



Feline Conservation Federation

July/August 2015 • Volume 59 Issue 4



TABLE OF

JULY/AUGUST 2015 | VOLUME 59, ISSUE 4

contents

Features

- 7 **Bandit the Bobcat**
Stephanie Wells writes about the family's pet bobcat.
- 12 **Third Time is a Charm**
Vera Chaples gets a handle on Spike's medical issues.
- 13 **A Confiscation Nightmare**
Melanie Boynes chronicles her attempts to regain possession of her beloved cats.
- 17 **Convention Report by Jennifer Kasserman**
Here's what you missed at the Wichita, Kansas gathering.
- 22 **FCF Convention was a Blast!**
Satisfied reports from James Aikman and Phil Cooper.





JOIN THE FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

WWW.FELINECONSERVATION.ORG

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.

Conservation

6 Fishing Cat Conservancy Reports Progress at Convention
Ashwin Naidu updates FCF on the past year's efforts.

25 Studying the Cheetah Population for Implementation of Conservation Measures for their Survival in Tsavo, Kenya
Cherie Schroff leads the team effort to protect cheetahs through education and research.

Legislation

10 Fighting the Animal Rights Ideology at the Local, State, and Federal Levels
Mindy Patterson lays out the who's who and the how and why of the AR machine.

29 California Bans Bobcat Trapping
How one community led the movement to protect native bobcats.

32 OSHA, the New USDA: Now there is the "Big Three"
Kathy Stearns explains what OSHA means to exotic animal businesses.

Education

23 Our 25 Years with Outreach Ambassador Cats
Barbara Dickey is one of the original feline educators.

35 Benefits of Early Socialization
Lynette Lyon outlines how she raises ambassador felines.

Pictorials

20 Your Best Shots
Tim Stoffel, Steve Higgs, Lynn Culver, Kathy Stearns, Michelle McKay, Chris McNeese .

Contact Us

FOUNDER:
Catherine Cisin

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:
Lynn Culver
executivedirector@felineconservation.org

OFFICERS:
President
Kevin Chambers
7816 N CR 75 W
Shelburn, IN 47879
812-397-2302
president@felineconservation.org

Vice President
Mindy Stinner
P.O. Box 882
Mebane, NC 27302
336-421-0065
vicepresident@felineconservation.org

Secretary
Debi Willoughby
281 Albee Road
Uxbridge, MA 01569
508-380-4722
secretary@felineconservation.org

Treasurer
Lynn Culver
141 Polk Road 664
Mena, AR 71953
479-394-5235
treasurer@felineconservation.org

DIRECTORS:
Conservation
Pat Callahan
1961 Connecticut Ave
Cincinnati, OH 45224
513-304-7155
conservation@felineconservation.org

Chris Tromborg
217 Baja Avenue
Davis, CA 95616
530-753-2763
director@felineconservation.org

Robert Bean
4633 Chandler Road
Hermitage, TN 37076
615-889-4633
WILDCON2B@aol.com

JOURNAL STAFF:
Managing Editor:
Lynn Culver

Layout/Copy Editor:
Eden Tran, edentranfcb@gmail.com

Associate Editor:
Judith Hoffman

Membership Services:
Jennifer Kasserman
816-674-7277
membershipservices@felineconservation.org

Organization

4 Letter from the President

5 From the Executive Director

16 Donations

30 FCF Table at Wildlife Conservation Expo

38 2015 Annual Convention Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

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

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



Feline Conservation Federation

Letter from the President

Recently, we have been telling you that OSHA has become an organization that we should all be closely aware of. A presentation at the convention helped explain the facts. Here is some more disturbing news on that front.

One of the latest news articles has brought out the fact that PETA is attempting to use OSHA in its fight to end animals in captivity. This tactic was used against Sea World and their orca shows. Despite PETA's protests, ad campaigns, and even initiating a lawsuit on behalf of the orcas themselves, nothing proved as successful at potentially altering the orca shows as OSHA's ruling that the trainers should be physically separated.

Now PETA is trying to use the same tactic by petitioning OSHA asking that the human safety organization prohibit people from physically interacting with captive elephants. They are basing their petition on the premise that doing so will prevent the hazard to humans and that all physical interactions should be banned outright.

PETA's legal counsel says, "There's no amount of training that's going to stop an elephant from acting like the wild animal it is."

Of course, their true intentions are not to promote safety for trainers and the public, but to end all shows in circuses and zoos, as well as making it cost prohibitive for those keeping elephants in a full contact situation. They cite the number of injuries and deaths and state that the number is extremely high for the small number of people actually involved in the activity. They also say that it is dangerous to the elephants because they claim training is done with beatings and the use of bull hooks.

"It's probably going to be impossible to train an animal to perform an unnatural trick like balancing on a ball if they're not able to get in their physical space and use a bull hook and train them through negative reinforcement," Mr. Schwoerke, PETA's legal counsel, says. "Certainly that's not something they're going to be able to do."

PETA had tried this approach in 2011, with a similar petition that OSHA took no action on back then. However, since that time, OSHA has reprimanded an elephant sanctuary in Maine, for the death of a handler, finding that the facility failed to separate humans from the elephants they care for. PETA now thinks the government

should impose that standard industry-wide.

Even organizations like AZA have jumped on the bandwagon by requiring zoos to have only protected contact with elephants in order to be accredited. Hypocritically, they have allowed special dispensations to facilities that still have unprotected contact.

Justin Loomis, owner of a circus with elephants, refutes the idea of protected contact, saying that it is not only safe for the trainers, but is better for the elephants. "I think there's a danger in almost every profession, whether you're an airline pilot, or in the military," says Loomis, noting that none of his handlers have been injured in recent memory. "The circus is an easy target, because we're not a huge industry. Are they going to stand up and

say the horse racing people are next?"

I think we know that it won't be the horse racing industry that PETA goes after next. It will be the wild felines. If you substitute the word tiger for elephants in what you read above, the story is just as viable in PETA's eyes. We need to keep a close eye on this and support the circuses and others who maintain free contact elephants.

Kevin Chambers



Specializing In Manufacturing Exotic Carnivore Diets
Since 1960

BRAVO
PACKING, INC.
Carney's Point, NJ 08069

Using Fresh Meat & Only Prime Cuts of Meat in All Meat Eater Diet Products.

CHOICES OF MEAT EATER DIETS

*SUPREME 100% HORSEMEAT
*PREMIUM 50% BEEF & 50% HORSEMEAT
*REGULAR 100% BEEF
*Bird of Prey 50% BEEF & 50% HORSEMEAT

CHOICES OF FORMULATIONS OF MEAT

PORTION WITH TRIPE, VITAMINS & MINERALS
*90% HORSE 10% TRIPE & 5% FAT
*40% BEEF & 40% HORSE 10% TRIPE & 10% FAT
*80% BEEF 10% TRIPE & 10% FAT

* SPECIAL ORDERS CHUCK BEEF & HORSEMEAT

* RAW BONES BEEF & HORSE WITH & WITHOUT MEAT

* ALL BEEF PRODUCTS OBTAINED FROM U.S.D.A. INSPECTED PLANTS

* ALL MEAT IS SAMPLED & TESTED FOR B.S.E. BY U.S.D.A. VETERINARY TECHNICIANS

Bravo Packing, Inc. MAINTAINS FULL PRODUCT LIABILITY

Contact Us at: Toll free (888) Bravo40

Visit Us at: www.bravopacking.com

From the Executive Director

By Lynn Culver

The Feline Conservation Federation lived up to its name at convention, generously donating \$2,200 to the Fishing Cat Conservancy. Ashwin Naidu returned from India with an update since we first met him at the Scottsdale convention, when FCF members donated over \$1,800 to this cause. We can all take pride knowing that the FCF is helping fishing cats in nature by contributing to a cause that builds awareness of these threatened felines, and helps build community-based restoration of human-damaged mangroves. Now, once again, Ashwin will be directing FCF donations to projects that broaden the fishing cat conservation mission.

Another conservation measure taken at convention was the board's approval of the Conservation Grants Committee recommendation of a \$2,400 conservation grant for cheetah research and mitigation of cheetah/human conflict in Tsavo, Kenya. Hunting is banned in Kenya, but threats still exist, such as habitat loss due to human encroachment, actual and perceived conflict with residents and smaller bodied livestock, retaliatory killing of the cheetah, and, less commonly, indiscriminate poaching. Education programs by the Tsavo Cheetah Project will have significant informative impact, and be combined with demonstrations of livestock protective measures. Read the full details on the Tsavo Cheetah Project (page 25) your membership and donation dollars are helping to support.

This is the Convention issue, with plenty of reviews, summaries of the presenter talks, and lots of photos capturing fond memories. This year, we toured two very different zoos. The Sedgwick County Zoo is a top rated AZA zoo and has many impressive displays and lots of great landscaping. Tanganyika is a ZAA-accredited zoo with a more open landscape and a much more personal touch. There were opportunities to feed a variety of animals, from pigmy hippos, giraffes, and rhinos, to lovely lorikeets. The FCF, being a recognized association of feline handlers, was given a rare treat; opportunities to interact with snow and clouded leopard cubs. Zoo owners Jim and Cherri Fouts and their son Matt went out of their way to make our visit fulfilling, and indeed it

was. I had hopes that we might have a similar experience to the Nashville Zoo convention, where our members were able to hold clouded leopard cubs. That is an experience everyone is still talking about, and I knew it would be difficult to top. But we reached a new bar at Tanganyika, which I have no idea how we are going to top this next year!

The poaching of an adult male lion named Cecil from just outside a protected national park in Zimbabwe, at the end of July, made worldwide headlines and still dominates my Facebook newsfeed. It has sparked heated debates over all trophy hunting, legal and not. It has been used to bring awareness of captive bred lions being sold to trophy hunters in what are commonly known as "canned hunts." Headlines and news journalists are informing people that an estimated 600 to 1,000 African lions are killed by wealthy Americans annually. The conservation value of big game hunting is being publically debated; does the influx of this blood money really help the local African economies or the ability of the African governments to conserve their wildlife? Is there an alternative?

Spin-off from this public outrage over American dentist Walter Palmer's callous killing of Cecil includes the decision by most airline companies to end transport of any big game trophies in their cargo holds. Congress just introduced a bill to speed up the protection to lions by changing the Lacey Act's prohibitions to apply to not only species designated as threatened or endangered, but to species under consideration for such designations. Animal rights have renewed pressure on Congress to reintroduce their Big Cat Public Safety Protection Act (a national big cat breeding ban bill). Charitable donations to CRUWild, which radio-collared Cecil, have seen a sharp increase, thanks to this outrage.

People are reacting to this news and showing it in many different ways. I believe another spin-off is the recent passage of the bobcat trapping ban in California. Read about it in this *Journal* on page 29. The timing of the commissioner's vote was just a week after Cecil's murder, and I cannot help but believe the poaching



Ashwin Naidu with feline friend and FCF's check to support Fishing Cat Conservancy.

of Cecil played a role in the vote. While bobcats are by no means endangered, they are certainly beloved; in fact, the community of Joshua Tree looked out for their wild bobcats and were furious that trappers had decimated the local population to satisfy the demand for their belly fur for export to Chinese and Russian markets.

On the opposite end of the country in Florida, there is human/feline conflict over Florida's endangered panther. This cat has been under intense state and federal management for nearly four decades to bring it back from the brink of extinction from less than 30 animals to more than 180. But it is now facing the reality that much has changed in four decades, and habitat that was supposed to be filled with panthers is now filled with vacation homes and shopping malls. Panthers have nowhere to disperse, and the Florida Freshwater Fish and Game Commission is ready to give up on the master plan to create three separate populations of panthers. The reality is, humans leave little for wildlife. And if this is happening in the U.S., how can we expect Africans to tolerate lions and Indians to live with tigers?

In the coming years, humanity will face increasing threats from climate change, and increasing human pressures on natural resources will bring about increasing loss of diversity. Humanity must slow down, accept a humbler life, and be more sensitive to the needs of Earth's other life forms. By raising our captive-bred felines as goodwill ambassadors, we can create in our communities an emotional connection to nature, and that is our best hope for bringing about much needed change.

Fishing Cat Conservancy Reports Progress At Convention

By Lynn Culver

Getting an update from a researcher that the FCF has supported in the past is always welcome. Having the researcher give that update in person at convention is even better. This year, Ashwin Naidu, who founded the Fishing Cat Conservancy (www.fishingcat.org), spent three days in June with FCF members in Wichita, Kansas, and presented his update on conservation of fishing cats on Friday with the other speakers. We met Ashwin just a year ago at the Scottsdale Convention, and members raised over \$1,800 towards his fishing cat conservation efforts. It was great to see him again and know that the donations from FCF members was money well spent.

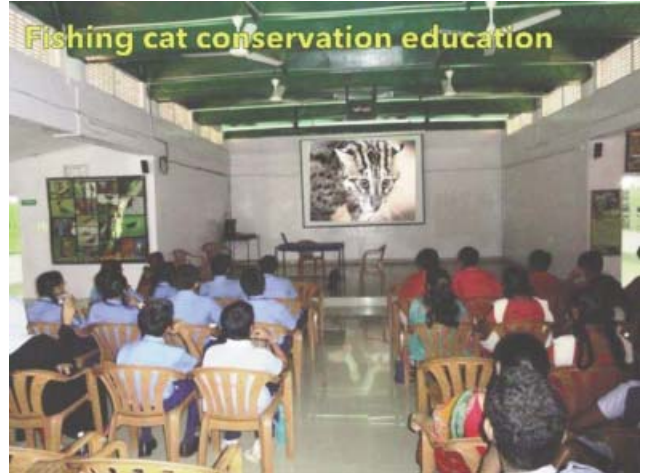
Ashwin returned with gifts this year; beautiful fishing cat logo t-shirts for donations over \$20. The FCF members scooped them up and raised another \$2,200 for the Fishing Cat Conservancy during convention.

Ashwin began his presentation with a reminder that fishing cats live in coastal mangrove wetlands in South and Southeast Asia. Mangroves are considered by scientists to be one of the world's most at-risk habitats. In fact, during the past century, the escalating destruction and degradation of mangroves, from land conversion for aquaculture and agriculture, coastal development, and pollution, have caused an estimated half of all mangrove forests to be destroyed.

Mangrove forests not only sequester

more carbon than other types of forests, but also store that carbon over a longer period. Mangroves fight climate change and provide protection from tidal waves and storms. Many people are economically dependent on mangrove-marine ecosystems. But these wetlands are being converted into fish and shrimp farms. Commercial aquaculture clears out all mangrove trees, brush, and grass cover from the ponds, and even fences the area, preventing use or access by fishing cats or any other wildlife species.

The goal of the Fishing Cat Conservancy is to create community-managed reserves for fishing cats and mangroves. Ashwin Naidu is working with locals to increase their understanding of the need to protect mangrove ecosystems and also to restore mangrove habitat when fish farms are no longer useable and, thus, are abandoned. Ashwin and the workers of the Fishing Cat Conservancy are documenting the presence of fishing cats with camera traps, teaching the children and community elders about this species and



Educating the community about their natural resources, and especially the fishing cat, is the first step to developing a community-based approach to wildlife conservation.

instilling pride in their native wildlife, so they will protect remaining mangroves, and they are replanting the abandoned fish farms back into mangroves. As the Fishing Cat Conservancy's message and methods catch on, there is hope that this highly specialized feline will be around for our grandchildren to see.

