit for the Amur tiger. The wildcat exhibits are connected by a unique skywalk system - an intriguing concept that some FCF members may want to incorporate into their small cat habitats.

My second day in Scotland is at the century-old Edinburgh Zoo. Most of the big cat exhibits are small and outdated, but I am here for a small cat: the Asian golden cat. There are three at the zoo and each has its own enclosure. The male is the easiest to see, but is in the least photogenic exhibit. Through perseverance, I manage to get some good shots of the two females in their densely planted exhibits. I also get excellent photos of a Scottish wildcat whose parents are at the aforementioned Highland Wildlife Park.

Next, I am off to the south of England for a group photo workshop at Wildlife Heritage Foundation. This private big cat breeding center is run by the public Paradise Wildlife Park. Visitors to WHF must book a guided tour in advance. Our photo tour, which is pricier than a regular tour, involves two staff members taking us beyond the barriers and right up against the fence. A highlight is the pumas, one of which repeatedly jumps across a small

pond to retrieve a piece of meat. The other highlight for me is the fishing cat, which plays in a reed pond and walks across a log. The group is going to walk right by the exhibit on the way to another big cat when I see the fishing cat and convince our guides to make a detour. We continue with big cats, including one of only three pure (non-hybrid) Indian tigers in Europe.

Wildlife Heritage Foundation is in the countryside near Ashford, which has a rail station for the Eurostar train to Paris. So I catch the evening train for a night in the City of Lights and head to my next destination the following morning. When I was planning this trip, my original thought was to get a direct train from Paris to Zurich to spend a couple days at Zoo Zurich. The zoo has a large, rocky hillside habitat for snow leopards. This exhibit far exceeds any here in the states and may be the best in the world (or at least ties for best with Kolmarden in Sweden). Just a couple of days before I book my train ticket, however, I receive breaking news that makes me replace Switzerland with Spain.



Scottish Wildcat at Scotland's Highland Park.



Elevated skywalks enable the small cats of Highland Park to move from one enclosure space to another.



Asiatic Golden cat at the Edenburg Zoo, sister zoo to Highland Park.



Cougar exhibit at Wildlife Heritage Foundation.

That news is that Zoobotanico Jerez is about to open the only public exhibit for Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*). As reported in the May/June 2012 *FCF Journal*, I actually have seen an Iberian lynx in the wild. The resulting photo, however, is a motion blur image taken before dawn with a flashlight. In hopes of getting a clear photo, I book a two-hour flight from Paris Orly to Sevilla, one of my all-time favorite cities. I spend three nights there and do a day trip to Jerez de la Frontera, which is only one hour by train and then 45 minutes by city bus to the zoo gate. I go to Jerez on a Monday, but have to return on Tuesday, because I find out when I get there the zoo is closed on Mondays!

The new lynx exhibit is nice, which is more than I can say for the rest of the zoo. Overall, the quality is very poor and most exhibits are severely outdated. I do get several good lynx photos, but only because I am tall. The two glass viewing areas have so much glare that they are impossible to see through, and a rope barrier prevents guests from going right up to the glass. Black metal fencing runs the



Zoo Jerez has the only public exhibit for the highly endangered Iberian lynx.

length of the exhibit, but the bottom half is covered. Only by standing on the low log barrier on tiptoes can I see through the unobstructed portion of the fencing for photos. In the afternoon, two other photographers show up and blatantly ignore the barriers to go right up against the glass and fence. I do not condone their

behavior, but I understand their frustration. Why does the zoo make its signature exhibit so difficult to see?

From Spain, I return to France for three and a half days at my favorite zoological park on the planet: Le Parc Des Félines. I reported extensively on this park in the November/December 2011 *FCF Journal*. I am happy to find some new additions since my last visit two and a half years ago. The nicest surprise is a two month old Asian golden cat. Talk about cute! Also, the park extended the path so that now they have three golden cat exhibits instead of one. There also appears to be a fourth one behind these, presumably for



Le Parc Des Felins in France has some of the best exhibits anywhere. Lovely Eurasian lynx strols amongst yellow wildflowers.

breeding. Golden cats are no longer found in the United States, but signage here indicates the park actively maintains two distinct subspecies (*Pardofelis temminckii temminckii* and *P.t. tristis*).

Also new to the park are Asian lions. The park already has three massive field exhibits for three varieties of African lion: Angolan, East African, and white South African. They have been unable to obtain Asian lions previously, however, due to the policy of the EAZA (European equivalent of AZA). In order to prevent hybridization, the EAZA forbids its members from housing both African and Asian lions at the same facility. I presume Le Parc Des Félines received an exemption due to their excellent track record and expertise with wild cats. The Asian lions are in the former white tiger habitat, which is in a separate area of the park from the three African lion habitats. The white tigers have their own new exhibit, which is the park's largest - over seven acres!

The final new development since my last visit is a sand cat complex. The two older, outdoor exhibits are still there, but they connect to an amazing new indoor area. Visitors stand in the middle of a glass rotunda surrounded on almost every side by a series of six enclosures. Thin wire separates each enclosure and doors at the back can be opened or closed to connect them. The roof is reminiscent of a greenhouse and can be opened in nice weather. This has got to be the best sand cat exhibit and breeding center anywhere!

My final destination is Howlett's Wild Animal Park in England. This is the late John Aspinall's original park and he later opened a much larger park nearby known as Port Lympne. Together they have an excellent small cat collection and, since my two previous visits to England focused on Port Lympne, I decided to try Howlett's this time. I find it rather disappointing, with most of the cat exhibits



Le Parc Des Felins indoor sand cat complex houses six separate enclosures and is one of the best exhibit and breeding centers anywhere.

set at least twenty feet back from the guardrail, making photos impossible. One area labeled "small cats" on the map has been demolished and replaced with an obstacle course! The day is saved, however, when I happen upon the fishing cat exhibit just as keepers are feeding them. This exhibit has a nice window for view-

ing and the adjacent fence is close enough to the guardrail for photographs. On future trips, however, I will skip Howlett's and return to Port Lympne.

Western Europe is unique in having so many outstanding cat facilities in close proximity. The purpose of my trip was twofold. One is to expand my portfolio of wild cat photos (which you can view online at FelidFoto.com). The other was to investigate facilities for a wild cat photo tour I hope to organize. Based on my research, I think the group tour will include Heritage Wildlife Foundation, Port Lympne, Le Parc Des Félines (two or three days), and probably Zoo Zurich. I will place an ad in this *Journal* if the trip is a go, but I am tentatively looking at spring and fall 2014. If anyone wants information sooner, you can email me at felidfoto@hotmail.com.



They don't call them fishing cats for nothing! Fred photographed at feeding time at Howlett's Wild Animal Park .

Late Summer Trauma & Panic

By Doug Kildsig

It was not three months after returning from the FCF Convention in Nashville, when trauma and panic hit the Kildsig household! My beloved lady bobcat, IMOS, was facing very serious health deterioration that could possibly result in death!

I am writing this article in hopes that it can remind each of us how the health of our animals can change VERY rapidly, and for no apparent reason. My cat has been incredibly healthy and energetic her entire 12 years of life, and now things had changed dramatically for the worse.

It was the first week of September, when we noticed a serious problem with fleas in the home, and one of our domestic cats seemed to be struggling with them. Within a week's time, I had sourced some over-the-counter flea insecticides to begin using throughout the residence, to include IMOS's enclosure system. At this point, no notice was made of a change in IMOS's mood, appetite, or disposition. In advance of beginning insecticide treatments, I had noticed a slight mood shift in IMOS, but not significant. Her appetite was still fantastic, as is typical in the fall season. By September 18, the flea problem had become severe, so I began to treat with over-the-counter insecticides throughout the home and enclosure system on September 20. By September 24, I noticed a significant shift in IMOS' mood, as if she was becoming disinterested or sluggish in her mood and behavior, but her appetite was still good. On September 25, I hit the "panic button," as IMOS's mood and disposition had dramatically worsened, and she had started to limit her travels to only select portions of her enclosure system and "nest" in a particular spot in a manner that was completely out of the ordinary and unusual.

I called her primary vet immediately and described to him as best as possible what had transpired. His initial diagnosis over the telephone was that IMOS may have become severely anemic due to flea bites! And his schedule would not allow a visit until the next day, September 27! At this point, her condition had worsened to very little movement and activity, and her food intake was virtually non-existent. I panicked and called another vet, who

made an emergency visit, but the diagnosis was inconclusive on anemia or toxicity due to insecticides. IMOS never had loose stools or vomited during this entire event, but she was definitely VERY, VERY ill and was very unresponsive to food or water, or even any interaction. Her primary veterinarian, Dr. Kevin Kennedy, of Hillside Veterinary Clinic, Lamar, IN, had indicated he thought she could have become anemic

from flea bites and may even need a blood transfusion, which would be very difficult to obtain. My mind was racing and I went into action as best I could, praying that my steps would be guided with wisdom and determination. Thank God, I reached out to Lynn Culver, who has been a godsend through this entire ordeal. Lynn selflessly dedicated her time and expertise to coach me through the difficult decisions and questions that needed to be addressed during the diagnosis. Lynn provided incredible compassion and understanding, plus veterinary experience to offer a second opinion. Was it a virus, bacteria, an infection, intestinal worms, anemia brought on by flea bites, anemia brought on by poor kidney or liver function? All these questions remained to be answered, and I was desperate for answers! The answers to these questions could not come soon enough, and my notes on these matters are numerous and vast!

Finally, on September 27, only two days from when IMOS really had a turn for the worse, Dr. Kevin Kennedy was able to make the site visit for examination and a blood sample for analysis. Thank God that Dr. Kevin Kennedy is a decisive person who can make the hard decisions and take immediate action with a blood sample. That usually requires sedation, and I am not fond of having IMOS sedated. She was sedated for emergency sutures only once before, and just the



IMOS had everyone worried with her lackluster appetite and lazy disposition. But thankfully her hunger and energy have rebounded.

sight of your beloved pet under sedation is anxiety-provoking; at least it is for me! Nevertheless, as Lynn Culver and Dr. Kennedy requested, a blood sample was essential as we worked toward a diagnosis and to determine if, indeed, she was in an anemic condition.

The same day as the site visit, September 17, I removed all furniture and carpet from her inside enclosure area, all while she simply lay with her eyes shut on a chair outside. I was devastated that my cat that was ALWAYS so full of energy and interested had been reduced to an animal that was completely unresponsive, not eating or drinking, and uninterested in every way. She was, indeed, at death's doorstep. This persisted and, on September 30, the majority of the data was back from the first blood panel - negative for FIA/hemobartonella, no sign of kidney or liver function problems, and CBC indicated moderate to severe anemia. On October 2, with no improvement or diagnosis resulting from the first blood sample, Dr. Kevin Kennedy made a second house visit to take a second blood sample for further analysis, to beat the weekend with the lab services! Just in case we needed it to continue to do diagnostics. Dr. Kennedy also provided an injected steroid and a dewormer, at my insistence, and took a stool sample for analysis.

