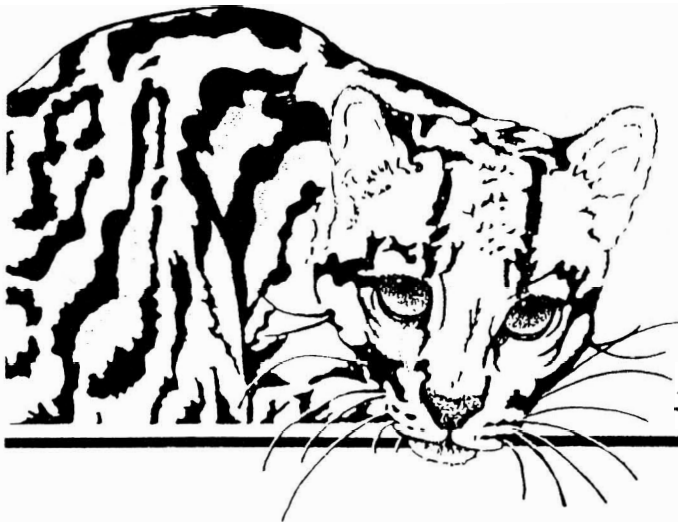
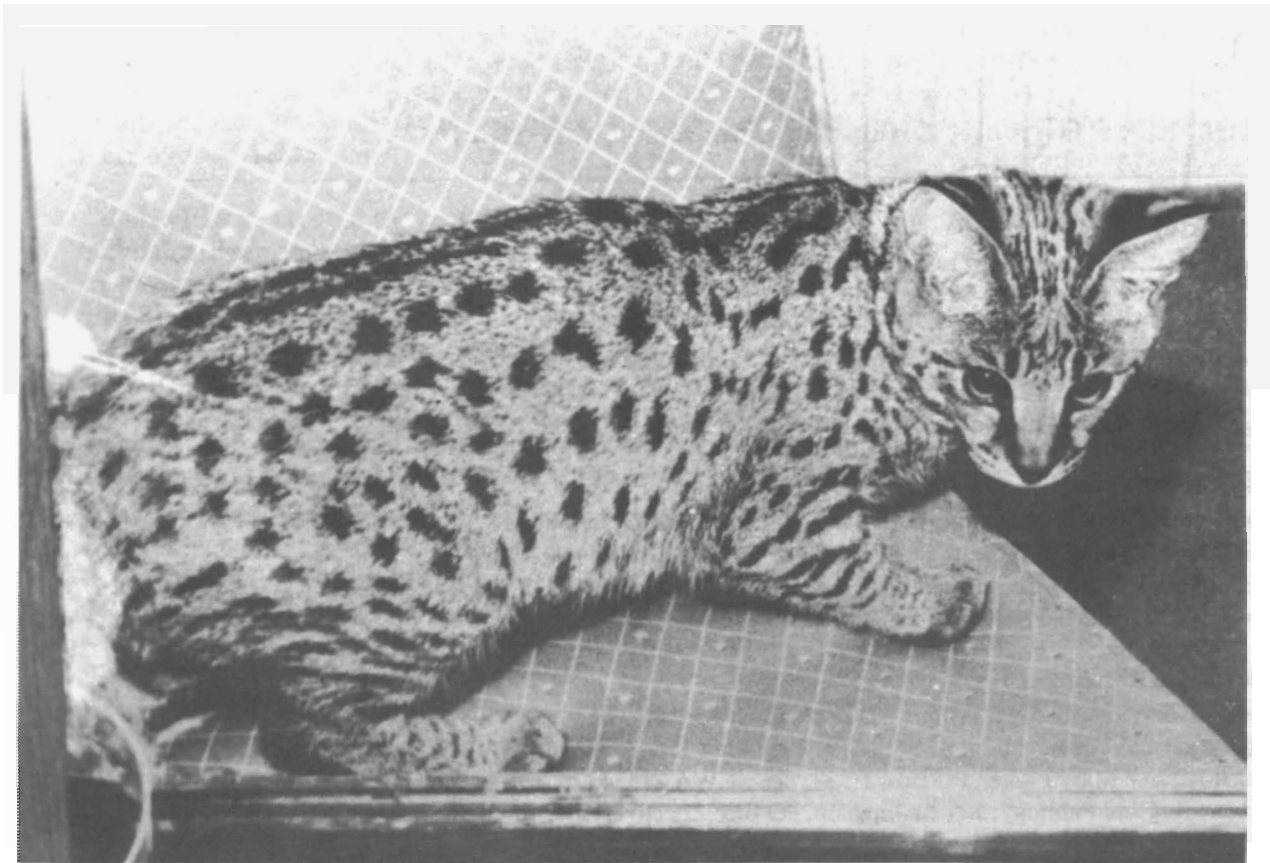


L.I.O.C. Endangered Species Conservation Federation Incorporated.



Newsletter

4101 Penn Ave., Pittsburgh PA 15224
July/Aug 1989 , Volume 33, Number 4



Suzi and Mike Mutascio have some interesting news about their Serval/Domestic hybrid. The cat shown above is named Savannah and is the first example of a documented Serval/Domestic hybrid within LIOC ESCF. These hybrids are called Savannah cats, in the same way that Geoffroy's/Domestic hybrids are called Safari cats. The interesting news? Savanna had a litter of kittens this spring. More on this story inside.

Information about LIOC ESCF Inc. and this Newsletter.