The big problem...



Large-scale commercial aquaculture farming of fish and shrimp is destroying native mangrove habitat and the wildlife that depends on this habitat.



The Fishing Cat Conservancy has erected community sign boards about fishing cat conservation.



300 Stichter Rd.
 Pleasant Hill, OH 45359
 Phone: 937-676-2058
 Email: oaao@windstream.net
 Web: www.oaao.us

*Protecting Your rights
 To own Animals
 since 1990*

Polly Britton
 Legislative Agent

Ohio Association of Animal Owners

Bandit the Bobcat

By Stephanie Wells

“I can’t believe you have a bobcat.” This is what everyone seems to say when they find out about Bandit. However, when they meet him, they can see that a bobcat can be a very loving animal.

My son, Jacob Wells, who is a senior in high school, has a passion for all animals



Bandit is a much loved member of the Wells family. He spends plenty of time indoors, but also enjoys his outdoor habitat with limbs to climb, ramps to roam, and platforms for resting.

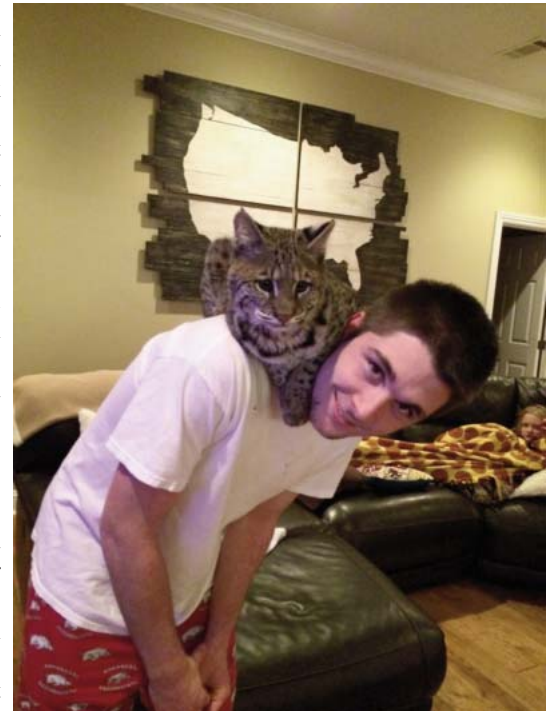
and a desire to be a wildlife biologist. It was Jacob who brought it to our attention about getting a bobcat. My husband and I thought he was crazy and we would not even ponder the thought of getting one. Because bobcats are wild and dangerous animals, right? At least that is what we thought. Our son was determined to show his dad and me that a bobcat would make a great pet. He did some research and prepared a PowerPoint presentation for us. He had our attention. After seeing his presentation and all of the research, we decided to give this some more thought. We let Jacob know that we would like to speak with someone who has a bobcat and learn more. So he found Lynn Culver, who breeds bobcats and who also owns Noah Feline Conservation Center (NOAH). We discovered

that Lynn lives only two hours from us; what a lucky break! This would be the person we needed to speak with. So we then scheduled a trip to check out these bobcats and meet Lynn. Lynn was very kind and answered all of our questions, and she even took us on a tour of her place and let us see all of her amazing cats. When I saw all of the kittens, I knew then that I wanted one. We talked with Lynn and told her we wanted a bobcat, so she put us down for one out of the next litter. Jacob was so eager to help get a bobcat that he sold his dirt bike to pay for Bandit.

Bandit, who was born on July 11, 2014, came into my family’s life at five weeks of age. Bandit is being raised by my husband and me, along with our two dogs. We also have two dogs, Alex and Sandy, and a domestic cat, Milo. Our family decided not to declaw Bandit after doing some research and learning that declawing may cause arthritis in the cat’s paws; so far that decision has not affected our furniture. We had Bandit neutered when he was about six months old, hoping that this would keep him from spraying when he gets



Bandit enjoys the creature comforts of air conditioning, comfy furniture, and plenty of good food.



Jacob convinced his parents that a bobcat would be a great addition to the family. Bandit agrees.

older. While he was being neutered, we also had him microchipped in case we ever needed to identify him as ours. I do not recommend anyone raising a bobcat with a domestic cat, because bobcats play too roughly. Bandit likes to wrestle with Milo, and he overpowers him and even likes to sit on him, so we always have to separate them whenever this happens. Bandit means no harm to Milo; it is just that he is so much larger and more powerful that it is more than Milo can handle at times. Bandit has plenty of room to play, with full run of our house and a 30x30 enclosure that is not attached to the house. His enclosure has lots of limbs to climb, boards to walk on, and places to hide, but he does not like to be in his enclosure alone. So either our dog Sandy stays and gives him company or one of us stays with him.

We have also discovered that he loves to play in the water. Our neighbor has a pond and Bandit loves to walk along the edge looking for fish and frogs. One day he got up the nerve to venture out into the water and before we



Bandit is leash- and harness-trained, so the Wells can take him for walks and swims. Bandit is a regular visitor to this pond, where he cools off from the summer heat.

knew it, Bandit was swimming all over the place. Now he will just walk up to the edge and jump right in and swim around. We thought that since Bandit loves the water so much that we would buy a kiddie pool for him. He loves to hang out in the pool and play with his toys, but if he stays in there too long, he uses it as a litter box. So we have to monitor his playtime in the swimming pool. Bandit also enjoys walking on a leash and exploring the yard; he does very well on his leash and it was not difficult to train him. While on his leash, he likes to visit with our neighbors and their animals. I think it makes him feel like a big shot. He also enjoys people coming over and visiting; of course, he must be the center of attention. He loves to play fetch and hide and seek with the kids. We can actually toss a ball in the house and he will go get it and bring it back to us, wanting us to throw it again. When it is time to play hide and seek, if you hide (he must see you hide), he will act like he is on a hunt and try to sneak up on you. His diet consists of raw meat, chicken with bone, squirrel, rabbit, deer ribs, ground turkey, ground deer, chicken gizzards

and hearts, and occasionally goat milk. The cost to feed Bandit is around \$250 a month. Being a year old, he is fed two times a day. We also use a vitamin supplement that is sprinkled on his food. He loves cat treats and honey ham for a snack.

We try to keep Bandit on a schedule, and feel with a structured environment he will trust us and we both will know what to expect. Bobcats can be very scared and timid animals at times. You must have patience and be calm at all times when working with or raising such an amazing animal. Our family went on a vacation this summer, and we took Bandit to stay with Lynn so she could watch over him. Bandit had a hard time not being with his family, and he did not want anyone to mess with him. A week later when we picked him up, he was so excited to

see us that he gave us lots of hugs and head rubs. Bobcats can be very loyal and loving pets, and this one example assured us that he is dedicated to our family. There is a strong bond between Bandit and the rest of the family and he is always letting us know with the way he plays with us and the way he rubs against us.

Bandit goes to bed every night a 10:00 p.m. and wakes up at 6:00 a.m. It seems that morning time is when the bobcat crazies start. This is when they get a burst of energy and run through the house, jumping and knocking things over. This is a good time to take him outside to burn off



When Bandit goes for a walk, he likes to visit with the neighbors and their animals. Stephanie says he likes being the center of attention.

that energy. Breakfast is between 7:00-8:00 a.m. and dinner is between 6:00-7:00 p.m. Bandit goes outside every morning and evening. He needs at least three hours of outside play and fresh air. Bandit prefers to be outside in colder weather, and he does not seem to like the heat. I must say he is a little spoiled living in the house.

We were told, and are now finding out, that owning a bobcat is not like owning domesticated cats or dogs. They require a lot of attention and are a big responsibility, and it takes the right family with the right environment to make owning a bobcat a success for both the owner and the bobcat. For our family, I can say that, overall, I am glad that we have Bandit. He has turned out to be a wonderful addition to our family. He gives plenty of love and affection with an amazing personality. Even though he can be a handful at times, I know that he will give our family nothing but joy, and I am sure Bandit feels the same way about us.

Join the Zoological Association of America



*promoting the
responsible ownership,
management, and propagation
of animals in both
private and public domains*

Several levels of membership include commercial, educational, facility, and individual. Facility Accreditation is also available.

P.O. Box 511275
Punta Gorda, FL 33951
941-621-2021
info@zaaorg
www.zaa.org



PREMIUM NUTRITION FOR YOUR CARNIVORES

Your animals are your zoo. Protect and care for them with the most nutritious carnivore entree in the industry. The first all-pork complete diet formulated specifically for zoo carnivores, Carnivore Essentials is backed by years of extensive field research and testing, and proven to be a safe, nutritious diet for all carnivores. Your animals deserve only the very best. Feed them Carnivore Essentials.

Fighting the Animal Rights Ideology at the Local, State, and Federal Levels

Mindy Patterson is president of the Calvary Group. The Cavalry Group is committed to helping animal owners protect their rights by educating citizens and lawmakers and helping its membership have access to high-quality legal representation in the event that their rights are threatened. Mindy presented this important primer on who's who in the animal rights movement at the FCF Convention in Wichita.

By Mindy Patterson

For centuries, animal ownership and animal agriculture has been revered and lauded while protected under the historic principles of private property as outlined in the U.S. Constitution. But today, those who raise, breed, and work with animals are in a fight for their very existence.

The web of non-profit groups and non-governmental organizations whose fundamental foundation is the animal rights ideology, collectively make up a \$400 billion industry.

Today, too many people fall for the wolf in sheep's clothing – believing that these organizations' ultimate goal is an increase in animal welfare and humane treatment of animals. But nothing could be further from the truth.

Dozens of animal rights groups are driving policy at the local, state, and federal levels, and are intent on incrementally destroying our ability to own, raise, and work with animals. As we fight their policies, it's important to know who is behind this deceptive destruction working against us.

• **Wayne Pacelle**, President and CEO of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). Began working at HSUS in 1994, and became President and CEO in 2004.

• **Michael Markarian**, the Chief Program and Policy Offer for HSUS; President of the Humane Society Legislative Fund; and President of Fund for Animals.

• **Gene Bauer**, President, Farm Sanctuary in upstate New York. Acted as campaign director for California Proposition 2, Farm Animal Cruelty Prevention Act, in 2008. Has also been working to promote the carriage horse ban in New York

City.

• **Animal Legal Defense Fund**. Based in San Francisco, founded in 1979, to promote their animal rights ideology by pushing “sue and settle” litigation and writing policy to expand their goal to end animal ownership at the local, state, and federal levels, while creating a field of law for animal rights. Set the premise for animal abuser registries. Over \$8.5 million in annual revenue in F/Y 2013.

• **Cass Sunstein**, Attorney, graduated from Harvard Law School. Held office of Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, also known as the Regulatory Czar from January 2009-September 2012. One of the most radical animal rights activists devoted to establishing legal “rights” for livestock, wildlife, and pets.

Miyun Park

- “My goal is to reduce the greatest amount of suffering for the greatest number of animals. Unfortunately we don't have the luxury of waiting until we have the opportunity to get rid of the entire industry.”
- Former VP for Farm Animal Welfare at HSUS.
- Executive Director of Global Animal Partnership (GAP)
- On Tyson Foods Animal Well Being Advisory Panel.

• **Miyun Park**, former vice president for Farm Animal Welfare at HSUS. Currently the Executive Director of Global Animal Partnership (GAP). “My goal is to reduce the greatest amount of suffering for the greatest number of animals... Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of waiting until we have the opportunity to get rid of the entire industry.” Why does animal agriculture continue to collaborate with those who seek our demise?! Miyun Park is on the Animal Well-Being Advisory Panel for Tyson Foods, Inc.

• **Sarah Conant**, former litigation attorney for HSUS. Hired by USDA in 2009, as Chief Animal Health Investigative and Enforcement Services.

• **Tom Vilsack**, Secretary of U.S. Department of Agriculture. Top appointment choice by HSUS and HSLF. In November 2012, released memo supporting “Meatless Mondays.” Also, ignored giving horse slaughter plants their grants

for inspection November 2011-September 2013. His wife, Christie Vilsack, accepted \$750K campaign donation during her run for Congress in 2012, in a failed attempt to unseat incumbent, Congressman Steve King (R-IA).

• **Ed Sayres**, Past President and CEO of the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), has a 42 year career with animal rights organizations. Helped launch NYCLASS (New York for Clean, Livable and Safe Streets) to end NYC horse carriages. Launched “No Pet Store Puppies” campaign. Now holds the position of CEO of the Pet Industry Joint Advisory Council (PIJAC) representing the pet industry!

These animal rights groups are working to destroy animal ownership using ballot initiatives, federal legislation, state legislation, and local ordinance changes.

Ballot Initiatives: The ballot initiative process is allowed in 24 states in the U.S. – Since 1990, HSUS has passed ballot initiatives negatively impacting animal agriculture, the pet industry, hunting and fishing, and ownership of private property in 18 of those 24 states.

Federal Legislation: HSUS has written and found SPONSORS to carry the following bills in the current 114th Congress:

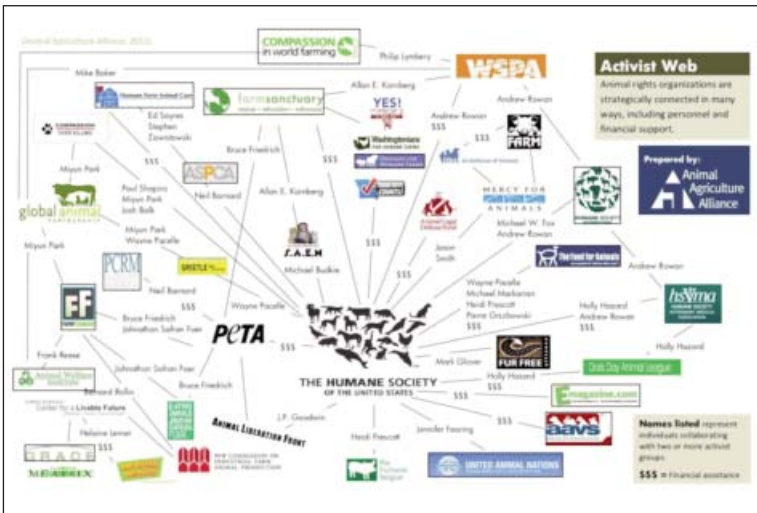
- 1) Safeguard American Food Export (SAFE) Act
- 2) Prevent All Soring Tactics (PAST) Act
- 3) Prevent All Cruelty and Torture (PACT) Act
- 4) Pet and Women Safety (PAWS) Act
- 5) Animal Welfare in Agriculture and Research Endeavors (AWARE) Act
- 6) Humane Cosmetics Act
- 7) And, I suspect that the Big Cats Safety and Protection Act will also be reintroduced

* Details about each federal bill can be

Sarah L. Conant

- Employed by HSUS as a Litigation Attorney immediately before she was hired by the USDA.
- “Humane Society lawyers are working with legislatures and in the courts to change laws that affect the lives of farm animals.”
- And, “they are forced to go state by state in this effort because there are very few federal laws regarding farm animals.”

Chief, Animal Health Enforcement Investigative and Enforcement Services
U.S.D.A.



