

Feline Conservation Federation

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TABLE OF

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contents

Features

- 5 ZAA Conference 2017 – San Antonio, Texas
Michelle McKay reports on the speakers and events at the ZAA gathering.
- 14 In Memoriam: Sampson – May 2004 - October 2017
Laura Walker remembers Canada lynx Sampson.
- 15 How Safari West's Giraffes, Cheetahs, and Rhinos Survived the Tubbs Fire
Peter Lang and garden hoses held off the flames throughout the night.
- 17 Come Join Us for the Annual FCF Conference in Sunny Charlotte, North Carolina
Classes, kittens, field trips, speakers and plenty of networking await FCF member attendees.
- 20 Purr-Fect Your Skills at the 2018 Annual Conference
Mike McBride writes on the wonders that await us at Tiger World.
- 21 Mystery of the Ailing Bobcat – Smoke and Mirrors
Teralee Harral shares how an intermittent eating problem was diagnosed and finally resolved.





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The FCF supports 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. Send \$35 annual dues (\$40 Canada, \$50 international) to FCF, 141 Polk Road 664, Mena, AR 71953.

Features cont.

- 29 FCF Represented at the Fall 2017 Wildlife Conservation Expo
Chris Tromborg and volunteers meet visitors at the FCF table.
- 32 Blast from the Past
Three short stories illustrate life with ocelots more than six decades ago.

Conservation

- 8 Donald Trump Administration Lifts Ban on Importing Lion Hunt Trophies: Crackdown in Wake of Cecil the Lion Scandal Ends
U.S. F&W Service starts issuing permits again October 20, 2017.
- 10 Scientists Split Over Snow Leopard Status
Are snow leopards endangered or threatened?
- 11 Thank You, FCF, For Your Generous Donations to Cheetah Conservation Botswana
Rebecca Klein updates the FCF on protection of cheetahs in Botswana.
- 13 Chinese Philanthropist Makes Largest-Ever Donation to Wildlife Conservation
\$1.5 billion is given to wildlife conservation efforts.
- 28 Snow Leopard Downgraded to "Vulnerable" by the IUCN
Apparently there are more snow leopards in the wild than previously thought.

Pictorials

- 18 Enclosure Enhancements at Wild Felid Advocacy Center
Jolie Connelly-Poe photographs highlight environmental enrichments.
- 30 Kylie Reynolds Shares Enrichment from Amazing Animals Inc.
The photographer shares her homemade playthings for cats.

Contact Us

FOUNDER:
Catherine Cisin

OFFICERS:
President
Mindy Stinner
P.O. Box 882
Mebane, NC 27302
336-421-0065
president@felineconservation.org

Vice President
currently vacant pending BOD meeting
vicepresident@felineconservation.org

Secretary
Rebecca Krebs
P.O. Box 770514
Miami, FL 33177
305-962-5349
secretary@felineconservation.org

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

DIRECTORS:
Robert Bean
4633 Chandler Road
Hermitage, TN 37076
615-889-4633
RBeandirector@felineconservation.org

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

Julia Wagner
P.O. Box 882
Mebane, NC 27302
919-625-6634
julia@felineconservation.org

JOURNAL STAFF:
Managing Editor:
Lynn Culver

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

Associate Editor:
Judith Hoffman

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

Organization

- 4 Letter from the President
- 28 Donations
- 34 2017 Third Quarter Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

The FCF is a non-profit (Federal ID#59-2048618), non-commercial society devoted to the welfare and conservation of exotic felines. The FCF publishes the *Journal* quarterly.

Members are encouraged to donate older copies of the *Journal*, with permission of the resident, to vet offices, dental or medical waiting rooms, or public libraries or public officials, to increase awareness of the FCF, its members, and mission.

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Submit articles on husbandry, conservation, current events, editorials, and photos for publication to the managing editor, Lynn Culver, at lynnkulver57@gmail.com.



Feline Conservation Federation

President's Letter

On January 1, 2018, Kevin Chambers resigned from his position as president of the FCF for health reasons. I am sad to see my friend of two decades step down from the position of running an organization that brings great value to the zoological industry. We are grateful for his service and guidance, and will rely on his valuable experience as we move forward.

As the FCF vice president, I have agreed to accept the position of president until the scheduled election later this year. A new board interim appointment for vice president will be made in the coming months. Those interested in the position are welcome to send an email to the board secretary, Rebecca Krebs, expressing their interest and sharing their qualifications.

Conferences are where people who share a passion come together and cement their bonds. A good conference provides content that strengthens skill sets, offers insight into new areas of interest, and helps us cope with scary or ugly issues we don't always want to face.

A great conference takes us to places that may push our limits and require us to mingle with people from very different perspectives or philosophies and learn to master issues that take us outside our comfort zones. But because we share common goals, in our case the care and keeping of wild cats, we make new friends and allies who will help us reach those goals and deal with the challenges of owning and working with wild cats.

In recent years, the conferences I went to helped me identify critical gaps in the industry that the FCF membership is uniquely qualified to fill.

At this time, there are two national groups that have wild cat welfare and keeping as their focus, the AZA Felid Taxon Advisory Group (TAG), and the Feline Conservation Federation.

TAG is focused on husbandry and multi-generational management of specific species held in coordinated collections in accredited facilities. Their husbandry course is a multi-day experience designed as intensive training for mid-level professionals working in those zoos, only available to a limited num-

ber of people annually, with attendee preference given to staff of member institutions. The group's members conduct research projects and contribute to field and conservation work that support TAG goals. That is a lot of information and support that affect a selective scope of species and the people who work with them.

The FCF is focused on husbandry and multi-generational management of all wild cat species held in the U.S., and in educating every person who possesses or works with them in any capacity, and people who have a desire to do so in the future. The FCF has historically embraced all types of owners, having been founded by pet wild cat owners in the 1950s. This includes zoos and wildlife parks of all sizes, sanctuaries, mobile educators, hobbyists, and anyone else possessing wild cats. In addition, zookeepers, volunteers, and docents, people interested in future ownership, and regulatory officials from local, state, and federal levels have always been welcome to participate. The FCF's Husbandry Course is designed as a broader overview of possession and care that is taught in a single day. This organization does not conduct research or field projects, but the members contribute consistently to ongoing genetic and behavioral research conducted at universi-

ties and zoos, and to other legitimate research projects occasionally. In addition, the FCF has supported wild cat conservation projects worldwide with tens of thousands of dollars and necessary in-kind donations in the last decade, with a special focus on the chronically underfunded small cats, and on species possessed by member institutions.

Clearly there is a great deal of overlap in the focus and objectives of the two groups, and great value in both.

In addition, there are other groups hard at work on issues that are relevant to wild cat husbandry and management. The AZA has conducted much research encompassing topics ranging from nutrition to artificial insemination, and published information is shared to all people with an interest. Industry vendors with products like Mazuri, Wild Trax, ZuPreem, and Oasis all study nutrition to the benefit of their clients. Animal Care Software, Wild Tracks software, and Species 360 software are all designed to support daily care documentation and additional areas like veterinary care. Zoo design firms endeavor to meet the housing needs of individual species.

Many groups are involved in protecting the legal status of specific groups of animal owners, including the AZA, the Zoological Association of America (ZAA), the Cavalry Group, Protect the Harvest, and many other species-specific and trade groups across the states.

It is very important moving forward that we agree as a membership about what our role as an organization will be in the animal industry, and with whom we will choose to partner. Clearly, we will continue to provide husbandry training and other educational experiences for our membership through our *Journal* and our FCF Wild Felid Husbandry Course. We will continue to participate in legitimate research efforts to better understand our species and their needs. We will support relevant, high-return conservation projects.

Where we go beyond that is up to this membership. It is my



In addition to attending USDA meetings on contingency planning, and AZA Felid TAG and its annual conference, Mindy Stinner has also been a regular attendee at ZAA's annual conferences. Pictured here are Mindy and Alan Smith, ZAA's previous executive director and now state-level lobbyist, listening to ZAA Conference speakers.

belief, having been in the industry for roughly 25 years, that we must educate the public about wild cats so they care about seeing them and protecting them. We must protect ourselves from activists who work to remove all wildlife from human care, which means all members must pay attention to legislation and regulation and be able to speak in their own defense. We must understand the legal and regulatory authority within which we already operate, and ensure we know how to manage issues that may arise.

We must assess the world around us and become our own best advocates. That means knowing when and how to speak out about sensitive issues and understanding who our resources are when we don't understand the issue or the system. There is no one who can represent your passion

to the world like you can. But that passion must be tempered with reason, facts, and an understanding of how the systems work. You could have a hundred advocates for your issue make a hundred angry phone calls, when one calm, informative call from you to the right person might get the job done better.

In order to continue with our goals as an organization, and to make us as individuals better advocates for ourselves, I have invited speakers to this year's conference who will address a broad spectrum of topics. Tentatively scheduled are a USDA representative, a professional zoo trade group lobbyist, individuals with innovative approaches to felid husbandry issues, conservation and genetics research scientists, and specialists in emergency preparedness.

Perhaps most importantly, I have asked these speakers to be conference participants. It is crucial that members have the opportunity to not just hear a presentation, but to talk more at length with these professionals in an informal setting.

Challenge yourself to learn more, to step out of your comfort zone and learn to advocate for legal possession and high quality husbandry for the animals that matter to you. Whether you have built a career or life around them or if you are an occasional volunteer at a facility, this conference will offer you the opportunity to grow and connect with others who share your goals.

I look forward to seeing you in Charlotte in August!

Mindy Stinner

ZAA Conference 2017 - San Antonio, Texas

By Michelle McKay

This year's ZAA conference in San Antonio, Texas, had the largest attendance in ZAA history, which made for excellent networking opportunities. The venue that the conference committee selected provided excellent mingling opportunities throughout the day and late into the evening. It was also a central location, which allowed attendees to venture out to the River Walk, which is a must-see in San Antonio, as well as the San Antonio Zoo and amazing area restaurants.

The pre-conference workshops were

very well attended and extremely informative. I attended trainer Barbara Heidenreich's workshop, which was excellent for beginning keepers or trainers to the more seasoned ones. Barbara travels throughout the world teaching others how to solve some of the worst behavioral issues, as well as training behaviors to assist in daily husbandry. On one of Barbara's publications it states, "Barbara uses positive reinforcement, empowering animals to participate and building relationships with animals based on trust." We were able to watch detailed videos which really helped the audience to visualize what she was

describing and will be able to replicate what she was doing with the animals in their care. She also had two shorter presentations during the daily breakout ses-



Kay Rosaire, eighth generation circus trainer and friend of Shrine Circus elephant handler Joey Frisco. Kay's inside connections enabled conference reporter Michelle and others to receive the royal treatment after the circus concluded.



A gathering of cat people at the ZAA Conference. (Left to right) Julia Wagner, Michelle McKay, Doc Antle, Liz Felton, Mindy Stinner, Melissa Meadows, and Kay Rosaire.



Bob Felton, Liz Felton, and Michelle McKay ride one of the Shrine Circus elephants.

sions which were very helpful.

The conference started out with the keynote speaker, Rick Berman, Executive Director of the Center for Consumer Freedom. Mr. Berman discussed the threats posed by animal rights groups and the importance of our industry to accept and operate in a “forever war” stance. The topics were challenging to hear, but the message provided hope for the future if we are galvanized to act. Each day there were multiple presentations to choose from that touched on everything from designing net income through educational programing, increasing volunteer participation, to Lucky the elephant’s story at the San Antonio Zoo. Brad Andrews’s presentation on the sixth mass extinction gave a sobering view of species we all care for. It offered a look at American Humane’s powerful conservation campaign. Dr. Chatfield discussed “security made easy.” He is a respected industry expert on biosecurity and disaster preparedness, and he gave an exceptional overview of biosecurity for zoological facilities. Dr. Evon Nadler from the ZAP Fusion Center gave an overview of the latest tools being produced by the secure zoo working group, which includes mapping tools to help facilities in their planning.

Bernadette Juarez, Deputy Administrator of the USDA’s APHIS Animal Care Program, spoke about the USDA’s perspective on the industry through the eyes of the USDA. She allowed members to make appointments to meet with her individually to discuss any questions or concerns that afternoon and the following day. This was very well received by the attendees of the conference.

For those of us in the FCF that conduct educational outreach programs, I highly recommend that you attend the ZAA conference. A good number of the members either do educational outreach programs themselves, work for a zoo that

offers them, or is responsible for the programs where they work. This year, there was a breakout session just for outreach educators held at a pizzeria that was within walking distance of our hotel. The room was packed, and David Kleven, the chairman of the education committee, addressed everyone. We discussed some of the dos and don’ts within our professional niche, as well as other relevant topics unique to our industry.