This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation Incorporated. We are a non-profit, non-commercial organization, international in membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of the newsletter is to present information about exotic-feline conservation, management, and ownership to our members, and to allow our members to publish their points of view on these topics. The material printed in this newsletter is contributed by our members and, in many cases, reflects the point of view of the person whose name appears on the article, rather than the point of view of the organization. The organization's statement of intent is contained in our by-laws; a copy can be requested from the Secretary/Treasurer. Reproduction of the material in this newsletter may not be made without written permission of the authors and/or the copyright owner LIOC.

Since the newsletter consists of articles, photos, and artwork contributed by members, we depend on you for our material. We can only publish what you send us. Articles of all types concerning exotic felines are gladly accepted. We also have a reader's write section for letters or responses to articles. Please send materials for contribution to the newsletter editor.

Newsletter Editor: Wendie Wulff, 4101 Penn Ave. #6, Pittsburgh PA 15224

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I'd like to open by thanking some of our members who have helped me with typing chores for the newsletter. In particular, I'd like to thank Cindy Campbell and one other person who doesn't want to be mentioned by name. Without your help, this and the preceding newsletter would have been even later in coming to you.

My work on the newsletter this year has shown me that the job I'm trying to do is just too big for one person. Every issue has been a struggle to coordinate, every issue has been late and, frankly, unless something changes the situation is only going to get worse. Some of the Board Members have talked about having the newsletter put together here in Pittsburgh, and then having all the copies printed in Portland OR and distributed by Barb Wilton's group. In fact, this issue may have been mailed to you out of Oregon.

Another change we've discussed is breaking the newsletter editorship up into a number of tasks to be done by various groups -- one group could collect and type articles, another could do the layout and assembly of the newsletters and then another could coordinate printing, envelope stuffing and mailing. It is my guess that the editorship of the newsletter will change, in one form or another, as a result of this year's convention. I'm certainly going to be campaigning for some changes -- from my perspective, what is important is not whose name is on the inside front cover, but actually getting the work done. It's obvious that I can't get it all done alone. So . . . If someone (or group) wants to share the work, or if someone (or group) wants the whole job, please let John Perry know right away.

I'd also like to say that the content of the newsletter needs some attention. All I have to publish are reprints from other cat and animal publications, which we all probably get anyway. Where are the branch reports? Where are the book reviews? Where is the President's Perspective? What happened to the interesting bits and pieces people used to send in about their experiences with their animals? What happened to the photos and the artwork? The newsletter is only as good as we all make it. Lets have some contributions! For the time being, go ahead and send things to me. I'll do my best to publish them or to send them right on to whoever will be in a position to publish them. I'm sure everyone enjoyed the photo series on the Bellingham's cats earlier this year and the piece Lynn Culver contributed to the last issue. We need more contributions exactly like those.

Finally, I'd like to make a pitch to get people to attend this year's convention. Convention only happens once a year and it is the best opportunity for information gathering and exchange that the club offers. People who might never contribute to the newsletter will talk for hours about subjects that interest all of us. We haven't got a recent article to publish on what to do if a cat suddenly becomes difficult to handle, but five minutes of conversation on the topic with someone like Ken Hatfield will give a new owner lots of hints in case the situation occurs. If you are seriously interested in becoming directly involved with non-domestic felines, convention is the one place to meet the people who can get you started. Getting together and talking about the animals is a better way to initiate an inquiry about kittens than an exchange of letters or an ad in the newsletter.

Go to convention! Send your check for \$80.00 in to Suzi Mutascio, or bring it with you when you come. Call the Landmark Bourbon Street Hotel (1-800-535-7891) and reserve a room. It's not uncommon for four or five people to share a room -- if you want a roommate or two, you might give Suzi or Shirley Wagner a call. It should be lots of fun and perhaps I'll see you there!

Savannah Hybrid Gives Birth

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Savannah, a 15 pound Serval/Siamese F1 hybrid owned by suzi Mutascio, successfully paired-bonded with a 13 pound champion male Turkish Angora, Albert II, owned by Lori Buchko of Hightstown NJ. The match resulted in the birth of two large healthy, bouncing kittens on April 5th 1989. While this unlikely combination of parents may conjure up thoughts of the odd couple, in actuality long sessions of genetic discussions led to Albert as an ideal stud candidate.

Prior to her second birthday, Savannah had rebuffed three different potential mates for reasons known only to her. She was cycling regularly throughout, so hope remained for her fertility. Albert's white coat and long hair were not cause for concern, for as a proven stud he clearly did not throw white dominant genes, but did carry and produce red which is highly desirable in a hybrid breeding program. Further, a long coat requires a double recessive genetic influence in order to manifest itself in offspring. As Savannah was genetically clear from long hair, short coated babies were expected. A well-bred Turkish Angora displays a refined, boxed head, narrow muzzle, copper eyes and out-sized ears atop a large, rangy, leggy body -- this is an excellent body type compliment to a Serval. Equally, if not more important, Albert is a calm, loving, laid-back cat -- a real gentleman, yet an avid breeder. Equally comfortable at home, or away, it was decided that Albert would assume residence at our home as Savannah is tenacious to her own territory. Within two days, the pair was literally inseparable; best friends, playmates, and sleeping/grooming companions.