Animal rights organizations are strategically connected in many ways, including personnel and financial support.

found on The Cavalry Group website under the “Federal Legislation” tab (www.TheCavalryGroup.com).

State Legislation: Animal rightist legislation was sponsored in 37 state legislatures in 2015, and details of every bill are too numerous to list (see state legislative map on The Cavalry Group website). But to highlight just a few concerning points, most of the animal rights-driven legislation at the state level vilified “for profit” breeding of animals; attempted to create an unconstitutional law that would allow the prosecuting attorney to file a civil action forfeiting one’s animals before the disposition of the case; attempted to pass onerous restrictions under the premise of “animal welfare,” but failed to address the problem of unlicensed, rogue, unethical breeders who are already in violation of existing laws; and violated animal owners’ constitutional right to due process, just to name a few.

Local Ordinances: Through the depart-

ment of planning and zoning, or city or county councils, the following are being passed through local ordinance changes:

- Mandatory spay & neuter
- Specified kennel/cage size
- Constant and unfettered access to outdoors
- Temperature control
- Guardianship laws for pets and live stock
- Anti-tether laws
- Limitation of how many animals you can own/breed (limit laws)
- Pet sale bans
- Exotic animal bans
- Pet store bans
- Carriage horse bans
- “Dangerous” animal bans

What to Do:

- Get to know your elected officials; your local, state, and federal representatives.
- Invite your elected officials to your animal enterprise facility to educate them about what you do, the issues we face from the animal rights movement, and why you need their support.
- Get to know and understand the U.S. Constitution.
- Write for your rights! Write for industry and local publications to educate the general public about our issues. We need to quit preaching to



The dark green states (24 states plus the District of Columbia) allow for ballot initiatives – when citizens, collecting a minimum number of signatures on a petition within a specified time, place advisory questions, memorials, statutes, or constitutional amendments on the ballot for the citizens to adopt or reject. [Note: MS and FL only allow ballot initiative constitutional amendments, not statutes. AK, DC, ID, ME, UT, WA and WY only allow statutory initiatives. IL only allows non-binding ballot initiatives.] The light green states, which are non-initiative states, allow for popular referenda, when the people have the power to refer, by collecting signatures on a petition, specific legislation that was enacted by their legislature for the people to either accept or reject (this process is used much less frequently). [Note: Popular referenda are allowed in all of the dark green states as well, except for Florida and Mississippi.]

the choir.

- Keep an eye on legislation, zoning, and ordinance changes at the local, state, and federal level!
- Promote yourself and your facility to your local community and especially to local officials.

Conclusion:

Remember that our fight to protect animal ownership is a fight to preserve our constitutional right to private property. America’s Founding Fathers believed that the most important of our constitutional rights was the ownership of private property. Our framers knew that if we lose private property in America, our country will collapse. The Constitution will only stand if WE defend it.

Closing quote:

“If some among you fear taking a stand because you are afraid of reprisals from customers, clients, or even government, recognize that you are just feeding the crocodile hoping he’ll eat you last.”
~ Ronald Reagan

Third Time Is a Charm

By Vera Chaples

Chapter Three of the ongoing “Spike Saga”... This all began back in January of 2014, and my absence from the facility. While I was gone, Spike decided to stop eating. Through many laboratory tests, ultrasound, endoscopy, radiographs (full body and skull), barium series, fecal exams, cultures, smears, and exploratory surgery, we still had no definitive diagnosis.

His illness coincides with my absence from the facility. The latest crisis involved me being rushed to the major hospital in Gainesville, Florida, due to, ironically, me getting bit by a house cat. The bite resulted in hospitalization for a week on IV antibiotics.

He, of course, began again to spiral downward in my absence. The staff tried every trick in the book to get him to eat. From giving Spike a pillow of mine sprayed with my cologne, to pulling my truck up and letting him see and hear it right before meal times. And these worked, once each. Then I had to Skype with him. (Do you know what I looked and sounded like to my hospital roommate, chuffing into a computer and going,



Spike has finally returned to good health and a hearty appetite. Vera says, “Come dinnertime, he’s all tiger.”

“Who’s momma’s boy?”?) Then they moved on to bringing out staff members he had not seen in a while to coax him... and they each had one shot. He ate for each of them (three), and then on the fourth, he flatly refused. And that was the beginning of his worst crash yet.

With still no diagnosis, we are grasping

in the dark and going on symptoms and what he responds to. We had him on one tablet of omeprazole every morning, which seemed to be working well. But this was merely a maintenance dose and not enough to handle a stressful event, such as my having to be gone from the facility for any length of time. Omeprazole (we use Prilosec OTC 24-hour delayed release) can be given to felines at the dosage of 0.5 to 1 mg/kg, and Spike was only on 20 mg daily.

Stress does not cause ulcers, but when one is stressed, the stomach acids build up and any active ulcers are then affected. This causes not only abdominal pain, but acid reflux, which can then lead to more critical organ failure, such as, in Spike’s case, acute renal failure. We also suspect that Spike is the victim of *H. pylori*, which he was indeed tested for on the first go round, yet it was negative. The *H. pylori* test is really not that reliable, as you can show negative and still be positive. A positive is a positive, of course. I have to add that tigers in the wild DO get ulcers from *H. pylori*. They actually get it from, of all things, eating humans.

This last round, we almost lost Spike.

He looked worse than he ever had, and you could see that this silent killer was taking its toll on our Spike. So the hard decision to get the vet out to sedate him again was made. Each time we have sedated Spike, it has taken longer and longer for him to recover. All his blood work was spot on in prior events, so nothing showed that would indicate why he is so sensitive to sedation.

Addison came out, sedated him, and we gave five liters of fluids. He drew blood work, gave

Cerenia, and basically told me that the rest was up to the big man upstairs. Nothing was found on exam that would cause this.

It took five days for Spike to fully recover from the sedation. During this time, I honestly had long talks with him. And I had to ask myself as I looked into his eyes, “Am I hanging on for YOU,



Vera and Spike share a special relationship that enabled Vera to provide medical treatment and plenty of TLC until Spike recovered.

Spike? Or ME?” The decision the night before he really came around was made to call the vet the next morning to put Spike to sleep. And almost like he read my thoughts, the next morning I found him bright-eyed! But he was still not eating. So desperate times demand desperate action. I grabbed his medication, wrapped it into liver and small beef chunks (pieces that he could just swallow), pried open his mouth as he would lie beside me, and tossed it down. I hand fed him for three weeks before I started to see the old Spike come to life!

But with the help of our veterinarian, Dr. Addison, we seem to have pulled him through and now have him on a more regulated dose of omeprazole, as well as a diet of only lean red meats and skinned turkey drum sticks for the calcium and phosphate. Spike will NOT eat vitamins. At this juncture, we cannot afford to have him go off his food just because we want to give him vitamins. So we add liver, the turkey legs, and prime beef. We have eliminated any and ALL chicken products, as with any ulcer patient, chicken fat is a primary catalyst for an ulcer attack.

This has not been an easy last year and a half. And, yes, at times I cuss that big lug... but God... I love that tiger...

A Confiscation Nightmare

By Melanie Boynes

I was introduced to the world of exotics by the man most known as Tarzan. I know him as Steve. Steve Sipek is from another generation – when people were



Melanie holds little Lepa, who was raised by her and Steve in their home.

not so regulated, when total immersion with big cats raised as family existed – before everything became so “institutionalized” with cages, rules, and human/animal separation, licenses, and government control. This is the man I learned from. Never did I imagine I would one day have my own tiger... only to have it confiscated by the state of Florida. I applied for (at the request of Steve, to have the security of two licensees at the property) and received my Class I license from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in 2006, after meeting the requirements of the state. I held that license along with Steve Sipek until 2010, when both licenses were “held up” in the Captive Wildlife Office (Division of Law Enforcement). Multiple requests as to what the holdup was went unanswered. Investigator Shannon Wiyda completed an inspection in 2011, and concerns were addressed.

I was advised by Captain John West that either Steve or

I would need to obtain a USDA license to exhibit. The application was submitted and the pre-licensing inspection was on August 24, 2010, with USDA inspector Megan Adams, who was accompanied by Dr. Gregory Gaj. There were minor deficiencies that needed to be corrected within 90 days. The six deficiencies in the report were corrected and I contacted Ms. Adams to do the follow-up inspection. Dr. Elizabeth Goldentyer, however, denied the application I submitted on September 16, 2010, based upon the history of Steve Sipek prior to Ms. Adams returning for follow-up. According to Dr. Goldentyer, because of Steve’s

issues with the agency, I was deemed unfit as well. Hence, the troubles began. (Steve never held a USDA license.)

I filed an appeal with the USDA, represented myself at the appeal, and lost. Since I was unable to obtain a USDA license (based upon Steve’s past history), I would not be able to keep my Class I



All the tigers loved swimming in the backyard pool. Pictured here is Lepa.

license with the state of Florida that I had held since 2006. There were issues that were corrected. There were issues with Steve and FWC. Both Steve and FWC are at fault as I stated (along with Vernon Yates) in the appeal with the state in 2012/2013. Being a licensee at that property, however, I was responsible for correcting any and all deficiencies that existed at the property according to FWC.

OPERATION GREYSTOKE Commenced

On February 27, 2012 (two years without a license), Steve was arrested on two misdemeanor charges and booked at the Palm Beach County Jail, and I was held at bay and that day given a letter from FWC stating that my license, along with Steve’s license, had been denied. Lepa, a three and a half year old tigress, Bo, a seven year old tiger, and Oko, a 17 year old black leopard, were seized by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Lepa, Bo, and Oko were darted, PIT tagged, loaded, and hauled across the state to the west coast of Florida, and held at the Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation (an approved FWC/USDA facility) in Largo, Florida. I spoke with the operator of the facility, Vernon Yates, that evening after finding out where the cats were taken and inquired as to how they were. “They’re fine,” he stated. FWC wanted to avoid media attention due to the sensationalism that occurred in 2004 with Steve Sipek.

Vernon Yates told me, “Build three new enclosures on a concrete slab, 8’x10’x24’ in nine gauge material [state regulations for two tigers] and an eight foot perimeter fence in 11 ½ gauge, and you will have your cats back in 45 days... Sixty at most.” That was on the evening of February 27, 2012, from Vernon Yates, who is an agent of FWC. So I had hope.

Kathy and Kenny Stearns of Dade City’s Wild Things decided to help us. We had a fundraiser on March 11, 2012, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm, to raise the money needed for the new enclosures. “Bring your camera and take a picture with Leo the lion cub and Tarzan.” Success! We raised the \$7,000 needed for the new enclosures

that day with the help of Kathy and Kenny, the crew and animals, and the community. We had the enclosures built, Kenny brought them over from the West Coast, and we put them up on our property. Kathy Stearns set up a 501(c)3 non-profit named Tarzan's Big Cat Sanctuary, Inc. We hoped that with a Florida sanctuary status we would be exempt from the state requirement for USDA licensing. The sanctuary was registered with the Florida Department of Agriculture as well. A new application for Class I license with the FWC was submitted. This time, I had representation. Everything was in order and, yet, FWC did their

best to find some reason to deny the application. Finally, on July 9, 2012, FWC came to do the inspection at the newly created Tarzan's Big Cat Sanctuary. Three inspectors from FWC came for the inspection. The new caging and perimeter fence and all other required items passed with flying colors, and Investigator Jon Garzaniti stated in his report, "[T]he three cages meet all the regulations of FWC and issuance of a license is recommended."

In August, the Captive Wildlife Office, in Tallahassee, denied the application, once again due to the history they had with Steve Sipek. In spite of the fact that everything was done to obtain the license, they said "NO." Back to court I went, this time with representation from Rob Melchiorre, of Perlot and Shiner, along with Kathy Stearns of Dade City's Wild Things and Vernon Yates of Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation (where Lepa, Bo, and Oko were being held). Even though everything was "right," once again because of the past history with Steve, the Florida wildlife license was denied.

Steve eventually took a plea deal with the FWC and paid restitution, and we asked the court to release the cats from Vernon Yates. Once again, we were back to court. This time Vernon Yates demanded he be paid \$60,000



Steve Sipek has lived with big cats for more than 40 years, raising them not for commercial purposes, but for the pure love of the animals.

for the care of the three cats for 480 days. Judge Paul Damico said that was an amount no one could be expected to pay. Finally, a judge who ruled in our favor! Our cats were to be released to Animal Adventures, in Okeechobee, to the custody of Sue Pearce. Steve and I chose that facility because of its location. Okeechobee was an hour and a half away, versus four hours to Kathy's place in Dade City. The ideal facility would have been McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary, which is only ten minutes away, but it had no room.

Next, we had to coordinate the move with all parties involved. That did not occur until June 20, 2013. From February 27, 2012, to June 20, 2013, we had no contact with our cats at all. These were

cats that had always lived in Loxahatchee, with hands-on human contact every day for 17, seven, and three and a half years, respectively. I knew they would not be the same cats that were taken from us, but no one could have prepared me for what I would see when the Animal Adventures team arrived in Largo.

Lepa, Bo, and Oko had been placed in transport cages Sunday evening, and we were not getting them until Wednesday. They had been sedated even though they were not supposed to be. We were not permitted on Vernon Yates' property, and he and his staff would not help with the transfer in

any way. The cats were brought out in "circus" transports outside of the perimeter fence, on a public street in a residential area. (This was done while FWC officers and Dr. Gregory Gaj, USDA head vet, were present.) Apparently, public safety was not a concern that day with either the FWC or USDA. The media was also present for the transfer; they had been contacted by Vernon Yates. FWC and the Pinellas County Sheriff's personnel were there with their firearms. Lepa, Bo, and Oko had to be transferred from Vernon Yates' transports to Sue Pearce's transports outside a perimeter fence on a public street in a residential area. Oko went easy. Lepa and Bo did not. So, we had no choice but to leave Lepa and Bo overnight

at the facility, pay board of \$169.50 each, and find a vet who would come and sedate Lepa and Bo the next day. Vernon Yates' vet on the premises said he would sedate them for \$14,000. Sue Pearce had planned to move the cats without sedation, but that was impossible since both cats were already drugged and would not move to her transports. Sue Pearce's vet, Dr. Megan Davis, drove from the East Coast, to Mr. Yates' facility to help move Lepa and Bo. Dr. Davis spoke to Vernon Yates, inquiring what drug Bo was on, and Vernon was not forthcoming. He said, "I said I wasn't going to



Lepa, Oko, and Bo, pictured above, were finally released after 480 days at Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation.

help in any way,” and turned around and walked away from Dr. Davis. Vernon Yates’ actions put the lives of Bo and Lepa in jeopardy. Sue Pearce and her staff had 30 minutes to sedate and transfer two cats, or they would be charged an additional \$250 for every subsequent minute over the allotted 30 minutes. We paid Vernon Yates an extra \$250 for the welfare and safety of Bo and Lepa. (You can read more in TOP CATS ROAR blog.) Finally, after both Bo and Lepa had seizures, we were finally able to make the transfer inside the enclosed trailer and be on our way to Okeechobee.