Our visit to the San Antonio Zoo was very well attended and it was a nostalgic visit for some who had been to the zoo before or who had known the zoo from years ago. The numerous upgrades to the enclosures and the visitor experience are too many to list. We were able to get a behind-the-scenes tour with their rhinos, as well as their hippopotami, including a young little hippo that was much socialized and enjoyed the attention he was receiv-

ing. Their giraffes were happy to take food from everyone who participated in the giraffe feeding, and watching the elephant herd interacting together was breathtaking. The San Antonio Zoo is accredited by both the ZAA and the AZA.

One experience that a few of us were able to partake in was going to the Shrine Circus that just happened to be in town. Kay Rosaire, who has over 30 years of experience working with exotic animals and is an eighth generation circus trainer, was with us. Due to her legacy and kindness, we were able to go behind the scenes and meet the elephants, as well as pose with the owner of the circus, while Joey Frisco, another multiple generation animal trainer, oversaw the elephant we were interacting with. It was a very unique experience and one that probably couldn’t happen anywhere but at that convention. I was with the right people at the right time and I couldn’t thank Kay enough for this unforgettable experience.

The conference’s after-hours festivities usually ended at the hotel bar, and for those who chose to partake it was a great time of being with old friends and making new ones. The post-conference tour to Austin’s Savannah was very exciting and Rowdy the rhino was the overwhelming highlight for those who attended. After all the festivities wound down, I look back and definitely felt that the networking was one of the most beneficial aspects of this type of conference. I love being with other animal professionals I can learn from, as well as those who are open to learning from others. This is a conference that all of us in the animal industry should be attending and I highly recommend joining the ZAA if you are not already a member.

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Donald Trump Administration Lifts Ban On Importing Lion Hunt Trophies: Crackdown in Wake of Cecil the Lion Scandal Ends

By Harriet Agerholm

Cecil was one of Zimbabwe's most famous lions and served as a tourist attraction before he was shot dead by a dentist

from Minnesota, Bryan Orford.

It became harder for American big game hunters to bring lion trophies back home in 2016, after the killing of Cecil the lion in Zimbabwe, sparked global outrage.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) designated lions from Central and West Africa as "endangered," which stopped hunters from shipping lion parts – whether a head, a paw, or a lion skin – back to the U.S.

But the FWS began issuing permits to import lion trophies again on October 20, 2017. The agency said it takes at least 45 days to get a permit approved and it is unclear

whether this has yet happened with any individual applications.

The FWS said it made the move after deciding regulated hunting could help fund conservation efforts. Critics say trophy hunting fuels demand for wild animal products.

The number of lions in the wild is steadily decreasing due to loss of habitat, dropping 42 per cent in 20 years, according to the African Wildlife Foundation.

The news about lion trophy imports came after Donald Trump's administration said it was going to lift the Obama-era ban on imports of elephant remains from the same two African countries.

The announcement was condemned as a "backwards step" by conservation charities, which warned elephant numbers were sharply declining due to poaching and a reduction in their territory.

Edited from an Independent UK article published November 17, 2017.



Lion rugs like this one can possibly be brought home from overseas hunts with the trophy ban lifted. Photo from www.businessinsider.com.



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Scientists Split Over Snow Leopard Status

By Navin Singh Khadka

Scientists are deeply divided on whether snow leopards are still an endangered species, a BBC investigation has found. Some big cat experts say their population has stabilized and increased in a number of places. This, they claim, has slowed the overall rate of decline. Others argue that there has been no robust scientific study to prove either that the population has stabilized. Amid the disagreement, top officials from 12 countries within the snow leopard range are meeting in Kyrgyzstan, to further strengthen conservation of the elusive big cats.

The differences of opinion among scientists have intensified as a downgrading of the threat to snow leopards - from "endangered" to "vulnerable" - is expected from the IUCN Red List soon. The Red List, maintained by the international nature conservation body, is the world's most comprehensive inventory of the status of biological species.

Scientists who believe that the number of snow leopards has gone up say the information is based on people working in the field. "Experts from each range country were asked to come up with best estimates of snow leopard population by country and the total was between 7,400 and 8,000 animals," says Dr. Tom McCarthy, snow leopard program executive director for Panthera, the global wild cat conservation organization. The big cats are currently listed as "endangered." "You have to stress there that's still what people call guesstimates; I like to call it a very educated guesstimate."

The figures have been quoted by a recently published book on snow leopards that kicked off the debate. Before these latest figures, the widely quoted population for snow leopards since the 1990s was between 3,500 and 7,500. "But I just can't see why we would cling to the figure of the 90s," said Dr. McCarthy.

Conservationists say snow leopards have been threatened by poaching, retaliatory killing by farmers, declining prey species, shrinking habitats, and climate change.

"Although it is difficult to capture an overall trend, there is a general lack of

evidence of a significant continuing decline in the global snow leopard population," David P. Mallon and Rodney Jackson, both veterans on snow leopards, wrote in the journal *Oryx* recently.

But some scientists are critical of that conclusion. "For that conclusion, less than two percent of the global snow leopard range has been sampled using scientifically acceptable techniques, such as camera-trapping and genetics," says associate professor Guillaume Chapron, with the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.

The snow leopard's range covers some 12 different countries. "And those two percent have been surveyed because there was an a priori expectation that this would be good snow leopard habitat. This is not a proper scientific reasoning. You do not choose a method based on the results it gives."

Experts say habitat range for snow



leopards extends over nearly two million square kilometers, involving 12 countries in central and northern Asia, including the Himalayan ranges. These are places with tough topography that helps snow leopards remain elusive. This is why some scientists call them "cryptic, wide-ranging species that are almost impossible to count - and therefore their population needs to be estimated."

But they also admit that there is a danger of misrepresenting the true numbers through this type of estimation. This, they say, became evident in recent scientific surveys based on camera-trapping and genetic tests on feces in Nepal and Pakistan, where fewer snow leopards were found than expected.

"This illustrated the dangers of this population size estimation technique of extrapolating from known surveyed areas (a very small part of snow leopard range) to the rest of suitable snow leopard habi-

tat, where they may or may not be present," said a big cat species expert who did not want to be named.

Professor Som Ale, a snow leopard expert who teaches at the University of Illinois in Chicago, commented, "Imagine the fate of a species such as the tiger or rhino or hawksbill turtle - a widespread victim of poaching and illegal trade - if the IUCN were to down-list species, across the world, based on population estimates largely based on interviews and expert opinions from conferences."

Experts knowledgeable about the IUCN categorization process, however, said the possible down-listing of the threat category for snow leopards is happening mainly because of a change in criteria. The new provision requires either the adult snow leopard population to be below 2,500 or to have experienced a rate of decline exceeding 20% over 16 years for the species to be categorized as "endangered."

Sources told the BBC that the IUCN assessment has found this is not the case. Scientists have also differed on the first age of reproduction and sexual maturity age for snow leopards. That difference led to a stalemate over reassessing the IUCN Red List status of the top mountain predator since it was designated as "endangered" in 2008.

Those arguing for the continuity of endangered status say down-listing snow leopards to vulnerable category could dry funding and push the species to extinction. "An immediate impact of down-listing snow leopards may be that the range country governments and conservation entities would de-emphasize conservation efforts they have on the ground," said Professor Ale.

Scientists in the other camp believe that a down-listing is a positive development and will motivate donor governments to continue funding - including for snow leopards - as they will see that conservation efforts do work. "Snow leopards are still very, very threatened with extinction; we cannot let up our conservation efforts," said Dr. McCarthy.

Edited from an internet article in BBC published August 24, 2017.

Thank You, FCF, For Your Generous Donations to Cheetah Conservation Botswana



By Rebecca Klein

All of us at Cheetah Conservation Botswana want to send you many thanks for your generous donation; you make it possible for us to continue our work to conserve Botswana's cheetahs and their Kalahari home!

The year finished well for Cheetah Conservation Botswana and we had some great successes in 2017. In the last quarter, we placed another seven dogs through the livestock guarding dog program, bringing the total up to 28 dogs successfully placed in 2017!

Here are some personal stories from the farmers...

Ms. Neo Motseothata - Farmers Network Member and LGD Recipient

"Before meeting CCB, the normal practice I knew was that you kill cheetahs and

The New Year began with another FCF donation of \$1,000 to Cheetah Conservation Botswana. This was made possible by a dedicated grant from FCF member facility, Wildlife and Environmental Conservation, to the FCF Conservation Fund.

Support of protection of cheetahs in their natural habitat through Cheetah Conservation Botswana's guard dog program will continue. Wildlife and Environmental Conservation's ambassador cheetahs meet U.S. Fish and Wildlife Interstate Commerce permit survival enhancement requirements through its partnership with the FCF, Wildlife Conservation Network, and Cheetah Conservation Botswana, and its ongoing efforts to protect cheetahs in the wild.

carnivores whenever livestock is lost. Ever since attending a farmers' workshop, I have been more tolerant of wildlife than ever. CCB intervened by letting us know how to respond to conflict and through them placing a livestock guarding dog (LGD) with my small stock, I can satisfactorily say I have never experienced any conflict. This should encourage us even more to work together and coexist."

Mr. Matlhaelakgang Theetsang - Farmers Network Member, LGD Recipient



Guard dog puppies raised with goats and sheep herds have greatly reduced predation by cheetahs and other carnivores.

"I want to comment that using a livestock guarding dog is valuable. I have a dog that has been my shepherd and I don't lose livestock to carnivores like cheetahs and jackals anymore. Today I am very proud of my farming and I am able to feed, water, vaccinate, and take care of my



Botswana cheetahs are benefiting from human/wildlife mitigation efforts by the Cheetah Conservation Botswana organization.

livestock and also improve my livelihood. Let us take up all the support and advices we are getting from CCB so that we can better our lives and our environment. Thank you!

Ms. Puisano Mosimanewakgang - Farmers Network Member and LGD Recipient

"I got to know CCB through attending a farmers' workshop. I had ten goats plus a ram in 2015. It was my only livelihood but the number dropped to five due to carnivores in the area. After receiving an LGD from CCB, the number of my livestock has increased and twice a year I sell the excess numbers to make my own income. I look after my children alone and this has helped me to support them. After CCB's assistance, we are now well aware of wildlife in our area and are coexisting peacefully with them."

Mr. Lebang Mokabati - Farmers Network Member

"Let me take this opportunity to applaud CCB for a job well done in our village. I used to experience conflict with cheetahs and I was doubtful that a dog could help, but I was willing to try all the methods CCB recommended. Our farming has improved since working together with CCB. I urge everyone to continue working with CCB because I believe



Cheetahs are the fastest land mammal, but only have endurance for short sprints. When not chasing prey, they conserve energy by resting and napping.

through working together we can improve our livelihoods and conserve the environment.

Exciting news from our environmental education program, too; our team has inspired a further 797 students since September through one bush camp, four school talks and our international cheetah day celebrations at the end of November. This sporting event attracted 150 students from four Kalahari schools who competed in football, netball, and obstacle courses to bring attention to the need for speed in the cheetahs' race for survival. This brings the total students engaged this year to 1715!"

And From the Children

"Now that I know cheetahs are endangered, I will help save them by reporting those who kill them."

"I love cheetahs because they are the fastest land animals and they are not dangerous to people."

"Thank you, CCB, for helping conserve cheetah - we appreciate what you are doing."

"I have learnt a lot in the bush camp and will make sure to teach my friends and family."

Through these community and education programs, a new development started in 2017, with participatory

planning meetings in two communities in the Western Kalahari key wildlife corridor. 550 people turned up to join in the discussions of how to develop the area to ensure improved livelihoods and environmental conservation. It's an exciting undertaking with a lot of community planning and follow-up meetings to develop livelihood plans. We want to turn living with cheetahs from a threat into an asset for communities.

Thank you once again for your support for cheetah conservation and for your belief in the work that we do!

All of us at Cheetah Conservation Botswana wish you a prosperous, happy, and safe 2018!



Community members learn about cheetahs at the Leshope Rural Workshop.



Children's bush camps teach kids appreciation for endangered cheetahs.

Chinese Philanthropist Makes Largest-Ever Donation to Wildlife Conservation

By Nancy Young

Continuing a trend demonstrating the increasing power of the nonprofit sector in China, a leading Chinese female business leader and philanthropist, He Qiaonv, has pledged \$1.5 billion toward wildlife conservation efforts.

The pledge may constitute the largest-ever private donation to wildlife conservation. It includes \$20 million from the Beijing Qiaonv Foundation for Panthera, an organization devoted to protecting the world's wild cats—starting with an initiative to protect snow leopards in China, and lions in Africa.