By October 3, the micropathy of the first blood sample was complete and also indicated no indication of FIA, and the

stool sample was negative for parasites. Still no improvement in IMOS's disposition or condition at all. I decided to consult with another local vet and he provided me Lactated Ringers solution and needles, just in case fluid delivery became necessary. He concurred with Dr. Kevin Kennedy; however, we had no positive indication of a cause of IMOS's difficulties. Dr. Kennedy also had sent Comfortis oral flea medication immediately on my first contact with him, and this was successfully administered on October 1. So, the home and the enclosure system were showing some improvement in flea disinfection, especially upon using Siphotrol, an aerosol product by Vet-Kem that Dr. Kennedy provided. This product seems to be highly effective with no toxicity risks. By October 5, the second blood panel was primarily complete, with the exception of FIV/auto immune deficiency data, and one of the samples indicated a concern for a non-regenerative form of anemia. Dr. Kennedy recommended we immediately begin an oral solution of Prednisone steroid and antibiotic (doxycycline), to include a liquid vitamin supplement, and hope and pray for the best. The initial treatment was the steroid for 30 days and the vitamin for 14. Praise God that after two hours of treatment, IMOS's disposition, mood, and appetite picked up markedly! I gave her the first dose on Saturday, October 5, and by that evening, IMOS's appetite was off the wall! By that evening, she ate an entire bag of roughly 60-70 raw shrimp!

She maintained this initial dose from October 5 to October 10, upon which her progress and improvement in mood, disposition, and appetite was so INCREDIBLY dramatic that Dr. Kennedy suggested we half the dose for the next week, then discontinue use altogether. If at any time she digresses in any of these areas, I should re-administer accordingly. From October 11-18, the half dose worked great and she continued to make good progress in all areas; almost the same fickle cat that I had grown to love the last 12 years!

As of this writing, we are now on zero meds and her personality, mood, disposition, and appetite have stayed incredibly strong and progressive. We started no meds on October 19, so we only have two days of observation, but I am very encouraged, prayerful, and hopeful that IMOS is healed despite no diagnosis and minimal medical intervention!

Bottom line, as I started this article saying, the health of our animals can change very rapidly and with no apparent reason, and it is incredibly important to have ready access to professional veterinary care and skilled, experienced personnel, such as, in this case, Dr. Kevin Kennedy and Lynn Culver, FCF Executive Director. Further capable resources to handle exotic species would be the Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine and the University of Tennessee, in Knoxville, TN. I have not had to draw on either of those organizations as of yet, but am prepared and aligned to do so if necessary. I would also like to thank Joe Taft, owner/operator of the Exotic Feline Rescue Center in Brazil, IN, who was immediately available to offer blood transfusion possibilities and additional skilled veterinary facilities and resources if necessary. I thank God for the resources of Lynn Culver, Dr. Kevin Kennedy, and Joe Taft to help IMOS as I navigated these very troubled waters, and I encourage each of my readers to make sure they have these types of quality and compassionate individuals available to their animal welfare plans. Remember, the health of our animals can change very rapidly and with no

apparent reason! I welcome your hopes and prayers that this story has a long-lasting and happy ending and that IMOS's health and wellness continue on this dramatic and miraculous upward trend! Thanks!


Skilled Resources Listing:

Lynn Culver, FCF Executive Director,
Breeder (bobcat, lynx, cougar, serval,
caracal, Geoffroy's cat)
141 Polk Road 664
Mena, AR 71953
479-394-5235
treasurer@felineconservation.org

Dr. Kevin Kennedy
Hilltop Veterinary Services
13208 N State Road 245
Lamar, IN 47550
812 544-2238
<http://www.myvetonline.com/HilltopVet/general-information.html>

Joe Taft, Owner/Operator
Exotic Feline Rescue Center
2221 E. Ashboro Road
Center Point, IN 47840
(812) 835-1130

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914 Riske Lane **Coreen Eaton**
Wentzville, MO 63385 **636-828-5100**

Social Media Policy

With increasing attention being focused on private wildlife owners, it is absolutely critical that we all strive to represent ourselves as well as possible. Social media is a tool and a weapon, so it is important that you proactively control your message. Below is a policy that can be adapted to your facility to address some concerns that may arise with regard to social media during the normal course of business. If you would like a copy of this Word document to adapt into your own policy, please send your request to edentrancf@gmail.com.

This policy was developed by Julia Wagner at the Conservators' Center (Julia@conservatorscenter.org).

Guidelines for Sharing Information: Facebook and Other Social Media

As the [facility name] continues to grow and thrive, it is increasingly important that the information that is provided to the general public be as accurate and informative as possible. As volunteers, interns, and donors at the [facility name], you have the privilege of seeing and hearing our latest news as it happens. But, with this privilege comes substantial responsibility. Because you are not an official representative of the [facility name], you are not positioned to make public statements about either the organization or its animal residents. This is especially relevant with regard to social media. To help you avoid a misstep, we are issuing guidelines about what is not appropriate to share via social media or any other public outlet.

Photographs – It is very exciting to be able to work at the [facility name], and during your time here you have undoubtedly amassed a library of unique photographs. Many are appropriate to share, but there may be some that are not. In order to help you, we have outlined what is not appropriate to disseminate:

1) Photos displaying inappropriate contact with an animal, either by you or another. If you are engaging in inappropriate contact with an animal, then you are already out of bounds and subject to disciplinary action. Do not make matters

worse by sharing your indiscretion with the world. If you have captured a photo of somebody else inappropriately interacting with an animal, we stress that you please share it with our staff so that we can address the behavior with the individual. We will do everything we can to ensure that we do not bring your name into the situation and greatly appreciate your willingness to help us ensure everyone is abiding by our safety guidelines.

2) Photos displaying certain types of appropriate contact with an animal, either by you or another. Depending on your role in the organization and the level of training you have received, you may have a hands-on relationship with some of our animal residents. While we understand that you are proud of this incredible accomplishment, it is imperative that you not post these photos. A layperson does not understand the extensive training you have undergone to have that level of contact. We do not want there to be any perception that the general public (i.e., tour groups) are permitted contact with our residents. The only exception to this rule is when you are engaged in contact with a trained education animal (Geoffroy's cats, singing dogs, Chaussies). If you have a question about whether a particular animal or interaction is appropriate, you may ask our public relations personnel whether you may post the photo.

3) Photos of butchered animals, bloody clothing, or anything else that overtly deals with the meat our animals are fed. It is one thing for the general public to have an understanding of the meat our animals eat. It is quite another when they are confronted with the graphic reality of a carnivore's diet. To prevent any confusion about our food supply and food preparation practices, we ask that you not post photos as described previously.

4) Photos of injuries and photos taken during ongoing emergencies. In the event of either situation, you should not be focused on photographing, but instead focused on how you can help. Furthermore, taken out of context, your photographs could be incredibly damaging to the organization, even if that is not your intent.

We do encourage you to post photos of the animals you care for, the friends you

have made, and to share this experience with those around you. In order to be safe, we do require that you take photos from four (4) feet away from the enclosure unless you are accompanied by an approved photography blocker. There are only a few approved photography blockers within the organization, so you must check with staff about who can assist you if you would like photos taken closer to an animal's enclosure. This rule is absolute, regardless of how benign an animal seems.

Videos - The same guidelines that apply to photos are also applicable to videos.

Animal Deaths – The [facility name] is proud to house such a large population of animal residents, both young and old. With that responsibility, however, comes the unfortunate reality that our animals do pass away, sometimes unexpectedly. Do not post anything about an animal's death until after an official statement has been made by the [facility name]. There are two main reasons for this:

1) Each of our residents has its own adopters, admirers, and caretakers. We do not want anyone close to an animal to have to hear about its death from anyone but our staff. Prior to making a public statement, we personally reach out to all relevant individuals to discuss the loss and why it occurred. Only after we have done this, do we publicly announce a death. This is a hugely emotional issue for everyone, and we hope to lessen the grief a bit by having a personal communication first.

2) You are not privy to all of the details of an animal's health and death, therefore you are not positioned to comment on either. Some of our animals have pre-existing conditions that we are working to control. Others require a necropsy to determine cause of death. Regardless of the case, it is the responsibility of the [facility name] to make a public statement about cause of death, not yours.

Once a public statement has been issued, we do encourage you to comment, post photos, and celebrate the life of the animal who you too have loved.

Animal Illness – Many of the same issues that are relevant to the death of an animal

are relevant to illness as well. We do not want individuals close to an animal to have to hear about a health concern from anyone but us, and you will not necessarily be aware of all that is being done to help ensure that animal's ongoing quality of life. That being said, you are always welcome to talk to our staff about our residents and their health statuses. As an invested member of this organization, it is appropriate for you to be kept apprised of an animal's condition.

Animal Births – Births are a joyous occasion, however, for a number of reasons we may not want them to be immediately made public. A few of the key issues are:

1) While we do everything we can to ensure that babies at the [facility name] live long, healthy lives, there is always the risk that a birth may not end well and that a stillbirth may occur or, that we may lose a baby in infancy. We want to spare everyone the grief of being excited about babies only to find that they are no longer with us.

2) If we are not intending on keeping an animal on our site (for instance, if a baby is going to be placed on loan to an

approved facility), we want that to be part of the birth announcement. Babies are popular for lifetime adoption, and we do not want potential adopters to get excited only to find out that an animal who they may be interested in will not be residing at [facility name] after its weaning period.

Animal Injuries – While the social interaction that grouping animals together brings is generally positive, conflict is an inevitable occurrence. Do not post photos/video of ongoing conflicts or of injuries sustained by an animal. Please alert staff immediately to either occurrence, and the situation will be addressed and appropriately handled. Images or comments about conflicts and injuries can be taken out of context and could unjustly damage the reputation of [facility name].

Human Injuries – It is not uncommon for our staff or volunteers to experience minor construction injuries onsite (chainsaws, fencing, and trenchers are scary!). It is also probable that at an active animal facility, there will be accidents or injuries involving animals and people. Out of respect for your fellow workers, please do

not comment on anyone's health status. Everyone deserves privacy.

Emergencies – In the event of an emergency, we ask that you please not comment until after a public statement has been issued. Even then, we will ask that you please refrain from comment unless you have been directed to do so. There are tremendous sensitivities in this field, and while we trust everyone has the best intentions, your commentary may become very damaging.

In the end, we trust each of you to exercise good judgment. If you are about to post something and even have a moment of doubt about whether it is appropriate, than it may not be. If you have any doubts, please reach out to your supervisor or our communications team for guidance. We greatly appreciate your understanding and cooperation in this matter and are available should you have any questions or concerns. As always, we truly value the critical role you play at [facility name] and want to ensure your time here is enjoyable.