Six months later, ironically on her third birthday -- April 5th 1989 --, Savannah gave birth to two babies at between three and five in the morning. Three hours later she gave birth to another kitten, sadly D.O.A., and presumably a victim of placenta abruptio from my observation of the birth. Savannah has proven to be an excellent mother, permitting me to interact with the two kittens and observe her maternal routine. At ten days of age, both kittens are large, robust and thriving. The first born was a solid white male, the second a spotted female with mottled areas of red, the third stillborn kitten was a male with perfect spotting on a beige ground color. (The D.O.A. kitten has been preserved and is available for scientific study to any qualified individual or institution.)

All three kittens were sizable at birth, weighing in excess of six ounces. I guesstimate the white kitten to be large, refined in bone and elegant at maturity, clearly exhibiting a serval type body and the spotted female to closely resemble her mother's beauty. The female, at ten days, weighs 11 ounces and the male 11 and 1/2 ounces.

When the kittens were nine days old, Savannah elected to move them from the nest box to on top of the bed where they are fully exposed. Accommodating her every wish, we lowered the mattress and arranged bumpers around the perimeter to prevent falls. Savannah also seems to have appointed me chief babysitter, as once I am in place, she enjoys going off to play with Albert, play with her toys, or romp in the outside play area for 2-3 hours at a time. This arrangement has provided the perfect balance of mother raised babies who are fully imprinted and socialized to humans.

As Savannah is the only documented serval F1 hybrid to date, each step of the breeding program ventures further into exciting new frontiers. Development of the Savannah Cat now appears to be a plausible endeavor.

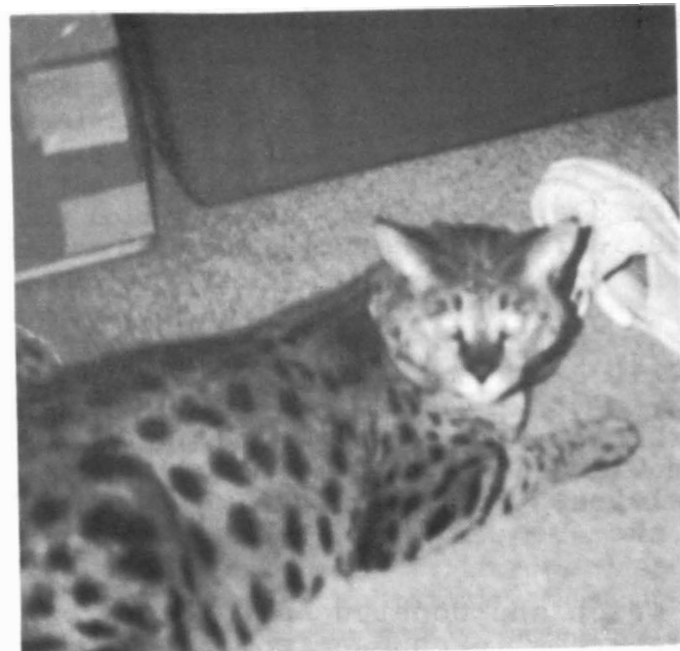
Congratulations Albert and Savannah!

For more information contact me: Suzi Mutascio, 609-983-6671 evenings and weekends.

Savannah Hybrid Gives Birth

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Top left: Albert, Top right: Savannah
Bottom left: Savannah pregnant, Bottom right: Kittens at four days old





NORTHWEST EXOTIC FELINE SOCIETY

MEETING REPORT

April 16, 1989

The April meeting of Northwest Exotic Feline Society was held at the home of Ethel Hauser in Vancouver, Washington.

Mary Parker, President, conducted the meeting. The majority were new people who wanted a lot of information concerning everything from LIOC to cat breeds, caging, diet and diseases. Ethel was well supplied with flyers covering many different topics.

Jim Christianson from Camas, Washington has been elected to the Board of Clark County (Wash) to help on the re-write of exotic animal laws.

We discussed our donation to the National Convention. There were a lot of good suggestions.

Liz Ghent from Seattle brought her beautiful female Wolf -- definatly not a feline but a beautiful animal we all enjoyed seeing.

Herb Wiltons Puma, Sean, spent the afternoon^{even} in the shade of a tree and kept one eye on a colorful rooster who knew enough to keep his distance!

Ethel Hauser with 5 cats and Barbara & Herb Wilton with Sean did a speak-out in March for the Clackamas County (Oregon) Democrats. There were several Legislators present and we are now receiving calls from schools in the area. It is good to get back in the swing of things.

Mary Parker won the dollar pool which she donated back to the Club. There were a lot of raffle items to choose from, too.

The meeting adjourned for picture taking and lunch.

Submitted by

Barbara Wilton, Sec.

Rare Cats Imported by the International Society for Endangered Cats, Columbus, Ohio

Felis silvestris gordonii, the Arabian desert wildcat, is one of the ancestors of the domestic cat and comes from the desert regions of Oman, Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. In size, they resemble the domestic cat and weigh from 7-12 lbs; however, the coat is a soft silver color covered with small dark gray spots, reddish brown ears, a red stripe down the spine, black-banded legs and tail, and a pale cream belly. The entire body has a soft, misty look, as though the tips of the fur were frosted with silver. In the wild, they lead a solitary life and pairs come together only for mating. This lifestyle is typical of species living in harsh environments where food is scarce and hunting involves traveling long distances to fill the daily requirements.