Lepa, Bo and Oko were subjected to God only knows what, but not the treatment that they were used to when they were in the care of Steve and myself. After a long, hard, emotional day we arrived in Okeechobee, greeted by FWC officers, for what reason I do not know. Protection from the media, according to Lt. Chris Harris. Perhaps the media should have been there to witness the shape the cats were in upon their release from Vernon Yates’ care after 480 days. Bo, the male tiger, had lost between 75 and 100 pounds, and Lepa’s eyesight had deteriorated in the care of a facility approved by FWC. And these are the people and agencies that are concerned with the welfare and safety of captive

wildlife in Florida?

Upon their arrival to Animal Adventures in Okeechobee, Sue Pearce did everything to make the transition easy on the three cats, particularly Bo, who appeared to have suffered the most. I spent the rest of my summer vacation in Okeechobee, beginning to regain the trust of the cats that were forcibly removed and changed forever... and should have been returned in the allotted time Vernon Yates said. After all, he *is* an agent of FWC.

Oko, the black leopard, was in her enclosure in Okeechobee, next to a clawed leopard that belongs to Sue Pearce. Oko was not clawed. Her foot went through the chain link and JD, the clawed leopard, hooked her and ripped her toe. It was determined by Dr. Davis, Sue Pearce’s vet, that Oko needed sutures. Oko never came out of the sedation and we lost her on November 26, 2013, six months after we got her back. Oko came home to Loxahatchee, to be buried on the property. There is not a day that passes that I do not think of my beautiful girl. Had she remained in Loxahatchee, or been returned, she would still be alive today. She was in perfect health.

In October 2014, I once again applied for a Class I license with FWC, never thinking I would obtain one. But on November 14, 2014, my license arrived in the mail, issued to Tarzan’s Big Cat Sanctuary. Then, FWC informed Sue Pearce that a license had been issued to me “in error” and she was not to release the cats. A few days later, I received a letter from FWC informing me that the license was issued in error and they intended to revoke the license. Once again, I could appeal. FWC decided to “shelve” my appeal until I applied for and obtained a USDA license. Once again, FWC was relying on USDA to deny my application so they could revoke. I still had hope, though... a second chance. This time, two cages were built in Loxahatchee, the expense this time out-of-pocket. An inspection was done and once again the cages passed, but this time Investigator Garzaniti refrained from stating that a license should be



Happier days at the Tarzan Big Cat Sanctuary, where the humans and animals could share space and affection.

issued. I applied for USDA. They received the application on February 7, 2015. The application has never been processed. An application with USDA usually takes four to six weeks to process, but this application needed an inquiry. An investigator came, from Miami, with more questions on April 3, 2015. Finally, on June 11th, I received a letter from USDA denying the application, once again because of past history.

I have now come to the realization that I will not have an FWC license, nor a USDA license (although I am as qualified as anyone who has both these licenses), nor will my Lepa and Bo ever be able to come home, even though I have been in compliance with FWC since March of 2012, and, if given the opportunity, I qualify for the USDA license. But because of the past history of Steve Sipek, I am forever denied.

Now, after two years of traveling to Okeechobee, and caring for Lepa and Bo, plus 26 other big cats at the facility, I am no longer permitted on the property to see Lepa and Bo. I appreciate Sue Pearce and Animal Adventures giving my Lepa, Bo, and Oko a new home. You can read her statements in the TOP CATS ROAR blog as well. The past three years have taken a physical and emotional toll on me. My priority has always been and will always be Lepa and Bo and the care they receive, as well as the other animals. For two years I have worked without a day off, seven days a week. I traveled to Okeechobee



Oko, the black leopard, passed away while at Animal Adventures. She failed to wake up from anesthesia.

chobee, and spent as much time as possible with Lepa and Bo, as well as cleaning all cat enclosures, tubs, and water containers, and feeding at one time, 26 other big cats. At first, I was able to do this. I used to stay with Sue, as she opened her home to me as well, until one weekend when she said she was going to petition the court to take ownership of the cats away from Steve. From that day forward, our relationship would not be the same.

Steve Sipek may have had caging deficiencies according to FWC, but his animals were always cared for, for over 40 years. There were times we disagreed. There were times Sue told me I could only come on weekends during business hours, so I had to drive back and forth Saturdays and Sundays. BUT I DID NOT QUIT. I watched as things changed. I saw things that needed to be changed, but were not. I was alone at the facility on the weekends the majority of the time. My frustration level was increasing. One person cannot manage 28 big cats alone. But Sue was unwilling to make the necessary changes. So I made sacrifices. At first, I was told if I no longer wanted to do my “chores,” I could pick one day a week and come and see Lepa and Bo from the “public walkway.” I would not have contact with Lepa and Bo.

There was an inspection on June 26th, by FWC, and that weekend I was told via



Melanie rebuilds her relationship with the cats after more than a year of absence and now separated by chain link fencing.

text message that I no longer needed to come to her facility. I had planned to go on weekends. However, shortly thereafter I was told that I was no longer allowed on her property. She had contacted FWC for validation and they told her she did not have to allow me on her property, so now I am no longer allowed on her property to see Lepa and Bo. Steve can see his cats providing he contacts her and lets her know when he wants to come, BUT he will not have contact with his cats either and will only be allowed on the public walkway.

Steve is now 73 years old. He has health issues and is unable to travel that distance often. Not only have the animals been taken away from him (and me) by the FWC, but now also Sue Pearce and Animal Adventures, to whom we entrusted the care of Lepa, Bo, and Oko.

I have not only had to deal with the loss of the cats, but also the physical and emotional wear and tear on me for the past two years. I have been told by people in

the animal industry that they do not know how I survived as long as I have, Sue Pearce being one of them. Sue told me that if what happened to me had happened to her (the taking of her animals), she would have “blown her head off.” But now, she is keeping Lepa and Bo from having contact with me.

I would never, regardless of the situation or issue, keep animals, exotic or domestic, away from their owners.

The welfare of Lepa, Bo (and Oko, when she was alive) was and always will be my primary concern, no matter what sacrifices I have had to make or will have to make. I pray that your animals and you yourselves are never subjected to what Lepa, Bo, Oko, Steve, and I have been subjected. I pray for St. Francis to protect your animals and God to bless us, everyone.

Be careful of your words and actions... I once heard someone say, “No one will ever take my animals away from me.”

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.

General Donations:

Joseph Meyers
Chris Tromborg

Phil Cooper
Lynn Culver
Martin Engster
FCF Corporation

Tiger Ridge Legal Fund:

Nanette McGann

Jim Fouts
Amy Gates
Jeremy Gillow

Fishing Cat Donations:

Nicole Ammon
Lea & Bobby Aufill
Kim Barker
Kurt & Patti Beckelman
Jamie Borros
Fred Boyajian
Pat Callahan
Kevin Chambers

Teralee Harral
Robert & Sandra Hohn
Della Jacot
Shelleen Mathews
Kathy Stearns
Mindy Stinner
Tim Stoffel
Leila Wassom

The FCF appreciates your generosity & continued support.

Wichita, Kansas Convention Was Top-Notch

By Jennifer Kasserman

What a great convention once again! For those of you who were unable to attend, you were all missed and we hope you will join us next year. This year, I was close enough to drive, and therefore even able to go a few days early. Now I know Wichita, Kansas, maybe doesn't sound "oh so exciting," but, like any town, it has a few gems for everyone, especially us "cat people."

We arrived at the hotel Tuesday night. The hotel staff was very nice and the excitement began as I visited with so many friends I don't get to see often enough, especially my roomie, Della Jacot. One great thing about Della is her enthusiasm and passion for animals, especially servals, which worked out well, because for the next five nights we each had a serval bed-mate. It took a little bit of time to get everyone comfortable, but the cats had taken over the room and made it their home in no time.

Wednesday morning, we headed downstairs for the educators course, which was being taught by Michelle McKay and Kim Barker from North Carolina's Conservators' Center and Zoofari Educational Encounters. Next door, Mindy Stinner had another group for the husbandry course. I completed the husbandry course myself several years back and Mindy was also my instructor. It was at my first convention and I remember how welcomed I felt as a newbie by Mindy and how in awe I was about everything I learned from her.



The wildlife conservation educator's class had a feline attendee. Photo by Michelle McKay.

I find it very valuable to all that Mindy still leads this course.

For the last few years, I have been exhibiting and educating, so I was very excited to see what Michelle had planned for us. I brought my partner in Exotics R Us, out of Kansas City, Crystal Harris, to this class, knowing the benefits it would offer us both.

Just as expected, Michelle did a great job. I think what I enjoyed most from the course though were the questions others in the class asked and the discussions we all had about what or how would be the best way to respond to different situations.

For the afternoon half of our class, my almost a year old serval, Sianna, sat in. Sianna has been doing programs since a few weeks of age and she demonstrated her great poise and attention while listening and learning herself. Sianna is a great ambassador animal. Many hours have gone into working with Sianna to encourage her personality and behaviors. Many of you yourselves

have worked with servals for years and understand their nature, so you can recognize that special-ness Sianna has in her.

Thursday was my birthday, so that morning a few of us loaded up and headed out to Rolling Hills Zoo, just outside Salina. Knowing that our next few days would be spent on outside zoo trips,

we decided to tour the museum at Rolling Hills. I have toured the museum before and strongly encourage anyone who has an opportunity to take the time if you are ever in the area. Their animal displays are well done and full of details. Air conditioning helped us out also as we explored the displays. A special display they had on hand was their bat exhibit. We took in all the sights, even the

raised plate coloring table.

Now back to the hotel to get cleaned up for our first official event of convention. Sianna continued to demonstrate her



One of the kittens at convention was this cute little bobcat. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

ambassador skills as she took over the reception area's greeting table, becoming the official greeter as members began showing up and signing in.

We had a great southwestern buffet dinner to kick things off, followed by our general membership meeting and a game of "Spinning Wheel of Cat Trivia," complete with prizes. FCF members lined up for serval kisses and kitten and cub interactions all evening long. Our members' knowledge was tested greatly by different trivia questions, but most everyone knew their stuff.

Friday morning after breakfast, we traveled to Sedgwick County Zoo, located in West Wichita. A great water display greets visitors at the entrance. The zoo has an impressive lion habitat, and other notable species displayed were red panda, gorilla, and meerkats. We gathered on a



The "Spinning Wheel of Cat Trivia" was a lot of fun. Here, Fred Boyajian shows off his knowledge on hybrid cats. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



The Sedgwick County Zoo has tiger feeding demonstrations each day. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

shady deck overlooking one of their many waterways at the zoo for a delicious barbeque buffet lunch. I really liked how this zoo incorporated their natural water sources throughout many of the displays.

We met for a special talk at the tiger habitat. There is a comfortable indoor building that overlooks the tigers and has a large glass window that closes over a heavy duty wire opening. Once a day, the window is swung open and the tigers are enticed over to the wire by offering meat treats. The cats stand as the keepers feed them meatballs on the ends of feeding sticks, which offers great photo opportunities.

Friday night was left open and many



During the behind the scenes tour at Tanganyika, Kathy Stearns got a good look at the rhinoceros.

drove downtown to watch the “Keeper of the Flames” or the firewalkers show. Some just hung out at the hotel for some cat visiting. Who doesn’t love a baby Geoff hopping around, with a Siberian lynx baby close behind and a bob on the tail of them all? Solo, Kae Sherrell-Hamilton’s adorable baby serval kitten, was only a few weeks old, so he was available to see in her room. He stole the hearts of all who visited him. I believe any one of us would have stuck Solo in our pocket (theoretically, of course) and taken him home with us if needed.

I was fortunate enough to sneak off to dinner with a few friends and enjoy discussions for future strategies pertaining to all of our real life situations we see in regards to our animals all over. One thing I have learned from my experience in the FCF is that we gain knowledge and strength through the support we provide one another.

Saturday morning after breakfast, we listened to our noted speakers. One of our speakers was Mindy Patterson, president of The Cavalry Group. My first exposure to The Cavalry Group was at FCF Convention last year in Arizona. If you are not familiar with them, you need to stop, look, and listen for a minute. Mindy and her husband, Mark, are the founders of this group, and their purpose is protecting and defending animal owners and enterprise. Together, we must all work for the preservation and conservation of species.

Then we bussed to Tanganyika Wildlife Park. Upon arrival, we were greeted by Matt Fouts, who explained the layout of the park and talked about the special features we could participate in throughout the day with our VIP passes. The park was fantastic; we got to feed lori-keets, rhino, giraffes, tortoises, goats, rabbits, and hippo, and guests could enter their kangaroo yard and interact with them. Every display was well kept and filled with great animal enrichment areas. We were all taking notes and photos to take home

with us.

We met back up in their conference building and had a nice, refreshing deli lunch. As we were finishing up, we were greeted by park owner and FCF member, Jim Fouts. Jim went through how he started the park in 1985, some of the trials and tribulations, projects for the future, and success they have had over the years. Their belief in real life encounters for educating future generations is something very true to my own heart.

Next, we were presented with a real treat, as five handlers entered the room bringing in two clouded leopard cubs, five snow leopard cubs, and a young binturong. Everyone got plenty of opportunities to hold and photograph the ambassadors.

As the cubs’ afternoon naptime approached, we all reluctantly said good-



Impressive lion pair at Sedgwick County Zoo. Photo by Jeremy Gillow.

bye to these special ambassadors. Next, Jim and Sherri had even more in store for us as they led us through a behind-the-scenes personal tour. I was in awe of just how far Jim and Sherri have come since their beginning and what a fantastic environment they have created for their animals. They have overcome legal and personal battles many of us are familiar with, or more than likely will become in our futures.

I was able to speak with Sherri a bit and was inspired by her positive take on everything around us. The tour started with the rhinos, which came right to her and waited for acknowledgement, including pats from their mom, and they even called out to her and Jim when we were leaving their building. All the animals’ homes exceeded expectations and the animals all radiated happiness.

We toured behind the scenes of the cat breeding area. Mind you, the cheetahs



Shelleen Mathews lulled this lynx cub to sleep in her arms. Photo by Teralee Harrell.

watched every step or rolling wheel as we passed through. Servals, caracals, and Siberian lynxes, all dear to my heart, were next. We met the parents of the leopard cubs we met earlier, and some jaguars, too.

Speaking with Sherri was one of my personal highlights of the week in Wichita. Her balance and honesty as a real person in the field were things I related to while noting the knowledge she shared with me from some of her experiences. The Fouts have dedicated their lives to



Sianna, Jennifer Kasserman's experienced ambassador serval, greets FCF member Fred Boyajian at the reception table at the Thursday evening ice breaker.

their animals, as so many of us have to, and at the end of the day you can tell they still get the same enjoyment and satisfaction from an interaction themselves with just any one of their animals. I left Tanganyika inspired.

Back at the hotel, we cleaned up. Mind you, Della and I had to wait as Sianna and Mara felt the need to use the tub also.

Prior to dinner, the silent auction was finishing up. So, as Sianna sat out front greeting everyone, I was inside checking my bids. The silent auction is always an exciting part, running around, back and forth, checking your bids, checking the time, trying to find out who is number 22 that keeps outbidding you so you can watch them like a hawk. Then the time is up and dinner is on the table.

Throughout dinner, I listened to everyone share and talk about their day, and the bittersweetness started to kick in that convention was nearing its conclusion and it will more than likely be until next year before many of us see one another again. But, alas, things must come to an end and, like many others, I was ready to be home with my animals, as many of us don't often leave our homes for days at a time. Having a few felines join us at convention, I believe, helps us all with our homesickness.