Nonprofits are on the rise in China's civil society. In the last few decades, the sector's Chinese analogue has grown in strength, with more than 460,000 registered nonprofit organizations and a whole lot more unregistered. In 2006, there were about \$10 billion in foundation donations, compared with \$125.5 billion in 2015.

That growth is expected to continue, as the Chinese government is supporting charitable efforts in ways unheard of in the past. Last year the country marked its first Charity Day—to be held every September 5th—a date which marks the passage of China's Charity Law that encourages charitable giving.

While China still technically has laws against private ownership of land, it is



Billionaire He Qiaonv believes that protecting China is protecting the whole Earth.

opening up in a way that enables the private conservation efforts of He Qiaonv. The government has promised to create between 30 and 50 conservation zones by 2020. And, since the Trump administration pulled the United States from the Paris Climate Accord, the Chinese government, under the leadership of Xi Jinping, has emerged, “as an unlikely environmental leader.” Xi has banned the ivory trade as of the end of 2017, and put forth a proposal to eliminate the use of gasoline-powered cars.

“The public awareness of environmental protection is gradually increasing in China,” He Qiaonv said in an interview with Bloomberg.

Her business background is in landscaping and resource management through her Beijing Orient Landscape Co. “At the very beginning, the dream of our business was to build 100 of the most beautiful parks in 100 cities of China,” she told Bloomberg. But, on the way to that dream, she dealt with the obstacles of polluted water and air that made her even more passionate about being an environmental steward.

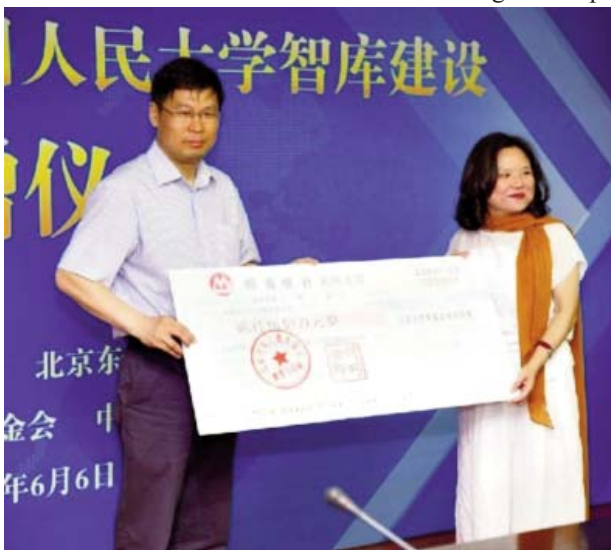
In 2012, she started her foundation with the goals of establishing conservation zones in China, protecting native species, and supporting NGOs that were having a positive impact on global biodiversity and carbon dioxide levels in the atmosphere. She has also worked with Bill Gates through the China Global Philanthropy Institute.

“We believe that protecting China is to protect the whole Earth,” she told Bloomberg.

“Things in China are changing under the global radar,” said Nicole Mollo, executive director of environmental philanthropy at the Recanati-Kaplan Foundation, in an interview with Bloomberg. “They have the will, and frankly they have the resources—what they are missing is a middle tier of expertise. They don’t know what it means to manage a protected area, to train a ranger, or to work with communities and livestock.”

The partnership with Panthera is meant to address that “middle tier of expertise,” starting with the creation of two snow leopard preserves. From there, she told Bloomberg she hopes to build hundreds of “urban classrooms” to teach “hundreds of millions” about conservation.

Edited from a Bloomberg News report published October 16, 2017.



Chinese philanthropist He Qiaonv has pledged \$1.5 billion towards wildlife conservation efforts.

In Memoriam: Sampson -- May 2004 - October 2017

By Laura Walker

I had the privilege of knowing Sampson from the time he was just three weeks old, when Ed, the owner of Animal Adventures, picked him up. I heard a tiny little hiss from him, but he soon got used to me.



Sampson and Laura spend time together on a sunny afternoon at the zoo.

And then he'd be calling me with many very beautiful lynx sounds from then on.

I was thrilled to meet this native North American feline and privileged to have worked with him every day, spending hours and hours with him for the first three years of his life at the zoo, and several times a week after that, to at a mini-



Sampson trusted Laura to pick him up and turn him upside down for belly rubs.

mum visiting him once a week.

We became very close. He let me handle him in all kinds of special ways. I could pet him while he was eating or drinking water, pet his paws, or pet him everywhere, and he didn't mind it. I could lie on top of him and he would lie on top of me. We knew how to relax together. I loved turning him upside down and giving him nice belly rubs. I could pick him up and turn him upside down and he would stretch out, fully trusting me and totally relaxed in my arms. He always greeted me and he seemed to know when I was coming, and he knew the sound of my car, according to everyone who worked at Animal Adventures.

Sampson loved to jump for snowballs. He loved the smell of shoes, so shoes became a source of enrichment and excitement for Sampson. He was great at the zoo's wildlife shows, and he made a lot of people happy with his laid-back nature and head butts. He spoke well for the species and brought awareness of these beautiful and precious felines to many people who saw him out at a show or at the headquarters.



Sampson enjoyed rubbing Laura's boots.

I will miss sitting about with him, calling to him, and his calling me and welcoming me into his territory every visit, making me feel loved and special when he was the special one. I will never forget this animal. His life was cut short by lymphoma. He was just thirteen and a half years old.

I miss you, Sampson, and hold you dear to my heart, and many will never forget you. I certainly will not. I love you in my heart, forever.



Sampson was an exceptional Canada lynx ambassador, gentle enough to eat out of Laura's hand.

How Safari West's Giraffes, Cheetahs, And Rhinos Survived the Tubbs Fire

By Hamed Aleaziz

Peter Lang stood firm as his wife and employees and dozens of overnight guests poured out of Safari West, outside Santa Rosa, California, into cars bound for anywhere but the path of flames shooting west from Calistoga toward the giraffes and cheetahs kept among the vineyards of Wine Country.

It was late Sunday night, and people all around were fleeing for their lives from the Tubbs Fire, one of the deadliest infernos in state history. For a brief moment, Peter's wife, Nancy, tried to persuade the 77-year-old founder of the unusual preserve to leave. There was no conversation to be had.

"I'm not leaving," he said.

"I had to stay the course," he explained five days later, as he ate a plate of chili and cornbread in the same Levi's jeans he'd been wearing all week. "I got 1,000 birds and animals that are here because I put them here. It's my responsibility to deal with the consequences."

From the moment he bought the land in the foothills of the Mayacamas Mountains

Fires in Napa and Sonoma counties

As of noon Tuesday



Over 245,000 acres burned in northern California in October 2017, including the Tubbs fire, Atlas fire, Nuns fire, and others, resulting in over \$9.4 billion dollars in insured damages.

in the 1980s, after noticing the forest and grassland and warm weather resembled the savannahs of Africa, Lang has cared for it. It took four years of breeding before the couple could open the facility in 1993.

Since then, they've converted the former cattle ranch lined with oak trees into a wildlife preserve offering safari tours featuring 90 distinct species, including rhinos and hyenas. Guests can spend the night in cottages or raised luxury tents. They call it the Sonoma Serengeti, and every year 60,000 people come to see it.

As a child, Lang was surrounded by animals. He grew up helping his dad direct animal-

themed TV shows, and in many ways Safari West was the "culmination of a wonderful life I've had."

Starting about 10:30 p.m. Sunday, and continuing past dawn Monday, Lang was focused on saving it. Minutes after his colleagues drove away, he began putting out fires. He drove the perimeter of the land, spotting flames racing down a slope and toward him.

"Boy, do you feel alone," he said. "I was alone."

Lang ran his truck tires over spot fires, and then stomped out others with his

boots. Walking over to an area for cheetahs, hyenas, and birds, he pulled out a hose and sprayed hot spots, like flames that crawled up the side of the cheetah barn and burning grass that lined the pen for hyenas, which were breeding.

"We were able to extinguish that," he said. "I use the big 'we.' Me and that hose. We are the we."

For hours, Lang walked for miles, back and forth across the property, disconnecting hose lines and adding new ones until he finally noticed he was dragging 400 feet of hose.

"When you're amped up and doing stuff, you don't know how far it's been," he said. "I'm a walker anyway. Everybody uses golf carts to get around here. I walk everywhere. It's much better for a kid my age."



Safari West owner Peter Lang remained behind to fight the fires and protect the over 1,000 birds and mammals at his zoo.



Safari West exhibits cheetahs in grassland habitats resembling Africa.



Mixed groups of African antelope confined behind fences were protected by Lang with nothing more than water squirting from hundreds of feet of garden hose.

Later, as the fire was surging miles to the west, engulfing whole neighborhoods, Lang drove one more circle around his property and came upon a group of five nyala — spiral-horned antelopes indigenous to southern Africa — trapped behind fencing as a grass fire approached.

“At my age, I don’t do a lot of running up to corners or vaulting fences, so I walked up and climbed the eight-foot fence,” he said. Having done so, he herded the nyala to safety.

From his vantage point at Safari West, Lang could see his own nearby property in flames. The next day, he learned that all four homes and three barns there were gone. So, too, were a lifetime’s worth of goods he had planned to donate to a museum — art, minerals, collectibles, pretty much everything he’d ever owned.

“The fire was pretty bright and it was a full moon,” he said, wistfully. “You wished you couldn’t see as well.”

When Lang finally escaped, he had only his truck, his passport, his Levi’s, and a shirt.

Still, he felt lucky. He and his wife were alive, and a small home on the Safari

West property survived, meaning they have a place to stay for the time being.

Owing to Lang’s hours of firefighting, none of the 1,000 animals on the property were lost, even though flames scarred much of the land and damaged fences, cars, equipment, and some buildings.

“We had good things working for us,” he said. “It’s hard to believe in miracles, but I didn’t do this all by myself. Things intervened that made it be able to happen.”

Starting only hours after the blaze ripped through, dozens of employees began showing up to help protect the land from further threats and begin rebuilding. As for Lang, he spent some of the ensuing days helping put out fires threatening nearby homes.

“We’re moving on,” Lang said. “Frankly, I didn’t think that at my age I’d be starting from ground zero, but I’ve always been



In addition to cheetahs, Safari West also exhibits servals, another wild African feline species.

determined. I was never going to retire anyways, so nothing has changed there.”

The park plans to reopen by March 1st.

As he reflected on his night of firefighting, Lang thought of all the past safety drills at the preserve — training for hypothetical animal breaks, worker injuries, or fires.

“On paper, they sound terrific,” he said. “But as Mike Tyson said before one of his fights, ‘They all have a plan until I punch them once and then the plan is out the window.’ The plan went out the window. Just ask Mike.”

Edited from a San Francisco Gate article published October 13, 2017.



With a full moon and towering flames, Lang had plenty of light to get around the property and, because of his heroic efforts, none of the animals at Safari West were lost to the fire.



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Come Join Us for the Annual FCF Conference in Sunny Charlotte, North Carolina, from Thursday, August 23rd through Saturday, August 25th

Information about the convention & courses:

Our hotel is the lovely Hilton Charlotte Executive Park, and our hosting facility is Tiger World Endangered Wildlife Preserve.

In addition, we will have optional add-on courses taught at the hotel on Wednesday, August 22nd, including the newly revised and updated Wild Felid Husbandry Course (eight hours), Educators Course (four hours), and Contingency Planning Workshop (four hours).

Attendees interested in bringing their juvenile small cats to the conference may be permitted to do so for the purposes of ambassador animal training or professional development training for other attendees. Attendees interested bringing any wild cats for any reason **MUST** be USDA licensed, and **MUST** contact the conference committee for more information before planning to bring their cats into the state of North Carolina. Both the state and the county hosting this event have restrictions that must be followed. Failure to adhere to these restrictions may result in expulsion from the conference, animal confiscation, and even criminal charges.



Information about the hotel:

The Hilton Charlotte Executive Park hotel offers many amenities for guests, including newly refurbished rooms, an outdoor pool, and indoor workout room. The in-house restaurant has a menu full of local cuisine and the bar is open every night until at least midnight.

This Hilton hotel is located a short ride from the Charlotte Douglas International Airport (CLT). A complimentary shuttle can provide transportation to the hotel, as well as within a three mile radius of the hotel.