The ancestor of the domestic cat is in a precarious situation today. Habitat destruction and persecution have reduced the numbers of these cats to a critical few. The shy, solitary nature of the species prevents them from coexisting with human encroachment. However, the major threat to the species is their own descendants, the domestic cat. The close relationship of the wildcat to the domestic cat allows interbreeding, producing hybrids which are no longer pure wildcats. Since wildcats produce only one litter per year of 3-4 young and domestic cats breed year-round, the domestic cats are rapidly overwhelming the wildcat gene pool. Humans are spreading out into areas traditionally occupied by this species, and with them, come the domestic cats. This invasion of domestic cat genes has already caused the extinction of several wildcat subspecies, and the fate of the entire species is now in serious jeopardy.

The Arabian desert wildcat is now thought to be extinct in the wild. No pure wildcats have been seen in over 3 years. Fortunately, a few pure animals still exist in captivity in Abu Dhabi, the United Arab Emirates. A breeding program was initiated in 1986, beginning with a captive male and a wild-caught female. From this original pair, 23 offspring have been produced, 16 of which have survived. This is the only known pure colony of Arabian desert wildcats in the world, and may be the last of this subspecies. Recently, the owners of this colony became concerned that, if disaster struck, the subspecies would become completely extinct in one blow. Therefore, an effort was made to establish breeding colonies in other areas of the world as insurance against extinction. Two pairs have already been sent to Germany. The International Society for Endangered Cats is honored to have been chosen as the U.S. representative to receive these cats from Abu Dhabi. Through the efforts of ISEC, San Diego Zoo will also receive a pair of cats. These pairs will be the only Arabian desert cats in the Western Hemisphere. The ISEC cats will be sent to Mrs. Pat Quillen's facility in southern California. Mrs. Quillen is Director of Animal Management and International Programs for ISEC and has operated a successful private breeding facility (Society of Scientific Care, Inc.) for 20 years. The California climate will be more conducive to the health of the wildcats initially than our own unpredictable Ohio weather. Eventually, as a major captive breeding facility is built in Ohio, a colony of these cats will be brought to this region.

This important conservation effort is being made possible through the efforts of many people including: Dr. Claus Muller and Mrs. Marycke Jongbloed of Abu Dhabi; Carol Carson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Atlanta; Gail Hagens, Atlanta Custom Brokers; the San Diego Zoo, California; and Lufthansa Airlines.

Letter from BeeJay Lester about the Rare Feline Breeding Compound

8

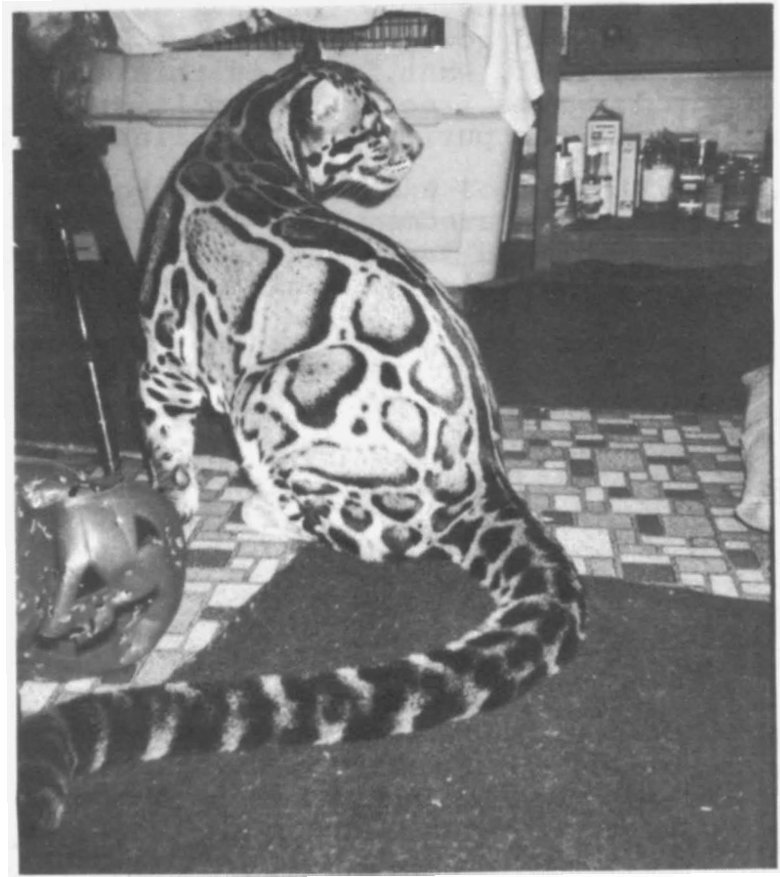
Thanks for putting my clouded leopard's photo on the Sept. Oct. 88 cover, however, that was poor reproduction and an outdated pix. Enclosed is a current one of Gemini at age 21 months and 65 pounds. We live together and I am the one who is "caged" -- that is, I have a cage around my sleeping facility so that I can get a few hours of shuteye before he jumps into bed with me. As many of the LIOC oldtimers might remember, my 19-year-old margav, Gigolo, also shared my life in this same manner prior to his demise in May 1987. If you could publish the current photo of Gemini with the following information and photos of Robert Baudy, it will serve to clarify the accusatory letter in the Nov. Dec. 88 issue from the Webbs in St. Augustine, Fl.