Business Cat-titude – Bringing Awareness to Your Facility

By Jim Broaddus,
Bear Creek Feline Center

Working with felines and being of the latter generation, my techno skills are not up to speed with the 'Facebook' generation. At the onset, I thought "tweeting" was something to get the cats' attention. I will qualify as an OCTOGENARIAN in less than a decade, and I do not have time for Encore studies, although I did check curricula offered at several community colleges. So what is the work around? Since BCFC budgets do not permit hiring a specialist to organize our social profiles, we gave the project to our "human resources" officer to come up with a fix. (LOL...there is no BCFC Human Resource Officer. It is just me!) Less I digress, our board, in all its wisdom, elected its newest and youngest member. Announcing Tanis Thomas, part of an artist family. Son of Tim and Terri Thomas, the Three Ts. They do, among other things, "Landing Pages." I was pleasantly surprised that, at 19 years of age, Tanis was worthy of the task. His dad, being his marketing consultant,

ensures that help will be available throughout this process.

Definition: A "Landing Page" is a simple one-page website that has all that signature stuff in an easy graphic interface. Tim and Tanis have a simple and affordable template that they use that makes the project quick and painless. They did one for me that has my name up at the top with the geographical location printed underneath. I got them to put a big panther picture with our logo under the banner and a simple "About the Center" text box next to it. The website was up almost immediately.

The package includes the purchase of the domain name and hosting for a year. The template includes a button for my email and three social buttons for Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube, respectively. The YouTube button links to a video of the Feline Center that was shot by a local TV station, but we plan to shoot a

The new Internet Landing Page for Jim Broaddus and Bear Creek Feline Center.

15-30 second commercial later this month to update and replace it. These three buttons can be exchanged for Twitter, Skype, or any other social media you desire. There is also a picture of me and one of my cats, my name and title, and a brief "About Me" statement.

Stay with me now. Lastly, there are four link buttons at the bottom of the template. Two are taken with the web designer's logo that link to their site and the search engine registration button that allows free registration to over 300 search engines. Having these two on the page is why they can host the site so inexpensively. The other two buttons are for the purchaser's use. I linked the first to our official Center's website and the other, of course, to the FCF. You could also have them link to a shopping cart, ticket site, or to download a brochure or event flier. The domain name was part of the fee, as was the first year of hosting.

Now I have two feet on the world wide web that link to each other and, instead of that long line of text hanging unattractively beneath my email signature, I have a clean "Contact Info" button that leads to my Landing Page; www.jimbroadus.us. Gratuitous plug for the Thomas family, go to www.webpagesfor99dollars.com. They will fix you up!

If it were just that simple. This launched the beginning of our new marketing effort. Another member of our team, Rick Knutsen, journeyed from his home/office up in Atlanta to visit us two years ago during a Sunday tour. He volunteered his digital marketing services to help BCFC fill the void with the Facebook generation. He develops comprehensive digital marketing solutions across multiple channels, including social media, banner advertising, and search engine optimization. With Rick's help, we were able to, within a month, add additional content on page one, pushing some, shall I say misleading, listings to barely on the first page, well insulated from Bear Creek. Rick pointed out that, "It's just a strategy that works!" He stated that as we publish more and more content on our website and social channels and engage our audience where they meet, we will ultimately dominate the space on search engines. Rick advised that pushing out content is vital and we want to accentuate the positive we are doing. Rick emailed this to me only days ago: "BTW, I posted your info regarding the National Geographic Photo



Exhibit signs are part of a face lift for the BCFC that includes landscaping and grounds upgrades and new grand entrance signage.

Shoot on G+, Facebook, and Twitter. Within G+, I sent it (again) to your email distribution list, so they can add your G+ BCFC page to their circles. Yesterday, I added you to 150 directories which will take up to 90 days to get populated. Now, we need to get the word out for your Thanksgiving Rendezvous so I can publish it on the same channels." I got it! Now I am beginning to understand this new language. You may reach him at www.wsiebizsolutions.net.

BCFC decided to develop a marketing strategy with simplicity in mind. We identified the four simple requirements to this plan:

- 1) Timeline,
- 2) Milestones,
- 3) Budget, and
- 4) Resources.

We also revisited our mission/vision statements and are adding to promote Florida Wildlife Treasures to the concept. Our first timeline was easy - from now until the end of the year. We identified two milestones: face lift of the facility and upgrade web/internet presence. Budget: \$2,000 or less. Resources: board members, volunteers and special friends! The web/internet presence upgrade is pretty much what you have read previously. The face lift was decided to have three outcomes:

- Upgrade our entrance to be more welcoming and visitor friendly,
- Upgrade our exhibit signage,

and

- Landscaping and grounds upgrades for ambiance, safety, and security.

We secured signage and went to work. We are landscaping, clearing and fixing issue areas.

Lastly, the BCFC Board will meet after the holidays to discuss one-, three- and five-year plans. It will involve ecotourism, marketing, advertising, goals, benchmarks, and a growth strategy. As Founder/Director of BCFC, I plan to involve my group to have more "ownership" in our cause.

Said another way, although no one does it as well as I do it, I must trust our volunteers and learn to delegate responsibility!

Keeping it real – the FCF's membership consists of hundreds of sanctuaries, exhibitors, and breeders worldwide. We think it may be time for us to unify in such a fashion to enable us to "stay on message" by linking our social profiles and websites. We continue to spend too much time as individuals, combating the negative campaigns launched against our membership, when we should be focusing on all of the positive we are doing. Please give some thought to joining with us to dock up our websites as we co-promote!

Bottom line: Content, content, content. We have to drive our message home and control it across all channels. We want to claim and optimize our social profiles. We are now in front of our audience in more and more ways and places.

*2014 FCF Convention is being held in
Scottsdale, Arizona!*

Thursday, June 19, through Saturday, June 21

**Basic Wild/Exotic Feline Husbandry Course and Wildlife
Conservation Educators Course ~ Wednesday, June 18**

*Reserve your vacation time now and watch for flight specials to
Phoenix Sky Harbor Airport (PHX)!*

This is it! Finally, the FCF heads west.

**All your requests have not fallen on deaf ears and we are happy
to announce what promises to be one of the best conventions ever!**

**FCF Convention headquarters for 2014 is the Scottsdale Cottonwoods Resort & Suites
Hotel, 6160 North Scottsdale Road, Scottsdale, Arizona.**

Our special FCF room rate is only \$82 double occupancy. Come early, stay late, and take in the other great attractions, including the Wildlife World Zoo and Phoenix Zoo. Cottonwoods welcomes our feline friends under 30 pounds. Call 480-991-1414 to reserve your room at the special FCF rate, which includes breakfast for two.

Join us as we gather at this peaceful, green, 25-acre retreat tucked into the Sonoran Desert. It's an inviting oasis featuring exotic desert flora, clean crisp air, and breathtaking Camelback Mountain views. Cottonwoods is designed for ultimate comfort and supreme relaxation including beautifully manicured grounds, two swimming pools, tennis courts, putting greens, and nature trail.

Our Cottonwood's Tucson Casita Suites are 485 square feet of living area with sleeper sofa, luxury plush-top mattresses, upgraded linen packages, mini-refrigerator, high speed internet, and an outdoor dining patio to enjoy the peaceful feeling of the resort.

On Friday, the FCF has arranged for a very special field trip to Out of Africa Park, Camp Verde. We'll be getting the royal treatment as we tour this one-of-a-kind animal attraction built on love, mutual respect, and understanding between animal and man.

Read about Out of Africa Park in this *Journal* to learn why you do NOT want to miss this exciting Convention.



Call it wild, call it crazy, but don't call it a zoo!



Curt LoGiudice and his tiger educational ambassador Lex pose. Dana Heisler photographed the pair for Jacksonville's Legacy of Leaders, which recently honored Curt and the Catty Shack Ranch and Wildlife Sanctuary.



IMOS messes with Doug Kildsig's hair. Doug recently fell ill, but has thankfully returned to his normal spirits. Photo by Willa Kildsig.

Your Best Shots



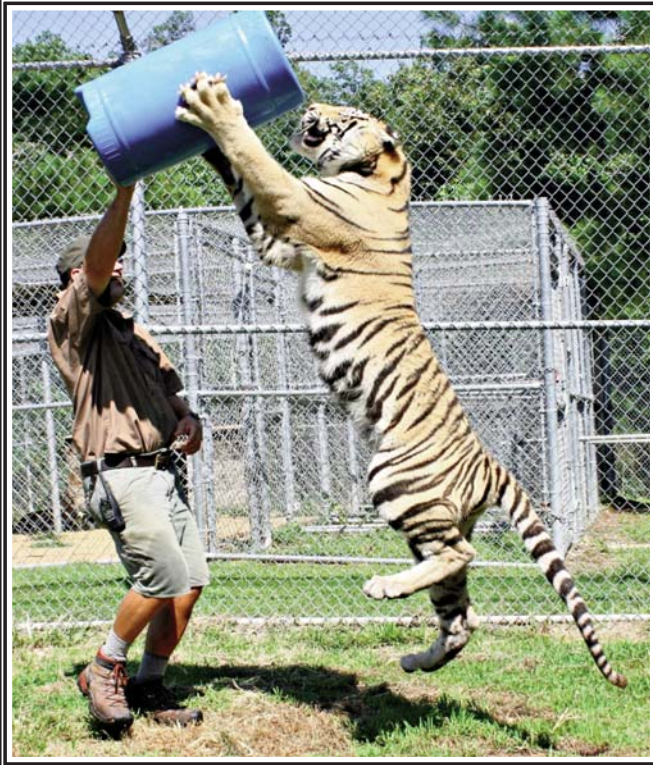
Self portrait of Laura Walker and Sampson Canada lynx sharing a hug.



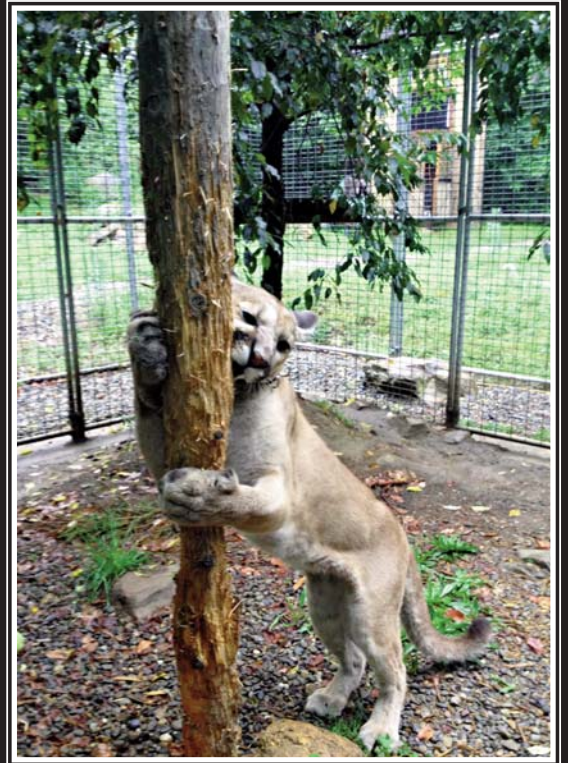
Jungle Josh Remenar and lion cub Delila at Branson's Promised Land Zoo. Photo by Remenar.



IMOS
rned to good



Wilbur McCauley exercises Indian, the Bengal tiger, at Tigers for Tomorrow Exotic Animal Preserve. Photo by Susan Steffens.



