

FCF



Feline Conservation Federation
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Cover: Thierry Plaud plays with Shakira, the Siberian lynx at Bear Creek Feline Center. Photo by Jim Broadus. Inside: Lucy the Geoffroy's kitten gives J.R. the cougar cub a kiss. Photo by Phil Parker.



Feline Conservation Federation

This magazine is published bi-monthly by the Feline Conservation Federation. We are a non-profit (Federal ID# 59-2048618) non-commercial organization with international membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of this publication is to present information about exotic feline conservation, management, and ownership to our members. The material printed is contributed by our members and reflects the point of view of the author but does not necessarily represent the point of view of the organization. FCF's Statement of Intent is contained in our bylaws, a copy of which can be requested from the secretary. Reproduction of the material in this magazine may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner FCF. We encourage all members to contribute articles. Articles on exotic feline ownership, husbandry, veterinary care, conservation and legislation are gladly accepted. Articles involving other related subjects will also be considered. Letters and responses to articles may be included in the Readers Write column. Submission deadline for the next issue is the first day of even numbered months. Please submit all photos and articles to the editor. Persons interested in joining FCF should contact the term director in charge of member services. Dues are \$30 US, \$35.00 Canada, and \$40 international.

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Letter from the President

Convention afterglow: the feeling you have when you arrive home after days spent with cat friends in Dallas. Everyone seemed to have a good time; the events progressed rather smoothly and only one strangler from the cat herd needed to be rounded up at the Southfork Ranch. The mix of old members and new ones, artists, international guests, and various friendly felines to fondle made for interesting experiences and conversations. With so much going on, there was no way to visit with everyone but I thoroughly enjoyed talking to so many new people.

The FCF membership nominated and voted on the first annual Conservationist of the Year award at the Saturday night banquet. FCF Conservation advisor Jim Sanderson was presented a plaque. The driving force behind the award was a suggestion by FCF member Raven Simons, who wished that FCF members had a voice in honoring extraordinary efforts in feline conservation. The FCF board took her suggestion and implemented it in time for the Dallas convention, although it forced a tight voting schedule. Unfortunately Raven was unable to attend the Dallas event due to medical issues. Thanks, Raven, for your suggestion and hope you are well on your way to a full recovery.

The first ever benefit art show titled *Cats: Facts, Myths, and Legends* was a lot of work and required coordinated efforts from the nine featured artists and curator Deborah Rabinski. Mike Friese designed a full-color postcard and Deborah created a target mailing list. Gail Laviola mailed out 400 of these announcement postcards. Oklahoma artist Debbie St. John delivered the portable center walls, which expanded the display capabilities of the room and she did a live casting of J.R. puma's paw print for the audience. Artists Rochelle Mason and Linda Dupris-Rosen flew in from Hawaii and California to debut their 36 cat "Wildcats of the World" exhibit. Deborah and husband/artist Rick Hilderbrandt worked late into the night Friday to set up the show. Deborah's composition and layout was stunning; one can easily see this is her area of expertise. FCF's own artist member Laura Walker signed books and visited with the public. In the back of the room was a display cage with JR puma,

Lucy Geoffroy's kitten, and Sue Ellen bobcat. Visitors got a rare glimpse of hand-raised exotic kittens. Artists split their proceeds with the FCF and over \$2,500 was generated from art sales.

FCF members and supporters donated enough funds to pay for the international airfare for two guest speakers from South America to attend. They were Fernando Vidal of Chile, founder of Fauna-Andina, a native wildlife rehab and captive breeding center and Anne-Sophie Bertrand, a researcher of margays in Brazil, who both spoke on Saturday. Over 50 years ago, Long Island Ocelot Club members pioneered the captive husbandry of ocelots and margay. Today the margay is almost completely gone in the US. But we still have members like Fred Boyajian who recall those days and whose husbandry experience and close association with margays has spawned a love for this species that will never be gone. Fred pledged \$5,000 to the FCF Conservation Grants Fund, earmarked for Sophie's 2-year radio-collar research proposal.

Two people I was particularly excited to meet at convention were Rebecca and Elmer Morgan, active members from before my time (prior to 1987.) Both Elmer and Rebecca served on the LIOC board and Rebecca was awarded the coveted Lotty in 1982. Her original Crazy Caracal cartoons regularly livened up newsletters of that time. It was an honor and pleasure to meet and visit with these long-term members. As residents of Texas, they no longer keep any exotic cats due to changes in the laws.



Gail Laviola

Director at large Robert Turner resigned just a few weeks before convention. He knew he was not going to attend this year's event due to a conflict with another of his great loves—Brickyard auto racing. As we all know, you can't be in two places at the same time and this year the FCF convention lost. Bob hoped the board could appoint a replacement by convention but this was not possible. All of the board members have plenty on their plates. Bob served this organization for almost a decade. He just retired from a career at General Motors and decided to retire from

the FCF board as well. Bob remarked to me several times his belief that the new generation board members need to be very savvy on the internet and comfortable with computers and software and he was having trouble keeping up.

At the convention's annual board of director's meeting, J.B. Anderson submitted his written resignation. JB was elected life director in a special election in 1992. Before that he had served as Director of Advertising. In the 1980s and early 1990s it was customary for the board to meet just once a year at the annual convention. Times have changed and now the FCF board conducts at least quarterly internet board meetings. J.B. does not wish to use a computer so his input has been missing from many important board discussions. This past spring the board amended the bylaws to require board members to participate in internet board meetings as well as the annual convention meeting. JB has served as the auctioneer at almost every

convention the past two decades. He is a true thespian at heart and his antics and humor has raised many thousands of dollars for FCF. As a member, JB will be free to devote his time to worthy projects of his choosing.

Volunteering for years can lead to burnout. Sometimes it can hamper your ability to accept change and new ideas and that can result in stagnation. The original structure of this organization included four life directors expected to serve for their lifetime, but in reality, they eventually resign. Life Directors were to act as rudders, making sure that the ship stayed on course. As I study the history of this organization, I see more evidence of the ship having four anchors than four rudders. Now all the FCF board seats are two-year terms.

I appreciate all the volunteer hours Bob and JB gave to the FCF over the years. The board must now appoint two volunteers to serve in the empty seats created by their resignations. At the convention board meet-

ing a serious review of the needs of this organization led the board to amend the bylaws to create two new important jobs—a Director of Marketing and a Director of Development. Finding the right volunteers will help position FCF for future growth and outreach work, increase our media exposure, and our fund-raising success. Do either of these positions sound like an opportunity for you? Please contact me if you are interested in being appointed to the FCF board. We will be addressing these empty board positions this month.

FCF is now rapidly evolving; it represents a larger and broader membership. In the past couple of years it has created new services such as Facility Accreditation and Handler Registration and new programs like the Conservation Grants and Fund for Helping Cats in Need as well as the highly acclaimed Husbandry Course to forward its primary mission of captive conservation. FCF will continue to be a member-driven organization, but this board has a vision to raise the funds necessary to hire a full-time Executive Director and a Director's Assistant so that even more progress with FCF services, public relations, and member building can be achieved. At the convention board meeting a motion to approve these two paid positions passed, the necessary first step towards achieving this goal. We must now form a plan to generate the funds to make this a reality.

Planning for the FCF convention takes a full year. Next year FCF member Doc Antle has graciously offered to host the convention in Myrtle Beach, SC and offered FCF members a trip to his T.I.G.E.R.S. Preservation Station. Doc's place is first class and unique. Not only are tigers, ligers, lion, leopard, cougar, and lynx roaming the grounds, but also we will visit elephant, orangutans, chimpanzees, binturong, and birds of prey and other animal ambassadors as well. Myrtle Beach is a popular resort destination in the summer time. The Convention Committee will have to get started early to reserve a hotel for us. Room prices will be higher than we are used to paying; the question right now is, how much higher? Start your saving account now so that you can afford to be at the 2008 convention because you cannot afford to miss this one!

—Lynn Culver

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Kiraka and Aki (The Rukas)

By Denise Little

Kiraka was born from Matata (serval male) and Cinnamon (caracal female) on October 18, 1999.

We call this cross cat “Ruka” which means ‘to cross’ in Swahili. I know they are supposed to be called servacal or caracal, but we did not like the sounds of those names.

Kiraka has a brother named Tsavo who has lived with a very loving lady in New York since he was eight weeks old. She has provided a perfect home for him all these years. Every year at Christmas we receive a card with an updated picture of him.

Kiraka on the other hand was sold to a nice man in New York for his wife as a

Christmas present. Our first experience of selling as a gift and our last experience!

We shipped her off early Christmas eve and received a call Christmas day. The call came from a frantic, wailing lady who was highly allergic to cats! She couldn’t even get near the carrier. She cried, “What do I do? I can’t even have her.” I said calmly, “Send her home” and I apologized for everything. How can a husband of three years not know his wife is allergic to cats?

So the next day we were back at the airport to pick Kiraka up. There she was huddled in the back of the carrier, scared to death. Bruce peeked in the carrier and said, “Hi sweetie,” and made the chirp sound to her. Kiraka came right up to the carrier

door and chirped back at him. The whole seventy miles home Bruce and Kiraka chirped at each other continuously. He felt so bad because she kept chirping and rattling the carrier door. He wanted to take her out, hold her and drive at the same time, but knew he couldn’t. It seemed like an endless seventy miles to me listening to both of them!

As soon as we got her home and opened the carrier door she jumped into Bruce’s lap, licked his cheek purring and chirping. Needless to say, she never left home again.

Kiraka is still with us at eight years old. Absolutely stunning in appearance and as sweet natured as she began.

Aki was born from Natata and Cinna-



Kirika relaxes with her domestic partner, Popcorn.

mon on July 12, 2001. His brother, Snuggles, who everyone, including the vet, thought was a girl, turned out to be a boy. This was discovered when he was supposed to be spayed. Needless to say he was

neutered instead. Snuggles is living the life of leisure full of lots of love in Miami with our dear friend.

Aki was no dummy. He chose to attach himself to Bruce and worked his charm so

well that he is still with us at age six. He is huge and handsome but looks totally different than Kiraka.

Kiraka has the body stoutness and rounder head like a caracal. She has distinct dark spots on her body.

Aki has the long, lanky body and narrow face like a serval. He has smaller and lighter spots on his body.

The Ruka has a reddish tan background color and dark brown spots all over their body. The ear tufts are not as long as a caracal but definitely noticeable. They have the white mark on the back of their ears like a serval. They have a crisp white belly and under legs with black stripes and spots. The claws are a mix of caracal and serval. The cubs are all different. Some take the head and body shape of a caracal; some take the head and body shape of a serval. Some have bigger, darker spots all over their body. Some have smaller, lighter spots.

They are both so different in appearance. Absolutely beautiful! •

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Aki catches Bruce's ear.

Guest Editorial

“Pets” is not a Four-Letter Word!

Of late I have been troubled by a controversy among the ranks of exotic animal owners. In our attempts to justify our existence and keep our private rights to choose animals of a non-domestic species to share our lives with, some choose to deny the very foundation of private exotic pet ownership in the United States.

The fact is a large percentage of captive born offspring of wild feline species are currently held in private homes and small facilities as *pets*.

Pets for the purposes of this writing are cherished family members of a non-human species raised with love and human kindness. In order to deflect the ire of the animal rights groups and those who really could care less about sharing their lives with animals, some owners point out that they are motivated by conservation and are concerned for the survival of a given species. Some of these same private conservationists keep felines who sleep on the couch and come to names like Sweetie and Sugar. What is wrong with admitting that?

This justification of private ownership as conservation can be confusing and misunderstood. This concept threatens to divide the alliance between the multi-animal owner/breeders from the person who keeps one or two non-reproductively active exotics. We all have a role to play.

Conservation is accomplished by sustaining a species, either in a wild state in nature or in captivity, in habitat of human creation. To further conservation, some breeders consult studbooks and demonstrate serious concern for genetic viability. It is true that exotic felines are potential ambassadors for their species if their owners are educated enough to teach. These felines do contribute to conservation awareness, but captive bred exotic felines are for the most part, primarily “pets.” We should not let the forces that oppose our right to keep exotic felines for whatever reason have the power to define us, divide us, and conquer us.

What is wrong with owning a pet exotic or just being a good exotic pet owner? From the time we came out of the trees and started to share our fire with wolves, the companion animal, i.e. pet dog, has been held in high esteem. Ancient cultures have worshiped the various feline species and

devoted works of art and poetry to them. Felines have been our steadfast friends and eliminated vermin when we were unable to control infestation ourselves. These companions comforted us when nothing else could, with a soft eye, a gentle purr, or just by standing by for us to appreciate the greater world. Being a companion animal holds a special place in society. Our exotic pets are at heart no different. For the owner, it is a simple relationship based upon love of the feline species.