Since 1969 I have been associated with the Rare Feline Breeding Center in Center Hill, Florida, owned and operated by Robert E. Baudy, a former animal trainer whom I met at a Shrine Circus. He was very friendly, performed an excellent tiger and leopard act and agreed to allow me to do volunteer work for his breeding compound. Over the years I have worked for him, raised many of his feline offspring from birth to either three months or even up to a year's time. Mr. Baudy's letter in the Jan. Feb. 89 issue only slightly tells the true story of his work with the wild cats. If it were not for him, many of us would not be privileged to "own" and be associated with these magnificent animals. He was a pioneer in the breeding program that others since then have become involved in. True, we may not agree with every single one of his practices but overall he is a cat man in the true sense of the word. I have observed Robert Baudy beginning his day at pre-dawn to mix special formulas for the babies born at his compound; he picks up deceased hoof stock from local farms for his animals; does all his own paperwork; goes to special events when asked and takes his animals (schools, parades, other events); and he even cleans the cages of his special charges. His staff is small and he is constantly renovating the facilities to comply with federal and state standards.

One question: Do the animals in the photos of him look like they are defective? He handraised the bobcat named "Cracker" and saved its life when the mother rejected it; he takes special pride in his male white Siberian tiger "Boris"; and my clouded leopard, Gemini, is a marvelously engineered and designed specimen!



Top left: Baudy and bobcat Cracker, Top right: Baudy and white siberian tiger Boris
Bottom left and right: BeeJay's clouded leopard Gemini



Remembrances

10

I remember Catherine's dry wit, Mike Balbo's shy smile, Bill Engler's humor and medical skill.

I can recall a day when one eagerly awaited the call that said your kit had come. When convention was a picnic in Amagansett, N. Y. in September.

I can remember a day when the most difficult part of owning an exotic was the day you lost it; sometimes to ignorance, but often to old age; a day of minimal government interference.

I remember a day when Branch reports filled half a newsletter (there were fourteen branches then) the other half was "News From Around the Jungle", art and humor by Paramore, the Birth Column, and articles ABOUT CATS!

I remember the enthusiasm at conventions, meeting friends, new and old alike, the first Auction in Florida, the warmth and love.

I fondly remember Carlotta and Tercera Cisin, Brutus Balbo, Mittens Hatfield, Prince Salisbury, Mabye Leake; Jan Thomas's art, and much much more.....all happy!

I can remember the Long Island Ocelt Club - can you?

Times were simpler then - the important thing was the cats - there was little other motivation. How far have we strayed. Have we turned away from the feline and towards man. Do we concern ourselves with what members think, feel, want.....is this good? or bad. Can we regress to a simpler time free of the politics and personalities which interfere with the purity of the feline? I don't know.

I'd like to try.

Bibliography

BIBLIOGRAPY - we're collecting a listing of books of interest to exotic owners, fiction as well as non-fiction.

Please send us a brief description of those on your book shelf, showing: Name

Author

Publisher (name & address) as well as
date of publication.

Send to: Shirley Wagner, 3730 Belle Isle Ln E. Mobile, Al
36619

Those contributing will be sent a complete listing. This will be made available when complete at cost.

Charles Douglas, a quiet man, always ready to lend a helping hand to human or feline, lost his fight with cancer May 10th, 1989.

Charles was among the first large scale breeders in LIOC. He made his property available to LIOC's gypsy, Bill Engler and when Bill passed on, took responsibility for caring for Bill's menagerie. Charles fought to keep the animals from being sold by Bill's heirs, to keep them together as Bill would have wanted.

Those long time members of LIOC and the Florida Chapter will remember Charles' quiet smile and shining eyes, his willingness to help when needed, never making much todo, just doing the job that needed to be done. For this he was given the 1978 Lottie.

Over the years Charles welcomed to his compound many cats in need of a home, they were many times neutered and of no use to his breeding program, they just needed and he provided. The Douglas compound was among the first LIOC sanctuaries to be listed. He was host of the first Florida convention. Due to personal problems, Charles was inactive in LIOC in recent years, but never far from our thoughts. He no longer has problems, but LIOC and the exotic feline have one fewer friend.

Congratulations!

Congratulations and much happiness to Evelyn (Dyck) and John Paramore - two long time LIOC members who recently wed.
(We found out about the happy event by the signatures on the recent LIOC vote & resulting ballot!)



I would like to extend my appreciation and thanks to Wendie Wulff and Gwen Oberlin for their time and hard work this past year. Both are relatively new members to LIOC and have volunteered to assume massive projects.

Wendie, our editor, re-vamped the newsletter and co-ordinated a difficult election while simultaneously responding to some controversial material which appeared in the newsletter. A devout non-partisan, Wendie has demonstrated her journalistic professionalism by publishing all submitted views and opinions on given topics.

Gwen volunteered to computerize our membership roster and co-ordinate new applications and renewals. Her work efforts to our non-profit corporation resulted in her company donating \$500 to LIOC.

You both stand as fine examples of the dedication and energy upon which LIOC was founded.

Mid Atlantic area members: It has come to my attention that there are several new members and/or established members who may be interested in forming an LIOC satellite chapter. Our home will be available for a meeting, if you let Mike and me know ahead of time. If you are interested, please give Mike Mutascio a call. Mike was President of the former Mid-Atlantic Branch, and has experience in organizing branch activities. Tel: 609-983-6671, Address: 6 East Lake Circle Drive, Medford NJ 08055.

Your VP, Suzi Mutascio

A Disclaimer

I have received several calls informing me that the picture of myself with the Safari hybrid which appeared on the cover of a recent LIOC Newsletter is being used by the International Exotic Organization.