Takoda, a two and a half year old cougar, is wearing out his scratching log at Ghost Cat Habitat. Photo by Craig Derosa.



h at
y Laura



Olivia the melanistic Geoffroy's kitten is very smart. She comes when called and often leaps into her owner's arms! Photo by Chris Berry.



Bluebell, a six week old spotted Geoffroy's kitten, stirred a video sensation on the Geoffroy's Facebook page with her super cuteness. Photo by Lainie Guidry.

Catsitting and Enrichment

Photos and article by Tina Bayer

Exotic Feline Cat Sitter, Wildcat Companion, or Feline Babysitter, whatever you want to call it, I can add that title to my resume. My life has changed dramatically in the last few months, all due to the convention in Nashville.

My first wildcat petsitting job was a result of geographical coincidence. Since the convention, I have kept in very close touch with Kurt and Patti Beckelman in

cats. I spent a lot of time photographing them and being comforted by their presence. I did everything the exact way Kurt told me to, and I did nothing until Kurt said it was okay. I didn't quite realize that Kurt and Patti were impressed with my interactions with the cats and how the cats reacted to me. My interaction with Hunter would not be believed, except



Serval Bug finds that celery stalks are incredibly stimulating. Recommended by a fellow exotic animal owner, Tina discovered that every cat loved it.

Broken Arrow, Oklahoma. I live in Cincinnati, Ohio. At the end of August, a coworker was taking a bus to Shawnee, Oklahoma, to pick up a car from his father and drive it back here to Cincinnati. Where my friend was going was only about an hour away from the Beckelmans, so I asked if I could tag along.

I had an amazing time with the Beckelmans and their cats. Amadeus was the first leopard I had ever seen in person. He is so playful. "Where's Ama?" is one of his favorite games. I really felt the power and strength of a leopard, in his legs and paws, when we were playing footsies.

Hunter the Geoffroy's cat quickly became my sweet, favorite baby (against all logic, because of his reputation). I took a milk crate with me from enclosure to enclosure, sitting and talking to the

that I have video of it all.

A few weeks after returning home, I received a phone call from Kurt, asking if I would be interested in coming back out to Oklahoma in October, to catsit while he and Patti went out of town. I was baffled and honored by the offer. They trusted me with their babies! Getting paid to play with the cats (to me, caring for them is play, not work). Seriously, how do you turn that down? No way would I say anything other than, "OMG, YES!"

The cats in my sole care were: bobcats Bud, Zara, and Ricco; serval Bug; Geoffroy's cats Hunter and Ahniwake; and African leopard Amadeus. I



Geoffroy's cat Hunter engaged in adorable play when given a fleece snake toy. Video footage of his antics can be seen on FCF's Facebook page.



Rico bobcat is also intrigued with the scent, and crunchy tactile stimulation of fresh stalks of celery.

would have my hands full, because the menagerie also included six lemurs, a raccoon, a skunk, a coati, many dogs, and



Tools of the trade. An assortment of scents went into the creation of enrichment toys for the cats to investigate and play with.

domestic cats. We do not want to discuss the donkeys, but I now understand where the expressions “pain in the ass” and “stubborn as a mule” come from!

Since this was going to be a much longer visit, I wanted to experiment with play and scent enrichment. I wanted to try everything I heard wildcats were attracted to. In other words, I was going to spoil the cats rotten!

I immediately began the preparations. I wanted to take spice bags, essential oils, and toys out with me to try. I was going to make the spice bags, pouches, by hand, so I had to ask around about what materials would be safe. I was advised to use burlap (sisal), unbleached muslin, and a denim-like drill cloth. It was very helpful, as my mother works in a fabric store, and I bought a lot of material since I needed to experiment with appropriate materials and sizes. I buy catnip pouches about the size of a credit card for my domestic cats, so I used that as a starting size base. I got the sewing machine out and got to work. I spent many hours making pouches of different sizes and strengths. I did that because what would be safe and appropriate for a Geoffroy's may be too easily swallowed and unsafe for a serval.

I went through all my accumulated reports, books, and notes to see what the

most cat-attractive spices were. I bought many different spices and raided the kitchen pantry. (You might have a good amount of fine feline entertainment right in your own kitchen, too!) After the pouches were made, my little niece helped me stuff them, and then I sewed the final side closed. I made spice pouches with ground cinnamon, cinnamon sticks, dried catnip enhanced with catnip essential oil, parsley, mint leaves (dry and also enhanced with peppermint essential oil), whole allspice, and Old Bay seasoning. Hey, variety is the spice of life, even for cats! I took other spices with me, but I ended up having so much stuff I didn't get to try them all. That calls for another trip to Okla-

homa.

Since scent is such a big part of a cat's behavior and environment, I wanted to also try some essential oils. During my first visit in August, I did take and try a few oils with Bug the serval. I sprayed diluted oils onto empty toilet paper and paper towel rolls. I tried lavender, a mint, and Obsession cologne. I even rubbed a roll over my arms and in the armpits. (Don't laugh; this is the one she preferred most!) This time, I wanted to try catnip and valerian root essential oils. I diluted them with distilled water at a concentration of two ounces of water with about 10-20 drops of oil in a spray bottle.

Once I arrived at Kurt's, I went through the feeding routine again with him. I video recorded everything so I could refer back if needed. I was confident I could safely feed and care for the cats. I took Kurt's

instructions very seriously and applied what I learned in the husbandry course, since I would be entering some enclosures to feed. Never take your eyes off the cat was stamped in my head. If the cat was too aggressively waiting for food, I varied my approach and improvised. Since cats are creatures of habit, I chose to feed a little earlier than usual, only by a half hour to one hour. This successfully decreased the food anticipation excitement and aggression. All feedings went flawlessly smooth.

Now came the play. Since wild cats can bond very deeply with their owners, I was a little worried about separation anxiety. This is another reason I wanted to concentrate heavily on enrichment. I thought it might relieve some behavioral stress due to Kurt and Patti's absence. Ricco the bobcat was the only cat that seemed distressed. He would not really participate with anything I offered. I felt bad and tried everything. As long as he was eating and drinking and not chewing his fur out, though, I wasn't too worried about him. I kept talking to him and didn't give up on the enrichment.



Tina's niece Maeleigh joined her to make toys for the cats. Teaching the next generation to care about wildcats is very important to Tina.



Hunter gets excited over a pouch of dried catnip.

I had two cameras going to video record and photograph every offering and reaction. So here is what happened...

I read in a very old *FCF Journal* article that Geoffroy's cats love leather. I bought some leather cord for Hunter. We played dangle the cord and tug of war. I also brought some fleece snake toys that a friend makes. They are about 13 inches long, one and a half inches wide, and have rolled fleece inside, no type of stuffing or

have a very strange bond that has shocked everyone. He usually lunges viciously at anyone who comes near his enclosure and is very aggressive. For some odd reason he has decided he loves me and is



Amadeus the black leopard did not get the scent pouches like the smaller cats, but did enjoy celery and playing "Where's Ama?" with Tina.

batting. My domestics love them, so I thought some of Kurt's cats might like them, too. I decided the snakes might only be safe for the Geoffroy's, so Hunter was the only one I gave them to. Hunter's reaction is on video and posted on the FCF Facebook group and on my Facebook page. It is two minutes of absolutely adorable play. The snake allowed him to engage in natural predatory behavior. If you want to some cuteness overload, check out the video. Hunter and I

and not pose any choking or swallowing hazards. The first pouch contained ginger powder and was offered to Bug, and she rubbed and rolled on it as if in olfactory heaven.

Bobcats Bud and Zara were given pouches that contained mint leaves enhanced with peppermint essential oil. They sniffed and ran like hell. I think I used too much peppermint oil. Back to the revision board on that one.

I made pouches of dried catnip moistened with a few drops of catnip essential oil. That was another funky flop, so I offered the straight dried catnip you can buy at any pet store. Amadeus and the bobcats had no interest; they must have thought it was some bad schwag. Hunter had a delayed reaction, rolling around by it adorably later. Bug had the strongest reaction rolling in it, possible intervention now needed. Fresh catnip might be more



Zara bobcat was stimulated by the smell of cinnamon sticks.

so sweet and playful with me. We had so much fun and I was told that after I left, he became depressed and wouldn't come out of his house for days, not even to attack Kurt. I have to mail him some more toys with my scent on them.

All pouches were inspected by Kurt before he left. I wanted him to make sure he thought they would be safe, durability wise,

attractive.

The diluted catnip essential oil sprayed on paper towel rolls was a bit more engaging. Zara bobcat liked her roll on top of her house near the top of the enclosure, while Bud preferred the ground. Who is the top cat there, I wonder?

Cinnamon was a big hit. I made pouches of ground cinnamon, but I didn't quite like it, so I bought a big bag of cinnamon sticks. I placed a handful in each pouch and sewed them closed. The sticks stimulated the olfactory response and the texture was interesting. Hunter, Bug, Zara, and Bud definitely hit the like button for the cinnamon sticks.

The valerian root essential oil also

made the greatest hits list. I sprayed it, diluted, on paper towel rolls and Hunter and Zara both went cuckoo for cocoa puffs.

The biggest hit sounds very odd, but was recommended by a fellow exotic cat owner. She told me to give the cats celery stalks. Celery?! Seriously?! It was the most engaging reaction-generating item I passed out. All cats loved it. Amadeus the leopard was even rolling around on his back like a kitten, holding it in his paws.

Amadeus, being a large leopard, did not get pouches like the other cats did. Can you imagine making a catnip pouch the size of a throw pillow? That's a lot of catnip and I am sure I would get some strange looks at the store buying that much. I offered him dried catnip straight on the ground and straight cinnamon sticks, but he didn't seem interested. So we played a lot of "Where's Ama?"

Ahni the Geoffroy's cat is kept in the bedroom I was sleeping in. Since she did a lot of hissing and growling, I took that as a sign she thought my presence was an unwelcome invasion of her territory. I tried to lure her into play with some fishing pole-type toys that would allow her to play at her safe comfort distance. It didn't work, but I did leave catnip pouches and a snake toy out that she could play with while I wasn't in the room.

While out in Oklahoma, I spent time volunteering at Safari's Sanctuary, where Kurt also volunteers. I logged some good time working with the cats there. I decided they needed some of my special fun, too.

I took the valerian spray with me one day and shared it with some cats. I sprayed it on one tiger's boomer ball and watched as she tried to roll with it and on it. The bobcats and serval had various items in their enclosure sprayed with it and the cats smelled and rubbed away.

The Canada lynx Yeti was the funniest. The oil was sprayed on a log in her enclosure. I recorded and laughed, because she was so excited her back leg started kicking in the air like a dog does when he gets a good scratch. Another day I took some celery in to Yeti. I placed it on her platform by her house. She definitely enjoyed it. I stayed in there watching and recording as she "stalked" the celery. I think she liked the valerian better though.