The way I see it, the problem comes when people apply the “exotic” word in reference to our pets. Some how it seems that exotics are considered less trustworthy to be companions, that by their wild heritage they can never enjoy the same status as a dog. That’s where I think we, as “exotic” owners, need to attack this problem. We need to point out that captive-bred exotics are just another branch of the animal family and that in fact they have been, and will continue to be, pets.

Now everybody who loves animals probably kept a pet hamster, mouse, or gerbil as a pet in childhood. They are in fact, “exotics” now made politically correct under the heading “pocket pets.” Guinea pigs are a food animal in South America, but the ones you give your children as beginner pets sure wouldn’t want to hear that. On the matter of beginner pets, many children start out with the pocket pet previously mentioned or maybe a parakeet or a goldfish. These are all “exotics” and shows that the general public does accept that exotics can make good pets. It’s just the rarity of certain species as pets or the imag-

ined potential for injury that scares the begeebers out of some people and makes the “exotic pet trade” the target for fanatics who would have us keep no pets at all.

We as a group must educate the media, the legislators, our neighbors, and the public to understand that pet exotic felines are not the wild beasts that feed their imagination or grace Saturday horror movies. Captive born exotic felines are to the educated and properly prepared owner as much a companion as your average mutt. In the wrong hands the mutt will bite you too!

We should continue to advocate responsible ownership of all animals—pets and breeding stock, domestic and exotic. We must stress that every animal is not right for every person, and that every captive-bred exotic feline is not born a killer at heart.

No matter what role exotic felines fill—conservation, education, performing animals, or simple pet, there will be no rest until the general public can get past the



Exotic or not? Depends on your state.

word “exotic.” It comes down to almost a matter of species bigotry. Even certain dog breeds are facing this prejudice. Potentially dangerous animals of all species require special care and confinement to protect the general public.

Pet horses kill more people than exotics ever have, but no state proposes banning them. Society recognizes the potential for a domestic horse to inflict injury or death and incredibly, in some states’ laws, horse owners can be held completely free of liability by simply posting a sign that states “Equines and equine activities are danger-

ous.” The same standard should be applied to all exotics.

It doesn't matter if your pet is a Doberman, wolf, bobcat, savannah hybrid, or boa constrictor, you should be required to be a responsible owner and protect your animal and the public by providing appropriate confinement. The rules should be the same for all, regardless of why the animal is possessed or what species it is. It's not the species that is the problem; it is the owner's failure to control the individual animal.

The organizations who push to ban our exotic animals really think that all species of animals are better off left to their own devices, that it is wrong to be confined to a cage or someone's home. Well that's just great if you were born wild and free, but almost all exotics that share space in captivity with humans were born in captivity and know no other life. Exotic felines are usually bred from docile stock that has acclimat-

ed to living in close proximity to us. If being cared for, fed and housed, and not having to worry about being eaten or starving to death is bad, then I apologize for oppressing my pets. Those who think that captive-bred animals, whether domestic or exotic should move back to the wild world should do so themselves and try to figure out how to survive on twigs and berries or re-learn that uncivilized “hunter gatherer” tradition from which our species sprang.

We all wish to spend a significant part of our lives with our exotic felines. We should not be divided by each of our individual reasons for possession, whether it is for pets, valuable genetics, education animals, performers, or whatever. Each role has its place and its purpose that supports captive breeding and captive gene pools.

All animals remind us not to take ourselves too seriously. We are not the center of the universe and we are not the only liv-

ing, breathing, feeling, thing the Almighty put on this planet. We all share this blue marble and the fate of all is vested in each other. We all have a place and a reason to exist. In the case of the lowly pet, no single group has done more to teach people about humanity. To be humane comes directly from people's experience with not just people, but animals. The interest in and desire for pet exotic felines supports captive conservation breeding of the species. We pet owners should be allowed to continue to associate with our exotic companions and not be marginalized so we can be legislated out of existence.

In my opinion there is no greater status an animal can hold than pet, a beloved member of my family to be cared for, loved, and cherished, to give and be given to and mourned for at their passing.

“PETS” is not a dirty word.

—Betsy Whitlock

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Book Review

Dominion by Mathew Scully

By Bart Culver

This book has been described as the bible of the animal rights (AR) activists. My purpose in reading it was to discover what possible reason the fanatics among them could have to attack our love of animals. To my surprise, Scully never even mentions the ownership of exotic pets.

The book is about whaling and the corruption of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) by Japan and Norway. It's about wealthy self-indulgent hunt clubs, palliating their desire to kill large numbers of large animals by calling it conservation. It's about canned hunts and animal experimentation. And of course it's about factory farming, in particular, the genetically altered scientific marvel known as the Smithfield ham.

Scully attends conventions, visits factories and corporate offices, and reports what he sees and hears. He is an eloquent writer able to evoke the emotions he intends. He easily convinces you that the practices he describes are repugnant, because they are. He debunks the spurious pseudo-science claiming that animals are not conscious or capable of suffering and therefore it is ok to do anything to them that will expedite the production of meat or medicine. In all these things I agree wholeheartedly.

He mentions pethood in general several times, as an example of proper relations between human and animal. In the midst of an esoteric discussion about whether animals are generic beings or capable of individual feelings, he says this:

"Whatever traits of personality emerge in animals through human influence must obviously be traits latent in the creatures themselves. We can bestow only the training and influence, not the qualities. These are revealed through our contact with a given animal. The potential must be there, in the nature of each animal. Pets in this way actually draw us closer to the reality of animal life than do beasts of the wild—a transformation vivid to anyone who has ever taken in a stray or feral and observed the creature slowly shedding the primal fear and voracity of its former life. The tame animal is in a sense the most natural

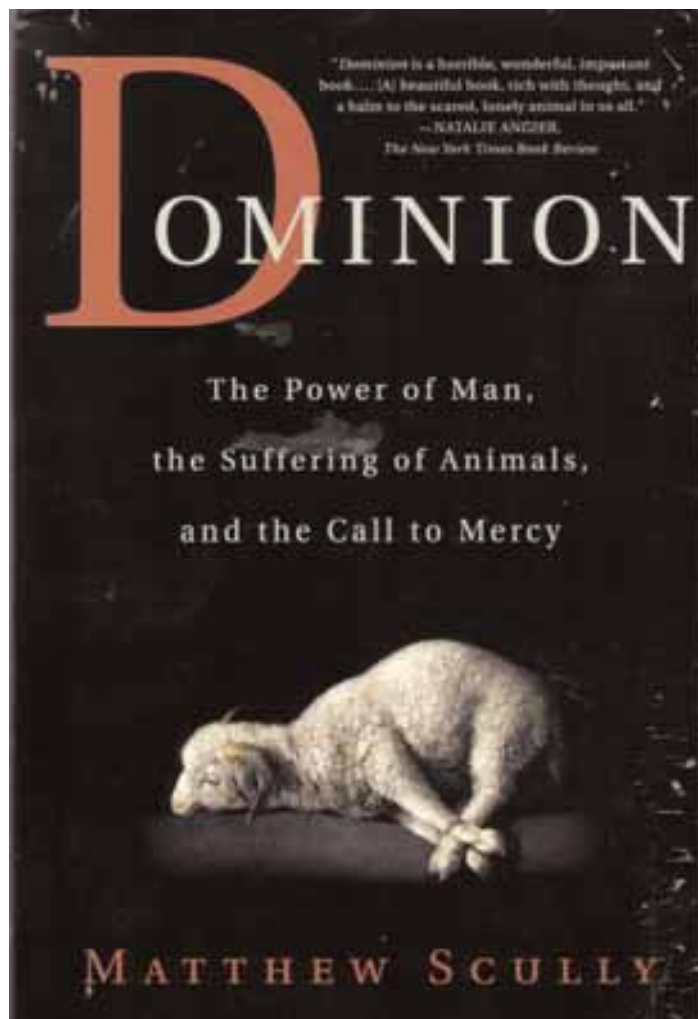
of all, displaying qualities hidden within his or her own nature that only human kindness can illicit."

This boils down to saying: to love them is to know them. Scully may be unaware that the very same thing can be said of tame 'wild' animals. Nevertheless, it would be hard to go on from that statement and decry anyone's love of any animal as misguided, and Scully doesn't try.

As a Christian conservative, he doesn't even frame his arguments in terms of animal rights. To him, it's about dominion as stewardship, which implies a duty to afford mercy to the helpless. This is the Golden Rule—the essence of Christianity and precisely the same as the Hindu concept of Ahimsa: justice for every living thing. It is the common ground upon which all earthlings must make their last stand together.

At this point I'm thinking this man is not our enemy and he could become our friend. But in the end, Scully disappoints me. After a monumental, compassionate, and reasoned description of a complex problem Scully seems exhausted by the effort. He commits the cardinal sin of cultural engineers, and reaches for the simplistic solution: thou shall not harm animals and to make sure of that, thou shalt not have animals. Like others before him, Scully throws out the baby with the bathwater.

In support of other arguments, he makes two incongruous statements which by themselves are totally unsupported and fall of their own weight. They are the only statements he makes in the entire book that I disagree with but they are whoppers. The problem is that AR fanatics—who think in



simplistic sound bites—will cherry-pick them out of this book, consider them proven, and make fund-raising slogans out of them. Therefore I consider it necessary to refute them.

1.) Scully briefly describes the dismal situation of mega vertebrates in the wild and the portent of a projected human population of ten billion. He admits he doesn't have the answer and presumes no one else does, (i.e. there is no such thing as virtuous animal husbandry) so he concludes, "it is better to just let them go...there are fates worse than extinction." This epitomizes the mentality of AR fanatics, who only care about the suffering they and their contributors can see. They seem unable to conceive of the infinitely greater suffering they can't see. His statement is dead wrong for two reasons:

(A) Extinctions have a nasty way of cascading up and down the food chain, right up to the front door of you and your children. Extinctions are severed threads in the fabric of life – harbingers of doom. Like water in a submarine, extinction is something you ignore at your peril.

(B) Extinction is not an abrupt event like euthanasia. It's a long and agonizing process for every individual. It is torture on a gigantic scale. You don't just become extinct. You are driven to extinction. There may be fates worse than death, but there cannot possibly be anything worse than being driven to extinction.

2.) Eager to stop canned hunts at any cost, Scully supports laws against possession and transport of wild animals for any purpose. Once again he's oblivious to the existence of virtuous animal husbandry, so he suddenly blurts out, "No one has the right to own a lion or a bear or any wild creature." Those of us who understand the condition of nature and the nature of animals, know better than Scully that the higher mammals are not only conscious and capable of suffering, they are also capable of love and trust. When given love, they return it. We also know that the enormous suffering caused by habitat destruction cannot be stopped simply by leaving animals alone. Habitat restoration and protection, and benevolent captivity are all necessary. FCF members are among those who have proven beyond refute that in benevolent captivity, animals can be so happy and

healthy that they outlive their wild counterparts twice over. In today's wild wastelands, mangled by human greed, billions of wild creatures are suffering fates far worse than the loss of freedom.

Our purpose in harboring these refugees from the decimation of the wild is beyond reproach. We are the vanguard of a new symbiosis of human and animal based on love, not greed —life, not death. We have a ratio of caregiver to animals much higher than AZA zoos, making loving care a practical reality. If we sell an animal, it is only to someone else that will love it as we do. No other form of animal husbandry is so virtuous. Not even the AZA zoos, whose rules forbid affection between animal and keeper, whose criticism of private sector ownership is monopolistic propaganda, and whose conservation work is so often a ruse to circumvent CITES and take animals from the wild to add to their menageries even though their SSPs were supposed to stop this.

In order to prevent some people from harming animals, AR fanatics have no excuse to take from all people the right to love animals. Forcing us to have nothing to do with animals is not an act of love. It is the height of folly. Scully is not a fool but he is dangerous. His facility with language and his obvious sincerity have made him the prophet of many fools and the huge gaps in this thinking will become theirs.

Scully does not discuss the conservation issue seriously. He confesses that the flood of humanity is the problem yet this professed Christian dares to dismiss the example of Noah as irrelevant to our time. This dogmatism must be the reason that he would advocate laws designed to manage captive tiger populations to extinction when he knows tigers are doomed in the wild.

The exact nature of being driven to extinction is becoming hard for caring people to ignore. The August 6, 2007 issue of Newsweek magazine carries a story 'Slaughter in the Jungle,' about the despicable execution style massacre of mountain gorillas in the Congo. After a pregnant female was shot, she was burned—a message that this was revenge against rangers campaigning against the charcoal industry that is destroying the gorilla habitat. All over the world, nature is being murdered, not by people who are starving, but by people who are getting rich. It's the fools and charlatans who try to stop the only thing that has a chance to save the few remaining innocent creatures on Earth.