This photo is fraudulently labeled as a bengal hybrid and is used without my knowledge or permission. As far as I can determine, this organization is making misleading and fraudulent claims (as evidenced by the purposeful misleading caption on my photo). I certainly would not want anyone to believe I have any connection with, or endorse the International Exotic Organization.

Ethel Hauser

Editor's Note: I wrote to International Exotics at one point and they responded with their advertising literature. They are offering for sale animals which they claim are various exotic/domestic hybrids having varying percentages of exotic blood. For example, they were advertising a 31/32% ocelot hybrid. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no scientific reports of ocelot/domestic hybrid animals. The advertising also included a photo of a cat which was labeled as a pure ocelot, but which appeared to me (and to several other LIOC members) to be a serval. I know how easy it is to get photos and captions confused, so this may have been an oversight, but I have my doubts about the material that was sent to me. International Exotics address is PO Box 1752, Council Bluffs, IA 51502 if anyone wants more information from them.

ARKANSAS OUTDOORS

by the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

G&FC TO CONDUCT PANTHER STUDY

LITTLE ROCK--Do panthers still stalk the wilds of Arkansas? That's a question the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission means to answer.

The Commission will soon be involved in a three-year, \$56,000 study to determine whether wild Florida panthers still inhabit the Natural State. Most of the money for this and other endangered species research in Arkansas comes from the Federal Endangered Species Act.

The Florida panther, whose scientific name is *Felis concolor coryi*, once roamed throughout the forests of the Southeastern United States. It is a close relative of the mountain lion of Western states.

Panthers were common in Arkansas when the state was still covered by forest from border to border. But as settlers cleared trees, drained swamps, harvested game and hunted panthers, their numbers dwindled. Well before the beginning of the 20th Century, panthers had become little more than stories told around campfires.

But reports of isolated sightings continued to crop up. In the past 15 years alone, the Commission has received more than 200 reports of panther sightings, some very doubtful, others quite credible.

Three panthers have been killed by Arkansans in recent years: in Montgomery County in 1949, in Ashley County in 1969 and in Logan County in 1975. A fourth panther was found dead beside a road in Franklin County in 1987. This last cat had been declawed, indicating it was a captive cougar.

What about the others? Were they wild panthers or captive cats escaped or released into the wild?

"There really isn't any way to know whether we still have wild Florida panthers unless we track one down and identify it positively," said Commission Endangered Species Coordinator Sam Barkley. "That's exactly what we're going to try to do."

The Commission will conduct aerial surveys of areas where cat sightings have been reported, identifying the most likely areas where panthers might be found. Then it will conduct a ground search for positive panther signs, such as tracks or droppings.

If the search proves panthers still live in Arkansas, the three-year program will turn into a long-term effort to save the cats from extinction. The Commission will hire a professional hunter who will use dogs to tree panthers so they can be tranquilized and fitted with radio transmitter collars. By tracking the cats with radios, biologists will learn more about their habits and needs.

The project will begin with work in the Ozark National Forest in 1989. The USDA Forest Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are cooperating with the Commission on the project.

Contributed by Lynn Culver

August 10, 1988
6684 Central Ave NE
Fridley, MN 55432

To the Board of Directors and Membership of LIOC ESCF

I am pleased that the issue of the Bylaws is behind us. However, I share Fred Boyajian's concern that in adopting the bylaws, we eliminated the "Code of Ethics" which was part of an earlier version. I don't think the Code of Ethics needs to be part of the bylaws, but it should still be adopted by the organization. The Code should outline what we are about and what is expected of members. The following is my first attempt at writing such a code. I'd like to suggest it for consideration by the Board of Directors and would appreciate getting general membership feedback on it with suggestions for improvements.

I feel that such a code should be positive and should provide a set of goals toward which we should work.

John Perry

Code of Ethics for Members of
LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation

1. I feel we should preserve Exotic Felines as they are threatened and endangered in native habitats.
2. This preservation can be done through many means, such as state and national parks, habitats, zoological parks, and private ownership. It requires the efforts of many people, including me!
3. As a member of LIOC ESCF, I also assume the obligation to educate others about good care of the felines and to promote their preservation.
4. If I have cats, I will keep them in a manner safe for the cats and safe for the public. I will ensure that they receive a nutritionally balanced diet.
5. I will help, to the best of my abilities, other members of the organization in such a way to improve the care, preservation and propagation of the animals.
6. Recognizing that preservation of the animals implies preservation of the gene pool, I will not permanently neuter my animals unless for the health requirements of the individual animal.

November 4, 1988

I'm just back from five weeks down under--visiting Australia and New Zealand. I visited three zoos and two sanctuaries while I was there(I'm not really sure of the difference.) and wanted to share my opinions of them and some information I got from them.

1. I visited the Royal Zoological gardens in Melbourne, Vic. They had several types of small cats, including golden cats (5), ocelots, and lynxes. They are trying to breed the golden cats and the curator would be more than glad to work with anyone who also has such animals to breed.
2. I then visited the Canberra Zoo. It was literally a back yard thrown together affair. All the cages were cyclone fencing and the enclosures were rough boards. Everything was dirt floored. There is apparently no impact from AAZPA in Australia. The only cats they had were servals. Apparently servals are common as captive animals in the far east.
3. I visited two bird sanctuaries. These both have private owners. Both seemed in good condition. The situation with many of the Australian birds is that, while they can't be taken in the wild, they can be exchanged between breeders quite freely. Perhaps this should be brought to USDI's attention as encouragement for the captive bred program.
4. I visited the Healsville Sanctuary in Victoria. This is a sanctuary devoted to propagating endangered Australian species in an environment as close as possible to the wild. It was beautiful, and covered much area. Obviously, there were no cats. The only cats in Australia were feral *Felis domesticus*. (They are becoming a problem to the native wildlife.)
5. Finally, I visited the Auckland, N.Z. zoo. They are in transition from square ages to environmental ones. They have a pair of Margays. The male is young and from Europe. The female is 23 years old and still healthy, if only with one tooth. When she goes, they are looking for another to breed. They have Servals who, the curator complained, breed like rabbits.