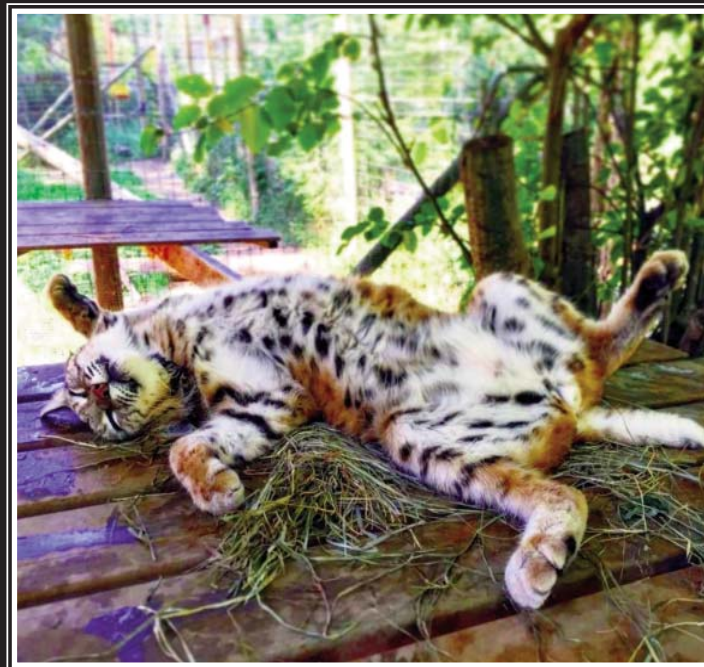
Within the shuttle radius is the Charlotte LYNX Light Rail system, which provides service to the downtown Charlotte area, full of restaurants, microbrews, music, and nightlife. Plan on spending some of your conference downtime exploring the Queen City!

Parking at the hotel is free, with ample overflow lot space available. Nearby restaurants within easy walking distance include Chili's, Kabuto Japanese Steakhouse/Hibachi Grill, and Sonny's BBQ.

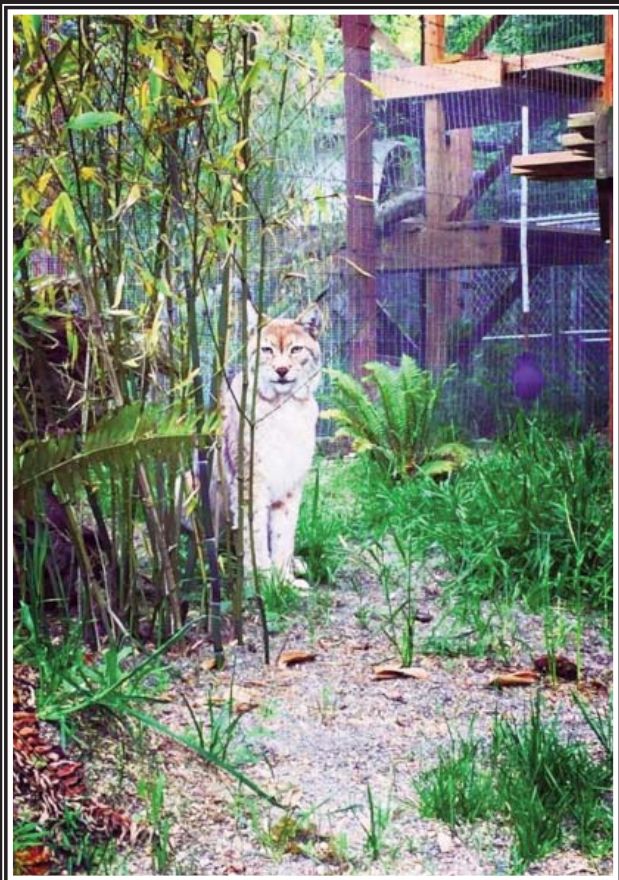




What cat doesn't find feathers fascinating? This Eurasian lynx has been presented with an assortment of peacock tail feathers to chew on and play with.



Fresh picked grass stimulates the sense of smell and brings on aroma therapy pleasures.



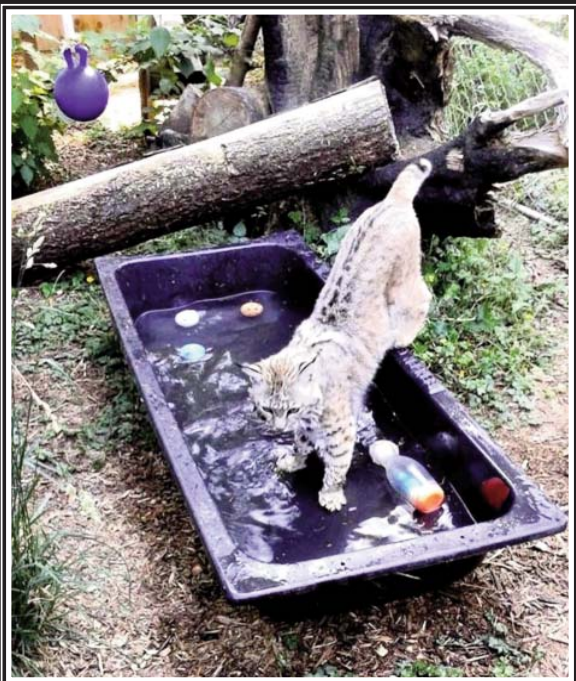
An enclosure filled with greenery such as ferns, grasses, and bamboos is cat-safe and provides hiding places and grazing materials.

Environmental and Behavioral Enrichments at Wild Felid Advocacy Center

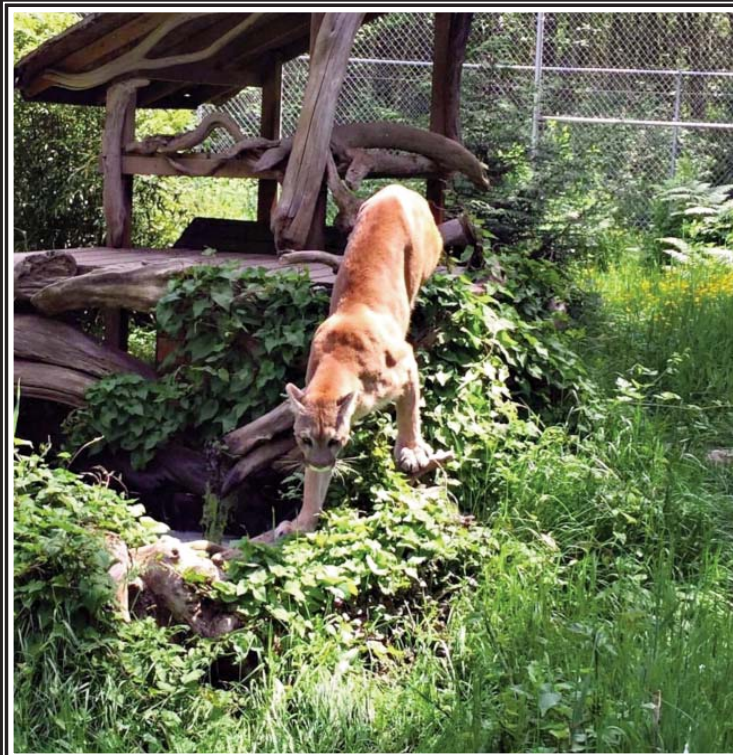
**Environmental
enrichments
stimulate
natural
behaviors**



Pools are a favorite enrichment for tigers. This design has wooden planks surrounding the water to keep the area free of mud.



Bobcats love playing in water and a few toys bobbing in a tub of fresh water make for an afternoon of "bobcat" fishing.



A greenery-filled enclosure for a feline as large as a cougar requires the habitat be large enough to not be trampled down. A roofed loafing platform constructed of natural wood logs and branches challenges the feline to test its balance and climbing skills.

mental enrichments involve specific physical s in the animal habitats. Behavioral enrichment stimulate an animal in a manner it finds pleasurable or interesting. Photos by Jolie Connolly-Poe.



Elevated resting platforms are appreciated by all feline species, whether it's a hammock, a woven firehose, or a wooden platform.



Nadjah bobcat inspects her image in a mirror. Novelty items such as a mirror stimulate curiosity and mental exercise.

Purrr-Fect Your Skills at the 2018 Annual Conference

By Mike McBride

It is an astounding number, but over 700 million people visit zoos and aquariums worldwide each year (Moss, Jensen & Gusset, 2014). This attendance allots zoos an opportunity to inspire conservation through education. Tiger World Endangered Wildlife Preserve, a non-profit public charity, began in 2007, when Lea Jaunakais purchased a zoo that had been closed by the USDA.

As a conservation center, one of Tiger World's many goals is to educate the community about endangered and threatened species of the world, especially the plight of the tiger (tigerworld.us, 2016).

Tiger World also functions as a rescue for all exotic animals in need, including lions, leopards, wolves, bears, baboons, and birds, just to name a few of the 54 species which reside within our intimate 21-acre experience.

What sets Tiger World apart from other

have many opportunities for a lasting impression, whether it be safely feeding a tiger, strolling alongside a kookaburra out on a rove, or watching a leopard go to school. This allows our visitors to walk away with more knowledge and appreciation for endangered species and captive wildlife management programs, along with a desire to get more involved with conservation.

Since our inception, Tiger World has always been progressive in nature to find the best techniques to care for animals. Lea Jaunakais has been published several times on her innovative approach for big cat medical husbandry, and she feels compelled to share knowledge and information that help the zoological community advance. As members of the Feline Conservation Federation, Zoological Association of America, and the American Association of Zookeepers, our staff is able to share successes, failures, and proposals

with keepers all around the world.

Tiger World's Director of Wildlife, Erin Carey, has dedicated her career to utilizing cutting-edge operant conditioning training techniques to ensure mental and physical well-being of all species. She has advanced Tiger World's animal handling protocols, increasing animal welfare and visitor experience alike.



Erin Carey doing advanced training with Xavier the leopard.

Continued education is just as important for animal care professionals as it is for any other career, especially because our industry is based on ever-changing science that constantly helps us learn more about the species we care for.

Thus, in order to continue with the tradition of information sharing, Tiger World is honored to host the 2018 FCF Annual Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina.

During your field trip day at Tiger World in beautiful Rockwell, you will have the opportunity to participate in professional development opportunities, including taking an overview feline nutrition and veterinary care class, spread your wings during a bird of prey husbandry and



Brandon McHugh wows the crowd with Hercules at Tiger World's Big Cat Blast.

zoos is the intimacy, and our ability to share individual animals' stories of forgiveness and acceptance with the public. The community of visitors is able to watch the residents of Tiger World grow, heal, and thrive within our unique facility.

Tiger World specializes in big cat husbandry, operant conditioning training, and enrichment. With a wide variety of skilled employees and volunteers, each day provides visitors with a truly specialized visit. We believe in making conservation personal with our visitors. Guests



Michael, the Timbaviti white lion, sunbathing in his habitat fit for a king.

handling class, fine tune emergency response plans with an experienced staff, learn how to establish quarantine protocols for sensitive species like macropods residing in high traffic feline facilities, and test your communications skills while listening to the animals during an operant conditioning training master class.

So, grab your water bottle and sunscreen and hightail it to Tiger World, as it will be an unforgettable experience you don't want to miss!

Special Sessions at Tiger World Endangered Wildlife Preserve

Tiger World Endangered Wildlife Preserve will be closing their park to offer special sessions in professional development to conference attendees.

Some of these sessions may require existing animal handling skills, and will be limited to professional members and advanced animal handlers with documented wild cat handling experience.

Don't lose out on the opportunity to participate—ensure your membership is up to date and apply for the registered handler status or professional membership you qualify for today!

Mystery of the Ailing Bobcat - Smoke and Mirrors

By Teralee Harral

Exotics are known for masking an illness, giving you the illusion that all is well, and because of this, it is often unmasked too late to treat, ending with tragic results. Other times, you see the symptoms of something not being quite right, and then comes the task of diagnosis and treatment. The process can be a real-life mystery; the suspense is agonizing as you use every clue to solve your pet's ailment.

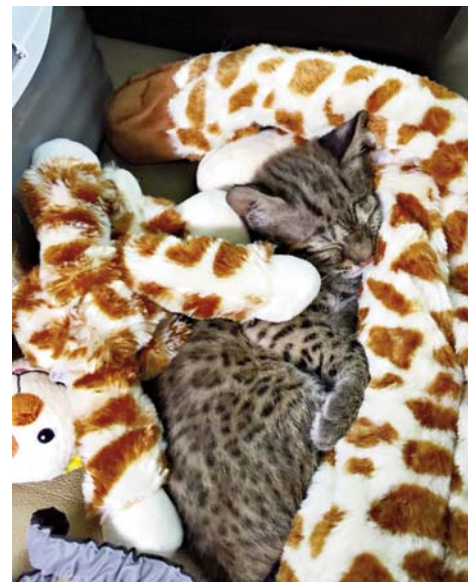
I am a first-time bobcat owner. I had the incredible joy of raising from eight weeks of age a little ball of fire that I named Sapphire Moon. I attempted to be an informed, prepared owner. I read everything. I researched, asked questions. I did my very best to gain knowledge so I could provide the best possible life so my first exotic could thrive.