After dinner, as we settled up the silent auction winner items, the live auction began. Della Jacot, our live auctioneer this year, kicked it into gear with high energy and enthusiastic encouragement.

There was a great variety of unique, one-of-a-kind items and friendly bidding on item after item. There were acts of generosity and sincerity that were appreciated and noted by many of the FCF veterans there and seen by the latest generation of new members.

Altogether, it was another great convention filled with seeing old friends and making new ones, while sharing once-in-a-lifetime experiences. The only thing left at the end was that lingering question of... "So, where is convention going to be next year, Lynn?!"



FCF auctioneer Della Jacot brings in the bids on this cast bronze lion door knocker. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Ashwin Naidu returned to speak at convention and enjoy the kittens like this little Geoffroy's cat. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Lea Aufferl got to feed the rhinoceros at the Tanganyika Wildlife Park. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Ronald LaTorre flew down from Canada, for a chance to give a clouded leopard a chin scratch. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Olivia Robertson, of Walk on the Wild Side, is daydreaming about her facility's next ambassador feline. Photo by Steve Higgs.



Bobby Aufferling holds a clouded leopard cub. Photo by Steve Culver.

Your Best Shots!



This was Jamie Borrows' first convention and she made the most of it; cuddling this snow leopard made her day.



Fred Boyajian got in plenty of clouded leopard loving at Tanganyika.



Jennifer Kasserling cuddles a clouded leopard.



clouded
by Lynn



JB and Reva pose with snow leopard cub. Photo by Kathy Stearns.



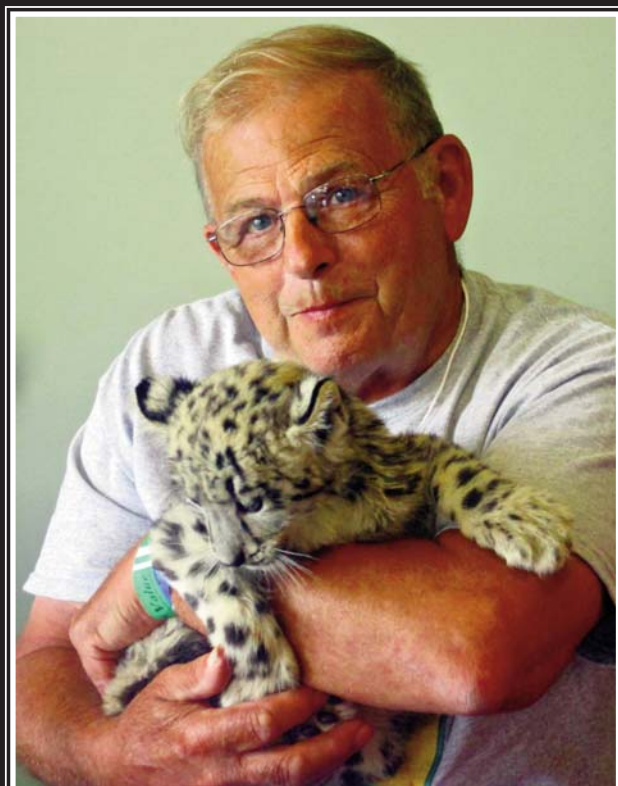
Mindy Stinner is in love. Photo by Michelle McKay.



man cud-
opard cub



Tim Stoffel is savoring the time spent holding this snow leopard cub.



Dan Gluck has an armload of snow leopard. Photo by Chris McNeese.

FCF Convention Was a Blast!

By James Aikman, Aikman Wildlife Adventure

For about the last 18 months, my family and I have been working on establishing Aikman Wildlife Adventure, a wildlife park featuring both drive-through and



James Aikman poses with fellow husbandry course graduates. Back row, L to R: Phil Cooper, Ed Lerner, James Aikman, Robert Beebe, Mindy Stinner, Arielle Klein, Eric Schiller. Front row, L to R: Kathy Lerner, John Kasserman, Scott Green, Adoracion Beebe, Amy Gates, Amanda Engster, Tammy Rene Crawford.

walk-through experiences. We have worked with just about every type of animal we will have at the park, with the exception of cats. Over this last year, we have been doing a ton of researching, planning, budgeting, preparing, and definitely a lot of learning. Through all of that is how we found out about the FCF. We felt that becoming members was a great next step for us in regards to learning more about the cats. Even though we have always known we would be starting out small with bobcats and servals, we knew the more we could learn the better our animals would be and the better off we would be.

This was the first FCF convention I

have attended, and although I was excited, I was not sure what to expect. I chose to come a day early and complete the husbandry class. The class far exceeded my expectations. I was blown away by the amount of great information that was packed into just one day. We covered just about every topic one could imagine, and the class had people in it from literally every experience level. I was thrilled to walk away from it with a better understanding of what we will need to do for our cats. I was also reassured that everything I had been learning before coming to the class was paying off as well. I made some great connections and friendships in the class which only got better as the convention went on. I would encourage anyone who is even remotely considering taking the husbandry class to do so. With the amount of information you learn, the networking that can be done, and the reasonable price, it would be very hard to find something similar anywhere else. This was my first FCF convention, but it will not be my last one.

By Phil Cooper

As a first-time attendee to an annual FCF convention, I really had no idea of what to expect. Well, in my wildest dreams I never knew just how much knowledge I was carrying with me back to Mississippi. On the first day, I attended and completed the eight-hour husbandry



Phil Cooper never imagined he would have an opportunity to hold a snow leopard cub, one of the world's most endangered felines.

course. Diet and health-care for wild felines were topics that I hoped to learn more about, and after the day was done my instructor, Mindy Stinner, had given me as much information as I could ask for. Thanks, Mindy!

That evening was terrific, meeting and socializing with fellow big cat lovers. I truly think I made at least ten friends for life. I enjoyed so much hearing their stories of friendships with their big cats. The following days were mixed with handling baby wild cats and very interesting road trips to the Sedgwick County Zoo (Top Ten in America) and Tanganyika Wildlife Park. Tanganyika Wildlife Park gave the FCF group VIP treatment and we were allowed to handle clouded leopards and snow leopards. Wow!! I learned so many wonderful ideas for enclosures and enrichment for wild cats.



At Tanganyika Wildlife Park, the servals' spacious habitat was a favorite with FCF members.

Thanks to the terrific folks at Tanganyika for making this a special day!! One subject that really touched me was learning about the ongoing fishing cat conservation efforts. I must admit that I knew very little about the fishing cats before arriving, but after listening to program director Ashwin Naidu's presentation, I have a special place in my heart for these little wild cats. Great work, Ashwin!! Packing up and leaving my new friends was hard, but I surely look forward to next year's convention, wherever it may be.

Our 25 Years with Outreach Ambassador Cats

By Barbara Dicely

The Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund (previously Leopards, Etc.), founded by Rob and Barbara Dicely, has been a USDA- and California Fish and Wildlife-licensed facility for 30 years. We have held U.S. Fish and Wildlife endangered species permits since 1994. WCE&CF is a registered 501(c) nonprofit.

We currently have 21 wild cats at our facility. The cats' enclosures are located at our home, on 22 acres in the San Francisco Bay area. Our cats range in age from one to 22 years old.

The goal of the Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund (WCE&CF) is to educate the public about the decreasing population of wild cat species around the world, to provide funding for worldwide wild cat conservation projects, and to offer safe refuge for captive wild cats.

WCE&CF has been providing school assemblies throughout the 12 San Francisco Bay area counties for 25 years. We have averaged 75 to 100 presentations each year. Most of our programs are at schools, from preschool to the state university level. We also do programs for the Scouts, Boys and Girls Clubs, parks and recreation departments, libraries, the Academy of Sciences, and businesses.

We want to educate children and adults about the amazing wild cats that share our planet with us. We feel it is difficult to care about something you know nothing about. If we are going to save the 36 wild cat species, we have to educate people about their status and what can be done to keep them from extinction.

We feel that presenting a live animal has a much bigger impact than showing a DVD. When that cheetah or lynx walks out on the stage, the children (and adults) are seeing a real, living and breathing cat that they can relate to, not just an image on a screen.

In the past 25 years, our outreach ambassador cats have included two snow leopards, two African leopards, two black African leopards, six cheetahs, one clouded leopard, two Siberian lynx, four Canada lynx, three bobcats, two caracals, three servals, two ocelots, two cougars, one Geoffroy's cat, and one fishing cat. Some of our ambassadors did outreach programs their entire lives; my first snow leopard

made appearances until she was 19 years old. Some of our cats choose to work for two years; all of our bobcats became homebodies once they reached sexual maturity at two years of age. All of our cats live out their lives with us. We do not dump our cats when they chose to retire. Outreach presentations should be fun for the cat. When it is no longer fun, they retire. The choice is always theirs to make.

Our outreach presentations are strictly educational. None of our cats perform tricks. Each cat comes out on stage on a leash and jumps up on a table. My husband, Rob, handles each cat, while I discuss information about the species and answer questions. Only one cat is out at a time and our presentations are never hands-on by the audience.

The other important aspect of our work is to provide support and funds for in-situ wild cat conservation. Our conservation partners include the Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, Cheetah Outreach in South Africa, the Snow Leopard Conservancy, the Small Cat Conservation Alliance, and the California Mountain Lion Foundation.

We know each conservationist personally and can vouch that our donors' money will be spent on the cats' conservation in the field. We donate a significant amount of money to each partner every year. We also bring our ambassador cats to our partners' fundraisers held in the Bay area. Hearing Dr. Sanderson give his presentation and then seeing a live ocelot, fishing cat, and Geoffroy's cat are the perfect pairing for the greatest impact.

We have always used the more common smaller cats (lynx, bobcat, serval, caracal, and

ocelot) in our outreach presentations. About six years ago, Dr. Sanderson, the world's leading expert on the small cats, asked us to include lesser known small cats in our program. Twenty-eight of the wild cat species are small cats. Little is known about many of them. They are understudied and their conservation is under financed. Many of them are listed as endangered. The second most endangered cat is the Andean mountain cat. The third most endangered is the Borneo Bay cat.

It might sound strange, but training a small cat to do outreach is more difficult than training a large cat. Small cats do not want to be out in the open. Their instinct is to hide, which is why many zoos do not want them in their collections.

So, six years ago, we purchased a female Geoffroy's cat kitten from Lynn Culver. We were told we would be lucky if we got her to do outreach programs for a year. She is now a whopping six and a half pounds and six years old. She readily goes into her carrier and comes out at the presentations. We do handle her differently than we do the larger cats. Instead of walking her from her carrier at the back of



Barbara Dicely talks to the audience while her husband Rob holds onto Shoshone, their 11 year old female cougar.

the stage, we put her carrier on the presentation table. If she gets nervous while she is out, she can go back into the crate for a break. She enjoys being out and loves to check out the stage.

Of course, the audience thinks she is beautiful and wants to take her home as a pet. This opens up a great opportunity for a dialog that this is a wild cat and, even though she is tiny, not a domestic pet.

Two years ago, Dr. Sanderson told us he was doing a lot of work with the fishing cat in Southern Asia, and suggested we add a fishing cat to our program. “Bandhu” entered our lives and has become an amazing ambassador. Once again, he takes some additional work on our part, as he is very shy. We tell the people in the audience that they need to be extra quiet and remain still while he is out. The children always cooperate and are fascinated by his looks and ability to swim underwater. Most people have never heard of a fishing cat and do not know it is endangered. When they ask what they can do to help save these cats, our answer is, “Don’t buy any product that contains palm oil and don’t buy farm raised shrimp.” Palm tree plantations and shrimp ponds are destroying the habitat of the fishing cat, flat headed cat, and Asian leopard cat.

If you are considering doing outreach education with your cats, I strongly encourage you to add some small cats to your collection. Many of the small cat species are difficult to obtain, but the rewards are tremendous. They have wonderful personalities and you will be helping species that really need help. The little cats deserve to survive and prosper as much as the big cats do.

The fishing cat does not have the large presence of a tiger, but he is his own amazing self.

Have there been challenges to our outreach programs? Definitely. Have there been days when we wish we had an office job with little responsibility? Yes. Are today’s programs different from those we did in the early years? Again, yes. Times change and our



Rob directs their cheetah, Temba, to walk across the table.

program has changed with them. We used to visit four or five schools a week. We had over 12 outreach ambassador cats, so no cat came out more than two days a week. Schools had budgets that allowed for multiple assemblies each school year. Today, most of our cats are senior citizens that no longer participate in our outreach programs. School assembly budgets have been cut drastically. “Risk Management” has made entire school districts inaccessible to us. The “powers that be” are so concerned about liability; they will not allow our assemblies. Even when we offer to bring small cats like a serval and a Geoffroy’s cat, they still think in terms of 400 pound tigers and say NO. USDA has changed and continues to change regulations. In the near future we will probably not be able to include our cheetah, cougar, and leopard as outreach ambassadors. We

are currently doing two outreach presentations each week.

We spend three to five hours a day in our van due to increased traffic congestion in the Bay area. Our van currently has 340,000 miles on its odometer.

Some days the audience is restless or one of the cats decides it does not like the set-up and does not want to participate. We pay a very large liability insurance policy annually. After spending hours in commuter traffic, we unload cats and feed 21 cats and clean their enclosures.

Is it worth the effort? We think so. These cats and their wild cousins are so very important to us.

This year Rob will turn 70, and I will turn 69. We have been talking about retiring. Then, we go to this week’s school assembly and meet a parent who says he saw us when he was in third grade and remembers everything we told him about wild cats. He remembers the snow leopard’s name was Chin-su and she was amazing. Now, his child is meeting our cats and learning to be the next generation of wild cat conservationists. Maybe five years from now we will consider retiring!

You can learn more about us at our website, www.wildcatfund.org.



Chachi, a three year old ocelot, demonstrates his climbing abilities for the audience.

Studying the Cheetah Population for Implementation of Conservation Measures for Their Survival in Tsavo, Kenya

During the annual Board of Directors Meeting at the FCF Convention in Wichita, the FCF Board of Directors voted to approve the Conservation Committee's recommendation to grant \$2,400 to fund the ongoing research, public education, and human/animal conflict mitigation work in Tsavo, Kenya. The FCF has joined the Felidae Conservation Fund and TUI Netherlands in supporting this important work.

By Chérie Schroff, Tsavo Cheetah Project

An Introduction to the Project

Tsavo East National Park, in southeast Kenya, comprises an area of 13,747 km² (8,542 square miles), with a large variance in habitat. Although declared protected land by the government of Kenya and managed by the Kenya Wildlife Service, multiple species populations, including the cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*), are declining. Bordering the unfenced park to the southeast and southwest, reside local tribes and communities who rely upon livestock or agriculture farming for their subsistence. Tragically, conflict with predators often arises when unguarded livestock are grazed outside and even inside the park boundaries during the dry season. A lack of knowledge has resulted in further deaths of cheetahs, which are often killed simply out of fear.

Since 2012, the long-term Tsavo Cheetah Project has been studying the population characteristics and conservation status of the cheetah in the Tsavo East National Park. We began by interviewing local residents, park personnel, and stakeholders about cheetah presence, behavior, and conflicts, while also recording cheetah and other predator spoor and direct sightings.