Robert Oppenheimer, upon seeing the first atomic bomb explode, thought of the Hindu Veda "Now I am become death, destroyer of worlds." If AR ideologues do not reign in the fanaticism their half-baked rhetoric has unleashed, they will soon find themselves uttering Oppenheimer's lament.♦

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In the Presence of Wildcats



By Thierry Plaud

We all know that feeling of being happy and fulfilled in the presence of wildcats but then have to return to the so-called “real world” with a lot of work, problems, conflicts, contradictions. I was in the middle of such a stream of negative events having faced the death of my beloved Newfoundland Pilou and seeing my marriage slowly but steadily breaking apart. I had the feeling that I had to find a place where I could think clearly about what to do with my life among dear friends and animals that I love and what could be a better place than Bear Creek Feline Sanctuary where surely my friend Jim Broaddus and his wife Bertie would help me to enjoy life again. A few emails later we arranged a two weeks stay beginning August 1 but I was warned that

Northern Florida weather would most likely be extreme heat and humidity. Indeed everyday spent there the temperatures were in the 90s and humidity close to 100%!

When I began my certification process, Bear Creek was my very first internship so the place remains very special to me. Since then I have completed several other internships and was fortunate enough to work with 21 different felids species in many different places around the world.

We had been in constant contact with Jim. I even helped him save a male Siberian lynx from certain death in a fur farm in Canada. Jim is quite an extraordinary person, one of these people to have “seen the light” after what most people would call a normal life but that Jim sees as his “dark period.” He explained to me that this was

the two and a half decades that he spent in broadcasting. He claims that he “left one wild business for another.” He doesn’t talk much about that era.

Apart from the male Siberian lynx, several other new animals had come to Bear Creek for their permanent home. Among them was a pair of six-month-old servals delivered by Caesarean section from Aza, my beloved female serval that Jim obtained from Lynn Culver. Also present was a female caracal that had been, according to Jim’s words, “tragically misunderstood,” having spent the first five years of her life in a room with a serval until one day she killed her serval roommate, which dictated to her owner to part with her. Another new arrival was a female Siberian lynx owned as a pet that had become unmanageable for

her owner and had come to Bear Creek to spend the rest of her life.

From that point it became very clear that I would not be able to spend a lot of time with every animal so I would have to make a choice. I was also curious to see if my furry friends would greet me or if I would be treated as a complete stranger after a year away from them.

I really love servals and intend to have a couple of them in the future, plus I helped Aza to overcome a bit of depression last year after the loss of her litter, so the servals were an obvious choice.

Jim insisted that Sally, the female caracal obviously hated people, being very hissy. She desperately needed someone to help her to regain trust in human beings again and Jim hoped that I could help her. This challenge would be very rewarding if I succeeded, so I took it.

Jim was also curious to see if Dani, the female high percentage Florida Panther would accept someone other than him in her enclosure and I was curious about this too because she is quite a character!

I found that the Jaguarundi's were quite wild and I quickly surmised that it would take more time than I had on this trip to even think about bonding with them.

I figured there was time to work with at least one additional species of Bear Creek's six and I selected Hero the male lynx and Natacha, a mature female and the first female at Bear Creek.

The trip to Florida was uneventful. I could not fly as crew on Air France, the airline that I am employed as a pilot, so I flew Delta Airline and they lost my luggage, which remained in the Atlanta airport for 10 days without any explanation despite numerous phone calls. So I had to live in Panama City borrowing clothes and amenities. This entire story is now a customary joke at Bear Creek. Being an airline pilot and traveling with Air France, my employer most of the time, I was not aware of all the hassle that passengers have to go through. What a nightmare!

A good meal was waiting for me when I arrived at Jim and Bertie's place (thank you Bertie) but I was, of course, curious to see all the cats so Jim gave me a tour. Jim's facility had improved from very good to excellent and all the cats I had met last year behaved like "hey you are back again. Where have you been?" The new cats were

a different story: Sally the caracal hissed at me and went to hide inside her den box. Jim told me that she behaved like this with everyone. The two young servals were wary and the two new lynxes either ignored me or challenged me a little bit. Shakira seemed to take pleasure the first two or three days blocking my exit of the cage. On this first evening, once in bed I knew that I had a long way to go before being accepted by the newcomers.

I spent the next couple days observing them, which means basically I sat in the cage and did nothing, trying to forget my

human being part so as to learn what kind of mindset those cats had. There I noticed that neither Sally nor Shakira were afraid of human beings. (Remember those two were reared by humans.) They just seemed not to like people. Hero, the Siberian from the fur farm, was surprisingly laid back but would not allow anyone to approach him, while Natacha, the older female, seemed very frustrated by the presence of the younger newcomer Shakira, a feeling any woman could easily understand! The servals were, well, serval-like, sometimes playful, sometimes hissy, but always loving. Dani the pan-



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ther was just the same as last year, looking at me with her very concerned and serious eyes that I interpreted as “So, what am I going to do with you?”

After this initial approach I set up my strategy for each animal, based on the most important things for any cat—having fun, eating good food, and doing some interesting stuff. The only problem is, of course, to find what kind of thing they consider as interesting stuff.

Jim is what most interns consider as the ideal manager that is very trusting and always positive. I told him about my projects and he would be like “good, do your stuff, and tell me about it.”

My approach and technique was very different for every cat. I had noticed that besides Sally’s hostility to the human race (I can understand this) she was also very food oriented, so I began to spend long hours in her cage sitting about five to six yards from her, talking to her and getting

closer, inch by inch, until she would show signs of discomfort at which point I would back off for about ten inches. The message I tried to send her was, “I wanna be close to you but if you feel I am too close, then I shall back off because I do not want to make you feel uncomfortable.”

Within three days I was able to approach her within less than a yard. One day Sally looked at me, climbed to her platform and turned her back on me, her way of telling me “You are not a threat anymore.” At this point I began to bring different toys inside her cage. The caracal in the wild preys on fairly large animals for their size (like small antelopes) so the toys I brought to her were fairly big toys until finding one that she really liked. Suddenly she decided to play with that toy and we had a kind of routine established. Major break through, I thought! The next phase was the hand feeding process. I would come every evening with her food, telling her the very same

thing and she quickly began to accept food from my hands and stay there to eat it instead of fleeing to her den box. From this point I knew that she eventually would trust other human beings again. I kept on coming to her cage, very often at night. (Caracals are nocturnal cats so they tend to be more trusting after daylight) When I left after two weeks we had established such a bond that she would come to me, lick my hair or arm, bite her toy so as to tell me “time to play.”

The lynx were a bigger problem because they were all different characters and there were three in one enclosure and as any wild cat handler knows, you must “keep your eyes on the cats.” I was confident that the female Natacha would resume our playing if she was not too upset by the younger female Shakira, and I was right. She did resume the playing and decided one day that my shoes were the most interested toys on earth. Because I had not gotten my luggage back at this time, these shoes were the



only ones that I had so I had to keep them or walk bare feet. I said, “Natacha No” in a firm voice. She backed off but decided that my shoes were just too interesting and came back trying to pull them off my feet. I said again, “Natacha NO” in a louder voice and got for this a big slap on my cheek. I knew that she had not used her claws but I felt a little bit knocked out. I resumed the playing when I felt some kind of liquid dripping down my shirt—my own blood. I calmly left the enclosure and advanced toward the bathroom and checked my face. A two millimeter deep scratch was running from under my eye to my mouth and pouring blood. She did not use her claws, otherwise I would have been scarred for life but most likely the tip of one of her giant front claws (Siberian have really big front claws for their size) went slightly out of the sheath during the slap. Needless to say, I decided to be much more cautious with the two others which were supposed to be even more

wild!

Meanwhile the young girl, Shakira, was still challenging me but was also the more active of the three. My early play attempts with Hero, the fur farm male, were completely unsuccessful so I concentrated on playing with the females. Lynx prey mostly on rabbits and snow partridges so I began to mimic those critters with a toy. (Just imagine a middle-aged Frenchman imitating the rabbit squeak, squeaky voice and French accent included. Quite a show for the other interns.) She did respond almost immediately and in spite of the extreme heat (remember, Siberians are *very* cold weather animals) she kept on playing until I decided to stop because of her heavy panting. After this first session I decided that we would have two sessions a day early in the morning and in the late afternoon. These sessions would be short so as not to exhaust her. She was so much enjoying her time that we had several good photo shoots with her, and FCF members will have the opportunity to look at the picture on the cover of this issue of the FCF magazine.

While we were playing like crazy, Hero was obviously very interested but all my attempts had failed with him and I wondered why. He seemed very comfortable with me and never hissed at me when I was with him in the enclosure, even letting me



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approach him at very close range. I had noticed that he seemed much more comfortable when he was staying in a narrow place, probably because his former life at the fur farm was spent in a 6'x6'x5' metal cage. So, I figured that if he was ever to play with me, he would do it in a confined place. One day I waited for him to go in the shade under his platform. Right on spot, he immediately began to play with delight and kept it that way until the end of my stay.

As for Dani the panther, she obviously wanted to make all of the decisions. Jim and I spent some time each day with her but neither of us could be sure about the

decision for me to remain alone in the enclosure with this powerful cat. The time spent with big cats (lions and cheetahs) in other facilities helped me a lot because I knew that at some point she would test me and that the result of this test would decide if I could safely go in with her. The test happened the fourth day. I was with Jim, both of us sitting at one side of the enclosure when Dani suddenly ran directly toward me and changed direction at the very last moment, avoiding me by a couple inches. She did this several times, and then sat resting under her tree facing me. Jim had to go and do some work so I asked him if I could stay there alone with Dani. I am

not sure what he was thinking at this moment but his voice remained completely confident when he answered, "yes of course." He might have also added, "Cry if it hurts!" As soon as he left, Dani and I looked at each other and she had a kind of mischievous look in her eyes like "so we are alone now, what am I gonna do with you?" This lasted about 30 long seconds during which I kept on talking to her, then she completely relaxed and from that day let me come in with her without being uncomfortable. We began to play together the following day and had a lot of fun but never got to the same intimacy that she shares with Jim with hugs and purring. She remained a little bit wary of me from time to time, which is not very surprising given the fact that we have spent a total of less than three weeks together.

My girlfriend Aza the serval was as friendly as when I left last year and with the help of lots of toys and raw fish I befriended Shena and Bonsoir the young serval without any problems. As for servals, my biggest surprise was Chakka, one of the males. I had played a lot with him last year, and during the first week he would not let me pet him without hissing. One night, after my play session with Sally, I entered his enclosure that is adjacent to Sally for what was supposed to be a short play session. To my complete surprise he was not interested at all by his favorite play but came right to me, lying on my legs and purring loudly, obviously begging to be petted. The "love session" lasted more than an hour and until the end of my stay that night. He was one of the most adorable animals that I ever met. I keep on trying to understand what had been different that day but have no answer and in fact I prefer it that way. The cats have to keep their own mysteries!

Then it was time to come back to the "real world." One more time I had learned a lot, but still do not know much about cats. My mind was more at peace and I knew deep inside that cats would somehow keep on sharing my life, even if a lot of people around me call me crazy. Once more, Bear Creek had worked its magic and I would encourage any FCF members or cat lovers to visit the place if they feel ready to face the northern Florida weather.

Cats told me a long time ago how to live one's life: Keep going and no regrets. •



The 2007 FCF Convention in Dallas Texas

An Overview

People began checking into the Southfork Hotel on Tuesday night for the FCF Husbandry Course. On Wednesday certified instructor Carol Bohning taught a class of 30 eager minds the eight modules of husbandry basics—natural history, nutrition, routine health care, caging, regulations, contingency plans and more. By 6:00 pm the students were filing out of the room, having taken their final exam and wondering if they passed. (*See zoo manager and husbandry course student June Bellizzi critique in another article.*)

Other attendees had arrived throughout Wednesday, including two international guests, Anne-Sophie Bertrand from Brazil and Fernando Vidal from Chile, attending FCF board members, Lynn Culver, Brian Werner, Kevin Chambers, Elizabeth Whitlock, Evelyn Shaw, Mindy Stinner, and JB Anderson checked in so they could meet first thing Thursday morning for the annual FCF board of directors meeting. (*See the FCF board of directors minutes.*)

FCF member Vickie Keahey's In-Sync Exotic's facility is just a 20-minute drive from the hotel and several carloads of members wanting a big cat fix made the optional field trip Thursday morning.