I was not a first-time pet owner, as I

had raised multiple kittens, the youngest being a mere few days old. I was prepared for around-the-clock feedings, warming, and the toileting process. I also own an F2 Savannah and an F2 caracat. My other cat, a high percentage Bengal, passed of old age last year. I mention this because, while it didn't give me true exotic experience, it did allow me to see that there is a difference between living with a domestic and a higher generation hybrid. It gave me a realistic understanding that while a bobcat would be similar to a hybrid in many ways, it was still going to be very, very different in a lot of other ways, most obviously with size and temperament. In the bigger picture, if I didn't pay attention and raise this animal correctly, I could end up with an unmanageable cat. I was fully dedicated to providing Sapphire with an enriched and healthy life, a life that includes our close human-to-cat bond, my ultimate goal.

I started Sapphire's diet with Fox Valley Day One feline milk formula that I'd ordered prior to her arrival. It is what the breeder, Lynn Culver, recommended and used. At her direction, I also used a liquid pediatric multivitamin and a calcium plus D tablet that I crushed and mixed with her small, cut raw chicken.

As Sapphire grew, I transitioned her from the baby vitamins to both the Wild Trax and Mazuri nutritional supplements. Why both? I couldn't decide which was better and figured two were better than one, and I faithfully mixed these in her daily diet.



Little Sapphire snuggles up to her giraffe, Jaffie.



Teralee and Kenny ride home from the airport with their long-awaited bobcat kitten named Sapphire.

I went against the advice of feeding bones during her early months. I knew that she needed the calcium from them and I believed that the supplements would provide all that she required until she was older. I do not have a fear of feeding bones; in fact, my F2 Savannah ate bone-in chicken thighs every day for multiple years. She is older now and has had a few teeth extracted, so she no longer receives them.

One of the things that I didn't expect from my new bobcat kitten was the extreme pickiness of what she would accept for food. Luckily, I'd also had this experience with my F2 Savannah doing the same thing and I had learned a few things. One of them is the fact that she would hunger strike much longer than I could hold out when attempting to give

her a new food. So while I tried to vary Sapphire's diet as much as possible, she refused all organ meat offered in multiple ways. She also came to detest the powdered supplements that I coated her food with.

I use a special whistle to summon Sapphire to eat, to which she will come running. A bobcat's sense of smell must be amazing, because this little kitty would lift her head and sniff the air when she reached the vicinity of her food and if the vitamins and calcium were added, she would literally kick her heels as she ran in the other direction. If she was going to choose to eat, her ritual would be to walk away, then circle back before eating. Mealtime, instead of being met with ferocious growling and gusto, was now a battle for her to eat.

As Sapphire grew older, I kept my reluctance to feed bones, still believing wholeheartedly that she was getting everything she needed through her diet plus supplements. I was instructed by my vet and other knowledgeable keepers to give whole prey such as frozen pinkies to make up for this.

Since I was failing at getting Sapphire to eat her organs and take her supplements, I gave her thigh bones, which she guarded and promptly chomped up. She seemed to have a few times where she shook her head and opened her mouth extra wide, to maybe move the bones around, I don't know. But she definitely enjoyed those first bones and I mentally chided myself intensely over and over for waiting so long.

It was about this same time that I changed to Osteoform powder (calcium) instead of crushing my own. During the next few days, I noticed Sapphire wasn't eating much. I hand-fed her tiny pieces of meat that she would take if I didn't have the supplements on them. I became alarmed and started asking questions. She was drinking fine, no excessive slobbering, no vomiting, but she was dry heaving. She didn't have diarrhea, or any stool at all, and she continued to run and play.

After racking my brain and trying to figure out what might be going on, I recalled Sapphire shaking her head and repeatedly opening her mouth very wide. I began to believe that Sapphire may have gotten a bone stuck in her mouth and maybe that was why she wasn't eating.

April 14th, 2017, I took eight and a half month old Sapphire to the vet, and after

asking me some basic questions, including if there was a possibility of her ingesting something, the vet kept her for the entire day since it was a work-in appointment. I left her with her favorite blanket and her "Jaffie," a stuffed giraffe that I brought with me the day I picked her up from Lynn at the airport. She slept and played with them every single day. The clinic took x-rays and determined that she was constipated and needed fluids, which they gave her. Sapphire came home and her Jaffie and blanket were on top of her carri-



Sapphire loved everyone, but she had her favorites, too. Cruz was definitely at the top of her list.

er. I immediately gave them to her and headed home happy.

Unfortunately, after the appointment, my Sapphire was still not eating. Five days later, my friend Cruz saw my distress and proclaimed that he had an idea, and he was out the door without revealing a clue to me as to what it was. He returned within the hour with a fish that he'd freshly caught and kept alive. Now I am a fish keeper; I keep about 800 gallons of freshwater pets, and I was vehemently opposed to this gruesome idea. Cruz reminded me that the situation was dire and Sapphire needed food right then. He requested that I go inside so he could offer Sapphire the fish. In the end, I was so desperate for her to eat that I left the area crying. His theo-

ry was that Sapphire's predatory instinct would kick in and she would attack and eat. He was correct. I could hear her distinct bobcat growls from inside the house. It was a relief and I was grateful for my friend's insight; I felt like I had my own young Dirk Gently.

On April 22nd, three days after she consumed the fish, I called the vet again because she was still constipated. I was told to try pumpkin and, if that didn't work, I was instructed to go to the emergency vet. This was because my vet was out of town and they couldn't see Sapphire for two more days. The next night, Sapphire threw up her food. Since I didn't feel it was life threatening, I chose to wait for her vet who is very experienced in exotics instead of going to the emergency vet who is not. I also didn't want to worry about them not believing my permit was real or take a chance of them trying to take Sapphire away for any reason. Owning a bobcat as a pet is not common in Oregon. Before I purchased and brought Sapphire home, I'd contacted the emergency vet to make sure they would treat her in an emergency situation. They said they would only touch her in an emergency and only if I had her permit in hand. So I was more than a little apprehensive going there with her. I reached out for support from my friends online. Multiple people with exotic experience responded with advice and questions to ask the vet. One suggestion was to request a B-12 shot for energy and appetite.

The next morning, April 24th, Sapphire was still not eating. I took her in to the vet and left her for the entire day. The exam revealed that Sapphire was still constipated, but the x-ray showed everything was moving. I'd been adding very small amounts of olive oil to whatever she would eat to try to lubricate her bowels. She was kept overnight to receive more fluids.

April 26th, I messaged her breeder, explaining that I couldn't get Sapphire to eat and she'd been seen by the vet twice and X-rayed both times. First time showed constipation. Second time, nothing. She wouldn't let them check her mouth, so the plan was to sedate her and get a complete blood panel run on Friday, two days away. I had tried offering rabbit, chicken, ground turkey, and beef. Her drinking was normal. She was still active; she loved to jump through the opening in the house that leads to the outside enclo-

sure. She would play in the pouring rain, then run inside soaking wet only to jump on me and cuddle until dry. Then repeat the whole process again. She still loved to play fetch. It was just the eating that was off. When she would eat, she would use only her tongue to grab the food, and then swallow whole. Only by coaxing and feeding small bites by hand could I get her to eat; she just didn't seem to be hungry. How can she even have much to get through the colon? Her breeder's response was that if she was constipated, she wouldn't be hungry. If she wasn't vomiting, it probably was not a foreign object. Blood work would show if there was an infection or organ problems.

She then told me the story of a serval she had that had stopped eating and the vet palpated his gut and found huge poop. The vet said it was too big to pass with an enema, so she operated to remove the fecal material from the intestines. It was not a foreign object, just an oversized poop. That serval has been fine ever since.

Lynn mentioned the possibility of mouth sores. She then googled causes of anorexia in cats. She found pseud-anorexia, a condition in cats where they want to

eat but won't, or they have difficulty eating. A plethora of explanations for this condition included esophageal inflammation and pain within the tissues of the mouth and throat, pain in the mastication (chewing) muscles, or a nervous system disease affecting chewing and swallowing. Pain anywhere in the body can be distracting and interfere with appetite. "She's too young and healthy for most of these." You have to rule out medical issues and then consider psychological.

With reluctance of possibly upsetting me, she told me the story of a three year old serval that stopped eating for no apparent reason. She was taken to the vet several times and no issues were found. She would eat occasionally. After several months' time, this serval would be taken to the vet for exploratory surgery and to be spayed since she had never cycled properly. Her ovaries were very small and discolored. She recovered from surgery, but continued to waste away. The cat was euthanized four months after the first symptom. Her mystery was never solved, and the reason for why she stopped eating never revealed.

Cruz brought Sapphire another fish, but this time she was uninterested. In desper-

ation, I forced a few tiny bites of food into her mouth before she got angry and pushed any other attempts out of her mouth. She continued to drink and play.

April 27th, Sapphire was still barely eating, but did eat a small breakfast. I was hoping that the vet would be able to figure everything out at her appointment the next day. I was still unsure about my feelings of sedating her. As the day finally stretched into evening, Sapphire surprised me and ate eight ounces of hamburger! This was the first day of normal eating in two weeks. I was torn about keeping her appointment the following day because of the planned sedation. I asked Lynn's advice on keeping the appointment and putting her through the blood work and oral exam. I wondered if it was in her best interest to wait and see if her eating returned to normal and not sedate, or if I should sedate and do the tests. Sedation always scares me. Lynn thought it possible Sapphire had some kind of stomach flu that was resolving. She ate, so she must not have been blocked if she didn't vomit. We decided to make the final decision after she was offered breakfast the next day. I found it very odd that Sapphire finally started eating out of the blue,



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but I was extremely happy that she did. On the morning of April 28th, Sapphire ate her breakfast and I cancelled her appointment. I wrote Lynn, saying, "Sapphire continued to eat well today. Even eating cut up chicken. Still small pieces and she didn't want to grab the food off of the plate. Still hand feeding her." "Baby steps," Lynn replied.

Sapphire never returned to her normal eating habits, but she was eating. On June 11th, I gave the very first adult dose of Revolution; she had previously had the kitten dose. As a protective mom, I worried the adult dose would be too strong. I watched closely for any reactions, especially since I felt like she was in a weakened condition from her lack of nutrition. Two days later, she threw up her food five minutes after eating it, then again the next day. That made three days without food.

As of June 15th, it had now been two months since Sapphire stopped eating normally. I could tell that she'd dropped in weight and I knew that she was burning more calories while playing than she was taking in. So far, she had been treated for constipation before slowly starting to eat again. She continued to drink and urinate regularly. I was unsure of her bowel movements because of multiple cats and an automatic cat genie that they all use. Although she could open her mouth fine and had never choked on her food, she only accepted very small pieces of meat and only if I hand-fed them to her. Steak was now her food of choice, but she would sometimes take chicken thigh, ground turkey, and Merrick rabbit pouches. I introduced the pouches hoping they would add some vitamins and taurine, as Sapphire was still refusing any offering of hearts, gizzards, etc., or anything coated with supplements. She was docile, whereas before she was ornery to other kitties. Feeding her was a horrible recurring nightmare. She would sniff the food, run off, come circling back, and maybe I could coax her into taking a bite. She couldn't keep food down unless it was in very small amounts.

I left Sapphire at the vet again, expressing my concern of a bone

stuck in her mouth. After multiple failed attempts to exam her, she would need to be sedated to get a look in her mouth. They wanted to keep her overnight on IV fluids. I was curious how they figured she would keep an IV in without being sedated, and they said they would run the line outside the cage and the worst that could happen would be for her to chew the line off. I was going crazy leaving her. The vet had told me that I was going to be asleep anyway and that she would be fine. I fixated on my worry for Sapphire and posted my fears and feelings online. I also described symptoms, in hopes that someone may know something that hadn't been thought of. I received a private message that was simple and to the point. "What is wrong with your bobcat?" asked a woman named Molly. I'd met her once at the Oregon Fish and Wildlife state meeting. That one message turned into hundreds of messages between the two of us, because Molly is a problem solver by nature and an animal lover at heart. She locked onto Sapphire's plight, putting her skills and resources to work. By doing this, she kept my mind busy answering her barrage of questions, as well as making me feel like a participant in solving this elusive mystery at a time when I felt so helpless.

Late into the night in our own version of Nancy Drew, in an online conversation with my friend Molly, we tried to troubleshoot the problem. What was different besides me feeding bones? If it isn't a stuck bone, maybe the calcium is tainted, she offered. Not a farfetched idea considering all of the product recalls that you hear about. Not for this company, but in general. I would not attempt to sneak any more onto her food after this point in time.