I hope that someone who is interested in the particular varieties of cats can keep in touch with Melbourne and Auckland. Just maintaining communications may be of help at some point in obtaining more breeding stock.

The International Society for Endangered Cats (ISEC) is hoping to work on an artificial insemination project. They have an Ecuadorian female and are trying to locate a male of the same origin.

If you have an ocelot whose bloodlines can be verified and are willing to cooperate in this program (the male would have to be anesthetized) by donating semen, please contact:

John Becker
1-800-272-2287

SANTA ANA, Calif.--Veterinary Pet Health and Accident Insurance is offered in 36 states.

Among the states are several in the Southeastern United States, including Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia.

VPI has sold more than 250,000 policies in the past six years and has paid more than \$3.7 million in claim benefits, according to officials of the company.

VPI is marketed primarily through veterinary hospitals. The company has launched a special marketing concept through Pet Stores that is described as very successful by officials of the company.

More than 100 Pet Stores have joined the program. In addition to the pet stores' customary warranty a VPI policy is given with the purchase of a puppy or kitten. The plan enhances the value of the purchase by the pet owner and helps to educate the owner on the importance of maintaining proper pet health care, officials of the company said.

Veterinary Pet Health and Accident Insurance is underwritten by Veterinary Pet Insurance Co. in California and by the National Casualty Co. outside of California. VPI maintains a toll-free telephone number for consumer inquiries: 1-800-USA-PETS.

Pelt Case

THE OREGONIAN, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 1989

18 months meted in bobcat pelt case

A Hood River man was sentenced to 18 months in federal prison and fined \$1,000 Tuesday after pleading guilty to purchasing four untagged bobcat pelts and transporting them across a state line.

Chief U.S. District Judge Owen M. Panner ordered Tollie Roberts, 61, to serve a minimum of one-third of the sentence before becoming eligible for parole.

Roberts bought the untagged bobcat pelts in John Day and then had them delivered to his business in White Salmon, Wash., Assistant U.S. Attorney James Collins said. Full length bobcat fur coats can retail for more than \$100,000, Collins said.

Bobcats are trapped under state issued permits and must be physically tagged at the close of the trapping season at a state Fish and Wildlife Department office. The tag stays with the pelt until its final processing, Collins said.

In Roberts' case, authorities were tipped off by an informant that he was buying illegal pelts. He was arrested after a joint U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Oregon State Police sting operation, Collins said.

Panner said that Roberts should report Jan. 31 to begin serving his term.

Dear Sir or Madam:

We have just been made aware of an article entitled "ON FOOD AND FEEDING OF EXOTIC ANIMALS" published in the June 1988 issue of "THE ANIMAL FINDERS' GUIDE". In the article the feeding of pre-processed foods for exotics is suspected of causing a variety of ailments from impaction of nasal passages (reprinted from ZOONOOZ, Publication of the San Diego Zoo) to liver damage and sterility (reprinted from INSIGHT Nov. 9, 1987. Contributed by John Perry).

We desperately need as much information as possible on these issues, as we have just been informed by the USDA that we should, in fact, be feeding our big cats pre-processed foods. Everything we have ever heard concerning the care and feeding of these big cats opposes what we were just ordered to do by our government. In order to protect the health of our cats, we must gather as much information as possible concerning the diseases and disorders that are now being blamed on the feeding of these pre-processed foods. Please help us to educate our government before their misinformation costs valuable lives.

If you have any further information that may be of interest to us concerning this matter, or if you know of anyone that might be able to give us further information, please do not hesitate to call or write. The health of our animals is at stake.

Most sincerely,

Debra A. Parker, Sec./Treas.
Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation, Inc.
1428 19th St. N.
St. Petersburg, FL 33713
(813) 821-9809

March 20, 1989

My husband and I have been involved with raising very rare and exotic animals over the last 20 years. We have a private wild animal sanctuary on our 100 acre timber land that we maintain. We also have what is left of the almost extinct Texas Red Wolf, and North American Red Wolf. We have maintained quite a few of these beautiful animals since 1960. We also have imported many very rare and hard to find Asian leopards and small leopards from India, Arabia and Africa. We are aware that a lot of these beautiful animals will soon be extinct unless a few of us devoted followers continue to propagate the species. Hybridizing many of these subspecies is one way to strengthen the breed so that the new bloodlines produced will reduce any linebreeding and inbreeding in the original animals. We have previously requested the names of all the members in your club that have other exotics so we can write to them to get an idea on how they are doing with their animals. We never received any of the member's names or addresses yet. If you wish, you could print this request in your next newsletter and hopefully we will hear from all the exotic animal owners.

Mr. & Mrs. Neal Clay
Rt. 3, Box 286C
Glenwood, Iowa 51534

HINTS ON DARTING ANIMALS

by Pat Hocter

reprinted from ANIMAL FINDERS' GUIDE

Practice!!! Don't just borrow someone's tranquilizing equipment. If you can't hit what you aim at, you will probably miss and make the animal harder to catch or, worse, you may injure it or kill it.