By mid afternoon the Southfork Hotel was filling up with feline ambiance. Kellie Navarro and her young leash-trained bob kitten Miss Meerah were making the rounds with FCF members and the hotel's 'sports kids' that were running up and down the hallways. Miss Meerah is, according to Kellie, docile-by-choice,' a delightful way of describing her lynx rufus superiorenous. Miss Meerah is in training for educational and ambassador work. Other four-legged visitors were J.R. puma, Lucy Geoffroy's, and Sue Ellen bobcat brought by Lynn Culver. They settled in over by the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. booth in the FCF hospitality suite. Theresa Shaffer brought four adorable serval bottle-babies and a 9-week-old serval called Mr. White Toes. This sweet guy sported a custom-sewn spotted fabric walking jacket and leash. Regina and Gary Hardison kept their big boys Romeo the Siberian lynx and Diesel the bobcat discretely confined to

their hotel room but word got out and FCF members visited them throughout the convention.

Registration went smoothly, with 100 nametags being distributed and program guides picked up. The number of vendors displaying at this year's convention were down from years past, but that meant that each vendor got more attention. Sanctuary Supplies brought boomer balls and magnetic car signs and plenty of good stuff to buy. Judy Jezl arrived to operate the Animal Capture Equipment booth full of nets, training aids, enrichment ideas, and to deliver a batch of custom embroidered FCF logo polo shirts. For anyone who didn't attend convention, these shirts are still available in S, M, L, XL, and XXL for \$29.00 plus \$7.00 shipping and handling. Send your size and check to the FCF treasurer. The FCF ocelot head logo and name is in full color and very smart looking. 'Wild Things

and More' is Betty Holding, a native Texan, and the painted rock lady who has been graciously stocking the FCF e-bay store with her original creations. To see Betty's work in person you can't help but be impressed by her carefully chosen round river rocks worn smooth by the water, painted shiny black as backdrop for her original portraits of feline species she hand paints. These are not stencils, no two are alike and her artistic ability makes these rocks gorgeous. Sara Comstock brought an assortment of feline collector's plates for sale at her booth. Harrie's Plastics displayed plastic animal furniture, slide doors, floors, and more and was manned by Nancy Nighswander, who was also in charge of the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. booth. Harrie picked up on a lot of visitor traffic being next to this booth, because of the three live felines on display, Sue Ellen, Lucy, and the star of the show, J.R. puma. These young ambassadors



Theresa Shaffer shares her 9-week old serval with Carol Bohning.

Jeremy Gillow



Phil Parker

People crowd around the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. booth to pet the puma and other exotic cats.

helped focus our attention on the attack of their very existence in human society by misguided animal rights backed legislation called the Haley's Act, which will prohibit the touching of young cats by any member of the public. The fear of losing our rights to pet the puma generated a slew of new U.A.P.P.E.A.L. supporters to fund the lobbyist hired to oppose the Haley Act bill. (Read more in the *Petting Puma* article)

Many familiar faces filtered in during the day's events as well as a cast of newcomers. Doc Antle brought two baby orangutans hanging in slings over his and

Mokshu Bybee's shoulders. An unexpected visit from Peggy Rice, Texas USDA exhibitor returning from a party in full clown costume with her sidekick capuchin monkey stopped by to cool off. Donated items had been logged in and members browsed the goodies and bid in the silent auction. Only a dozen special items were reserved for the live auction Saturday night. The ice-breaker wet bar and finger food was offered right on-time to round out the sensory experience—food, friends, felines, and 'freshments made for the perfect end to a really smooth day.

Friday the buses loaded up for the drive to the Dallas Zoo. We arrived at opening and were greeted and briefed by Ken Kaemerer, updating us on the various behind-the-scenes tours arranged for our benefit. Being the end of July in Dallas, the weather was not overwhelmingly hot, but the locals know to time their visits in the spring and fall, so it wasn't crowded. In fact, the manager of the gift shop wanted to know more about us

and commented that it was rare to have a group of adults visiting this time of year.

The tiger exhibit was by far the best feline habitat, fully landscaped with water features, tropical bamboo, and other rain-forest looking plants that hid the tall chain link fence. On the side the public viewed, one looked through what appeared to be a



Jeremy Gillow

Capuchin held by June Bellizzi of the Catocin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo.



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U.A.P.P.E.A.L. has retained The Ferguson Group lobby team and is currently opposing Haley's Act (SB1947) and the Captive Primate Safety Act (SB1498). Your membership and donations are greatly appreciated.

stand of about three inch thick bamboo trunks, however close examination revealed it was really metal posts complete with what appeared to be 'growth segments' and painted green to look like bamboo, set about two inches apart and a very thick hot wire strung inside, making a very neat effect of seemingly no fence between us and the tigers.

The behind-the-scenes tour of the elephants demonstrated their behavior training to lift feet for pedicures and present parts of their body for exams. Those who attended the rhino tour got to feed apples and even get close enough to feel the creature's strange skin.

In the afternoon, the buses filled for the trip to Southfork Ranch where the famous Dallas TV show opening scene of the Ewing family home was shot. The museum tour was kind of hokey (how long can you milk an 80's show?) but this writer was a serious fan of the series and the artifacts brought back memories. One wall contained the Ewing family tree with all the Dallas show characters and their various inter-relatedness through marriage. I had forgotten that Bobby's wife, Pam, was Cliff Barn's sister, and of course Cliff Barn's father was Digger Barns, a direct wildcat oil competitor to Jock Ewing. The inside of the home (which by today's standards



Phil Parker

Cowboys entertain at banquet.

would not even qualify as one of those gated community McMansions) was a tribute to the Ewing family. However I didn't recognize the furnishings and wondered how that big family and a TV crew of cameras and producers could fit in it. That's when we learned the show was actually filmed in California and this house was only used for the outside shots!

Tour over, we assembled to talk FCF business in air-conditioned comfort. After

all, the whole purpose of the Southfork ranch was to kidnap the members and hold them captive for the general membership meeting. The idea worked. With over 80 members in attendance, a multitude of topics were discussed. (*See General Membership minutes.*)

Afterward we had a feast awaiting us. Cowboy entertainers told jokes and sang songs in the background. I have eaten plenty of barbeque in my life, but never anything so delicious as that night. The brisket was tender; the coleslaw delicious, the potato salad was *out of this world!* I am not kidding, I would love to have that recipe. (Was it made with whipped cream?) The meal was topped off with apple cobbler and a generous mound of fresh whipped cream and the room was full of satisfied conventioners ready to be rounded up and bused back to the hotel.

Saturday we listened to six speakers while Deborah Rabinski and Rick Hilderbrant unveiled the FCF feline art show for public viewing. Artists Debbie St. James, Laura Walker, Rochelle Mason, and Linda DuPuis-Rosen each took turns visiting with art admirers. J.R., Sue Ellen, and Lucy, our living feline artifacts, held court in the back of the room. (*See Deborah Rabinski and Regina Hardison's account of the art show*)

We listened to FCF conservation advisor Jim Sanderson update us on his world travels and the status of wild cats in various countries. Artists Rochelle Mason and



Mike Friese

FCF members (right) snap pictures on the expansive ranch lawn.



Phil Parker

J.R., Sue Ellen, and Lucy (L-R) do what kittens do best.

Linda DuPuis-Rosen shared their personal life stories that led to their interest in cats and desire to paint these magnificent creatures. Anne-Sophie Bertrand reported on her efforts in Brazil to study margays in the wild. (*Read Anne-Sophie's Convention experience.*)

Fernando Vidal gave us an eye-opening look at the situation in Chile with this country's unique native wildlife and plant life that has evolved in isolation due to being bordered by extreme desert, the Andes mountain range and ocean. (*See Tom Harvey's article.*)

Ken Kaemmerer updated us on the FCF sponsored project to translocate Mexican ocelots in Mexico in preparation to someday translocate this rare species into southern Texas to increase genetic diversity. Joel Slaven showed a variety of video clips of his domestic animal and wild animal training and acts he has produced for Sea World and Busch Gardens, stressing all the time the importance of making training fun, and letting the feline show you what behavior it is good at, and then reinforcing that natural behavior with food treats. Bill Williamson showed a video of various concrete enclosure enhancements, running the gamut

Going once! Going twice! Sold!

New items at the store: The Savannah Cheetah Foundation DVD with Dr. Antle—listen and watch the video while Nikita tells her story! Watch and listen to Doc Antle tell us about the cheetah chase and his visit to Africa's premiere spot, the Savannah Cheetah Foundation! • Beanie Babies! We have an assortment of Ty Beanie Babies up for auction! • Jahari's Adventure Read-Along storybook and DVD. Listen, watch, and read as you travel with Jahari!

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Hobbyists: Can you make jewelry? Do you paint? Are you gifted with arts and crafts? Need that extra spending money for Christmas? Got a bunch of stuff hidden in that attic? Or in that closet? Don't throw it away! If it is resellable and in good to excellent condition, help supply the FCF eBay store with your items!

from waterfall walls in big city zoos to residential backyard makeovers.

The evening banquet began with a full service happy hour while conventioners finished up silent auction bidding and cast their vote for the journal photo contest. After a full Italian theme buffet dinner, the awards ceremony was kicked off by Mike Friese announcing this year's members' choice award which was a two-way tie of photo contributions between Mace Loftus and Mace Loftus. Theirry Plaud's intern experiences and enrichment article from the January 2007 issue won editor's choice for reporter of the year. Carol Bohning called out husbandry course graduates and presented them certificates of completion. And this year we had a passel of new awards. Head Cat Wrangler Elizabeth Whitlock did the honor of presenting the following: Madame I D Fleas for best dressed woman went to Kellie Navarro. Joel Slaven won Sir Tom Cat for best-dressed man. FCF's Miss Kitty for cow girl was a very close call, with two ladies going all out in full western flair, hats, boots, studs, belts, jewelry, the works! Reva Anderson edged over Sandra Nabeta. FCF's JB Anderson, in 'Elvis-gone-country disguise' won Cat Roper for Cowboy Man. Our King of the Jungle was Brian Werner in full tiger costume and young Danielle Finley won Queen of the Jungle. Certificates of appreciation were awarded to Fernando Vidal for the person who traveled the farthest, Gail Laviola for all the journal stuffing she does, Sara Comstock for managing the eBay store, Deborah Rabinski for organizing the FCF first ever benefit feline art show, and editor Mike Friese for raising the bar on the FCF Journal. Lynn Culver awarded both JB Anderson and Robert Turner, directors that have stepped down this year, with a recognition certificate for their years of service to the FCF. Evelyn Shaw presented decorative wall certificates to Bill Meadows, John Turner, Matt Baker, Nancy Nighswander, Sara Comstock, and Wayne Sluder, the new FCF Regional Directors. Mindy Stinner awarded Jim Sanderson the new FCF member voted Feline Conservation Recognition plaque for his tireless work documenting and protecting the world's small cat species. FCF's highest award, the Lotty, was presented by past recipient Nanette McGann to Director of Husbandry and certified course instructor, Carol Bohning.

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The end of the awards signaled the beginning of the live auction. Abe Vaskin Basmajian was volunteered for auctioneer after he mistakenly said he had taken a course in auctions. What he meant was a course on how to buy and sell, but heck that was close enough for us and he was roped in for the job. Abe helped to generate over \$4,000 total from the silent and live auctions. Some of the highlights of the live auction were a full printed set of the LIOC/FCF 50 years of newsletters scanned from the originals, with extra pages in color not ever seen in the distributed copies. Carefully assembled into six large three-ring binders, the set was won by Fred Boyajian for an astounding \$600! Another bid-

ding war broke out between Brian and Fred on a pewter tiger statue with Brian's final \$500 bid winning the artwork. The finale to the day's long list of events was a 15 minute stand-up comedy act by David Sol, FCF member from California whose unique brand of humor centers around his experiences with his tiger buddy Raja and the strange world we cat keepers live in. Saved for last because a few of his jokes were slightly blue, a full day ended in chuckles and laughter.

Sunday morning many of the FCF attendees drove to Tyler, Texas to enjoy a tour of Vice President Brian Werner's facility Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge, ending this yearly event with a final big cat fix. •



Sara Comstock, though Mike Friese had a hand in it.

Taking pictures of tigers behind the scenes at the Dallas Zoo.

N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center has the following kittens for sale:

Male cougar, born early June. J.R. spent five days in Dallas with FCF members and his photos are in this issue. He is for sale to USDA licensed educational or exhibit home.

Geoffroy's kittens, unrelated spotted male and female, born early July.

One spotted and one black female Geoffroy, born end of August.

Caracal kittens born early September.

Call Lynn Culver 479-394-5235 for pricing and more information on these kittens.