Just in case. The packaged rabbit was relatively new, so I discontinued that as well. Some of her ideas and questions were included anemia or maybe a bladder/kidney infection that made her pee so much she was dehydrated. She asked about fever, but Sapphire did not seem feverish with warm feet/ears, etc. She told me of a friend's cat that chewed on a branch and a piece broke off in the roof of his mouth. The cat quit eating and then started not feeling well. By the time they knocked him down and figured it out, he didn't make it. Bones can also get crosswise in the mouth, making it so the cat is not able to eat. Molly asked about foliage in the enclosure. Any toxic plants? Morning glories! They were entwined through the chain link on two sides and were probably five feet up. I set to the task and removed them the following day.

In the Sherlock Holmes mode, I wracked my mind trying to think of any clues I may have noticed but not truly processed. Then I remembered that I had caught sight of Sapphire drinking out of the pond in her enclosure. I'd shut off the filter because it kept getting clogged, so the water was pretty gross and swirling with frogs. Maybe there was some diseased amoeba thing making her sick? The next day, it was decided to better be safe than sorry, so the pond was immediately drained, removed, and filled in.

Molly and I had been corresponding for hours and my mind kept visualizing Sapphire alone, afraid, and very sick. Molly assured me they most likely would have staff looking in or even cameras. I then remembered the vet saying that at 10 p.m. there would be a check. Molly knew of my vet even though she lives over an hour away, as her friend uses them for her cats

and lemurs and has for a long time and is very happy with them and their knowledge. This brought to mind that my sister also uses Santa Clara Animal Clinic and Dr. Sean for her seven macaws. One particular macaw had been seen by multiple vets and Dr. Sean spent hours going over symptoms, researching, and most importantly, actively listen-



Sapphire shares the bed with her two buddies, a very rare domestic/caracal hybrid, known as a caracat, named XotiKiss, and a F2 domestic/serval hybrid known as a savannah, named ZaZoo.



Tiara, Teralee's daughter, resides at home and also helped raise and socialize the young bobcat.

ing to my sister, even looking under the microscope at feather after feather she had chronologically filed, searching for the answer. This further calmed me a bit.

On June 16th, I was beside myself with worry as I agreed to sedation for an exam. I knew it was necessary and may save her life. I was terrified because of her weakened condition from lack of food and whatever was ailing her, knowing that sedation could kill her, but I had to trust my vet.

While Sapphire was sedated, an X-ray was taken and it showed no obstructions. Her kidneys appeared slightly smaller than usual, but were of no concern. The much anticipated oral exam that included an endoscopy was clear. Dr. Carry Barrett, who happens to be Sean Barrett's wife, was chosen for an abdominal exam because she is exceptionally good at palpation. Her finding was noted that day in her chart as "most likely tape worm impaction." I was given a new flea medication called Cheristin to apply the following week. And, yes, even with regular doses of Revolution on all of my animals, she still had fleas. She had just received her new adult dose. Blood samples were taken. Excessive fleas were found. Tape-worms would explain all symptoms.

Fuller tummy with low appetite and dehydration from lack of room to drink. And constipation from things not moving because of worm blockage. The vet wanted to wait to treat her until blood work results came in because of her run down condition, and should her results show kidney or liver problems, she didn't want to add wormer now, especially since Revolution was recently applied. After being gone overnight, I picked up Sapphire, and as usual, her blanket and Jaffie were sitting atop the carrier. I was excited to see her and opened her carrier for our sweet reunion, only for her to stretch, yawn, and saunter past me.

This new information ignited "Operation eradication of the would- be killer fleas." I couldn't bomb my home with pesticides because I have aquariums. We carefully taped them all up, being ever so diligent in not missing a single space, and turned off the filters. We sequestered the cats and dogs. Then came the dreaded chore of dusting everything inside and out. Washing, vacuuming, etc., daily. We also retreated all of the animals for worms and fleas. This was a huge, time-consuming ordeal; it made filling in the pond and pulling out all of those morning glories seem like child's play.

After the exam, I felt hopeful of a full recovery for Sapphire. Who would've thought this could all be from fleas? Later, I made calls and informed the Facebook world of the newest information from the vet. But soon after all of my efforts, Sapphire threw up her food and it looked like blood. I felt bad for coaxing her to eat when she obviously didn't want to. Ulcer? "She's not acting right.... I feel so helpless," I had typed to my friend. Molly asked if I'd tried Nutrical. I had not; I'd tried it previously on an older cat and she wasn't a fan. I also noted that for having been given fluid, she was drinking a lot.

On June 17th, the veterinarian checked on blood work and reviewed

the x-rays. In a desperate attempt, we tried another fish, but she was completely uninterested. I was now worried sick.

A multitude of ideas have been considered. External/environmental issues such as poisonous flowers, infected pond water, or chewing branches. Food related issues like a chicken bone stuck in her mouth, tainted calcium, or that the body couldn't handle the supplements. Packaged rabbit. Internal workings such as ulcers, constipation, worms, maybe the revolution dose was too high, stomach flu, anemia, anorexia, or psychological issues. After weeks of not eating correctly and now days without food, I feared organs would shut down. When would this mystery get solved? How could it be solved with so many possibilities to eliminate? I had a highly competent vet with whom my complete confidence lies, experienced owners with their own knowledge base and ability to problem solve, yet the answer continued to evade the capture of Sapphire's team of highly skilled detectives hot on the trail. So many unanswered questions.

Speaking of hot on the trail, Lynn sent me an email on June 21st. "It's a long shot, but I can't help but wonder if the fleas are a key. Could Sapphire have Bartonellosis (cat scratch fever) from fleas, causing mild red blood cell anemia and inflammation of the intestinal tract causing vomiting? If not that, I wonder about a moving partial block." She described an



Kenny and Sapphire share a loving embrace.

event with her cougar, Mishi. Then she wrote, "I wonder if this is gastroparesis. Possibly idiopathic." Then she told of a young, adult serval with vomiting issues, and the cause wasn't found until necropsy, a slight abnormality of the pylorus that caused pylori stenosis and vomiting. All very good ideas. We were racing against the clock.

On June 21st, it had been a day and a half since Sapphire had kept down a meal. She was vomiting 20 minutes after drinking fluids. I called the vet clinic for an update and was told she was receiving antibiotics, IV fluids, and Droncit for tapeworms. They were keeping her for observation and would contact me if she needed to stay the night.

An obstruction had been discovered in the latest X-rays and surgery was scheduled for the following day. Finally we had a cause and a remedy! Surgery scared the heck out of me. I knew Sapphire was weak. I called Lynn on my break from work and told her of the obstruction. I shared my fear of surgery and she helped me understand that this was exactly what she needed. I went back to work. Much to my distress, later that day I got a call at work with news that Sapphire was declining quickly and my veterinarian was 80 miles away, caring for animals at the Wildlife Safari in Winston, Oregon. He had turned around and was headed back to perform emergency surgery on Sapphire. Unfortunately, traffic was at its peak and travel was extremely slow. This included my route to rush to her side, one of the most frustrating and frantic drives of my life.

When I arrived, she was in the cage with her Jaffie and blanket. Previously, they hadn't ever given them to her and I knew it was bad and that they were doing all they could to comfort her. Sapphire was fading. The seconds ticked by ever so slowly. I was praying Sapphire would hold on until help arrived and that she had enough fight in her to make it through the surgery. It was now after hours and things looked terribly bleak. Deep relief rushed through me when Dr. Sean arrived. After being shown the X-rays and being assured that he would do his best, I was of course visibly distressed. I was ushered out and told it would be in Sapphire's best interest for me to leave. Of course I argued and went to the parking lot to wait anyway.

My daughter Tiara had since joined me and she, too, agreed that there was nothing I could do for her here and it could be hours. I reluctantly went home. All I could do was continue praying.

It was an excruciating wait for the call. I kept the no news is good news attitude and, when the call finally came, relief that Sapphire had made it through was intense. We weren't out of the woods by a long shot though. She still had to make it through the first 24 hours. The vet couldn't identify the object and was hoping that I could. The last time I'd seen Sapphire,

obstruction never made it out of the stomach. Now missing in the puzzle was what the heck was that thing that almost killed my bobcat? I remember describing it as almost feeling like the newer nerf football. Firm with a bit of a mushy give. Again with the guessing games. Did it come out of a toy? It didn't look like anything I recognized as being in my house, so where did it come from? How did she get it? I posted a picture on the internet and asked for suggestions. Nothing fit. Where is Columbo when you need him?

The first 24 hours were full of suspense and anxiety. Then we made it to 48 hours. On the third day after surgery, Sapphire came home. Very weak, but alive. The next hurdle was waiting for a bowel movement to be sure things were working and moving things through. Finally, on June 26th, I was able to write to Lynn, "She pooped!" "Whoopee," she wrote back. Sapphire was on the road to recovery. I was still very concerned about the months of sporadic eating and nutrition. Would she ever eat normally again? After weeks of eating erratically and never the correct diet/ratios, I wonder how I could get her back on track.

Time passed and the question of the identity of the object was still left unanswered, destined for the cold case files, until one day I was slicing avocados for a rice bowl, which my daughter and I make on a regular basis. The avocados were on the smaller side and I needed another. As I grabbed the avocado out of the refrigerator, I turned and I saw it... the avocado pit sitting on the counter. It was like the slot machine was slinging bells and whistles as the last piece of the puzzle was randomly jolting into place. The pit sitting on the counter was the size and shape of the object I'd taken a picture of aside the tape measure. And, just like that, I could finally be at peace.

As I write this story, Sapphire Moon is a happy, healthy, spirited bobcat. She eats her chicken wings and thighs and reserves her food aggression for beef and the bigger pieces of chicken. Unfortunately, she still vehemently refuses her Wild Trax, Mazuri, and calcium. A light dusting will send her running the other way and she shies from food for the next few offerings. At a year and six months old, she will



Sapphire's X-ray with the stomach circled on the right, pylorus circled on the left.

she was limp and being transferred to the operating room. Still a haunting memory.

The most important piece of the mystery was solved. A blockage in the pylorus. Why wasn't the object found in earlier X-rays? How is it that she could eat, then not eat, with a blockage? Back to the story Lynn had told me about her cougar, Mishi. He would eat small amounts, then go without eating, eat small amounts, then back to not eating. Later, it is discovered that he had swallowed an ear tag that was overlooked by some horrible mistake. Being plastic, it didn't show on the X-rays, but the theory was that it would turn one way and block the intestines, and then get repositioned with activity so food could travel past it, and then it would form another block and the vomiting would repeat. This is the same conclusion we had for Sapphire, only her

share a food bowl with any one of her feline friends; they eat together in harmony. I wonder if she realizes she is a bobcat.

This experience, while traumatizing to live through, did teach me a few things. You know your cat. Persist when you feel something is wrong. Do your homework and seek out the most qualified and experienced veterinarian you can find, before you even bring your cat home. Watching poop and gums on a regular basis is a must. Never tweak a tried and true diet; your cat needs to be in top shape to survive the unexpected. I also learned that in the throes of certain death, I would do anything to keep my bobcat alive, including going against my deep rooted belief that feeding live prey, while totally natural in the wild, is usually unnecessary in cap-



The object removed from Sapphire's stomach was only an inch and a quarter long, and it had apparently been inside her since April, sometimes settling over the pyloric sphincter, sometimes not, until it finally became lodged and stopped all flow of food.

tivity. Cats are known to toy with their prey, sometimes for hours. There is no doubt that the cat is given an enriched experience hunting and killing, all while another animal suffers a long, cruel, and torturous death. To make up for the absence of live prey, my kitties hunt, chase, and "kill" the feather wands that I switch out with various toys scented with

new, exciting scents, and I do not have any guilt of abstaining from live prey. I do respect others who choose this route for their beloved kitties; it is just not the choice for me. Throughout the entire process of trying to discover the reason for Sapphire's symptoms, the network of sleuthing was incredible. Utilize the collective knowledge of the exotic community as the treasure trove of information it is. There is nothing wrong with casting a net out there and reeling in all of the possible ideas to present to your veterinarian. Especially ones from experienced owners. Oh, and keep avocado pits off of the counter! *Wink*

Many hours and a multitude of people were involved in trying to solve this mystery. The skill of my veterinarian, Sean Barrett, of Santa Clara Animal Hospital in Eugene, Oregon, saved Sapphire's life, there is no doubt in my mind. I will forever have gratitude in my heart to him for that. No matter what time it was or how long I kept him on the phone, he was always patient and thorough in explaining his every step. Sapphire's breeder, my friend Lynn Culver, who always seems to have an unlimited amount of energy, was my go-to person, having years of experience. Lynn would immediately respond to any of my calls, messages, and questions with sound information that either she already knew or that she'd gotten after researching because she didn't know, giving me answers and support. Kurt Beckelman is near and dear to my heart; he is a fellow bobcat owner and offered many, many hours on the phone as he shared concern and advice as a man experienced with big and small cats. My new friend Molly Schaeffer provided insane sleuthing skills and was a real life Jessica Fletcher, joining me in late-night online conversations often going into the wee hours of the morning, giving many possibilities, reme-



Teralee and Sapphire smile for the camera after her recovery.

dies, and reassurance. Lots of reassurance. My stellar friend Cruz Riley, an excellent fisherman and skilled observer, brought Sapphire presents and presence as he also happens to be Sapphire's favorite person on the planet. My steadfast husband Kenny and my sweet, compassionate daughter Tiara assisted in Sapphire's care then and now. The final credit belongs to our omnipotent God, as he heard the collective prayers from friends and family around the world. Faith. Hope. Belief.