Methodologies for monitoring population status and distribution are non-invasive, reflecting regulations in Kenya's national parks. Direct sightings are supplemented by spoor tracking. Data are gathered opportunistically by tour drivers or the principal investigator within known cheetah territories. Sighting and spoor locations are mapped for distribution and home range studies. In dense vegetation, infrared camera traps have been useful in confirming presence of predators and for identifying animals through their spot patterns.

We share sighting data with the Zoological Society of London, thereby providing the larger cross-boundary information on populations in the Tsavo and northern Tanzania habitats. To date, we have identified 39 individual cheetahs; an additional four (4) observations remain uncertain due to the distances of the sightings. Earlier this year, field efforts expanded geographically to include the northern sector of the park (above the divid-



Chérie Schroff with Mercy, a student at the White House School, which borders Tsavo East across the Mombasa Road. The Tsavo Cheetah Project is the only initiative working to assist residents with human-wildlife conflict pertaining to predators in and neighboring Tsavo East and the majority of Tsavo West National Parks.



The Tsavo Cheetah Project team includes Bernard, a resident of the area who placed camera units on his land to document the cheetah presence and potential livestock depredation.

ing Galana River) and the communities on the periphery. We have documented a moderate to high number of cheetahs within the study area, although with a substantial threat of decline due to persecution by local residents and, less commonly, non-selective poaching with snares. We seek out predator conflict reports from the neighboring communities and assist them with appropriate livestock protection measures. We also provide information on predators and their behavior. Tragically, in Tsavo, as with many other places in Africa, cheetahs are sometimes killed for no reason at all --- simply out of fear. Local residents of varying tribes within the Tsavo ecosystem, who lack knowledge on local predators, see the cheetah merely as a big animal with teeth and claws; a threat! Therefore, they will sometimes stab, spear, or poison these harmless, non-aggressive cats simply to rid the fear.

Furthermore, cheetahs and leopards are often regarded as the same species by a number of local residents; referred to as "Chui," the Kiswahili name for leopard. They will tell us that cheetahs (even when shown in photos) live in trees, kill baboons, and jump over bomas at night. As knowledge on cheetah behavior and



In most cases of reported and confirmed livestock depredation by the cheetah, the young calves, goats, and sheep are attacked when they are near or actually inside the park boundary not being supervised, when they wander off from the herder, or are left tied, again unsupervised, to a tree or fence, or in a shallow, makeshift boma.

camera trap captures have shown us, they are in fact speaking of the leopard. The cheetah is active during daytime hours, and hunts in early morning after sunrise and late afternoon, when the sun begins to go down. They do not climb up large trees like leopards and would only walk in-between or over a short and very poorly built boma (livestock corral). In most cases of reported and confirmed livestock depredation by the cheetah, the young calves, goats, and sheep are attacked when they are near or actually inside the park boundary not being supervised, when they wander off from the herder, or are left tied, again unsupervised, to a tree or fence, or in a shallow, make-shift boma.

There have been some nocturnal cases of cheetahs taking goats which are tied out during the night, while the watchmen sleep. All of these incidents are so preventable; but the key is always education on predator behavior, especially as it relates to predation, and the improvement of livestock husbandry, both of which we instill in all communities where such attacks have occurred, even in those where they have not. All depredation reports made by residents on the periphery of Tsavo East continue to be investigated upon notification. Investigations into cheetah presence and depredation on small (and occasionally large) bodied livestock, verification through examination of bite marks and

measures to reduce conflict with the cheetah and other large cats, is an ongoing activity of the project.

Since inception, reports from initially interviewed communities have decreased, especially with a large Maasai community bordering the Mombasa Road, who have made witnessed efforts to reduce predator conflict, at least outside the national park. However, this is with bias, since many initial reports from these

Maasai were not believed to be based on actual conflict in each occasion, but as an incentive for potential compensation from the project. In the past few months, two of eight reported incidents were verified by corroborating evidence of cheetah bite marks. Camera trap units have since been placed at this single location where Oromo people currently reside. Depredation, in this case, is believed to be a result of unsupervised free-range goats in daytime hours wandering close to the park's boundary, as residents had admitted.

Beginning last year, we had initiated cheetah and ecology education programs in local schools with developed curricula and activity booklets at all grade levels.

To date, many of the programs consist of an initial, class appropriate (students are divided by class level in two separate



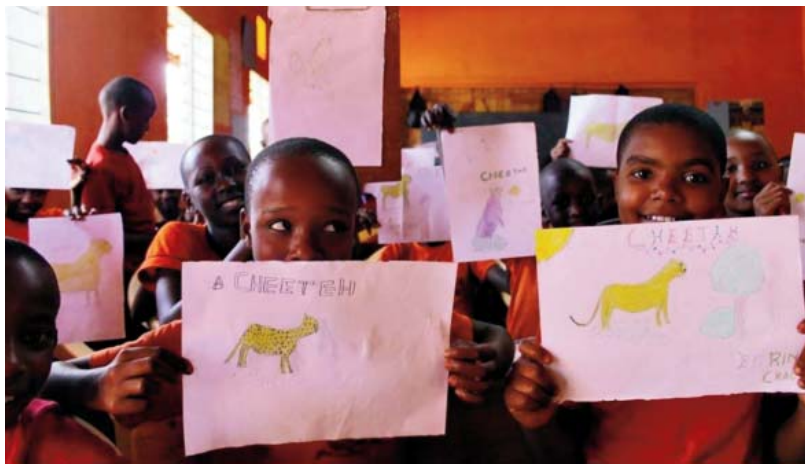
Since inception of the Cheetah Project, reports of cheetah conflicts have decreased, especially with a large Maasai community bordering the Mombasa Road, who have made witnessed efforts to reduce predator conflict, at least outside the national park.

sessions) talk on the cheetah and the Tsavo ecosystem, with slides followed by art activities, quiz and answer, puppetry and story reading, with incorporation of the curriculum-based education booklets. Simon Trevor of the African Environmental Film Foundation recently granted the project DVDs on Kenya cheetahs and predators to use in the programs for higher level classes and adults. In accordance with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), the Project has established a partnership with Tsavo East Education Centre through education warden Twalib Saaid. The project will be keeping the same "A Tsavo Cheetah's Ecosystem" program given its success in ten schools to date, but incorporating visits, talks, and films by the KWS education officers pertaining to predators in the Tsavo ecosystem. With this, we shall also resume the expansion of the education programs to the eastern Tsavo West boundary and, eventually, throughout additional priority areas within the ecosystem where cheetah presence is known. One key reason that we attribute the programs as being such a success in the primary schools is because we have managed to make them so fun for the children. Through incorporating story and picture books, puppetry, and interaction-engaging educational activities, we believe knowledge on and sensitization to the cheetah will have a much larger long-term impact and create memorable experiences for the students.

In secondary schools, this is achieved through community poster creations on the cheetah and poem contests, in addition to curriculum-based activities in the educational booklets. The number of primary school involvements (seven) has been higher than the secondary schools; given the class schedules, primary levels are much more flexible for inclusion of the program. During mid- and later June, we had the first art exercise in two primary schools. The enthusiasm and knowledge of the cheetah actually exceeded our expectations. It was remarkably impressive that the lessons and stories taught to the students in just a few months had notably been retained by the large majority of pupils. Their answers in an oral quiz preceded

ing the art assignment surpassed what we had predicted and many of the students' cheetah drawings depicted the anatomy, adaptations, and/or specialized behavior of the cheetah. Other than some misspelling of the word cheetah, which was never taught through the programs until afterward, these recent sessions clearly indicate the successfulness of project visits and the teacher-led program implementation.

I also had a chance to inquire with some students regarding their parents' and other elders' knowledge on the cheetah and how they perceived this cat and other predators on their land and what they have told them about the cheetah through their lessons. As expected, the older children responded in more detail and the most common answers I received was that they had informed their parents that "the cheetah is a nice cat that would not harm a person" or "...would not harm a person unless they were attacked," with some of the children appropriately using the word **non-aggressive**. One boy replied that he



Beginning last year, The Tsavo Cheetah Project initiated cheetah and ecology education programs in local schools, with developed curricula and activity booklets at all grade levels.

had informed his family to "keep the livestock in sight, because it would not be the fault of the cheetah or other animal, if they were not watched over..." A few other students had apparently taught family and neighbors that "cheetahs and leopards are very different" and referred to key aspects of the species' behaviors and markings. From these questions, more students had committed to talking about their lessons and activities through the programs to parents and neighbors, especially those who live on rural land where conflict between residents and predators

has occurred. In a few of these locations, we found that we are working with some of these parents of the children or communities.

And this is what we are working toward, since many of the parents of these students did not have the opportunity to attend school; the children will often bring home their lessons and share them with their parents and grandparents. Reaching both the younger and older generations is the goal for building awareness and knowledge of the cheetah – and its ecosystem in Tsavo and why they both should be protected and conserved for now and the future. There is still a good deal more booklet mate-

rial and activities to cover. The kindergarten-aged students really enjoy the story books and cheetah puppetry that we had coordinated with their teachers. Enthusiasm is similarly evident in class levels 1-7 when we visit. It essentially becomes a fun, interactive, and educational day for all involved: the students, teachers, and the project. We hope we can continue in these schools and successfully expand to others with comparable and ongoing results. Of course, as far as measuring success through a decline in cheetah and predator conflict within the study area, this will take time and depend on the school program expansion, continued meetings and interviews, along with appropriate livestock loss prevention assistance in communities. Nevertheless, the initial school programs are a beginning and we expect that the students' communication with their parents and communities on the cheetah has already had a positive impact in some locations. We will know more at the end of the year, through program evaluations.

The majority of the project's visits to regular communities bordering the southwest boundary of Tsavo East during the past six months were affected by the construction of a new high-speed SRG railway along the immediate boundary of southwestern Tsavo East, running from Mombasa to Nairobi, or by reason of



The majority of the project's visits to regular communities bordering the southwest boundary of Tsavo East during the past six months were affected by the construction of a new high speed SRG railway along the immediate boundary of southwestern Tsavo East, running from Mombasa to Nairobi. Past data on cheetah and lion sightings, movements and conflict, along this boundary will be useful in the future for comparison and to determine the effects of the new high speed railway on movements and conflict with pastoralists and other residents along the periphery.

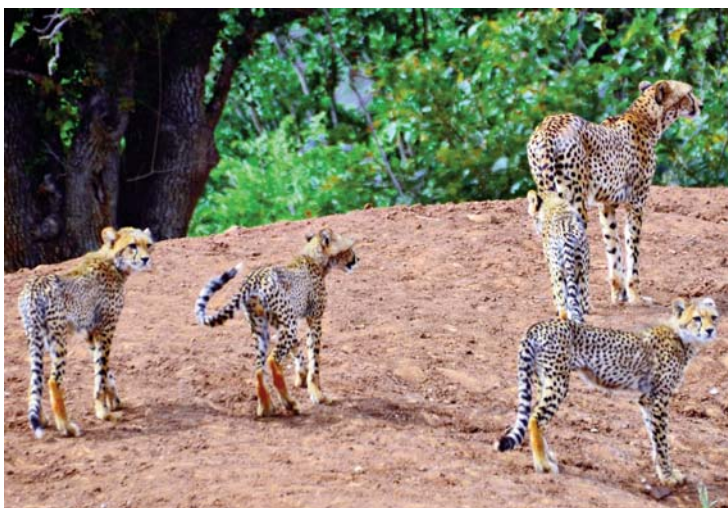


The project wishes to establish data on cheetah movements and threats along the Kasigau Wildlife Corridor, where there is potential for a large, connecting cheetah population through to Tsavo West and trans-border into Tanzania.

alteration in the animal movements due to the activity and relocation of some pastoral residents as a result of the construction.

I was recently notified of a cheetah mother and three cubs that were often seen on the park side of the construction site very close to the wildlife corridor, across from Rukinga. It appears the mother was trying to find a former water source outside the park boundaries. Prior to the construction several months earlier, and before the birth of her cubs, she had been seen by the research team and neighboring Taita residents crossing the road. As far as we know, Amara herself does not have a history of preying on live-stock, but there are still some local people who fear any large cat, so we try to monitor her movements, as with other cheetahs near communities, as much as possible. Often this is accomplished through the assistance of residents with whom we have built mutual rapport over the years. They will phone us when they see her or another identified individual cheetah or group, and we will proceed to the given location immediately, or as soon as we can, depending on our proximity. This particular location would not be ideal for camera trap placement, given its closeness to the road with many people passing by on foot and in vehicle; there would be a great risk of theft.

In addition to opportunistic direct sightings, we scan for cheetah spoor or scat, which at least provides evidence of cheetah presence and, in some cases, the sex and approximate age of the animal (by size and distribution of the tracks). On occasion, especially in the park, tracking of their spoor has actually led us to cheetahs. We are very curious who the father of Amara's cubs may be; if he mostly resides across the corridor road on the Rukinga side or closer to Amara in southern Tsavo East. He can be one of nine (9) known identified males within this southern area. Past data cheetah and lion sightings, movements, and conflict along this boundary will be useful in the future for comparison and obtainment of the effects of the new high-speed railway on movements and conflict with pastoralists and



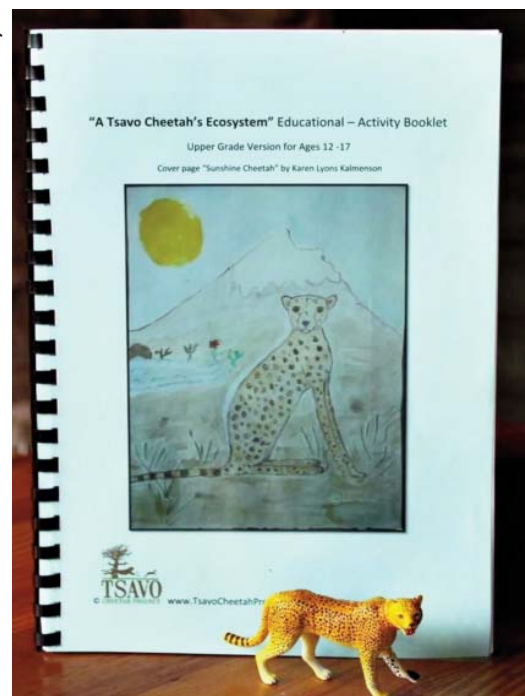
Chérie is familiar with Amara, a mother cheetah, and her three cubs. This family is often seen on the park side of the construction site, very close to the wildlife corridor, across from Rukinga. It appears Amara was trying to find a former water source outside the park boundaries.

other residents along the periphery.

Since inception, the project has focused efforts in the southern sector of Tsavo East, and on peripheries of the south-western boundary. Data on individual cheetahs and their distribution and movements is still lacking along the Kasigau Wildlife Corridor into southern Tsavo West National Park connecting to the boundary line of Tanzania, into Mkomazi National Park. From the Tsavo East cheetah population and Rukinga Sanctuary across the Mombasa Road, there is potential for a large, connecting cheetah population through to Tsavo West, and even the trans-border into Tanzania. Evidence, however, is deficient, requiring further and ideally collaborative research. For this reason, the project has also executed grant requests to establish data on cheetah movements and threats along the Kasigau Wildlife Corridor and southern Tsavo West to the Tanzania border; to identify individual cheetahs for subsequent ongoing monitoring and movement data, and conduct an initial threat assessment on threats to the species through semi-formal interviews with local residents, stakeholders, and park personnel, and corroborated findings by the project. Results will provide a baseline number of cheetahs within this study area, their distribution, initial spatial data, and potentially corroborated evidence of trans-border move-

ments and connecting cheetah populations between Kenya and Tanzania, paving the way for ongoing, collaborative monitoring and threat intervention.