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Dallas Husbandry Course Experience

By June Bellizzi, General Curator,
Catocin Wildlife Preserve & Zoo

It's 3:15 am and I am off to BWI Airport to begin an adventure. I'm armed with three different reference books on exotic cats to try and cement all this information into my brain. I have been anticipating taking the husbandry course since I first heard of it in San Antonio in the fall of 2006 at a ZAOA conference. My zoo had decided to host the husbandry course in the early spring of 2007. As unexpected things happen, my boss, his wife, and their grandson were involved in an awful car accident and the plans for the course were sent to the back burner. (They are all fine now and on the last of the mend.)

I arrived at Dallas airport and tried to find a shuttle for the hotel. All shuttles are marked for Mary Kay Representatives. Okay, think for a moment, Mary Kay Cosmetics and zookeeper or exotic animal people... Nothing against Mary Kay but bleached marked pants and an animal t-shirt is a far cry from the well-dressed, nice smelling Mary Kay representatives.

The Mary Kay folks responded to me negatively until they found out what I did. We all know how those conversations go. It is nice however to share what we do with those that wouldn't do it in a thousand years but say how cool they thought it was.

I arrived in Dallas a day early so that I could settle in and study my reference books a bit more. On Wednesday, I timidly arrived at the room set with tables, chairs, and many folks who had the same look on their faces. Carol Bohning introduced her-

self and then began to pass out these "manuscripts" and the empty feeling in the stomach grew larger... but as the day progressed, it was gratifying to me that I seemed to know a good deal of the information. Osmosis is wonderful! Still looming over our heads was the test.

The information that was shared by

**I timidly arrived
at the room set
with tables,
chairs, and many
folks who had
the same look on
their faces.**

Carol and her well-prepared handbook was great. Each person in the room came with different levels of experience and woes. I came into this with a slightly different perspective. My place of employment is a zoo in contrast to many who had sanctuaries or private facilities. The information in the course was applicable to both,

and in my opinion it is a course that anyone in this business as a seasoned professional or a newcomer should take. With anything there are differences in how things are accomplished. Building housing areas, shifting areas, platforms, and so forth can vary greatly from place to place. Recommendations on wire gauge, types, and lessons learned were priceless. The guidelines that are presented are a strong foundation to begin, from there, the sky and your budget is the limit. Discussions on how to handle a difficult inspection, how to handle the ever increasing laws and bans on animals, and the best way for each and everyone of us to comply with and cover our butts to optimize the lives of the cats we all are here for.

Test time! As most of us began to sweat bullets, the test was passed out. Once it was

all over and the papers turned in, the great sigh of relief which I was hoping for turned into a "What if I didn't pass? How can I go back to Maryland to work?"

After a good night's sleep, I looked forward to the ice breaker reception and meeting many of the people that I have talked to on the phone for years, but never met. I am always amazed at conferences as to the mass of people that arrive—some first timers and others seasoned veterans. None of that matters, most all are of a like-mind and interest, and all on the edge of the bell curve. You all know we animal folks are different or is it just everyone else?

Mindy Stinner kept me busy with silent auction items in-between the non-human guests that flowed in and out of the room: bobcats, servals, orangutans, a capuchin, and two lovely Chesapeake retrievers. Thanks Mindy for making me feel right at home.

Friday featured a visit to Dallas Zoo and

**Carol held her
ground as to the
cries for an open
book test, can't
hurt to try.**

Southfork Ranch! Our Cat Wranglers made sure that we were all on our buses and followed all of the instructions. At the zoo we were treated to a number of behind-the-scenes areas and ample time to tour the zoo and even a ride on a carousel. Southfork was fun if

you were a fan of Dallas, the series, as I was. The cowboy serenade, stories, and chow were good. After that long day, I was ready for bed.

Saturday was chock full of information, stories, and serious conservation information. With all that we learn, it shows just how much we don't know, and without the efforts of Jim, Fernando, Anne, and countless others, so many wonderful creatures would disappear from the earth. It's time for us all to step up and help these efforts with whatever support we can.

Dinner was next on the agenda and the much-anticipated silent and live auction.

There was so much to do, so many wonderful people to meet and great stories and cats. I am so grateful that I had the opportunity attend, make some new friends, meet old friends, and have a purrrfect time. I look forward to next year's conference and seeing you all again.

P.S. I passed! •

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Cat Conservation in Chile

By Tom Harvey

It's always exciting to go to the convention to hear the latest updates on the Great Cats of our planet. Sadly, the news is never any better than the year before. Jim Sander-son has been on a never-ending quest for the flat-headed cats in southern Thailand. All of Southeast Asia is a hotbed for the small cats. The fishing cat is one that is not being found. Another one that has never been photographed in the wild is the Chi-nese mountain cat.

Fernando Vidal operates Fauna Andina, dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of native species and the breeding of endan-gered species.

Fernando is also the only person in the world known to have both a male and female guiña (*oncifelis guigna*.) This has been a long process, as Fernando has not wanted to deliberately capture a wild female. Receiving their first orphan female, plans are in the making to breed the two. The male guiña has been at the facility for eight years. The rescue center has done a lot of work on the protection of pumas, capturing and translocating problem cats, and also fighting illegal hunting of pumas.

In the last 100 years Chile has lost over 50% of their forest. With the Pacific Ocean on the western coastline and the Atacama Desert, the driest in the world on the east side of the Andes, Chile stretches over 2700 miles along the southwestern coast of South America, a distance roughly the same as that from San Francisco to New York. At the same time its width never exceeds 150 miles, making the country more than 18 times longer than its widest point. These factor in the difficulty of habi-tat fragmentation, that is as forest are cut down and natural resources such as copper, iron ore, precious metals, wood products, and hydropower are a priority for the coun-try, the native species will pay the price. This is a factor that our whole planet is fac-ing.

What can be done to help nature?

1. Field researchers have to get the govern-ment and the local people involved.
2. Confirm the research with camera trap-ping.



Fernando Vidal describes the activities at Fauna Andina.

3. Capture and radio collar.
4. Determine and mitigate any threats.
5. Monitor high conservation value popula-tion.

Good science is necessary but not suffi-cient for good conservation.

What is the plan?

1. Get help
2. Ask others to help and be patient. For instance, the flat headed cat was caught on camera in 1996—no more pictures until 2005. Hundreds of thousands of pictures and just two of the flat headed cat!
3. Follow through with conservation by:

- Identifying areas of high conservation value.
- Establishing long-term presence, a base of operations to attract students and researchers.
- Working towards international coopera-tion involving everyone.

To sum it up, conservation and education will have to be the priority of the human race if we want any future with the amazing animals of this great planet. Captive breed-ing of all species needs to stay in the fore-front of FCF efforts. It will take all of us working together. We can make a differ-ence. •

The Convention: Six Impressions

We were excited to have the opportunity to attend the convention for the first time this year. We enjoyed taking the husbandry class—which was packed with great information—and meeting all the other cat lovers over the four day event. The trade show was great for ideas and contacts. In addition, seeing the visiting babies was a real treat and a great reminder of how precious our now 3-year old puma, Zinnia, is and how rewarding the human-cat relationship is with such a bond. We were amazed at the diversity of the speaker list on Saturday and enjoyed hearing cat news from all over the world. What was impressed on us the most as an overall theme was how much the indigenous cats all over the world are in trouble and how much FCF as a group and as individuals want to help with conservation, research, and education. The auction items were a fun and drawn out way to raise money and we know FCF will use this money in the best interests of the cats. Our favorite tour was Tiger Creek.

The cats wanted to interact with people and talked to the groups and seemed to appreciate that we appreciated their beauty. The sanctuary had great examples of practical handling, training, and feeding. We liked the hands-on approach, positive presentation, and personal tour. Many kudos to the FCF for an excellent convention and we look forward to the next one in South Carolina.

—Leah and Bobby Aufill

...

This was my first FCF convention and, man, was I sorry. Sorry I didn't drag my lazy butt to *last* year's convention. What's the expression? I've never had so much fun with my pants on? That convention was a *blast*!

There's always energy when animal people get together, but I found this one really special. The networking was incredible; I met some of the best, purest individuals I've ever known, next to my tiger, of course.



Mike Friese

David Sol performs his brand of tiger-themed standup.

I particularly loved Brian's suggestion that we all think of ourselves (meaning our various organizations) as "sister" facilities, and am keen to speak to others in those terms. Strength in numbers, yes?

There's no way am I missing next year's convention. Kudos to the FCF board members, officers, convention volunteers for all the unselfish work!

— Dave Sol

...

Yee-haa! Git along there you little kitties! This here's cat wrangler Kathy. I had a rip-roarin' good time at the FCF convention near Dallas, Texas! I'm plumb tickled that I was able to volunteer and help Betsy and Stan with registration and buses. It was a great way to get involved and meet some neat folks.

If ya'all didn't go, ya missed a good 'un! The Dallas Zoo folks were mighty cordial—even takin' us behind the scenes. We fed rhinos, had an elephant training demo, and got a close look at some mighty purty tigers. Of course a big thank you to ya'all who were there, fer keepin' such good track on yer time pieces. We were all back on board the buses within five minutes of our expected departure time!

Then we high-tailed it out to Southfork Ranch. We went through the museum, and got the low-down about how all the Dallas TV show was made and even saw where



Jeremy Gillow

Southfork employee and Leah Aufill check out baby serval.



Jeremy Gillow

Kathy Thomas with J.R.

they filmed part of it! Then we put on the feed-bag and had a deeeeee-licious barbecue! The ranch even provided a couple troubadours, complete with cowboy hats and boots. They were a-singing cowboy and western songs, of course. One little kitty almost strayed, but we rounded her up and headed home.

The speakers were top-notch. Learnin' 'bout ocelots, guñas, trainin' and cage rocks really rocked! Discussin' worldwide issues gave everyone ideas to chew on. The live kittens were a sight for trail-weary eyes. Pettin' 'em, seein' 'em play—even watchin' 'em snooze was pure pleasure! Their little feet were a-twitchin' as they caught prey in their sleep!

The convention wound up with a banquet, silent auction, live auction, and beautiful art show. I went home some poorer in my pocketbook (memberships, silent auction, art pieces, etc.), but so much richer with new friends, useful information, and wonderful memories. See ya'all next year at Myrtle Beach! Yeeee ha!

—Kathy Thomas

...

Lions, Tigers and Cowboys!

This past convention was amazing! This was my first FCF convention. I met a lot of nice people and make some new friends. I was so excited when my parents told me I could go with Sara. I was very impressed on how friendly the FCF members were; they made me feel welcomed. I got to see new places, do new things and even went

to Tiger Creek. Tiger Creek is an outstanding place; the big cats were awesome! One of the handlers fed one of the tigers, and I got to see how big they really are when they stand up on their hind legs. I have visited several zoos and not one of them teach you about the big cats like Tiger Creek does. I learned alot! If you are ever in Texas, you should go there, no doubt it. We all went to the Dallas Zoo and I finally was able to see a live ocelot! We all got to go behind the scenes and learned about caging and safety. I learned so much and there is so much to tell. This convention has given me the education I need to help teach my peers this coming school year. Another great thing was the auction. It was fun and a great way to help the FCF. Brian Werner dressed up in a big tiger costume! Thank



Phil Parker

Danielle in her award-winning costume.

you Brian for making my first FCF convention a fun one. Hope you like your big rock! Thank you Sara for taking me. Thank you Carol and Evelyn for being friends. And thank you to all the FCF members who attended. See you all next year!

—Danielle Finley

...

My family and I are fairly new to the world of exotic feline husbandry. We're just becoming involved in private conservationist efforts. I have spent the last five years fighting a statewide ban on exotic cats so that we could bring an African serval into our lives. At the time we began this fight, it was with the sole intent of satisfying an inner need to have this beautiful creature. Over the course of the last five years however, our purpose has changed in such a drastic manner. We are no longer in this fight for what we want, but have come to realize how critical the role of private conservationists in the world are when more and more exotic feline populations become threatened with each passing day. This has become our goal, our purpose in this world.

When I first heard mention of FCF, it was just a fleeting comment to someone that was considering getting an exotic cat but had not done any research on proper husbandry practice. This intrigued me so I started doing my own research and found the next convention was just a few short weeks away. I joined The FCF just days before attending the Dallas convention, with the intent of taking the husbandry course so our local government would be more inclined to allow us to realize our dream of having a serval.

I will readily admit that I had this preconceived notion of the types of people I expected to meet while I was there. I fully expected to encounter wealthy people who were bored with their lives that had found a "hobby" with which they could spend money in ways to make themselves feel they had made their "contribution" to the world. I could not have been further off base! Instead what I found was that those in attendance were just ordinary people, much like myself, doing their very best to accomplish extraordinary things with very few resources besides each other. By the time the convention came to its end, I truly felt that I had taken part in the most motivating, awe-inspiring event in my entire life. It gave me a sense of fulfillment that I just cannot express in words.