This was one big labyrinth of "who done it/what caused it" mysteries that I'm grateful got solved. While Sapphire was still a victim of me failing to control her environment, there was no fatality involved. The avocado pit was detained, photographed, and booked into evidence, convicted of obstruction, attempted murder, and causing extreme pain and distress, then sentenced to educating fellow cat owners of the dangers of ingesting foreign objects.

Editor's note:

Teralee composed this article in November 2017, believing that her experience with Sapphire could potentially help another owner facing intermittent symptoms of a moving, partial block. Her dedication to Sapphire and the welfare of all captive felines inspired her to share her story. Sadly, Sapphire passed away March 10th of this year while under the care of veterinarians. Sapphire succumbed to complications from pleural effusion.

Snow Leopard Downgraded to “Vulnerable” by the IUCN

By Anthony Bouchard

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) officially announced mid-September 2017, that the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*), which was formerly an endangered species, has now been downgraded to the “vulnerable” status instead.

While it might be excellent news for those in favor of animal conservation, it doesn't mean we can let our guard down. Being downgraded on the IUCN's Red List from “endangered” to “vulnerable” only means that the species is one step further away from extinction, but it's still at risk and any wrong moves could land the species right back on the endangered species list.

According to the IUCN, there are more snow leopards in the wild across 12 Asian countries than previously thought, which means they don't meet the criteria for being labeled an endangered species. This miscalculation ultimately led to the change in the species' Red List status.

“To be considered ‘endangered,’ there must be fewer than 2,500 mature snow leopards, and they must be experiencing a high rate of decline,” explained Dr. Tom McCarthy, the lead of the Snow Leopard Program.

“Both are now considered extremely unlikely, which is the good news, but it does not mean that snow leopards are ‘safe’ or that now is a time to celebrate. The species still faces ‘a high risk of extinction in the wild,’ and is likely still declining – just not at the rate previously thought.”

Snow leopards have faced decades of habitat loss via climate change and illegal animal poaching fueled by their valuable

pelts, but heightened alertness to these issues has helped protect the animals' populations from dipping any lower than they already have.

Considerable efforts have gone into protecting the species and ensuring its populations didn't decline, so it's certainly comforting to know that the big cats' populations aren't plummeting as badly as they once were.

On the other hand, the latest amendment to the Red List isn't convincing everyone. Some fear that many will take the downgrade as a reduction in seriousness toward the snow leopard, resulting in dire consequences for the species.

Worthy of note, the IUCN made a similar decision for the giant panda around the same time last year. The species was downgraded from its endangered status to vulnerable instead.

Abrupt changes like these are enough to make anyone wonder just how many other animal species on the IUCN's Red List aren't properly accounted for. It should be interesting to see if any



Snow leopards are still vulnerable to habitat loss from climate change and illegal poaching, so the threat of extinction is still very real.

other animals see Red List downgrades as conservationists double-check their data.

Edited from a Labroots internet article published September 15, 2017 (www.labroots.com).



Snow leopards were downgraded from endangered to vulnerable by the IUCN.

Donations

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

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

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The FCF appreciates your generosity & continued support.

FCF Represented at the Fall 2017 Wildlife Conservation Expo

By Chris Tromborg

On Saturday, October 14, 2017, the Wildlife Conservation Network held its annual conservation event at the Mission Bay campus of the University of California in San Francisco. Scores of conserva-

tion organizations were represented,

including many concerned with the conservation of felines. A partial list of these includes the Wildlife Conservation Society, Felidae, the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, the Snow Leopard Trust, the Snow Leopard Conservancy, Niassa Lion Conservation, the Andean Cat Alliance, the Small Cat Alliance, the Puma Project, the Mountain Lion Foundation, and the Feline Conservation Federation. The general news for animal conservation around the world is as troubling as ever. For example, the Niassa Lion Research Project reports that lion numbers in South Saharan Africa have plunged to levels below 18,000 individuals. Cheetahs, always on the edge, are holding their own relative to lions and tigers. Snow leopard numbers are difficult to estimate with the level of turmoil in Afghanistan and Pakistan. As of this writing, however, the conservation status of the snow leopard has been changed from endangered to threatened. The trapping of bobcats for their fur has been outlawed in California.

The FCF table was located near good company, in a row of tables including that for the Mountain Lion Foundation. The FCF table was operated by FCF member Dr. Chris Tromborg, FCF member Sherilyn Dance, volunteer Julie McNamara, and FCF guest Stan Bursten, Ph.D. Dr. Tromborg also supervised the Mountain Lion Foundation exhibit, with assistance from MLF representatives Deeanna Lakeland, MSC, and

Kathryn Klar, Ph.D.

The FCF exhibit offered information about member organizations including the Endangered Feline Breeding Center, the Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund, the Lyon Therapy Animal Ranch, and Safari West. It was directly across the pedestrian path from a table for the U.S. Department of Fish and Wildlife. This table displayed confiscated wildlife parts and products, including a tiger skin, a tiger head, a leopard head, a snow leopard head, a clouded leopard head, a lion paw, some elephant teeth, a rhino horn, and other pieces of formerly living beings; all of this material was confiscated in San Francisco, a city generally regarded as being friendly to wildlife. The situation is probably worse in other places.

It should be noted that the officers of the U.S. Department of Fisheries and Wildlife were at the expo on their own time, since many of the interdiction and prosecution activities of the DFW have been profoundly disrupted by a change in government policies toward animal conservation under the Trump administration.

The FCF's message was well received. Many of our sample brochures and *Journals* were given to interested visitors to the FCF table. The FCF message was made more effective by the location of its table, directly across from that of the FWS exhibit, with its disturbing evidence of the unbridled destruction of cats in the wild. The importance of captive conservation,

the maintenance of adequate alternate gene pools in captivity, and the absolute necessity of enhancing the need for feline conservation through the use of ambassadorial animals became self-evident as visitors viewed images of living captive felines at the FCF exhibit to the display of the remnants of deceased felines at the DFW exhibit.

On another note, as most FCF members might be aware, Northern California experienced severe fires during October 2017, especially in Sonoma County. Three FCF member organizations are located in Sono-



Dr. Chris Tromborg manning the FCF table with friend, Stan. (Chris' sister, Sher Dance, in the background).

tion organizations were represented, including many concerned with the conservation of felines. A partial list of these includes the Wildlife Conservation Society, Felidae, the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Cheetah Conservation Botswana, the Snow Leopard Trust, the Snow Leopard Conservancy, Niassa Lion Conservation, the Andean Cat Alliance, the Small Cat Alliance, the Puma Project, the Mountain Lion Foundation, and the Feline Conservation Federation.

The annual WCN Wildlife Conservation Expo allows those involved in wildlife conservation to gather together and compare notes about successes and failures over the past year. It provides conservationists with an opportunity to exchange ideas about tactics and strategies that can be employed in attempts to stem a seemingly inevitable tide of



Cute photo of a dog trying to get to the Eastern Lubber Grasshopper container.



An aisle view of the many vendors in discussions, including Dr. Tromborg.

ma County, including Safari West in Santa Rosa, the Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund in Occidental, and the Lyon Therapy Animal Ranch in Sonoma. The good news is that all three organizations survived the inferno with no loss of animals. All three organizations were affected by the fires, however. The WCECF had crated all of its cats in preparation for evacuation, which fortunately never became necessary. In contrast, the Lyon Therapy Animal Ranch did have to evacuate most of its animals. Unfortunately, they were obligated to leave a group of

ocelots behind for logistical reasons. Thankfully, the Lyons were able to return to their facility after a short period of time and experienced only a modest disruption to their activities. The organization which was most severely impacted was Safari West. The zoo experienced some damage to its perimeter barriers and to some of its infrastructure, including some extremely expensive vehicles. Once again, however, primarily due the heroic efforts of the Safari West staff and especially that of owner Peter Lang, no animals were lost. Among the animals that were saved are the several cheetahs



Dr. Tromborg answering questions.

that the zoo regularly presents in a very handsome exhibit. These were harrowing times for Northern California and its FCF affiliates. It speaks well of them as a group that their dedication to their charges resulted in the protection of all captive felines possessed by them.

Once again, and even in the face of natural and anthropogenic challenges, it was an altogether productive event. The FCF will continue to disseminate its conservation message and will present its perspective on feline conservation at next year's Wildlife Conservation Expos in both the spring and fall. Hope to see you there.

Kylie Reynolds Shares Enrichment From Amazing Animals Inc.!



Two large cardboard tubes are wrapped in rope and hung with a rod so they can each spin independently! Great cat scratcher for our bobcat, Willow!



Another cardboard tube is simply hung with rope for the Geoffroy's cats to play in and on! These tubes were donated by Owens Corning, whose goal is to have zero landfill waste and they love teaming up with zoos to donate enrichment items!



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Blast From the Past

The Long Island Ocelot Club began the summer of 1955. The first issue of the club's newsletter was published January 1957. The purpose of the club was to inform members of new developments in the field of medicine or other data pertinent to the world of ocelots; to answer questions regarding ocelots from owners or perspective owners, regardless of whether the request came from a member or a non-member; and to give assistance in locating an ocelot.

The following three early stories paint a picture of life more than six decades ago, when ocelots from South and Central America began arriving at pet stores. The struggle for and against private ownership has been going on since the beginning, with wins and losses, and a growing love for and understanding of these jungle felines. By 1961, the Long Island Ocelot Club had 157 members.

January 1957

Mrs. Muriel White, of 78-12 35th Ave, Jackson Heights, New York, has lost the right to keep Se-Ahm, her 28-pound, three year old Brazilian ocelot, in a suit brought against her by the New York City Department of Health. There is a city ordinance which prohibits keeping an animal with



July 1961 Long Island Ocelot Club front page featured Pepper, a California ocelot, kissing his people.

“vicious propensities” within the city limits.

The trial was held December 28th, at the Long Island City Magistrate's Court. The city called as a witness a Department of Health veterinarian who testified that he had handled three of four ocelots and that when cornered they will attack. Mrs. White's attorney was unable to produce proof to the contrary.

The Long Island Ocelot Club provided photographic and printed material and offered testimony from its members regarding their experience with their ocelots. Mrs. White's attorney did not find the material or the testimony to be useful in her defense.

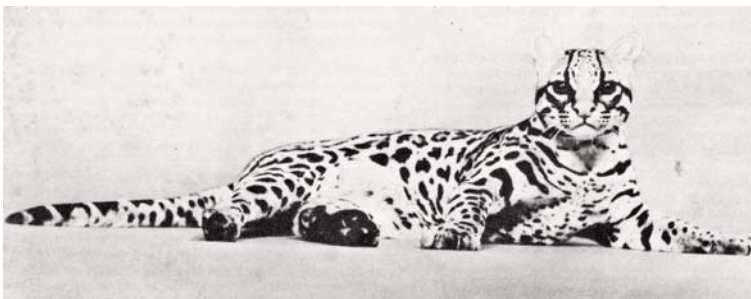
January 1958

In early November, Los Angeles ocelot owners won a temporary victory in their lengthy tooth and claw battle for the legal right to keep their pets. L.A. City Council members voted down a proposed law banning all “wild” animals in residential and retail store zones. Residents will be permitted to keep monkeys, pandas, peacocks, seals, ocelots, and cheetahs.

The next hearing of the council will decide on which proposed regulations to accept. The Board of Animal Regulations' proposed rules would give them (the board) the opportunity to make rules pertaining to the keeping of “wild” animals as they see fit. One of the current proposed rules would take the wild animals out of the house and put them in a cage 25 feet from the house. This is hardly the place for a house pet! Some owners might as well move out of their houses to their pet's cage. It could happen.

November 1960

Mr. R.A. Roberts, 37 Forest Street, Needham 92, Massachusetts, tells the following story:



January 1959 Long Island Ocelot Club Newsletter cover photo is Caligula, a three and a half year old, 33-pound pet ocelot living in New York City.