I have all my offerings and reactions documented by a couple thousand pictures and I don't know how many videos. This



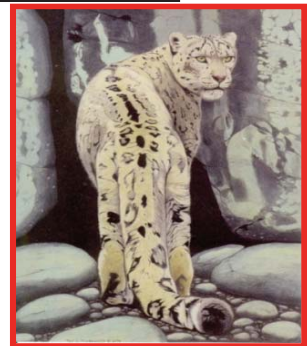
Valerian spray was a big hit with Yeti Canada lynx at Safari's Sanctuary. Sprayed on a log in her enclosure it stimulated her to kick her back leg like a dog being scratched.

was a cat sitting JOB. It sure didn't feel like work to me. I cannot wait to do it again! It was as enriching for me as it was for the cats. I don't know who had more fun, me or the cats... I really think it was me.

FCF NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



Meet the Wildcat Safety Net Challenge!



FCF granted funds to transport 28 tigers to Turpentine Creek

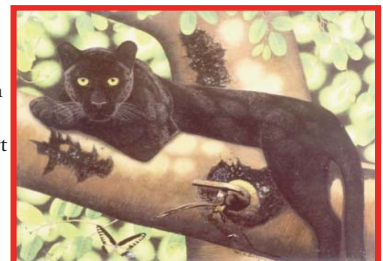
Wildlife Refuge where these big cats have a secure retirement home to live out their golden years.

Now we need to refresh our funding so FCF can help transport more cats when emergencies arise.

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 at 479-394-5235 to use your credit card and support this worthy cause.

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



Mocha

By Chuck Bunnell

A small domestic cat entered our cougar's enclosure and she ate part of the cat, burying the rest for me to find. It was not a pretty sight.

Our cougar, Mocha, seemed fine for a few days. On the third day after eating the cat, she started getting very lazy. She would not eat, drink water, or play. There were no beautiful, happy cougar noises. On the fourth day, she could barely sit up.

I called Doc Antle of T.I.G.E.R.S. and then our veterinarian. I got antibiotics, syringes, and lots of great information. I learned how to take a cougar's temperature and give shots, among other valuable things.

Mocha's temperature reached 103°F,



Mocha the cougar is a happy, healthy 15-year-old.



Large gap between the gate pole and the pole where the gate latches to the pole leave room for unwelcome visitors.

which is next to coma and death. By the fifth day, Mocha could barely open her eyes. She could not move from a prone position. I could give her shots and she did not even flinch. I was told to be prepared for the worst, but there is no such thing as preparing for the death of your

only exotic animal. My girl was only four years old and it was not fair that she was going to die so young.

I stayed with her in her pen for three days and nights and kept ice-cold towels on her to keep her body temperature down. I continued giving her shots every 12 hours and taking her temperature every 12 hours. Finally, after a week, she held her head up and made a noise. She was coming back to me! It took another couple of days before Mocha was her normal, happy self, purring and making the beautiful cougar noises again.

She and I are both very lucky to have been able to spend the rest of her life

together. She was only four years old when this happened. Today she is just over 15 years old and is the happiest cougar. She still always purrs and talks like crazy. I can never forget how bad those days were thinking she was going to die. It still breaks my heart.

Of course, I "fixed" the compound so animals cannot get in, with the exception of mice and birds. Here are some hints for securing your compound from smaller animals.

First off, make sure your enclosure is tight enough that small house cats or other small animals cannot get in. The easiest place for an animal to enter the enclosure is usually where the gate closes. This is because there is usually a large gap between the gate pole and the pole where the gate latches to the pole. The fix is simple. Add another pole between them! Anywhere else you see a gap, close it off either with a pole or with more chain link.



The fix is simple; add another pole.



Attach extra pole with clamps and fill in spaces large enough for animals to enter.

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Wildlife Conservation Expo 2013

By Chris Tromborg

On Saturday, October 12, the Wildlife Conservation Network held its annual conservation event at the Mission Bay campus of the University of California in San Francisco. Scores of conservation organizations were represented, including many concerned with the conservation of felines. A partial list of these includes the Wildlife Conservation Society, Felidae, the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Cheetah Conservation Kenya, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, the Snow Leopard Trust, the Snow Leopard Conservancy, Niassa

ed 35,000. Recent estimates place that number closer to 18,000. Cheetahs, always on the edge, are holding their own relative to lions and tigers. Snow leopard numbers are difficult to estimate, with the level of turmoil in Afghanistan and Pakistan. In August of this year, the Small Cat Alliance held a



Dr. James Sanderson of FCF and The Small Cat Alliance discusses the evils of using palm oil with Dr. Chris Tromborg of FCF and MLF.



FCF member Chris Tromborg stands at the FCF table waiting to inform others about the FCF vision of the future of felines.

Lion Conservation, the Andean Cat Alliance, the Small Cat Alliance, the Puma Project, the Mountain Lion Foundation, and the Feline Conservation Federation. The FCF was represented at the expo by Dr. James Sanderson, founder of the Small Cat Alliance, and Dr. Chris Tromborg, both FCF board members. This annual expo allows those involved in wildlife conservation to gather together and compare notes about successes and failures of the past year. It provides conservationists with an opportunity to exchange ideas about tactics and procedures that can be employed in attempts to stem a seemingly inevitable tide of imminent extinctions.

The general news for animal conservation around the world is as troubling as ever. In March of this year, the Niassa Lion Research Project stated that lion numbers in South Saharan Africa exceed-

presentation where- in the status of the bobcat in the United States, and especially in California, was stated to be relatively secure. Unfortunately, bobcat fur has suddenly become popular in China, and bobcat bone is now being used to supplement the declining supply of tiger bone in

traditional Chinese medicine. This is also a major problem for African lions, as their bones are also being used to supplement the increasingly difficult to obtain tiger bone in this enterprise. FCF member Dr. Chris Tromborg, also a board member of the Mountain Lion Foundation, suspects that cougars will be next on this menu of misguided medicine.

The FCF table was located near good company, in a row of tables including those for Felidae, the Puma Project, and the Mountain Lion Foundation. It was directly adjacent to a table from the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. This

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.

James Battista – Intermediate

Rebecca Krebs – 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

table displayed confiscated wildlife parts and products, including two tiger skins, a jaguar skin, a complete head and skin of a clouded leopard, a skull from a Siberian bear, a skull from an orangutan, some elephant teeth, a rhino horn, and other pieces of formerly living beings. There was not enough room on the table for the leopard skins or other cat parts. Surprisingly, all of this material was confiscated in San Francisco, a city generally regarded as being friendly to wildlife. The situation is probably worse in other places.

It should be noted that the officers of the U.S. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife were at the expo on their own time, since many of the interdiction and



The U.S.D.F.W. table displays the wages of sin, with a tiger skin, a jaguar skin, and the full skin of a clouded leopard.

prosecution activities of U.S.D.F.W. have been profoundly disrupted by the government shut down. The hamstringing of the government's conservation efforts has been a boon to many of the opponents of wildlife conservation, especially those who are trafficking in wildlife parts and

products.

The FCF's message was well received. All of our sample brochures, Journals, and DVDs were taken by visitors at the FCF table. The FCF message was made more effective by the location of its table, directly adjacent to that of the DFW table with its disturbing evidence of the unbridled destruction of cats in the wild. The importance of captive conservation, alternate gene pools, and the absolute necessity of enhancing education with animal ambassadors became self-evident as visitors looked from the living captive felines at the FCF table to the deceased remnants of former felines at the DFW table.

Altogether, it was a productive event. The FCF will continue its conservation efforts and will present our view of conservation at next year's Wildlife Conservation Expo.



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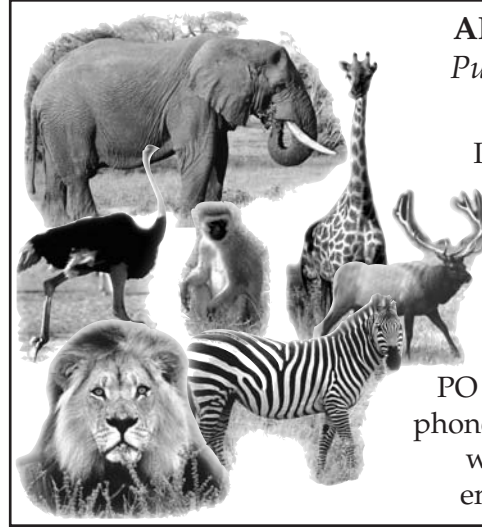
FCF Education Committee Would Love Your Help!

By Kim Barker

Our Education Committee is broken down into two sections: the Marketing Department and the Resources Department. The Marketing Department is led by Lauren Bean, and its main focus is marketing our educational items to our members, selling products in order to raise funds for our printed educational materials, and recruiting new members. Lauren wrote an article in the last *Journal* giving you an update on the marketing projects her department is working on. The Resources Department is led by me, Kim Barker. The main focus of this department is to provide educational resources for our members to use in their studies, teaching, shows, etc.

Here is an update on the Resources projects we are currently working on.

We have been working with Fernando Vidal, from Chile, and Jim Sanderson on a Guigna Fact Sheet. Fernando and Jim have given the FCF exclusive permission to use this fact sheet. We will be using the information from this sheet to update the



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Guigna Species Fact Sheet in the Youth Section of our website.

I have been creating tri-fold informational boards for the Conservators' Center. This is a visual aid with pictures and educational information on animals that go out into the community to museums, schools, and special events. I plan to offer

these to FCF members, who could use this information as a tool and, in some cases, to help answer questions when there are lots of visitors and not enough staff to answer a group's questions. This is a custom product on the species you want. The design can also be very eye-catching to passersby and draw attention to your organization. This can be used as an extra resource for your staff and volunteers when answering questions from the public.