The guest speakers were incredible, the stories they shared of their trials and tribulations were so inspiring. The passion with which each speaker gave their accounts



(Left to right, top to bottom) Fernando Vidal demonstrates how momma cats carry their young • Betsy Whitlock gets a laugh presenting *King of the Jungle* award to Brian Werner in full tiger costume • FCF members go behind-the-scenes at the Dallas tiger exhibit • Friendly rhino lets Jeannie Baker handle his horn • Cute stuffed tiger goes cowboy for convention • JB Anderson in Elvis-gone-country wins *Cat Roper* and Reva Anderson the *Miss Kitty* award • J.R. says "excuse me" • Banquet night at the Southfork Hotel • Teresa Shaffer does the "mommy thing" • Kelli Navarro waves snake toy for Miss Meerah bobcat • Jim Sander-son gets "wigged out" at banquet. Photographers: Mike Frieze, Phil Parker, Kelli Perras, Teresa Shaffer.



Cover your mouth when you yawn!





Teresa Shaffer

**Kelli Perras goes nose to nose
with a miniature serval.**

made me feel like I was looking into the very depth of their being. This exquisite passion was so clear even with those in attendance. When members of the audience wanted to be heard, everyone gave those individuals their undivided attention.

I was able to tour the grounds of In-Sync Exotics after the husbandry course and was witness to a breathtaking display of love between the owner and her cats. Most of those in residence there were to some degree abused, whether intentional or not, often the abuse was manifest simply by ignorance of proper care and feeding. Every single animal there, regardless of their personal history, was so at ease with their caretaker that she could go in each enclosure and share very affectionate displays and the cats were completely at ease with everything she did. The bond she has with these cats was apparent in every movement, every gesture.

I left the convention with the heartfelt knowledge that I had formed connections with people, with animals, and with an unbelievable sense of fulfillment and purpose like none I have ever felt. Several of those in attendance were able to bring their exotic feline kittens with them so that everyone would have an opportunity to get that “hands on” experience. I have to admit that part was my favorite... I am pretty sure I took well over 200 photos just of the baby cougar cub, J.R. For future conventions, I know I will be planning far in advance so that I don’t miss a thing!

—Kelli Perras

“Future Private Feline Conservationist”

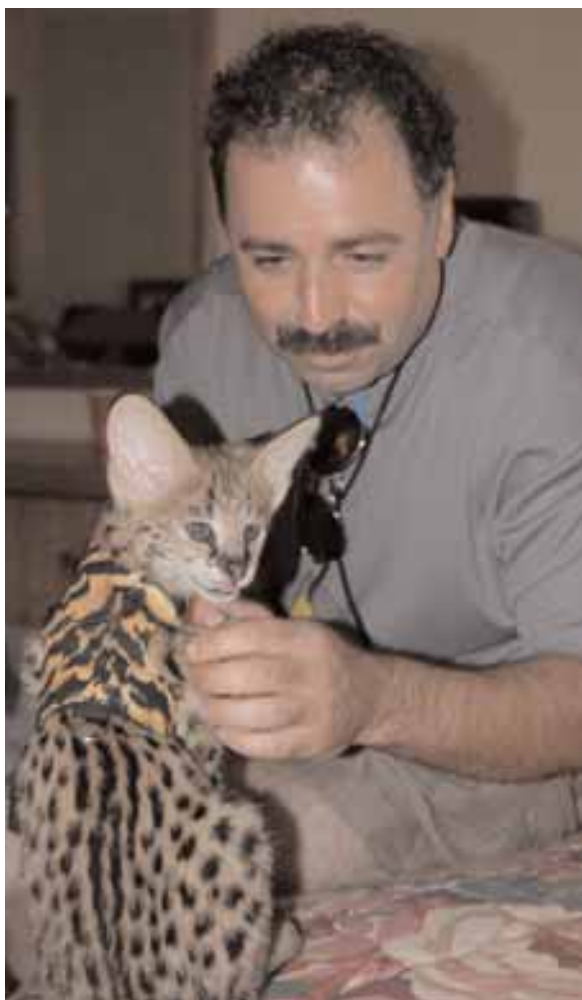
...

I drove with Laura Walker all the way to Texas from Massachusetts to help her move, transport her paintings for the art show, and enjoy something that promised to be interesting. I had met Sampson, the Canada lynx, that Laura loves and has worked with, that lives in Bolton, Massachusetts at Animal Adventures. I have a love for animals myself and I have enjoyed nature and Audubon from my youth. I wanted to see the countryside, see the wild cats up close, and see what this convention was really all about. I wanted to meet people who worked with these wild cats—and to find out if they were as “crazy” as Laura!

I took the husbandry course out of an interest and at Laura’s urging. I found the Carol Bohning to be very professional and she did an excellent job presenting the information. It was a lot for a newbie to absorb. I enjoyed socializing with all the people and getting to know what they do, the cats they own, and what they think about their animals, conservation, and other things.

It is obvious the people who belong to FCF love animals, know how to take care of their animals, and prove that they are responsible owners. I do believe in responsible private ownership. I feel, though, because the group is so small, that much has to be done to have responsible private owners be heard. There needs to be more positive PR to combat the news. A scientific approach needs to be taken, a reason and a purpose for the public to embrace private ownership. Responsible private ownership is a keystone to the prevention of extinction. It seems similar to the stem cell research issue: people are going to have to get off their high horse someday and find morally what is better and more important. I believe in private ownership more so now that I have attended this convention.

It was fun to be the auctioneer. I was nervous and scared. I couldn’t believe I got recruited to do something like that so soon! I know, however, that that is how small organizations work and everyone needs to



Laura Walker

**Abraham Vasken Basmajian adjusts Theresa
Shaffer’s serval’s walking jacket.**

shoulder a certain amount of responsibility. I guess I got something on my shoulders pretty quick, but I enjoyed it!

Tiger Creek was excellent. I could see that there was a serious investment there and a lot of thought has gone into creating this sanctuary. Lynn Culver’s place was fascinating. A lot has been invested in this place also. I could see all the work she and her husband have to do to take care of their animals plus all the time, energy, and love invested.

Going to the Dallas Zoo was also very interesting. Getting in on the inside of things was a privilege. And it was a great privilege to be able to touch the rhinoceros. I loved meeting the people and meeting their animals: Romeo the lynx, Lynn’s cougar and Geoffroy’s cat, and the bobcats and servals that were there too. It was just a wonderful experience for me, and one that I will not forget in my lifetime.

—Abraham Vasken Basmajian

Petting Puma Prove Profitable for U.A.P.P.E.A.L.

When U.A.P.P.E.A.L. representative Nancy Nighswander asked me about reserving booth space at the FCF convention in Dallas for U.A.P.P.E.A.L. fund-raising/membership drive/legislative awareness purposes, I had an idea on how we could increase interest.

I planned to bring several kittens with me to convention. Keeping the Dallas TV series theme, the amusing trio was a small South American Geoffroy's kitten named Lucy, Sue Ellen bobcat, and what I knew would be the star of the show, J.R. puma.

During the Thursday registration check-in and icebreaker reception, it is customary for FCF members to share their kittens with the convention attendees. These three were parked in front of the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. booth and helped attract plenty of attention. Nancy and I enlightened visitors on the negative effects of the Haley's Act (HR 1947) bill before Congress. Contact with J.R. puma, a species restricted by Haley's Act, was limited to paid U.A.P.P.E.A.L. members or persons who made a minimum \$10.00 donation to the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobbyist fund. A sign on the booth table explained why.

Help U.A.P.P.E.A.L. fight the Haley's Act!

FONDLE THIS FURBABY FOR FREEDOM!

Hold this baby cougar now while you still can because if Congress passes Haley's Act, you won't get another chance! U.A.P.P.E.A.L. members get unlimited furbaby petting privileges during this convention! For a \$10 donation to the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. Haley Act opposition fund, you too may enjoy this potentially "once in a lifetime experience."

The U.A.P.P.E.A.L. lobbyist team is working hard to make sure that doesn't come true.

Help keep our country free.

Join U.A.P.P.E.A.L. today for \$25 single/\$35 family. Members may hold, hug, kiss, pet, touch, and maybe even bottle-feed this baby cougar today.

Fill out an application and join NOW!

U.A.P.P.E.A.L. is a 501(c)(4) non-profit tax-deductible organization, so give generously. All donations and member-

ship fees go into our lobbyist fund.

There is no doubt that FCF members disagree with this federal bill and want to protect their freedom to pet and fondle baby big cats and were willing to put their money where their hearts were. Nancy had a stack of U.A.P.P.E.A.L. membership application forms at the ready and for those who signed up, she gave them a special sticker to wear that proudly announced, "I fondled for freedom." We signed up 19 new members and generated \$475 towards the lobbyist fund for fighting Haley's Act. J.R. soaked up all the admiration and quite a few bottles of milk formula too. He was a "purrfect" example of why Haley's Act is a bad bill and that Congress needs to stop passing animal rights bills.

Presently the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. board is conferring with Bill Hanka and his team to prepare for meetings with the agriculture committee during the August recess in anticipation of increased action on this bill in September. ASPCA, Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), and Animal Rights (AR) activist Big Cat Rescue (BCR) have organized a public relations campaign to write Congress in support of Haley's Act. Carol Baskin of BCR has been very active. She has installed Capwiz XC on her website. This is a \$12,000 yearly rental database program that has state, local, and federal legislator email addresses accessible to web visitors by zip code, as well as media contacts, and can generate emails in support of AR legislation, track them, and send copies to the web site owner. Big Cat Rescue has purchased additional grass roots internet technology that alerts an email database of any pending town hall meetings and urges the recipient being emailed to attend, meet their representative, and voice support of Haley's Act. An FCF member (not a Big Cat Rescue supporter) recently forwarded me their email invitation from Carol to attend a town hall meeting. If you get one of these notices, it's a good idea to



Mike Friesa

attend and let your representative know about these high-cost tools of the AR industry, and express your opposition to any AR bills that step on the USDA's ability to regulate commercial activity and protect animal welfare and, in the case of Haley's Act, prohibit all contact with all cats of any age.

Everyone needs to write the house agriculture committee members to express their opposition to this overreaching and unnecessary bill. Not only does Haley's Act forbid all contact with the big cat species no matter what their age, but also, should it pass, it prohibits USDA from issuing any new permits to any holder of big cat species, or any applicant that might obtain big cats until USDA writes and approves regulations to enforce Haley's Act. Since it takes USDA an average of three years to go through the process of drafting, publishing for public comment, and then approving new regulations, this means no new zoos or sanctuaries holding big cats will be licensed for possibly the next three years. This is just one of many unintended consequences of Haley's Act, a bad bill that will harm big cat conservation, facilities that use young cats as ambassadors for their educational programs, and fund-raising efforts to house cats in sanctuaries, zoos, and conservation centers.

To help U.A.P.P.E.A.L. fight this bill, please join and make a donation to the lobbyist fund. Contact information can be found in the U.A.P.P.E.A.L. advertisement in this journal issue. •

Then and Now: A Comparison of Two Dallas Conventions 25 Years Apart

By Rebecca Morgan

It sure was fun to attend a convention again after so many years. I really enjoyed meeting everyone and playing with the babies. For those of you who do not know me or who did not meet me at the Dallas convention, I am a long time member; I joined L.I.O.C. in the early 1970s. I am also a past “Lottie” recipient (1983) and the author of “Crazy Caracal,” a comic strip that ran in the this newsletter from 1981 through 1984.

Lynn asked me to write a comparison of the last convention I attended in the early 1980s to this latest convention, both of which were held in the Dallas, Texas area.

Back in the early 1980s, L.I.O.C. was composed of a lot of branch groups that each met several times a year, usually at one of the member’s homes. Many members brought their cats and it was mostly a social club with a short business meeting and plenty to eat. Then once a year we would get together for a national convention.

The 1982 Dallas convention was hosted by the Southwest

Branch and held at a hotel in Farmers Branch, Texas. We had a lot more cats (especially the larger breeds) in attendance since the laws were not as tight as they are today. If memory serves me correctly, there were several clouded leopard cubs, a serval, two margays, and a cougar cub along with some jaguar and tiger babies.

Our hospitality suite was much smaller and we had no commercial vendors.

Friday we had our speakers. They included Tom Mantzell, the owner and operator of a Texas-style Africa, a 1500-acre ranch west of Dallas that hosted endangered and threatened hoofed stock from antelope to zebras, Nancy Carter, a very nice lady who ran the nursery at the Dallas Zoo, and John Stokes a professional animal photographer. Our speakers were good, but I must say that this year’s speakers were excellent. I really enjoyed the magnificent people you brought in to speak of all the things being done to help our exotic friends in their natural habitats.