July 1959 cover photo of California-owned ocelot, Simba, age two and a half, inspecting a photo of himself as a seven month old kitten.

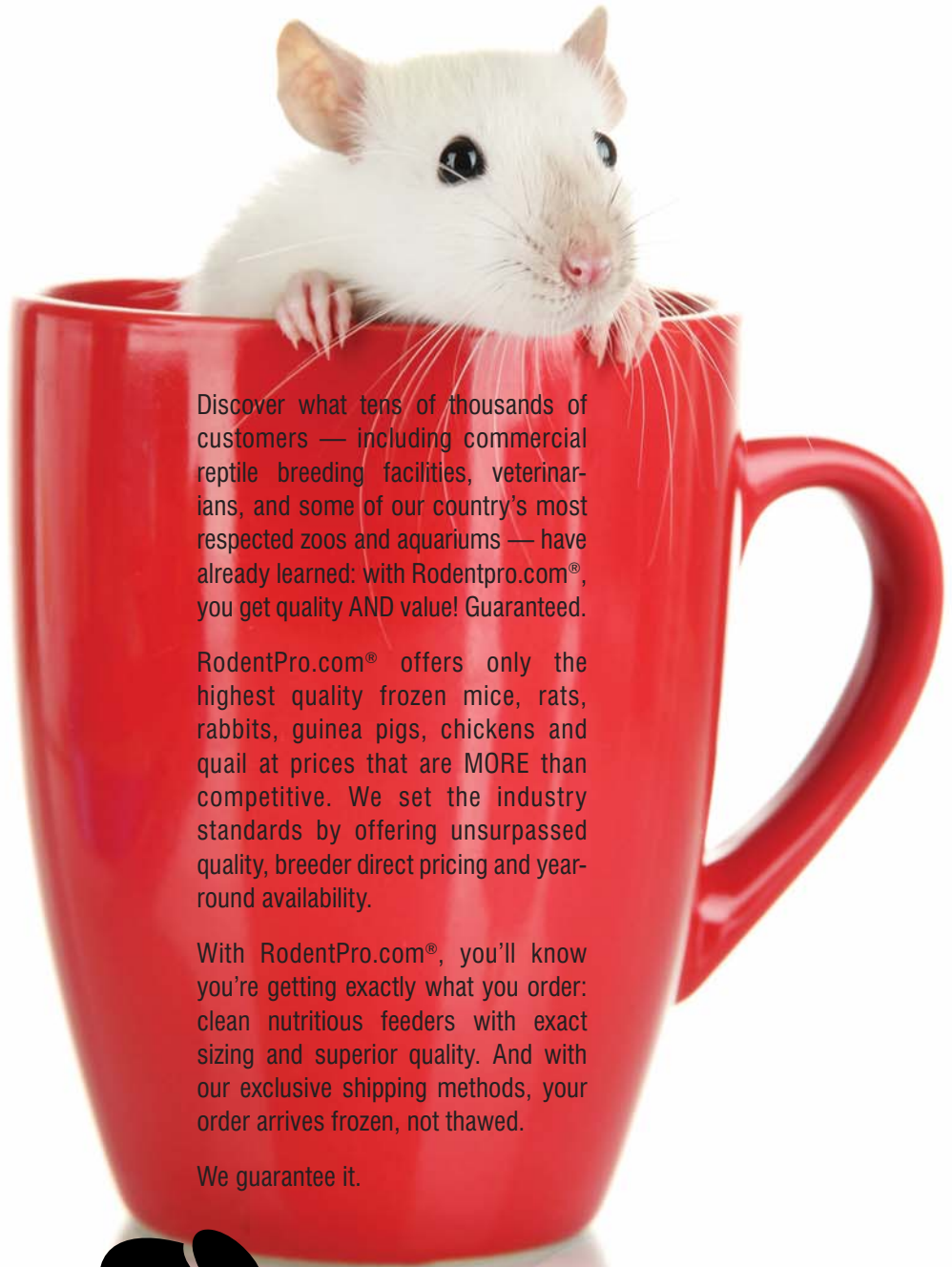
This past week has been a busy but interesting one getting used to our new member of the family, Samantha the ocelot. I must confess that when I walked into the pet store two weeks ago and bought the cat, I left asking myself, “Roberts, what have you gone and done now?” I had arranged to bring her home on a Friday morning, and when I walked into that store I felt as though I had ice water in my veins. I steeled myself to follow through, come what may.

My wife and I arrived home with Sam in a borrowed cage without any incidents on the way. The cage was deposited on the floor in our recreation room in the cellar, the collar and leash having been applied before arrival. I stooped before the cage door and released her, picking up the end of the leash as she came out. Sam stretched her legs and began sharpening her claws on a nearby rug. I stopped the action by lifting her up and setting her down. She then leaped into my lap and arms and started her strenuous purring. She was so darned affectionate that all the fear I had melted away and we became good friends.

I realized that the forgoing is an old story. I only hope that we can contribute in some little way to other new ocelot owners and help them get off to a successful start.

Wake Up

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2017 Third Quarter Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

The 2017 Third Quarter Board of Directors Meeting was held on the FCF forum from August 7-20, 2017. Board members present were: President - Kevin Chambers, Vice President - Mindy Stinner, Treasurer - Lynn Culver, Director - Robert Bean, Director - Chris Tromborg, and Secretary - Rebecca Krebs.

Ratify the 2017 Annual FCF Convection meeting minutes: the minutes stand approved as presented.

Treasurer's Report:

Total liabilities and equity - \$81,389.94.

Voting and motions:

- Make an appointment to appoint Julia Wagner to the vacant director's position on the FCF Board. Moved by Mindy Stinner, seconded by Kevin Chambers. The motion carried with a unanimous "yes" vote.

- Motion for the Board to approve the status of the programs as indicated below. Programs will either be kept in operation, suspend until such time as the membership can support them, or ended as programs we do not see a need for in the foreseeable future: KEEP - Members Services, Education, Convention, Journal, Legislative, Professional Review. SUSPEND - Conservation Grants, Captive Conservation (may be of special interest to our new members), PR/Marketing/Development (may be assigned to new contractor), Facility Accreditation. END: Wildcat Safety Net, Youth Education, Feline Urgent Response Team. Moved by Mindy Stinner, seconded by Kevin Chambers. The motion carried with five "yes" votes and one "no" vote.

- Motion that that the FCF award the Tsavo East Grant Proposal the full \$2,850 requested. Moved by Chris Tromborg, seconded by Lynn Culver. The motion carried with a unanimous "yes" vote.

- Motion that the Board approve a contracted position for administrative support and marketing modeled after the contract previously used for the executive director position, with modification made to the compensation section commensurate with the candidate's experience and hours to be

agreed upon by the Board and candidate, with a job description and title to be finalized based on the candidate's capacity, but including at a minimum coordinating the membership drive and facilitating the update of the organization's public face, at the direction of the Board. Moved by Mindy Stinner, seconded by Kevin Chambers. The motion carried with a unanimous "yes" vote.

- Motion that the Board approve a \$300 entire website (public and private) evaluation expenditure. Moved by Chris Tromborg, seconded by Lynn Culver. The motion carried with a unanimous "yes" vote.

Important topics of discussion:

1. A review of the FCF financial reports was made, including funding provided to Conservation Grants. Additionally, funding for updating and securing the website was proposed.

2. The statistics of the number of views on the FCF website have been presented as a method to review what is leading visitors to the FCF website, who is looking at the site, what revisions could be made to increase visitors to the site, and what percentage of reviewers are showing interest in FCF membership after visiting the site. These numbers can now be utilized to formulate the direction of the FCF's website design and advertising prior to the membership drive.

3. The FCF new membership numbers were presented for review, analyzing numbers from 2011 through 2017. Numbers show a drastic decline in membership. Reasons for decline were discussed and ideas for revamping the website as a method for increasing membership via the FCF website were proposed. Through a website membership drive, it is proposed that actions happen in the following order:

- A) That the introductory video on the webpage be revised with a detailed message as to why people should join the FCF,

- B) Have members link the FCF page to

their personal website,

- C) Have an FCF Facebook advertising page that solely promotes the organization,

- D) Reconsider the website content and possibly increase the availability of feline husbandry information,

- E) Possibly add an FCF blog,

- F) Begin to re-utilize Vocus for press releases as a method to increase membership.

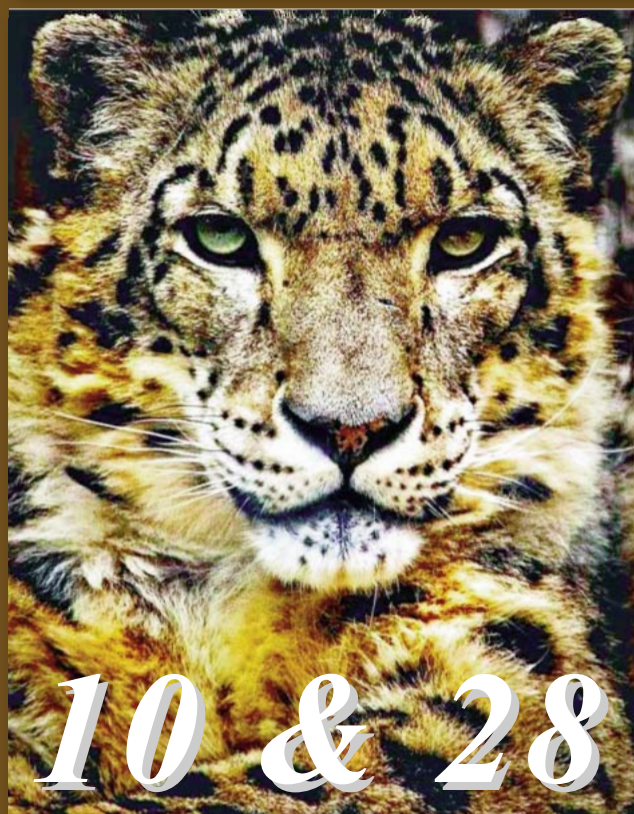
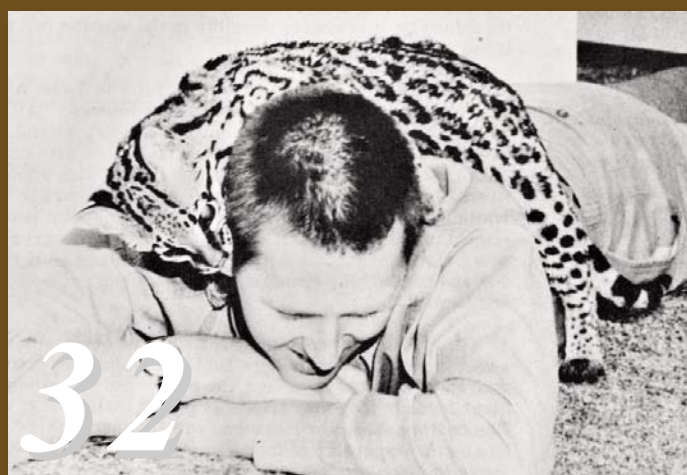
4. A proposal to split our Facebook into a public and private face was presented, along with paying an individual to set that up in the near future. Per the Board's approval in splitting the Facebook page, the paid individual would help set up the private Facebook page and would help create guidance for public-facing content moving forward. Erin Patters is the current main moderator for the public FCF Facebook page. The Board showed no objection to having Erin look into setting up a closed, members-only FCF Facebook page and directing members to join the page once completed.

5. A proposal to establish better website security was discussed. Chad Stinner did a review of the current FCF website and found several security flaws. Chuck Bunnell, the FCF webmaster, was able to immediately address some of the security issues and better secure the FCF website. Additional security issues will be examined.

6. Position statement revision for the website was discussed as the FCF begins to take a new direction. Once completed, the statement will be presented to the Board for approval.

Rebecca Krebs

Visit the site, choose "Feline Conservation Federation" as your charity and then shop. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to the Feline Conservation Federation.





Feline Conservation Federation

January-March 2018 Volume 62, Issue 1

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: Salem the snow leopard has retired at the Wild Felid Advocacy Center. He's enjoying the change of scenery, his two-level tower, and his bamboo and fern filled habitat. The Shelton, Washington, refuge was established on a property that was formerly a botanical garden - a definite perk. The recent snowfall made this Himalayan feline feel right at home. Photo by Jolie Connolly-Poe.

Back Cover: At the Wild Feline Advocacy Center, Ruffian the bobcat loves to drape his limbs down the sides of his walkway while napping. Bobcats particularly appreciate having elevated pathways to pace and nap on. Photo by Jolie Connolly-Poe.