Boards go into

a little more detail than most people will ask for, and visitors hopefully walk away with a greater understanding of an animal they may have never heard of before that day. We hope one day to be able to mass produce these types of boards, but we have found that including pictures of animals that people are going to meet on their visit to our facility helps them to connect even more. There is also an extensive amount of research and planning that goes into each board. My process of creating one board takes weeks, sometimes months, so unfortunately I cannot take every request to create one. I will, however, be happy to consult with folks wanting to create some for their site if they cannot wait for me to make one for them. AND, as the species information sheets get completed, there will be a plethora of information to include on your board. Materials for the boards are not particularly special, depending upon how elaborate you want your board, but they can get pricey. Most everything can be found at a craft or office supply store (Michaels, Office Depot, etc.). I use actual photographs on my boards that can be developed at any photo processing center. Just remember, if the photograph is not yours and is not from an open source, you may be required to obtain permission to use it depending on copyright laws. Even if you know the person who took the picture and it is not copyrighted, it is always a good idea, and polite, to ask them if you may use it. If you want to start creating your own tri-folds, here are the materials

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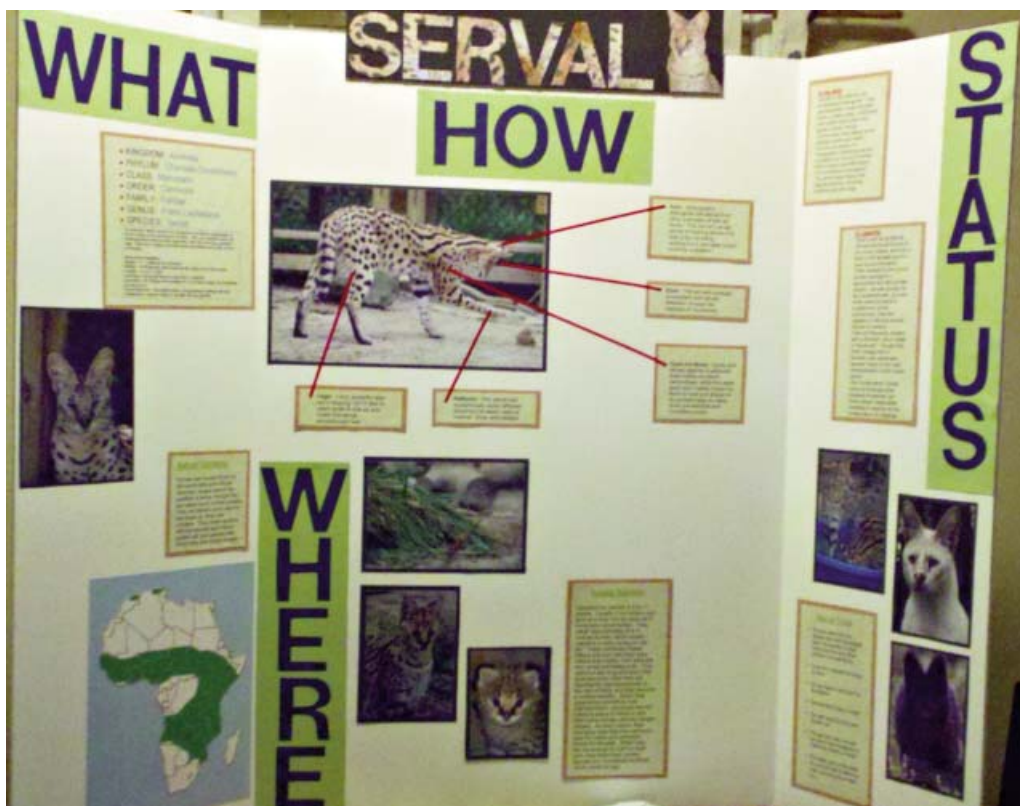
Serval Board: The title at the top center is a balsa board covered with thin foam. This is glued on. In cases where the name goes across the entire centerpiece, the wood title board is Velcro on the back and top of the board for easy removal. The picture of the serval and the letters spelling "serval" are a piece of felt that had pictures ironed onto it, which were then cut out. This was a style decision on my part.

you will definitely need:

- A foam core tri-fold board (approximately \$16 at craft or office supply store)
- Multi-colored construction/scrap book paper (based on color scheme you want to use)
- three-foot balsa wood slab (as title board)
- Stencils for larger letters if you want to create your own
- Stick on letters for smaller lettering needs
- Photos
- Ruler
- Scissors
- Cutting mat
- X-acto knife
- Craft glue
- Access to a word processing program (MS Word, for example) and printing
- A little creativity and imagination

A new project that we are starting to work on is the species trading card project. Our goal is to have an inexpensive takeaway item for young people (and the young at heart) as a reminder of the animals they have learned about. We are currently researching a few companies that offer good quality trading card options at relatively affordable prices. There will be more to come as we pilot this and get feedback on the effectiveness (both in cost and the public response) of the cards.

We have so many great ideas for resources that we would like to offer to our members, but unfortunately, with only a few people helping out, we cannot get through them all. We would love to hear from fellow members! If you have any resource ideas for us to add to our list or if you want to volunteer on this committee, please email me at kbarker2@triad.rr.com.



Even if you can only give two hours of your time a month, it would be greatly appreciated!

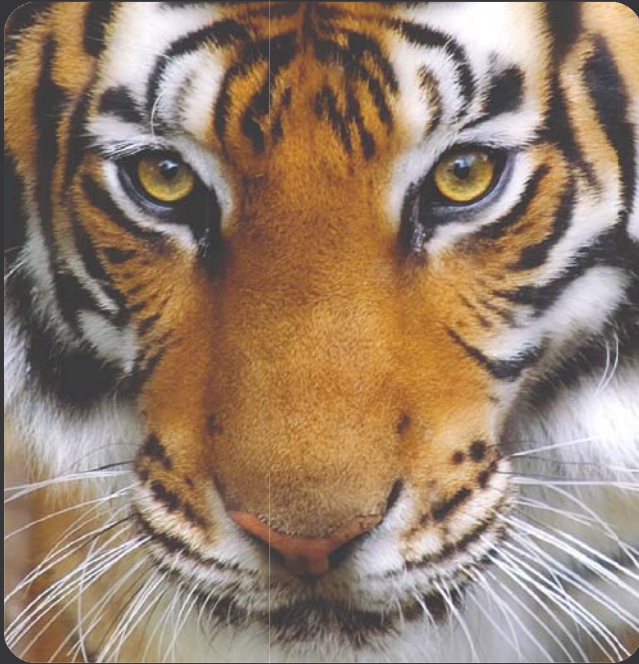
In the next *Journal*, Amy Flory, head of the *Youth Newsletter*, will write an article updating you on her newsletter projects.

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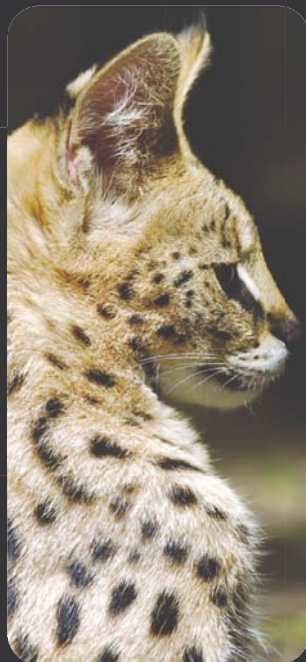


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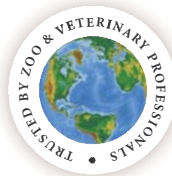


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Enrichment 101

By Thunder, the Bobcat

I am the super macho, 30-pound house cat with well-trained butlers. I am only four years old and have many more birthdays to come. In the meantime, I have these enrichment ideas to share about me and my peeps (they think they are my masters). I have a feeding mom and a napping dad. They have adjusted well to my training, but have more to learn. Our morning routine starts with getting into the bedroom and picking up after them. All pieces of Kleenex must be washed in the toilet before I begin any activities of pleasure. Sometimes I even confiscate the roll of toilet paper from the hiding places and give it a bath. I am really good at bathing things and must admit there is not much left when I get done. On the other hand, my doggie toys hold up much better, and I make good use of the recycling program on them. I wash them in the toilet, play with them, get them dirty, and repeat. Now, that can take lots of time and be exhausting, but there are other ways for me to entertain my peeps. For example, I love cotton sheets. The Egyptian, softer cotton is the best. They are fun to spin out on, race under the blankets and pillows, and just have a “ripping” good old time. My peeps even tap on my claws with proud parenting smiles, meaning I am doing a good job of entertaining them with this activity. Now, if I get all of the



My entertainment guru, Chris Costa. I have her wrapped around my tail and it is my job to entertain her when she visits. I will bring her my favorite toy, the toilet brush, and let her practice throwing it. I am not ready for her to try out for the big leagues, even though she is the bestest. Photo by Roger Standfield.

above activities squeezed into one morning, I have had a good workout and need to take this athletic body of mine down the hall for a good cooling off period. This gives me time to think of the next enrichment program for them.

Some mornings, my mom butler will toss one of my toilet brushes down the hallway. I love pushing it away from her soccer ball style and making her come get it to toss the other way. Since my legs are shorter and move faster, I must admit I am huffing and puffing by the time I wear her out, but she is real good at making it go in different directions so I can get it further away from her. After she leaves for work, I will sometimes take a nap with the dad butler. He makes a good bed bunkie and I give him about half of the bed. This allows me to stretch this beautiful spotted belly out, sometimes Jesus style. They have too many pillows on the bed and sometimes I will take one. I like to pretend it is my woman and rough it up a little. I can bite it, talk to it, and move it around the house.

I am a red meat man. When my feeding butler gets home, she takes care of me or I work on retraining her. I am a happy camper with deer meat. If she tries to feed me some of that chicken, I will do things. I learned how to open the fridge to see if there is anything good to eat hiding in there and will sometimes check on Izabella, the Canadian, to see if she has anything interesting to eat. I eat anything I can until I get a real good red meat meal.

I have favorites for treats. Ham is at the top of the list. I love that salty flavor and will fight for the whole bag. Sometimes my afternoon butler will sneak a little plain yogurt or cottage cheese to me. If the butler is on his best behavior, I will get a chicken neck or gizzard snack before the feeding butler comes home. My last activity of the day is being a super macho porch kitty. I like to watch the nightlife after



Toilets are good for drinking, washing “stuff” in, and pit stops. They are the most useful creation my butlers have in the house. Photo by Roger Standfield.

eating and reminding all the little domestics that I am home. If they come close, I will try to play with them. Most of them, however, shake in their paws and stay away from the porch. I have all of them in their place, and my butlers need not bother with giving them attention. The butlers do not have time to waste on this chore.

Other activities I squeeze into my busy day, at my leisure, include playing with the whiffle ball at 5 or 6 am to remind my peeps that they are alive and have made it through the night. They are welcome to steal. I eat anything I can until I get a real good red meat meal. I also like to let someone brush me. It keeps all my hair straight so I do not have to wash it, dry it, curl it, or spray it. I can look good with their hard work, not mine.

Then there are the bonding moments. I like to give my feeding butler a workout and let her drape me over her shoulder or jump on her back when she is leaning over. She needs those muscles to get me more deer meat and it is my job to help her. The biggest bonding moment is when my butlers are giving each other a hug; I must get in the middle for mine. They must have forgotten about me and a group hug is an efficient way for me to remind them that I exist. I am sure with my great organizational skills I may have forgotten some of the training I have given them for their enrichment, but hopefully you get the picture. Leah & Bobby Aufill.

A Short Primer on Kidney Failure in Cats

By Lynn Culver

Kidney failure can be either acute or chronic. Acute kidney failure occurs suddenly and is marked by a sudden decline in kidney function. Chronic kidney failure is a progressive or continuous deterioration of kidney function. Symptoms of chronic kidney disease may not develop until very little kidney function remains.

Acute kidney failure is reversible and, therefore, it can be cured. Conversely, chronic renal failure is irreversible. In human medicine, renal failure is treated with dialysis or a kidney transplant, but in animals, especially wild felines, this is not practical.

Inside the kidney are nephrons that regulate electrolytes and process waste, which is essential for a cat's digestive health. When these nephrons disappear, the cat is in kidney failure. Symptoms

include problems eating, drinking, digesting, and going to the bathroom.

Creatinine is a chemical waste molecule that is generated from muscle metabolism. The kidneys filter out most of the creatinine and dispose of it in the urine. As the kidneys become impaired for any reason, the creatinine level in the blood will rise due to poor clearance of creatinine by the kidneys.