Of course, our field sessions will continue in Tsavo East, to monitor identified animals over time and identify new animals (or those unidentified), as well as our scheduled school visits for the education, response, and investigation to community conflict reports. Here, there is also opportunity for more focus on movements, numbers, and conservation status of lions and other feline species. Thankfully, with the support of the Feline Conservation Federation, we can move forward with all of our critical field programs for the Tsavo cheetahs.



One key reason Chérie believes the educational programs are such a success in the primary schools is because they are fun for the children. Through incorporating story and picture books, puppetry and interactive, engaging educational activities, Chérie believes knowledge on and sensitization to the cheetah will have a much larger long-term impact, by creating memorable experiences for the students.

California Ends Bobcat Trapping

Edited from articles by Taylor Hill and Chris Clark

The Bobcat Protection Act of 2013 was intended to stop California's commercial bobcat trapping trade. The act came about after public outcry over the disappearance of bobcats on private land and in areas just outside Joshua Tree National Park.

However, by the time Governor Jerry Brown signed the bill, it had been amended into a semi-ban on bobcat trapping—creating no-trapping zones around national parks and wildlife refuges, but allowing trapping elsewhere. Commercial trapping is still licensed. And demand for bobcat pelts overseas has driven up prices to as much as \$200 to \$600 for just one clean, white belly fur hide—quite an increase from the \$78 a bobcat pelt fetched as recently as 2009.

Those rising pelt prices fueled a 50 percent increase in California bobcats killed in 2012, compared with the previous year, resulting in 1,813 bobcats taken from the wild.

Wildlife officials were once again asked by conservation groups and citizens for the full ban to be instated—and an end to the pelt trade in that state. At a state Fish and Game Commission meeting in April, officials reviewed their options and heard from the public on the bill: Around 40 people spoke in support of a total ban, with only four members speaking against it.

“Right now, the fate of bobcats is tied to the rise and fall of its fur prices in the international market, instead of a science-based plan,” said Brendan Cummings, senior counsel for the conservation group Center for Biological Diversity.

Still, the whole operation might have gone unnoticed and unchecked if it hadn't been for the near decimation of the species in the bobcat-loving community near Joshua Tree.

“We had bobcats coming in and out of people's yards every day—people had named them,” explained Cummings, who lives in Joshua Tree. “Then, very quickly, they started to disappear.”

The high desert community town lies on the border of the national park; trappers were lining the

park's boundary with wire cages equipped with bobcat lures, cat toys, and potent scent attractants.

“When we found out about the trapping, we suddenly realized where all of the bobcats had gone,” Cummings said.

Bobcats are widespread in the United States, with established populations in 47 of the Lower 48. Most states still allow hunting or trapping of bobcats in some form, but often set limits on how many an individual trapper can catch in a given year.

But in California, from November through January, it's open season on the bobcat. Since Prop 4 passed in 1998, it's illegal to trap any wild animal in California using a leg hold or similar trap. Bobcat trappers in California tend to use cage traps.

As long as the total haul each year didn't approach 14,400, the Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) maintained that the trapping season wasn't hurting the bobcats. 14,400 is an oddly precise number, so it's natural to assume there's some science behind it. And there is: it's one fifth of California's bobcat population when that population was last estimated -- in the late 1970s.

In 1979, the group Defenders of Wildlife sued to block export of bobcats from California, charging that the limit was based on faulty population estimates and assumptions about how quickly bob-

cats replenish their population after being hunted or trapped.

Defenders of Wildlife prevailed in court; a judge ordered a halt to export of bobcat pelts from California in 1982, and said that freeze could be lifted only when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) came up with scientifically accurate estimates of California's bobcat population and its ability to absorb losses to trapping and hunting. FWS never provided that estimate, and yet the court order banning bobcat trapping was lifted in December 1982, when changes to the Endangered Species Act made the case legally moot.

In Joshua Tree, Cummings said a local commercial trapper snagged 50 bobcats in 2012, the year the community started to notice a dearth of bobcats in the area. While 50 fewer bobcats might not be devastating to the species' overall health, Cummins thinks the concentrated killings can be regionally detrimental.

“Around Joshua Tree, its estimated there is about one bobcat for every two square miles of territory,” Cummings said. “That means he wiped out the bobcat population in about a 100-square-mile radius just outside of a national park.”

Bobcats are less picky in their eating habits than some of their relatives, like the lynx, but for the most part they eat rabbits and rodents. Like other predators, they act as a regulator on their prey populations. Without predators to keep them in check, prey populations explode.

Here's an example of how removing predators can have really bad effects. 2002 was a dry year in Joshua Tree, and scientists in the national park here noticed that a number of Joshua trees were dying. On examination, they found that small mammals such as black-tailed jackrabbits and antelope ground squirrels were stripping the bark from Joshua trees to get at the moist tissue beneath, killing the trees in their quest for water. Such dry years are expected to increase in number and severity as the climate warms. Bobcats eat ground squirrels and jackrabbits. They're thus one of the Joshua tree's most important allies in a warming world.

If California's bobcat management policy is based on 30 year old data that a court of law found faulty



The disappearance of the Joshua Tree bobcats sparked a public outcry to end the commercial trapping of bobcats on private land and in areas just outside the Joshua Tree National Park.

back then, how sure can anyone be that the trees will still have those allies when they need them?

Bobcat habitat has been steadily altered in the state of California. Bobcats live throughout the state, and throughout the state forests have been cut down, desert habitat paved over for suburbs, roads built, and the number of speeding drivers increased. If the 14,400 number had any validity 30 years ago, it's long since been made obsolete.

One hurdle left for conservationists was to show the detrimental effects the trade can have on the species. But that's easier said than done. For starters, no one knows for sure if bobcats are in decline or increasing in numbers, because nobody's counted them in California since the 1970s.

At that time, the population was estimated at 70,000 statewide. Since then, trapping numbers have gone up and down with the rise and fall of pelt prices. The biggest trapping year came in 1978, with 20,000 bobcats killed, and the lowest trap total came in 2002, with 580 bobcats tallied.

"It's funny, because conservationists

FCF Table at 2014 Wildlife Conservation Expo

On Saturday, October 10th, the FCF will be at the Mission Bay Conference Center at University of California San Francisco, with a display table at the Wildlife Conservation Expo. The FCF has been represented there for the past decade and has been welcomed back again for this year.

The annual Conservation Expo is a great way to meet members of the public interested in wildlife and talk to them about the FCF. The Expo has plenty of conservation groups on hand, including Dr. Jim Sanderson, and a lineup of great speakers. Dr. Jane Goodall is this year's keynote speaker.

Director Chris Tromborg will be manning our table along with two of the FCF's member organizations, Lyon Ranch and Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund. If you are in the area October 10th, drop by and say hi, and if you want to help man the table, contact Chris; his info is on the contacts page of this *Journal*.

will say, 'We probably shouldn't kill them until we know how they are doing,' but trappers will say, 'We don't need to regulate trapping until there are numbers telling us the animals are in trouble,' " Cummings said.

Even with the Bobcat Protection Act in place, 1,639 bobcats were taken in 2014.

"Even if bobcats are abundant, we're still against the commercial exploitation of them," Cummings said. "And people

can say the Joshua Tree story is just anecdotal evidence, but seeing that a single trapper in a single season can cause a noticeable difference in a region's population is cause for concern."

On August 5th, the California Fish and Game Commission voted three to two in favor of ending the commercial and recreational trapping of bobcats everywhere in California, becoming the first state in the nation to do so.



Fox Valley
ANIMAL NUTRITION, INC.

Day One formulas are species-specific formulations having the required protein and fat for neonatal growth. Recommended for those neonates who are orphaned, cannot suckle, or are being bottle-raised.



All-milk protein from premium food grade milk ingredients



Complete complement of vitamins and minerals



Balanced fatty acids including medium chain fatty acids for easy digestion

We specialize in serving the wildlife, domestic, and exotic animal communities. For information on our "Sponsorship of Goods" program (a donation of products to your local center, group, or wildlife organization on your behalf), please contact us at:



FOX VALLEY ANIMAL NUTRITION INC.
(800) 679-4666 or email: nklc@aol.com

www.foxvalleynutrition.com





ENJOY \$10 OFF

Your next order
of \$50 or more.

When ordering online
or by telephone,
Enter code ZZ-F3.

Limit 1 per customer.
Excludes Supreme Products.



Ear Mite Killer
With Aloe. Contains
0.15% Pyrethrins & 1%
Piperonyl Butoxide.
6 oz liquid.

Egge[®] Toy
13"L. Super-tough, indestructible
design. Assorted colors.



The Best Ball[™]
Non-toxic, gorilla tough, polyethylene plastic balls.
Assorted colors. Sizes: 4½"D, 6"D or 10"D.

Chase 'n Pull Toy
32"L handle with
36"L extra-strong solid braid
rope. Squeaky. Assorted colors.



Heavy-Weight
20-Gauge Stainless Steel Bowls
Sizes: 8 oz, 16 oz, 30 oz, 48 oz, 72 oz or 128 oz.



Safe-Guard[®] Paste with Fenbendazole

JEFFERSPET.com

Call for a FREE Catalog.

1-800-JEFFERS

(1-800-533-3377)

OSHA, the New USDA: Now There is the "BIG THREE"

Summary of the presentation by Kathy Stearns, co-founder Dade City's Wild Things, during the FCF Convention in Wichita, Kansas

Zoological businesses place a lot of emphasis on the safety of their animals and the public. Every state has laws about public safety and the federal USDA agency enforces regulations to protect animal welfare. But do not neglect to protect your employees and interns and regular volunteers because there is another federal agency looking at your business. This is OSHA, the Occupational Health and Safe-

an important piece of advice. You cannot make a workplace accident free. But you can train and provide proper equipment to mitigate those dangers. While OSHA compliance has always been a concern for zoos and their employees, there has been a recent trend of animal rights activists to use OSHA complaints as another avenue for attacking zoological parks.

The OSHA regulations apply to all employers and their employees. But volunteers are not covered. But who counts as an employee and who is a volunteer?

Volunteers can fall into a legal gray area in regards to OSHA. Generally for-profit facilities have a difficult time claiming a volunteer is not a *de facto* employee. In not-for-profit facilities, compensating volunteers by giving them a T-shirt or meals (including a Christmas celebratory dinner) may reclassify a volunteer as an employee. The question is does the volunteer perform routine, regular work that replaces a paid position? Or is the volunteer someone who comes in when they want, and does what they want? Volunteers and interns that have expected duties and receive any small amount of compensation can be considered "unpaid employees" by OSHA.

Again, Kathy stressed the importance of written documentation. Create written manuals on daily activities and emergency situations. Every protocol should be written down, every training session documented, and certificates always handed out. Make safety checks by ensuring you have the proper equipment for the job and generate monthly and annual reports. Have MSDA (Material Safety Data Sheets) for all chemicals (bleach, cleaning fluids, disinfectants, etc.) posted for employees. Perform inspections of your facility and be prepared should there ever be an injury or death at your facility. Read up on OSHA and know your rights.

Training is a great first step. Having written instructions but never practicing them in real life can lead to poor performance when a crisis develops. Document that employees have been to training, at a

minimum, have yearly refreshers. Train and document your employees in levels: Tour Guide/Keeper/Trainer/Management.

OSHA will investigate major animal related injuries. These can be injuries from animal bites, kicks, and scratches, or septicemia from animal bites.

When an animal escapes, if you and your staff are not trained, you could end up shooting a person instead of an animal, like what happened when a zoo vet accidentally shot a tranquilizer dart into an employee during an escape drill in June 2014, at Tenerife, Canary Gun Islands. Kathy again stressed that safety protocol is very important!

Additional situations that should be part of your safety protocol are what to do about heat and cold injuries. Summertime work can lead to heat exhaustion. Symptoms include dizziness, weakness, nausea, and muscle cramps. This can lead to even more severe situations of heat stroke, with symptoms of lethargy, altered mental status, and even unconsciousness. Wintertime has the threat of hypothermia, causing pale, bluish extremities, altered mental status, and also unconsciousness.

As an employer, it is your responsibility to supply employees with proper equipment to do the job safely. An example is fire extinguishers. But you must have



Having written instructions but never practicing them in real life can lead to poor performance when a crisis develops. Escape training can prepare the staff for a smooth recapture in real life situations.

ty Administration.

All three are equally important, but the best way to take care of all three is by making sure your animals are well conditioned, on mark, and prepared. This will ensure the public and employees are safe.

Kathy advises that the best way to keep in USDA compliance is to rely heavily on your veterinarian. Establish a close working relationship and keep the vet in the loop of all animal related matters. Develop written protocols for all situations, such as training, transportation, encounters, food, medical, euthanasia, proper handling and caging, emergency equipment, inspection, medical records, injuries, or death of the animals. When being inspected by the USDA, videotape your inspection. If the animal care inspector objects, explain that you are recording for "training purposes."

For OSHA compliance, Kathy imparts



MSDA forms must be available to everyone for every chemical on site and this includes cleaning solutions and medications.

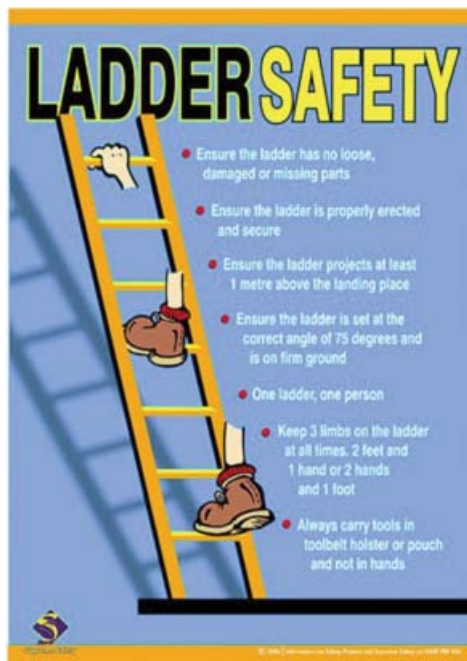
documented training and monthly inspections and generate reports. Failure to do any of these is each a separate violation and fine. Provide knife cutting safety gloves. Provide respiratory masks. These masks require training for proper use and doctor written approval. Ladders – did you know that ladders up to three feet in height must be secured to the area, and when using ladders over 52" in height, you must provide rigging? These are only a few areas that can easily be overlooked and will cost you lots of money.

It is imperative that you train and supply your employees with the proper equipment. You must also have the training in written form and have the employee sign that they understood and will abide by the training. Make your training alive with "Certifications." OSHA will visit after an accident and wants to see proof of training. OSHA wants "Industry Training" and today's professionally run animal businesses are supplying this void.

Develop written protocols for training employees in emergencies. What is each employee's job who helps, who leaves, and where they go. Write down who, when, and how to alert management, and who, when, and how to alert authorities. Who is responsible for safety checks of equipment? Who does training on safety equipment and procedures? Whose responsibility is it to protect the public? Who addresses the press? Prepare press releases for a variety of emergency situations.