The easiest way to dart wild stock is at night with a spot light. When you cast a light in an animals eyes at night, you can usually get quite close. It's eyes will shine like flashlights, working against its natural camouflage, making it much easier to find. Most scopes on rifles work very well at night with only a strong flashlight beam on the animal. Make sure you stay out of the light yourself. You must also be quiet.

After you shoot, be sure to keep the light on the animal if possible for, often, they will go only a few feet and stop. You simply wait.

The disposable liquid darts made by Pneu-Dart are great for this. They will make a flash when hit at night. This lets you know for certain that you made contact.

Night hunting is very effective. That is why, in many places, it is illegal to even cast a light in wildlife's eyes and have a gun along. I suggest that, if off your own property, you always inform your game warden so he knows you are not up to some illegal activity.

If you work by yourself following deer or other animals, they will only offer moving shots. Animals normally follow well used paths or walk fence lines. This holds true inside or outside your compound. Even if outside, they are normally trying to get back in and looking for a spot to enter. Most animals expect danger to come from the rear. You can capitalize on this if you place yourself in a good spot for a shot and simply have someone else slowly walk behind the animals. It will eventually come to you. You will have time for a nice clear shot, for the animal will be busy worrying about what is behind it. You must hold still.

I also suggest being on a hillside or up in a tree. Most hooved stock seldom look up for danger.

After you shoot, stay put. Most animals only run a few hundred feet and stop if not pressured. They won't know where the danger is. If you wait until the chemical has time to take effect, they will normally be on their path. If you run after them, they can cover over a mile before they go down and you may force them to bed up in brush or go deep into the woods, making it very hard or impossible to find them.

Remember when you dart an animal, it will become defenseless. If it enters a swamp, creek, or river, it may well drown. It also may be attacked by natural predators. Some drugs last for hours, making the animal defenseless and easy prey.

Time yourself! After you shoot, either look at a watch or punch a timer. A few minutes after a shot will seem like hours. Many people double dart, thinking they missed or the dart failed to work, only to find on the second shot, that they overdosed the animal. Due to weather conditions or placement of a shot, it can take over twenty minutes for an animal to go down. Real life is not like Wild Kingdom--they only turn off the cameras.

On horseback, you can often ride right up to other animals. Most hooved stock do not associate machinery and horses with man. Ride or drive slowly. The animal will let you know if you are getting too close. They will show signs of nervousness and be looking for an escape path. When they show these signs, you know that is as close as you dare go. I have often been able to shoot two or three times before a herd broke. Again, do not pressure them. They won't normally travel far.

Never have more than one person shooting unless you are using a walkie-talkie. For example, if I shoot a male spotted fallow, my partner knows he could shoot any other color or a female. If two shoot and don't keep each other informed, I promise you, you will double dart some stock.

Moving shots are normally unwise. The only reasonably safe spots to place a dart are the hips, the shoulders, and the neck, in that order. A shot to the gut, rib cage, or lower legs is often unpredictable, unsuccessful or, worse yet, can kill your animal. Tranquilizing darts move much slower than bullets. This means you must lead the animal too much. If you are patient and use your head, you will get a standing shot. Often a whistle or a loud noise at the right time will cause an animal to break stride and give you a shot.

Remember, a dart loaded for a trophy buck will kill a doe or fawn. When you shoot, always anticipate a miss. Make sure no other deer could be hit. This is the most common cause of overdosing.

The cardinal rule of darting is "it is easier to add more drugs to an animal than try to remove too much." Dart the first animal with the lowest amount of chemical possible and work up if too weak. The reverse is dead animals.

Have full knowledge of the chemical you are using. Know its side effects and normal reaction time. Some drugs work well on deer only to kill elk, a member of the same family. There are big differences between whitetail and fallow deer of the same size with many drugs. A good book on tranquilizing may seem expensive in the store, only to seem very cheap when you are standing over a dead animal because you failed to buy it.

Stay with the animal until it regains full consciousness. Many animals survive in good shape only to later go deep under and crink a neck and suffocate. They may also choke on stomach contents. Many drugs paralyze the bowels and, due to expansion of the gut, the animal will suffocate if a tube is not placed down the throat or a canna needle inserted.

Be prepared to kill five to ten percent of all animals tranquilized. Only use drugs when necessary. Being careful and learning what you are doing will reduce the kill, but you cannot anticipate weak hearts and different illnesses that may not show outward signs. Remember, even in hospitals, anesthesiologists lose humans to reactions from drugs. They are trained in medical schools.

Never forget that a gun can kill. If you are hit by a dart or hit someone else, they may die. Many drugs can be absorbed through the skin or through your eyes. Life is too precious to waste. BE CAREFUL!

PITTSBURGH (AP)—Lion tamer Gunther Gebel-Williams said Thursday he plans to retire from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, where he has been riding elephants and subduing Bengals for the past two decades.

Dressed in blue sequined tights and jacket, the trim, blond Gebel-Williams, 54, said he wanted to retire "while I'm still on top."

He said he would tour with "The Greatest Show on Earth" for two more years before retiring at the end of the 1990 season.

"Tiger training is like race car driving, like boxing. You have to be really on top all the time. It's not possible to feel not so good one day. ...There has to be the time to say that's it," Gebel-Williams said in a thick, German accent flanked by a 40-year-old elephant, Nellie.