Blood urea nitrogen (BUN) level is another indicator of kidney function. Urea nitrogen is a waste product that is excreted by cells when they break down protein. The kidneys are designed to filter this waste product out of the blood and pass it into the urine. This blood test will be high when the kidneys are not working properly.

Chronic kidney disease can increase levels of phosphates in the blood (hyperphosphatemia). This is because the kidneys cannot adequately filter out phos-

phorus, so it builds up in the blood. High phosphate levels can cause calcium and phosphorus to form deposits in the heart, lungs, joints, and skin, which affect organ functioning.

As toxins begin to build up in the bloodstream, the feline may begin to show signs of nausea, stomach irritation, and other digestive problems. Kidney failure contributes to weakness and a lack of energy. Cats suffering from end-stage kidney failure are lethargic or depressed. In very serious cases, a cat may become hypothermic and then fall into a coma-like state. Finally, these cats may suffer from convulsions or seizures due to a build-up of calcium and other substances which are normally filtered from the kidneys. As the toxins affect the internal organs and nervous system and reach the brain, seizures may result.

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Aben's Story

By Lynn Culver

I get calls from cat owners asking for medical advice. I am not a veterinarian. I have owned a variety of wild cat species for more than two decades, and that does give me a lot of personal experience to draw upon. I also enjoy watching medical dramas on TV, like *Mystery Diagnosis*, *True Stories of the ER*, and *Dr. G Medical Examiner*. Biology in humans and animals is similar, and there is always something to learn about how organs work or the pathology of diseases, causes of death, and what antibiotics treat what problems.

When I get a phone call from someone, of course I advise that they seek veterinary assistance and counsel them as best I can. Often, that means sharing anecdotal stories of similar situations experienced by me or stories of other owner's cats. With so many cats and so many years, I have had my share of experience with pneumonia, diarrhea, coccidia, campylobacter and fungal infections, intestinal blockages, stomach ulcers, infections, liver and renal failures, and various forms of cancer. Each illness is a learning opportunity, and each death, however tragic, carries with it an opportunity to expand my understanding and share lessons learned with others.

For instance, a cat not eating can be so many things. Since our cats cannot talk, we have to be careful observers of behavior and body language. We have to pick up as many clues as we can to help our vet diagnose and cure the cat. Is there any vomit in the enclosure? What does the poop look like? Is the cat's behavior normal, or is he sluggish? Has he suddenly lost weight? What does his fur look like? What do his eyes look like? What is the entire history of the lack of appetite? How old is the cat? Is it dehydrated?

When someone calls with a sick cat asking for help, many times what I am doing is telling them stories of other sick cats with similar symptoms, then talking them into having a vet draw blood to hopefully diagnose the problem and counseling them on the best way to get their animal to their vet.

If a cat in question is between the ages of six and eight years, countless times I have told people of the possibility of liver or kidney illness. It seems that if a cat has a genetic predisposition to these failures,

it will happen around that age. And, I counsel people, if a cat is not predisposed, then chances are it will happen around the age of 15 or 16 years. Being an obligate carnivore is hard on both the liver and kidneys, making treatment of these organ failures problematic in a wild cat.

Over the weekend, my husband announced that something was wrong with Aben, our Canada lynx, and he suspected we needed to worm him and the other cats. It's fall and it is a good idea to worm before winter to keep the cats in the best shape for dealing with the stress of cold weather. But I was not that concerned and I did not take the early warning signs seriously. Aben was only seven years old. Since he lived with two other lynx, we had to confine him to a smaller enclosure to wait for a fecal deposit to bring to the vet for diagnosis. I decided to cover my bases and treat him with Baytril just in case he had an infection. He received a shot on Sunday and another on Monday.

Tuesday, I brought the fecal sample to the vet and was told they thought they saw campylobacter rods moving on the slide and that we needed to medicate Aben for this protozoan. I came home with enough azithromycin for Aben and his two female companions, Little Miss and Shelby, since they all shared the same enclosure and this is contagious. My experience with this protozoan is mainly with kittens and I have seen it be the cause of vomiting, reduced appetite, dehydration, and, definitely, loose stools. What was strange was that Aben's stool looked fine.

We began treatment, inserting a tiny piece of pill into a small bite of meat. Aben's appetite was falling, and each morning we removed some of the prior day's meal, but his eyes looked bright and he did not appear terribly ill. His poops looked normal, too. But then Friday afternoon, Bart and I both observed a serious decline in Aben's behavior. When I



Aben, like all Canada lynx, transforms into full glory in winter. Seasonal changes trigger a dramatic change in their coat, switching from the thin, brown color of summer to an incredibly thick, striking silver-gray in winter.

offered him a two-inch cube of chicken with the pill piece hidden inside, it took him five bites to finish it off. On the one hand, I wondered if he was testing it for the presence of a pill, though he did eat the pill, and, on the other hand, it looked more like he was having problems actually eating and chewing. It was then that I noticed a pill on the ground, which meant he had managed to spit out the pill from a previous day's medication. And I looked around further and noticed a scrape pile of leaves and found vomit. Did the vomit contain another day's pill or did that go with the pill piece on the ground? Aben should have received three days of a five day course of meds, plus the pill I just watched him eat, so he should have been feeling better. But if he spit one of the pills out and vomited the other, then that could explain why he was not recovering. I told Bart about my discovery and he came over to examine the situation and found another piece of a pill under the feeding station!

I gave Aben a careful once over and felt the telltale grit of flea dirt. I had been counseling another FCF member about flea anemia on a bobcat, so how ironic that I, too, might have the same problem with Aben. I dosed Aben with Advantage drops behind his neck. It was difficult to get down under such thick fur – fall weather brings on a dramatic change in lynx fur coats – they go from scruffy brown in the summer, to a thick, luxurious silver-blue pelt in the late fall and all winter. I offered Aben a normal portion of food, but had serious doubts he was going to eat dinner.

I went to bed concerned, but, as luck would have it, my vet and her office assistant had arranged to visit on Saturday. I figured I would turn this social call into an opportunity to draw blood and get a diagnosis. Saturday morning, we found Aben was much worse. He was on the floor of his cage and not getting up. Bart and I brought a carrier outside and I was able to just pull him into the carrier. Once inside our home, I put him inside a wire crate on a towel over a plastic heating pad. He was hypothermic and very dehydrated. I warmed up a bag of Lactated Ringers

solution and attached a drip line and began giving him fluids subcutaneously. Over the course of the day, his body temperature slowly returned to normal and he received 700 milliliters of fluid.

I wondered about the diagnosis – was it a protozoan infection bringing him down, or could it be a flea infestation causing anemia? Because he was in the house and there are also exotic kittens in the house, I did not want to risk fleas getting loose off of him. So I did something I deeply regret. I got some Adams flea spray and doubled up on his flea treatment just to be sure.

Turns out Lady Luck was not on my side, as the veterinarian got a farm call and did not come by with the assistant and her kids. Now it was a weekend, the clinics were closed, and I had no blood work and a very sick lynx on my hands. I did pop another piece of pill down his throat, gave him a shot of B complex, and another shot of Baytril, because I still was not confident of the diagnosis. He was warm, hydrated, and medicated, and I could do no more. He had no interest in food and no interest in water.

Sunday morning arrived and, to our

relief, Aben sat up in his crate and greeted Bart with a big lynx hello and a head bob. He did the same for me. He definitely seemed better, but certainly was not well. Aben drank from a cup of water I offered throughout the day. However, the warm chicken soup with ground turkey puree did not entice him to eat. At least he was drinking, but now I noticed he was ataxic. His muscles were weak and he was unsteady on his feet.

Over the course of the day, I gave him another 500 milliliters of Lactated Ringers solution. I brushed him to remove much of the flea dirt on his neck and at the bottom of his back and base of his tail so that his fur felt clean and healthy again. I kissed his head and whispered into his ears that we would make him well, and I hovered close by his side. Eventually, my constant meddling attention began to bother him and he sat up and staggered out of the crate. He found a big kitty litter box and sat in it, and I thought he would pee, but he did not. Then he staggered over to my computer desk and rested underneath it. Moving around was an improvement, but I was shocked at how weak and jerky his movements were. And



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the terrible fear crossed my mind that perhaps I had poisoned him with flea spray.

I returned Aben to the wire crate and got a warm, moist terry towel and thoroughly rubbed his spine to try to remove any of the flea spray from him. I soaked him down and then toweled it off. It was around 10:00 that night and I decided I had done everything I could, and he was stable and I was going to bed for the night. But in a matter of minutes, Bart called for help, as Aben was having a seizure! I flew out of bed and concluded that he must be poisoned from the flea spray and that stirring it up with the terry towel had only made matters worse. I had to soap him up and give him a full bath and get it off him.

Valium is an anti-seizure drug and fortunately I had some on hand. I injected Aben with two tenths of a cc and then another tenth of a cc before his seizure subsided. He was nearly comatose, and I drew a warm bath and brought him into the tub and held his head above the water and scrubbed his fur with baby shampoo. Plenty of flea dirt turned the water red and I figured I had made a difference. I toweled him off and dried him as best I could and returned him to the warmth of the heating pad and set up his fluid line again.

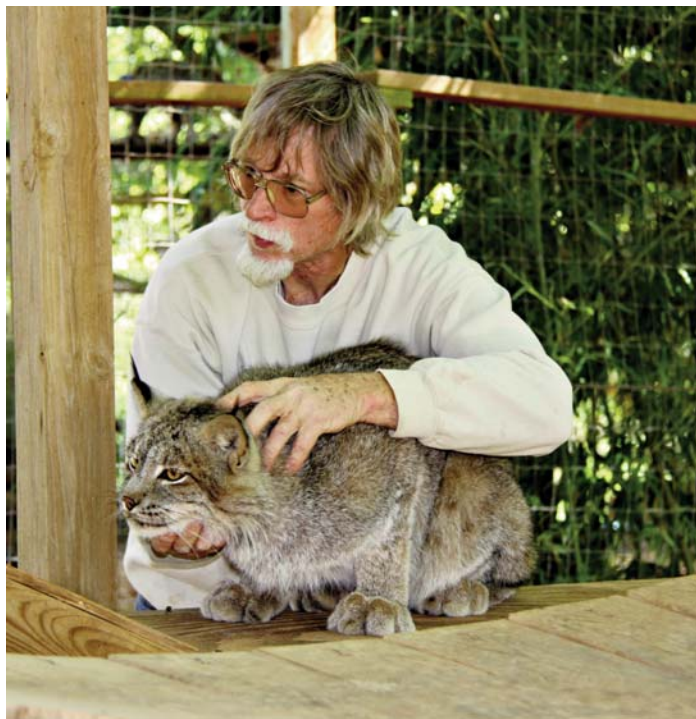
I debated about giving him some dextrose. Was he hypoglycemic from fasting? Would the benefits of dextrose outweigh the risks of giving it subcutaneously? Dextrose should only be administered through an IV line, as it can result in abscesses if given subcutaneously. But I have done it before and never had an abscess and I chose to take that risk at this point. I gave him 200 milliliters of Lactated Ringers Solution and 200 milliliters of 5% dextrose solution. As soon as I was done, Aben had another seizure! And, again, I administered another two tenths of a cc of valium to stop it. I was haunted by the thought that the flea spray was the culprit and I worried that I had failed to scrub him thoroughly enough. In a desperate effort to save my beloved lynx, I drew another warm bath and carried him to the tub and scrubbed him with baby shampoo and really soaped him up and rinsed him well. When he was toweled off and back on the heating pad, I made a bed beside him to watch over him through the night. He was finally sleeping soundly, with rhythmic breathing and muscles relaxed. I checked him every 20 minutes with a flashlight, unable to sleep myself. But after several hours, I decided he was stable and I left him for my own bed.