Friday evening was the general meeting where Ken Hatfield, our president, outlined the items that



CRAZY CARACAL



BY REBECCA MORGAN

This CC cartoon from 1981 depicts a real disaster caused by Fred Boyajian’s margay. Fred attended the 2007 convention too.

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AMERICAN ZOO AND AQUARIUM ASSOCIATION

would be discussed the next morning at the executive meeting.

We only had one field trip which took place Saturday morning at the same time as the executive meeting. The trip was to Neiman Marcus and to the Ola Podrida Shopping Center, a unique shopping center made up of small shops selling hand made items. It was nothing in comparison to the behind-the-scenes tour of the zoo but some of our older members wanted to go shopping as most came from small towns. Everything else took place at the convention hotel.

Saturday night was the banquet where we recognized members for their contributions, presented the "Lottie," had an auction, and everyone voted on their favorite photo from the previous year. At the end, everyone in attendance received a small gift to remember the convention. In 1982 it was a square candle with the national logo on one side and a different exotic cat on each of the other three sides.

Sunday morning Ken Hatfield reported back to the membership on the meeting of the executive committee and the proceeds from the auction were presented to Ken.

As you can see, the typical convention back then was shorter, we had fewer speakers (all of which were local), and the only "field trip" was a social event. This was also before the Wild Feline Husbandry Course was developed.

In my opinion, the organization has taken many strides forward. It has become an organization with a lot of credibility while at the same time, keeping a very friendly atmosphere.

If we had been where you are today, maybe there would not be so many laws. We just were not prepared to fight all the new laws that were coming at us from every direction and we had so many disagreements on which way to proceed. We also, I'm sad to say, allowed personalities to get in the way.

Keep up the good work and help each other with problems as they surface in all areas of the country. But most of all, when you have small disagreements among yourselves, listen to everyone's point of view and work them out without fighting.

Always keep in mind that with any disagreement between your board and your members, it's the cats that always lose. •

Latest Exotic Feline Handlers

The members of the FCF Board of Directors are proud to announce that during the months of July and August the following individuals have applied for and been accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program. The Board cannot stress enough the importance of participating in this program. It is proof positive to the legislators that make decisions which directly effect our ability to continue to own, breed, or exhibit our cats, that we as an organization are committed to responsible ownership and excellence in the care of our charges. We hope more of our membership will take advantage of this program to show their commitment personally.

Dr. Ron LaTorre	Basic Level	3 years experience
Brenda LaTorre	Basic Level	3 years experience
J. B Anderson	Advanced Level	29 years experience
Reva Anderson	Advanced Level	29 years experience
Judy Berens	Advanced Level	14 years experience
Kathy Thomas	Basic Level	10 years experience
Fred Boyajian	Advanced Level	40 years experience
Jason McLeod	Basic Level	8 years experience
Rajani Ferrante	Advanced Level	10 years experience
Phillis Parks	Basic Level	9 years experience
Kheira Knoop	Advanced	16 years experience
Mokshu Bybee	Basic	6 years experience
Julia Mckenzie	Basic	5 years experience

Applications for this program can be found on the FCF website at the following hyperlink:
<http://www.thefcf.com/husbandry/reghandlerapp.asp?key+486>

The board further hopes that in addition to the this program that members will take the next step and further show their support for excellence in the care of their cats by applying the FCF Facility Accreditation Program. The overview, basic standards, and application can also be found on the FCF website.

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

—Betsy Whitlock
FCF Secretary

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Art Show Cats: Facts, Legends, and Myths

By Deborah Rabinski

As a curator I want everyone to know what a wonderful experience it has been to work for FCF and the artists that made this art show. I feel that people I met can change the world. Just to know the kind of love and caring that each and everyone of you give to the animals and the love that you get back from them is what art is about. It's why artists paint, write poems, dance, or play music. You are the very muse.

The start of setting up the art show begins when the artists bring in their artwork, which started late about 9:00pm Friday. First I went through all the art, just to hang on the walls. Once hung, I labeled each work. Thanks to Deborah St. John, we had temporary walls down the center of the room. Deb was the best—not only did she bring the walls, she stayed in the gallery as I was at the gate, and sometimes looked over the kittens. Deb also cast footprints of both the cougar and serval kittens. What a great person—with great art to match.

Yes, we had kittens in the art show. Thanks to Lynn Culver we had cougar, bobcat, and Geoffroy's kittens as well as some visiting serval kittens.

This show was the debut of the traveling exhibit, "Wildcats of the World" by Rochelle Mason and Linda DuPuis-Rosen. These were the "facts" of the show. Our walls were adorned with 36 wildcats. All outstanding and both artists were very professional.

Laura Walker gave us "myth" and she was the first artist I talked with about being in this show. Her artwork started my beginning thoughts and in person she is just beautiful. If you did not get to meet Laura, please look for her next year.

Sara Comstock gave us both David and Sara Stribbling artwork (UK) as she is working as an agent for them. What great artwork. Thanks Sara.

Rick Hildenbrandt was the "legend" part of the show. He had the big watercolor of the French cave painting. He helped set up the show and keep me together.

The art show came together with all artwork playing off one another, transforming the room with great art. It was a delight to



see and the kittens had many people asking about FCF. The hotel had a wedding and the people would come in look at the artwork and see the kittens. We talked to a lot of people throughout the day. Everyone said it was the people that made this convention so special.

I must thank many people for their help: Brian Werner for his help with the Safari Club newsletter, Mike Friese and Lynn Culver for the postcard, and Lynn for help all the way through to the very end, and my husband, Rick Hildenbrandt. Without him I could not have done my best. I saved the person I most wanted to thank for last—Kevin Chambers who worked right on through a heart attack and put together a great convention through all kinds of trouble. You're the best.

I want everyone to know that this was my first convention and everyone made me feel like I was family. Thank you all.

We sold 28 works of art and 50% of the sales went to FCF for an emergency fund. If you saw any artwork that you wanted for a gift or yourself please email me (deborah@enter.net) and I will get you together with the artist.

I want people that could not be with us this year and those of you who could, to know more about the artists:

Linda DuPuis-Rosen has been creating art for over 20 years. She has focused her creative efforts in the area of wildlife art using watercolor. Over the last seven years she has donated her time and artwork to a number of wildlife conservation efforts around the world. Her most recent project is in collaboration with artist Rochelle Mason to create the "Wildcats of the World" educational exhibit. The feeling and emotion that are evoked from her paintings come from her experiencing the sights, sounds, and smells of the local terrain. Linda allows those who have not had the opportunity to encounter these animals first hand, the opportunity to see their true beauty and to help awaken their connection to nature.

Rochelle Mason has been painting wildlife since 1980. In 1990 she decided to build her reputation as an endangered species artist. Her passion is to represent the less charismatic animals that get little public attention. Rochelle's paintings, collected internationally, are oftentimes shared with the public as educational art exhibits, featured mainly in natural history museums. Rochelle's most recent traveling exhibit, entitled "Wildcats of the World," represents all 36 species of wildcats from around the world and debuted at this art show.

Rick Hildenbrandt is known for working



Phil Parker

with the grid and finding icons in everyday life. Mr. Hildenbrandt had his first museum show while still in high school. He has been an artist apprentice with Michael Kessler and graduated Summa Cum Laude in 1987 from Kutztown University. Rick is a hard-working artist and master of control, pushing materials to see where they will take him. Hildenbrandt shows us how icons are made and how we relate to situations in life, asking “is this a universal metaphor for all?”

Deborah St. John is a self-taught Kansas

born artist. She unitizes color pencil and graphite pencil to photo-realistically depict wildlife. Deborah also uses scratchboard and scrimshaw techniques. She has given numerous drawing and color pencil workshops, been a participant in international galleries and has clients in numerous countries.

David Stribbling is one of the UK’s leading wildlife artists; his work has sold at Christies and Phillips Chester, and through many galleries. It is a great honor to have a master artist of this level in this show.

Another View of the Art Show

Did everyone get a chance to visit the art show in Dallas? I sure hope you did because it was fantastic. This was my first art show ever, of any sort. I’m glad my first was an art show themed on felines and other wildlife.

My husband and I visited several times. One of his favorites was the two cat eyes looking through green leaves with reflection on the dew. My husband finally brought one home, themed ‘Dinner to Go,’ a bobcat chasing a mouse. My favorite was the baby Canada lynx looking at his reflection in a pond while rain drops are falling. I loved it so much, I brought it home.

The three artists who were at the show, Rochelle Mason, Laura Walker, and Linda Dupuis-Rosen did such an amazing job and I am so glad that I got to meet these three

talented women. They have now changed my perspective on art forever.

I hope we have more art shows at future conventions because if you haven’t heard the buzz yet, I won a St. Jude Dream Home while I was going wild and cat crazy at the Dallas convention. A while before, I had bought a single \$100 ticket to benefit the children at St. Jude Hospital. The winning prize house was 2,600 sq. feet and valued at \$275,000.

We had just pulled up to the gate at Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge in Tyler, Texas on Sunday morning when I got the phone call telling me I had won. The first thing I did was thank the Lord for the blessing. The second thing I did was, I think, give Brian Werner a hug as I told him what I had just won. Now that I have this bigger house, I now have more wall space to decorate. I

David handles paint like a surgeon: each and every placement of color gives us the knowledge of a master’s hand at work. Never does he let your eye stop, you walk away with the feeling you just met that animal yourself for the first time. He not only gives us the exact likeness, but truth. It’s our soul meets his soul and the animal’s.

Sarah Stribbling has been fascinated by wildlife and the natural world from an early age. Inspired and encouraged by her father, she started drawing professionally in 2003. She graduated from Newcastle University with a zoology degree in 2004 and currently is undertaking a master’s degree in biodiversity and conservation at Leeds. Looking at Sarah’s work, you can feel her energy and the excitement in her discovery. Her brush stroke is open, her color clear. The viewer is lead to wonder how pure the environment could be.

Laura Walker’s ideas usually come from dreams or visions during the night—like a colored slide. Many times ideas grow from the original “slide” to form continuity within her imagination. These ideas get transferred to watercolor paper, board, or canvas. Laura’s work brings about innocence in us, a place where fun begins. She reminds us that there is a child within all of us. Is Laura being a storyteller or shaman foretelling dreams in her paintings? •

just happen to know three good artists that could help me out.

That is, of course, if I really end up getting to move into my new home. Most of you know that I am smack dab in the middle of a conflict with the county and their restrictions over my cats, Diesel and Romeo. The dream house is located one county north of the county I live in now, and it has restrictions on cats.

In my wildest dreams, I had no idea my life was about to change so dramatically and I was about to be in a fight for my cats to have the right to live with me and to really live in the ultimate dream home. You see, if Diesel, my bobcat, and Romeo, my Siberian lynx, can’t go, I can’t go. I don’t care if it was a million dollar dream home; no one will separate me from my kids, till I draw my last breath.

—Regina Hardison •

Thanks to: Rochelle Mason • Linda Dupuis-Rosen [Wildcats of the World] • Rick Hildenbrandt • Deborah St. John • David Stribbling • Sara Stribbling • Laura Walker • FCF kittens • Curator Deborah Rabinsky

Field Conservationist Meets Felids Ex Situ

By Anne-Sophie Bertrand

After a long three-day journey from Brazil, I finally arrived in Plano, Texas and got the time to relax a bit before meeting everyone. I confess I was pretty impressed as FCF appeared to me as a bunch of people that had known one another for decades. I felt like a new student in college with the only difference that I was the only one who knew no one. After a few hours, I got Kevin Chambers and Lynn Culver on the phone to invite me to see little puma, bobcat, and Geoffroy's kittens.

This is where it all started. I entered Lynn's room and noticed the musky smell of wild felids. Now this was really weird to me, as the only place I could smell this odor so far was in the forest! For the very first time and in a very different context (hotel room!), I got to see those gorgeous creatures from near. I even had the honor to give a baby puma the milk bottle! Geez! I wish everybody could do that once, it is so heart-touching! I sincerely believe this can change someone's mind regarding "wild cats." I had personally never thought about them this way before.

I met so many nice fellows. I heard so many wild cat/pet stories, some stuff I could have never imagined. I found every bit of it so information-rich. Sure, I have a lot to learn from FCF people. You guys have a tremendous amount of behavioral information on the cats I am working with. For three days, I could talk to people and hear their stories. The funniest part is that even though I dedicated my time and life to these animals, I had much less contact with the cats than the FCF people. It is a paradoxical feeling! For two days, we had different visits and shows which allowed me meeting new faces giving me another perspective of things.