Under OSHA Recordkeeping regulation (29 CFR 1904), covered employers are required to prepare and maintain records of serious occupational injuries and illnesses, using OSHA 300 LOG. These records are to be kept for five (5) years. MSDA forms must be available to everyone for every chemical on site and this includes cleaning solutions and medications. You must be able to print MSDA forms for employees going to hospitals or doctors' offices if needed.

Some situations require OSHA inspections, so learn your rights. A death or in-patient hospitalization of three or more employees must be reported within eight hours to 1-800-321



Situations that should be part of your safety protocol include ladder safety.

OSHA (6742). If in motor vehicle accident - do not notify, but log in on an OSHA 300 log. If an employee has a heart attack, you must notify OSHA. If death or injury occurs on public transportation, do not notify, but log in on an OSHA 300 log. If death or hospitalization occurs over 30 days, you do not have to report.

Information needed to be provided when reporting to OSHA includes the establishment name, location, time and date of incident, number of fatalities or hospitalization, and names of the injured, and the contact person and a brief description of the incident.

There are two kinds of OSHA inspections, depending upon whether it is based on complaints or referrals. Complaints are by employees, referrals are by a second party. Inspections can be either comprehensive or partial. Full inspections are performed on potentially high hazard areas.

Focused inspections are limited to certain potential hazard areas. Inspections are typically made during regular working hours. CSHO inspector must show credentials. They will meet with the employer's representative, usually a safety officer. They will also meet with an employee representative, usually elected by the employees. You have the right to refuse an inspection without a warrant.

OSHA priorities in this order are: Imminent danger, catastrophes and fatal accidents, employee complaint, agency referrals, targeted inspections, follow-up inspections.

The inspection process is as follows: The compliance officer prepares an inspection history, and studies standards that apply, does media research and opens the conference. He will explain how you were selected, likely scope of inspections, and any standards that apply. For example here is a walkthrough. Officer and accompanying representatives proceed to inspect your animal business for safety and health hazards. OSHA officer determines route and duration of inspection. The officer is required to keep all trade secrets confidential. The officer can consult employees during the tour, and will inspect postings and record keeping requirements. The inspector will review hazard communication program, MSDS and training program. The officer should

point out to employer any unsafe or unhealthy conditions observed and discuss possible corrective actions. At the conclusion, the officer conducts a closing conference with employer, employees or their representative. They should leave the OSHA Employer Rights and Responsibilities (OSHA 3000) and inform you of your appeal rights.

So remember – *Safety First*. Our industry must be ready, well-trained, and properly equipped to minimize any dangers!!

Andrea "Critter Doc" Sobotka
Communication, Natural & Energy Healing, Intuitive Counsel
For Animals & Their People
Specializing in
Exotics, Wildlife & Domestic Pets

Andrea Sobotka, HTAP
602-317-1543 • critterdoc1@cox.net
www.spiritanimalwisdom.com



Discriminating Tastes Prefer...™

Discover what tens of thousands of customers—including commercial reptile breeding facilities, veterinarians, and some of our country's most respected zoos and aquariums—have already learned: with Rodentpro.com®, you get quality AND value! Guaranteed.

RodentPro.com® offers only the highest quality frozen mice, rats, rabbits, guinea pigs, chicks and quail at prices that are MORE than competitive. We set the industry standards by offering unsurpassed quality, breeder direct pricing and year-round availability.

With RodentPro.com®, you'll know you're getting exactly what you order: clean nutritious feeders with exact sizing and superior quality. And with our exclusive shipping methods, your order arrives frozen, not thawed.

We guarantee it.

Order online!
www.RodentPro.com

It's quick, convenient and guaranteed!

P.O. Box 118
Inglefield, IN 47618-9998

Tel: 812.867.7598
Fax: 812.867.6058

E-mail: info@rodentpro.com



©2007 Rodentpro.com, llc.

**RODENT PRO**.COM®
MICE • RATS • RABBITS • CHICKS • QUAIL

Benefits of Early Socialization

By Lynette Lyon

Medium sized cats are some of the most popular animals in the industry of wildlife education, and for excellent reason. Cats have fascinated humans for thousands of years and the bigger the cat, the better. Impressing people with a lion or tiger does not take much effort. Well trained small cats, however, hold the impact of their larger cousins, while remaining a safer alternative.

Some cats, like the ocelot, bobcat, and lynx, are well known by both animal professionals and the public. Other cats tend to stay unknown to those outside of the animal world, despite being popular working animals. The serval and the caracal are two such cats that remain anonymous to some degree.

One of the reasons for this is the human condition of associating what we see with something else. Oftentimes, people see serval and think cheetah, or see caracal and jump to mountain lion. Even after



Lynette Lyon presents her female serval, Nahndi, for the benefit of the residents of a retirement home, enriching their lives and stimulating the feline as well.

explaining what the animal is, people will walk away from a show thinking that the baby cheetah was adorable.

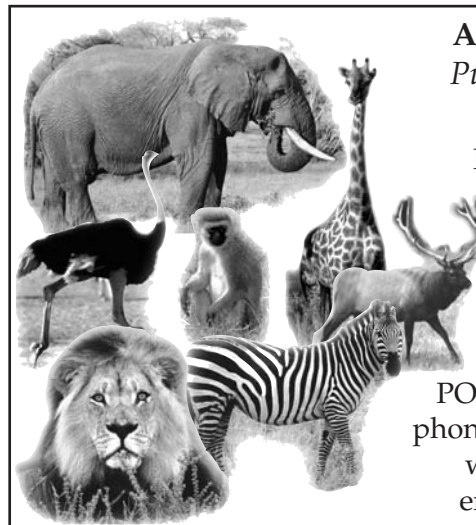
This is one of several reasons why using medium sized cats in education is important. All the smaller wild cats bring something special to the table, as well as their own challenges. Bobcats are well known to people throughout the U.S., which makes them enjoyable to talk about. At the same time, they are infamous to trainers for their stubborn natures. Ocelots are easy to identify by their stunning fur, but also by their locking jaws and nasty attitudes.

are rarely faced with confrontation, which could explain their shyer personality. Caracals, though, are content to hunt prey much larger than themselves. They are also willing to defend themselves, where servals are more likely to flee. In handling situations, these opposite natures seem like they would need to be approached in different ways. The initial training for both cats, however, should be the same.

When they are babies, they need socialization; how trainers do this does not matter as long as the animals are comfortable in as many situations as possible. Many



Lynette has added Shiva, a female caracal, to her wildlife ambassador program.



ANIMAL FINDERS' GUIDE

Published the first of each month

12 issues – only \$24

Informative articles on exotic animal husbandry and what is happening in the industry.

Exotic animals, related products & services, auctions & shows advertised.

PO Box 99, Prairie Creek, IN 47869
phone: 812-898-2678, fax: 812-989-2013
www.animalfindersguide.com
email: animalfinder@thnet.com

trainers refuse to allow their kittens' exposure to new people and environments. What newer handlers fail to realize is that public areas are ideal training grounds. They do not even need to tell people that they have an animal with them. The exposure to the smells and sounds of a social environment is an ideal starting point.

As the kittens grow older, their differences in personality become more obvious. It is their physical differences that become dangerous. A caracal's superior strength as they age can be difficult to handle. Where a serval may hiss and try to hide in an alarming situation, a caracal is more likely to take an aggressive approach. Biting and scratching is expected from a caracal that is unhappy with its circumstances.

A simple way to distract either type of cat is to use a favorite toy. A plush toy that a cat has had since it was newborn is both comforting and engaging at any age. Additionally, a toy that plays on predatory instincts is an excellent tool. Even a cheap stick toy from the pet store will work, though those do not last long.

Teaching any cat to accept a harness is a challenge that even domestic cat owners

know about. Again, the key is to start young. Rubbing a kitten's belly while it is being bottle fed, or putting a collar on while it is distracted by a dishcloth is an easy place to start. Training to work on a leash in public should always be a positive experience for the cat.

At the end of the day, despite their differences, the initial training for almost any small cat again comes down to socialization. It is the simplest, yet most overlooked step for any animal trainer. Perhaps people refuse to socialize because they do not feel as special anymore if the cat likes someone else. Or maybe it is the fear that the animal will react in an adverse way. No matter the reason, all

animal trainers need to recognize the benefit of early exposure to the public.



Lynette and Shiva attend a black tie fundraiser event. The bouquet of carnations keeps the young feline occupied.



MEAT COMPLETE WITH TAURINE

RAW MEAT SUPPLEMENT FOR ALL CARNIVORES

Based on whole prey composition, this supplement balances the nutrients lacking in skeletal muscle meat-based diets for carnivores: vitamins A & D (normally supplied by the liver), B vitamins (from gut contents of whole prey), and of course calcium (found in bones). This supplement also contains added taurine – an essential amino acid for felids – and the antioxidant vitamin E.

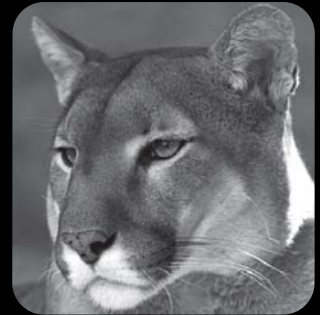
CENTRAL NEBRASKA PACKING, INC.

PO BOX 550 ~ NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA 69103-0550

1-877-900-3003 ~ 1-800-445-2881 ~ FAX:1-308-532-2744



exploring
new ideas



premium
products
uniquely
formulated

perfecting
exotic
animal
nutrition



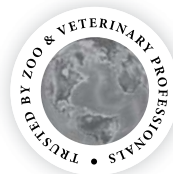
We know you take them seriously, which is why we take their nutrition seriously.

Exotic animal nutrition is our business. For over 20 years, we've collaborated with zoo and exotic animal professionals to conduct extensive research to improve nutrition of exotic species. Our products are proven to support the health and longevity of exotic animals.



Sign up for our newsletter today
at **MAZURI.COM** and
be the first to learn about:

- **Latest Product Information**
- **Product Promotions**
- **Tradeshows & Events**



Mazuri[®]
A World of Good Nutrition

2015 Annual Convention Board of Director Meeting Minutes

June 25, Wichita Airport La Quinta Inn and Suites

Present were Kevin Chambers, president; Mindy Stinner, vice president; Lynn Culver, treasurer & executive director; Pat Callahan, director. Absent were Debi Willoughby, secretary; Chris Tromborg, director; and Robert Bean, director.

Lynn Culver gave the treasurer's report. Total FCF assets are \$96,930.57. January through June 2015 income: \$18,448.52. January through June 2015 expenses: \$19,573.29.

The board ratified the First Quarter Board Meeting Minutes as printed in the *March/April 2015 Journal*.

Lynn Culver gave a report on the status of the new FCF website. Code writing is nearly completed and issues of security have been addressed. Home page will have a video. Presently, the "InCATvenient Truth" runs in this place. Lynn discussed composing a video based on interviews with FCF board and members, and clips of the convention. Robert Hohn and Tim Stoffel agreed to video during convention. Mindy Patterson agreed to edit clips together.

Mindy Stinner gave a report on the Wild Species Registry and showed the board the website as it stands now. The site is ready for test entries and FCF member cats will be entered at no cost. The Registry needs volunteers to be trained to enter cats and should be divided by species. Registry assistants need to sign a Memorandum of Understanding to allow the species managers to enter lineage info from other people. Moved by Mindy that the FCF adopt a coordinated species breeding program. Details to be determined by the board and membership as developed. Seconded by Pat. Motion carries with four yes votes.

Lynn moved that the FCF donate an additional \$2,000 to Conservators' Center for the continuation of the code writing project. Three yes votes, one abstain, motion carries.

The board discussed re-vamping the Wildlife Conser-

vation Educators course into smaller workshops. A survey was printed to be passed around at the membership meeting to gain feedback from the members on what topics are of the most interest.

Marketing Report - The FCF Facebook group has 1,799 members. Kurt Beckelman reported and his Facebook group, Exotic Animal Owners and Friends, has 3,317 members and several have joined the FCF. FCF members will be asked at the membership meeting to provide additional leads for *Journal* advertisers and Kurt will follow up. Suggested was for the advertisers to have a promo code on their ads so they can track sales through FCF advertising. A request was made to add onto printed membership applications the question, "Who referred you?" This is already in place on website questionnaire and Lynn reported that almost all new members join online.

Pat Callahan presented the board with a grant application from the Tsavo Cheetah Project for \$2,400, to cover the cost of vehicle maintenance for community programs. The project's official title is "Cheetah Monitoring and Education in the

High Conflict Tsavo East Communities." Only two members of the Conservation Grants Committee voted, but both approved. The board discussed the merits of a cheetah conservation project and agreed that working with the Kenya Government and the Felidae Conservation Fund was beneficial to the organization as well as the cheetah. Pat moved that the board approve a \$2,400 grant to the Tsavo Cheetah Project in Kenya, with two stipulations; that the article for the *Journal* be submitted prior to dispersing the grant, and that the FCF receive future reports and photo updates on small cat species in future articles, as well as the expected update of the cheetah project. Motion was seconded by Mindy. Motion carried with four yes votes.

Pat reported that this was the only grant application and that ways to better promote the FCF Conservation Grant needs to be explored. Pat suggested that the FCF contact former grant recipients to see what they are doing now and if they need any additional funding.


Kevin Chambers stated he wished for the FCF to update its USDA Feline Census database. Lisa Werner volunteered to work on this project.

Lynn Culver reported that the PR Vocus account contact is expired and that renewal would be \$1,800, and needed to be finalized by June 30. Lynn reported that the previous year's contract offered many services that were not utilized due to a lack of time and assistance and expressed doubt that more could be accomplished in the coming year. Mindy moved that the FCF approve the annual PR VOCUS contract for \$1,800, with Jamie Borros volunteering on the public relations committee to work on the press releases, and additional assistance will be requested at the annual membership meeting. Lynn seconded the motion. The motion carried with four year votes.

Meeting adjourned.

Minutes by Lynn Culver, standing in for Debi Willoughby.


**Own Your Pet's Food:
Take Control by Feeding Fresh!**



"FRESH + OASIS is the 'Missing Link' to a Healthy Complete Diet & Optimal Performance"

Add Oasis premix to fresh meat & the result is a scientifically balanced and complete real food diet – no guess work. Oasis is professionally formulated by Dr. Gary Pusillo, and for over 20 years, has been the #1 selling vitamin & mineral premix for exotic cats, trusted by the world's top breeders, private zoos and sanctuaries. Now Oasis is available under the Complete Natural Nutrition brand along with other exceptional nutritional tools like Primal Cal, Rapid Rehab & Crisis Care.

www.CompleteNaturalNutrition.com / 866-807-7335



CompleteNaturalNutrition



20



23



35



13



25



Feline Conservation Federation

July/August 2015 Volume 59, Issue 4

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: Ashwin Naidu took this photo of one of Tanganyika Wildlife Park's beautiful snow leopards. The FCF Convention toured the ZAA-accredited zoo during the annual convention in Wichita, Kansas.

Back Cover: Tim Stoffel took this convention photo of Jamie Borros taking a cell phone selfie with one of the tigers at the Sedgwick County Zoo.