At 7:00 the next morning, I returned and he was still resting, but now he was twitching, to me another sign of flea spray poisoning. I considered that they might be tiny seizures and I treated him with another three tenths of a cc of valium, but it did nothing. I gave another three tenths of a cc of valium and still he was twitching. I called the vet to arrange to bring him in that morning and spoke to the assistant. She said the twitching was not seizures and valium would not help. She also said I should wash him with detergent to remove the flea spray. Of course, I was using a mild baby shampoo

and the commercial says use Dawn detergent to save wildlife! Still fixated on the flea spray poison theory, I once again drew another warm bath and this time scrubbed him with Dawn dish soap. The water no longer turned colors, as the two baths previously had cleaned him well. But I felt better. I knew we were treading in very dangerous waters, and I had to stabilize the patient and give all the supportive care possible to give his body time to heal from this poison.

Aben was seen by the veterinarian at the clinic. He was awake, eyes open, but not really responsive. His temperature was only 94.6 degrees, very hypothermic. At that body temperature, it is not surprising that he was nearly comatose. He was put on a heating pad and wrapped in warm towels from the dryer. The technician shaved his leg and drew the blood. While we waited for the machine to print out the results, a thorough examination was conducted. The vet could feel something crunchy inside him and could also feel some fecal material as well. He had been pooping, so I really didn't think it was a block, but maybe a tumor?? But the vet did not think so. Urine was expressed from his bladder for analysis.

The answer came back. Aben was not anemic, so we could probably rule out his flea infestation as the cause of his illness. Aben did not have a high white blood cell count either, so this was probably not an infection. But Aben was in renal failure. His BUN was greater than 130 – which is the maximum the machine registers, and his creatinine was also off the chart. Normal is less than 2.4, and my vet tells me he has seen creatinine levels in the high teens recorded on his machine, so while we do not know what his numbers were, the news was dire. The final clue was his phosphorus level, which was another immeasurably high number, greater than 16. Normal is less than eight. Being way above normal is consistent with chronic kidney disease, not acute failure from events in the immediate past. The findings were not consistent with flea spray poisoning, which was only a small consolation at this point. Renal failure is a death sentence, and survival is a matter of luck really. The urinalysis showed blood in the urine; but it also indicated that the kidneys were doing some concentrating, which was surprising news to the vet, considering the extreme values of the BUN and creatinine.



Aben enjoys a chin scratch from Bart Culver. Photo by Eden Tran.

I think that Aben was not the only victim of shock at this point. I was in denial. I went to the vet for help and I was not ready to give up. About the only hope is to flush the kidneys with more Lactated Ringers solution directly into the veins. I gave the okay for the vet to shave his arm and set up an IV line for him. Over the course of the next two hours, his body temperature slowly rose to 96.8°F and he received about 100 ml of fluids. I examined him all over, and especially his feet. I discovered he had claws growing back from his



Aben stands in his large habitat in front of the entryway to one of the smaller birthing cages. This is where we confined him to obtain a fresh stool sample and, also, to medicate and monitor him before moving him into our home for intensive care.

declaw surgery. One was even curled back and about to penetrate for a second time. Most were deformed nubs that had broken through the skin. Cats hate for you to touch their feet, so this was something I had no idea was going on. Aben is one of the only declawed cats on our property, having had the surgery prior to arrival. I got out a pair of clippers and began trimming his nails and promised him that, once he was well again, I would have corrective surgery to fix his feet. Aben was on a one drop of fluid every five seconds drip and, at that rate, a bag would last about 20 hours. I went home with another bag to follow up and the hope that somehow we could flush out a block and get his kidneys working again.

All day long as I watched over him, he never had another seizure, but he continued to twitch his muscles and remain unresponsive. And I began to think back over all the details of the past two weeks. Were there any signs we failed to pick up on? There were the guests the weekend before he fell ill. Aben always comes down to greet any company. He is a favorite cat at our facility, having been raised by another family and having spent the first two years of his life with kids inside a home; he was very social. But

that weekend, he would not come down off the ramps to visit. That was odd; that was not Aben. But do you run to the vet and say – my cat snubbed my company? And then I recall seeing occasional vomit in the lynx enclosure. Cats vomit sometimes; it does not mean they need a vet. But maybe that was another signal we missed. And then when we did confine him, I noted that I could feel the bumps on his spine and he had definitely lost a lot of weight. Of course, campylobacter can do that, too. But when he was suddenly terribly dehydrated Saturday morning, hypothermic, and very weak, that is classic kidney failure, and I never saw it coming.

Aben passed away shortly before midnight Monday night. The next morning, I performed a gross necropsy – I had to know more. He did not have an intestinal block. He did have some chicken bones still in his stomach, probably from Thursday's meal, so I guess his digestive system had shut down. His bladder was full. I had

noticed he never did wet the towel of the crate over the weekend and Monday. Little or no urine output is another sign of renal failure. Both of his kidneys indeed looked very diseased. The tops of them were whitish and the bottoms were black.

I will never know if he could have been saved had we diagnosed him earlier. This story is being shared to help others. Sometimes symptoms are vague, and you should not take good health for granted. Cats hide their weaknesses and must have the ability to suppress pain. Case in point, Aben never limped or indicated his paws hurt. Routine health checks and blood work can give you a baseline to

work with and you can see illness develop in the early stages. There is no substitute for a complete work-up.

As Bart and I ponder our loss and grieve over Aben's passing, we are certain of one thing – Aben knew more than us about his situation. Aben rallied on Sunday morning to say good bye to us both. To thank us for his life and to let us know how much he loved us. I still cannot believe how he appeared to be improving Sunday and then passed away Monday night.

FCF Professional Membership

The Professional Membership Review Committee has approved the following members who have applied for FCF Professional Membership since publication of the last *FCF Journal*.

**Kathrin Stucki
Julie Walker**

Julia Wagner

Professional members have registered their handling experience, entered their felines in the census, agreed to abide by the code of conduct, and meet the policy definition of an FCF Professional.

Third Quarter FCF Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

Third quarter Board of Directors Meeting was held on the FCF Forums from October 22-28, 2013. Board members present were: President Kevin Chambers, Vice President Mindy Stinner, Treasurer Lynn Culver, Secretary Debi Willoughby, and Director Pat Callahan. Director Chris Tromborg and Director Jim Sanderson were not present.

Ratify the 2nd Quarter 2013 Minutes: The minutes of the Convention Board meeting and the membership meeting were approved by consent. One correction was made to the board minutes stating the motion to appoint Shelleen Mathews to the Professional committee. It was not in the original minutes, but the motion had carried.

Treasurer's Report: Reviewed and analyzed. Third quarter income = \$6,575.49; Third quarter expenses = \$4,639.41. Net Income = \$1,936.08.

Appointment to Accreditation Committee: Christa Donofrio: Debi moved to appoint Christa to the Accreditation Committee, seconded by Lynn. Motion carried

with 5 yes votes, 0 no votes.

Appointment to Accreditation Committee: Rebecca Krebs: Lynn moved to appoint Rebecca to the Accreditation Committee, seconded by Kevin. Motion carried with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes.

Membership Renewal Report: Lynn explained that there is a glitch in our website, so the yearly renewal process didn't start in July as normal with three notices being sent. Instead it started in September and will end in November with six email notices being sent.

FCF Website: Our website manager is currently trying to fix glitches in our outdated website. Our website is having issues, because it is old and not compatible with new technology. He will also be giving the board a proposal to do a total upgrade to our website to get it up to date. The board all agreed we need this upgrade and will wait to see the proposal.

Newsletter Changes: The adult newsletter is being revised and renamed. The new name will be "Cat Tales" and it will feature one of our committees in each issue, have an article of interest for members, and will be a place where we can market and

make announcements. The board is encouraged to get the committees involved in contributing to this newsletter on an ongoing basis.

Wild Cat Weekend: We have announced our next Wild Cat Weekend, which will be from January 10-12, 2014, and will be hosted at the Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary (BCH) in Sarasota, FL. As an added bonus, BCH will perform a wild animal show during each class and we are also offering access to the BCH and a guided tour on Saturday.

Professional Applications: There are pending applications from August 2012 that need to be reviewed. Lynn will contact Shelleen Matthews, who was appointed onto the committee in June 2013, to get the ball rolling.

2014 Convention Date and Location: The convention will be at the Scottsdale Cottonwoods Resort in Scottsdale, AZ, from June 19-21, 2014. Our courses will be held on June 18th. The field trip will be to Out Of Africa Parke in Camp Verde, on Friday. Kevin moved to accept the 2014 convention to be in Scottsdale, AZ. Lynn seconded the motion. The motion carried with 6 yes votes, 0 no votes.

SAVE THE DATE!

Start making your summer plans now! FCF Convention 2014 will take place in the desert oasis of Scottsdale Cottonwoods Resort & Suites Hotel in beautiful Arizona. Join us for FCF educational courses, expert speakers, and, as always, lots of playful kittens! Our Friday fieldtrip will be hosted by the Harisons, at the amazing Out of Africa Park, in Camp Verde, which promises to be a BIG

SPLASH!

So, mark your calendars for June 19th through 21st, 2014, NOW!

We can't wait to see you all again!



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.

Conservation

Grants:

Pat Callahan
Gayle Bilsland
Diane Sanders

General Fund:

Gayle Bilsland
Lisa Padula
Susan Goodman

General Fund:

Capital One
Mary Ellen Carlin
Dean Harrison

The FCF appreciates your generosity & continued support.



Bear Creek Feline Center





Feline Conservation Federation

September/October 2013 Volume 57, Issue 5

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: Zoobotanico Jerez Zoo and Botanical Gardens is one of the oldest parks in Spain. With a special emphasis on Iberian fauna, it is the only public exhibit for Iberian lynx (*Lynx pardinus*). Iberian lynx are in danger of extinction. Multiple factors creating this dramatic situation include poaching, trapping, poisoning, destruction of their natural habitats and main food source, rabbits, and even auto collisions. Photographer Fred Hood captured this rare image of their signature cat along with many other felines during a European tour of facilities. Read more about it in this *Journal* starting on page 13.

Back Cover: Aben, a Canada lynx, enjoys a scratch under the chin. This beautiful and super friendly cat came to the NOAH Feline Conservation Center as a young adult and tragically passed away October 28, 2013, from chronic renal failure. Lynn Culver shares this account starting on page 38. Photographer Eden Tran visited the facility last year and captured this moment between Aben and Bart Culver.

www.FelineConservation.org