Saturday morning came and after Jim Sanderson's report on Asian cats' situation, I presented the research we are doing in southwestern Brazil. I was quite stressed but I guess it is like this the first time. But it went OK and people came to ask me questions and talk to me afterwards, which demonstrated their interest. I felt so happy. And the Margay Man aka Fred Boyajian, came to me. Fred told me he had owned 40

margays. Lucky devil! For our research project, we humbly aim at capturing eight individuals and much remains to be understood as for their behavior and response to human development. But, when you hand-raise an animal, you become very well-aware of its behavioral patterns. Even though they are not "wild" the innate part is there. While I was commenting on my rare encounters with our monitored margays to Fred, he could compare it with his margays and he could tell me he'd seen that thousands of times. I had never thought I could find such a well of information there in Texas!

And if the margay project is doing well, I am surely very, very grateful to Fred for making things possible down here. And so am I for Joel, Kevin, Brian, Lynn, and others. If FCF as a whole makes a difference, I think it is worth mentioning individual efforts.

Furthermore, I understood FCF has evolved a lot and is now more involved

into wild cats' conservation issues. That is great news for the cats. Working in South America, I came to understand that what seems 'little' or 'small' in the states can make a pretty big difference in what we know as the third world. So I guess the message is: "Do small, we will do big with it in the South."

In brief, this trip to the FCF convention was a great experience for me. I believe FCF has now matured regarding its approach towards its beloved animals' conservation. Congratulations! May you be successful in preserving wild cats in their natural habitats.

With the FCF conservation grant, we will be able to buy four GPS radio-collars for margays from Televilt (Sweden). Besides the fact that we will be the first ones to monitor small cats with such equipment, those collars will allow collecting much needed information on the margays' response to human-caused habitat changes. Thanks for your trust and your help! •



Blast from the Past. . . . *The Very First F2 Savannahs*

LIOC-ESCF

July/August 1989—Volume 33, Issue 4

Savannah, a 15 pound serval/Siamese Fl 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 5, 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 outsized 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



F2 kittens at four days old

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 5, 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 DOA, and presumably a victim of placenta abruption 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 background color. (The DOA kitten

ANIMAL FINDERS GUIDE

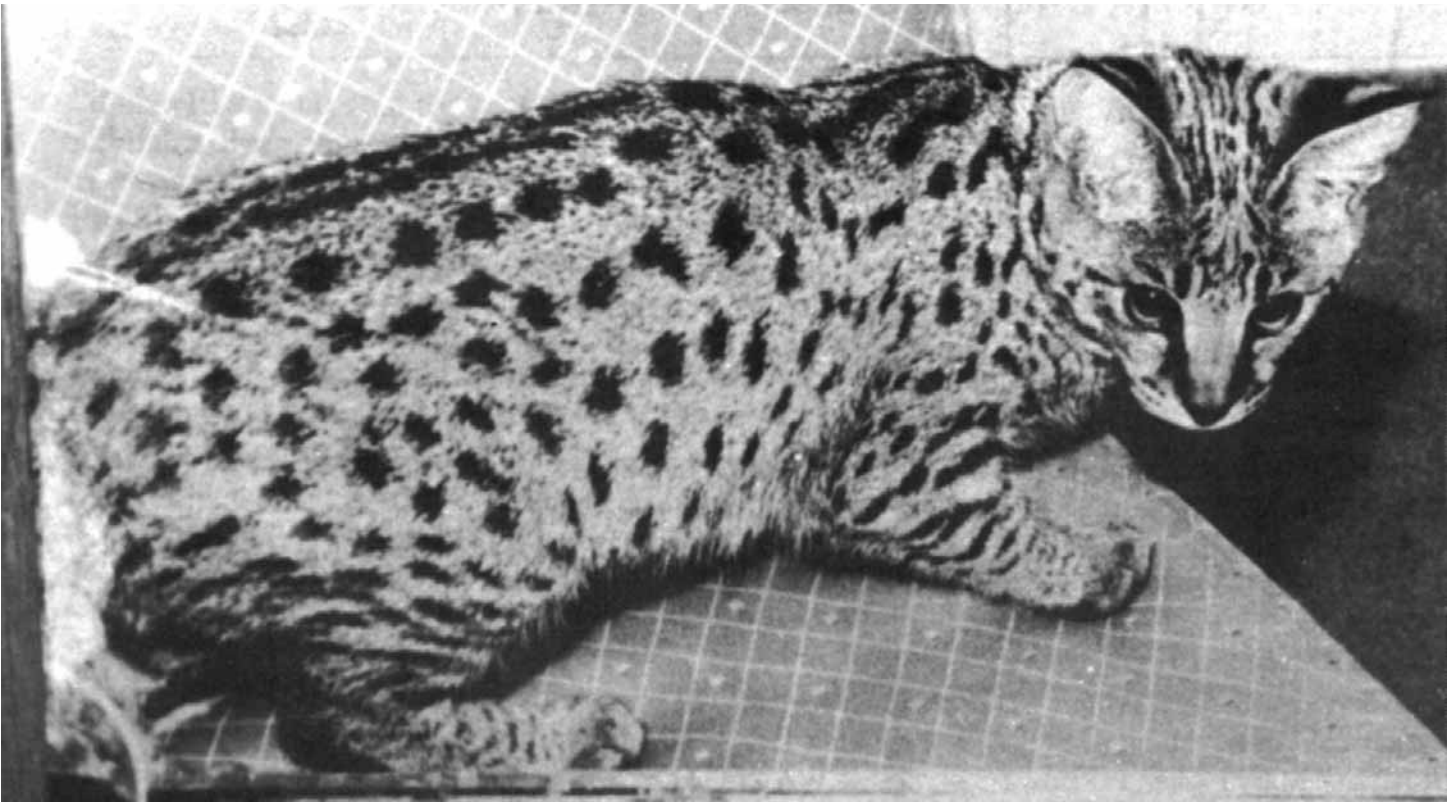
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Savannah, the first F1 and the proud mother of the first F2 Savannahs.



Savannah, pregnant



Albert, the father of those first F2s.

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 estimate 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 11.5 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! •

Another FCF Member Facility is Accredited!

When FCF president Lynn Culver decided to apply for FCF Facility Accreditation, she knew it was going to take awhile to assemble the pieces required by the accreditation committee. N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center houses nearly four-dozen cats of six species and utilizes a variety of cage designs for the inhabitants.

The N.O.A.H. facility sits in the center of the Culver's 30-acre Arkansas property. Over ten acres is under perimeter fence; some of the fencing is eight feet high and much of it is ten feet high.

The Culvers acquired their first cougars over 22 years ago, and their first cages still stand, now housing different cougars. In the past two decades construction has converted the Culver's entire yard into prime feline habitat.

The six resident cougars are either remnants of a former breeding program or homeless pumas taken in by the Culvers. Today the Culver's emphasis is on breeding the smaller feline species. Over two-dozen cages and exercise habitats provide for serval, caracal, bobcat, Canada lynx, and Geoffroy's cat.

Bart Culver designed and installed connecting squeeze cages to facilitate medicating, examining, trapping and transporting their felines. Either double-door entryways or shift cages attach to every compound.

Several of the small cat species have

access to fenced-in habitats. The servals and caracals are rotated so they can enjoy a 5,000 square foot area landscaped with bamboo, native grasses and bushes. The 12-foot tall fences have a 30-inch recurve and a hot wire at the eight-foot height.



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Bobcats have hillside habitats situated under the native hardwood forest. The fence height for the bobcats is ten foot with a 24-inch recurve and a hot wire for security. A couple of the bobcat enclosures are connected directly to the Culver's home by way of either overhead tunnels or ground level and underground tunnels.

Lynn applied for facility accreditation not only in hopes of gaining accreditation for the N.A.O.H. facility, but also she says, "I wanted to give the accreditation committee something complex to consider and learn from. Our facility is definitely challenging. We have cages that are twenty years old, and cages that are just one year old. None of our construction uses chain link, and most cages are built with treated post and beam construction."

At the Dallas convention general membership meeting, accreditation committee member Doc Antle encouraged everyone to submit facility applications, and encouraged strong construction and emphasized use of metal posts rather than wood.

"After the meeting," says Lynn, "some of the FCF members told me they built using treated wood posts and they were discouraged, thinking they would not be approved. I told these members to go ahead and apply. I believe Doc was referring more to tigers than small cats, and I pointed out that even tigers can be safely held by wood—it just needs to be strong enough



and that requires more than a 4 x 4. The first accredited tiger facility was constructed using treated 4 x 6 posts."

This FCF program is still rather new and adjustments to the process will occur over time. It won't be long before facilities will be applying for re-accreditation.

In addition to the detailed descriptions of each cage and a stack of photos Lynn supplied two DVD tours of the facility—one taped in the late fall and another in the

early spring.

Lynn says, "I borrowed a camcorder in late November and it ran out of tape before I was finished videoing all the cages. It was another three months before I could borrow it again and finish up. My annual inspection by my veterinarian was in April 2007 and once he visited and signed off my application I was ready to submit it. I drew a map, included an aerial photo of the property and surrounding areas as well to help the committee get a feel for the location and facility layout."

The hard work and effort paid off when the accreditation committee certified the N.O.A.H. facility 'FCF Accredited.'

The FCF accreditation committee stated, "The N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center meets the standards of the FCF. The facility shows great improvement over time in habitat construction and habitat enrichment, especially for the small cats. The creativity and adaptation of the facility is very admirable. While the habitats for the small cats are excellent, the habitats for some of the larger cats appear to need future structural reconstruction. Although I am sure the habitats can maintain their current occupants, I would ask that the habitats be reinforced for any new occupants. This would be most critical for younger occupants. As a whole, the facility looks to be a great haven for its residents." •



Carol Bohning's Thoughts on Winning the Lotty

I am very honored to have received the Lotty award at this year's convention in Dallas, Texas and want to thank those past winners of the Lotty who felt that I was worthy. It seems like there are so many good people out there who try to do the right thing on a daily basis. If only the media would focus on that aspect, what a different world it would be! Although our lives are packed full with work and family, us animal lovers fill in the small gaps of free time by tending to our animals, our family's or the neighbor's animals, or a stray. Unfortunately, we are going to have to push our tired bodies into dealing with animal rights types and their legislation. I never thought that I would involve myself with politics, but it is so depressing to see state after state fall and to be here now, with Ohio under threat. I can hardly bear to think about the fall legislative season. But we must get involved if we want to keep our animals, to keep our rights as American cit-



Photos by Phil Parker



izens! I would like to see FCF take back the country, state by state! The fight will not be easy, but I think that we all need to do more.

Start at home, if you are lucky enough to still live in a state that allows ownership. Try to work with local officials or first responders if they need help with an exotic animal and educate them about our world. So many people do not understand their nature and so become afraid of our animals. Most state legislative folk that I have spoken to also are completely ignorant that we responsible owners are out there. Volunteer for campaigns of those

legislators who will support private ownership; I guarantee that you can make a difference. I urge you to get to know other animal people and work with less responsible owners to improve their facilities or their practices. Help each other build cages or pens, relocate and move animals, etc. Develop contacts with the media who will occasionally print a positive animal owner story. Educate and eventually most people come around to understand our world a lot better. In addition, I think we need to meet the animal rights people head on! Call and complain to facilities that host PETA or HSUS (etc.) functions. Let them know what those organizations really stand for and how all of their money is spent (not on animals!) We need our own animal owners' grass roots movement to stop people who know nothing about our animals from dictating how we will enjoy and keep them (or not!) Okay, so now you know what I'm doing next year too!

—Carol Bohning

New Regional Field Representative Works Successfully with President of FCF to Stop Ban

August 15, 2007

By Wayne Sluder

Arkansas Game and Fish (G&F) was proposing changes that would have prohibited new exhibitors of large felines from entering the state, or if already in the state, acquiring large felines (specifically lion, tiger, or cougar).

Summary:

FCF member Julie Roper alerted Lynn Culver to proposed G&F regulation changes. As a concerned citizen, Julie has requested to be informed in writing of any proposed captive wildlife regulation changes.

A couple of weeks ago, Lynn Culver and Julie Roper, who is an Arkansas permitted puma holder and a practicing attorney, and myself, the new field representative of Region 4 for the Feline Conservation Federation, met with Doyle Shook, Chief of Wildlife Management with the Arkansas G&F.

Julie had a separate audience with Doyle to discuss specific changes to the new Personal Mountain Lion Permit being proposed to replace the Breeder/Dealer Permit for those holders not involved in either breeding or dealing.

Lynn and I then had an audience with Mr. Shook later that afternoon. We met for over two hours with Mr. Shook and went over in detail his proposed changes and presented compelling conservation concerns to support the FCF request to drop the proposed changes that would have closed Arkansas to any future conservation centers, educational exhibitors, or feline refuges for large cat species. Because of this meeting, the proposed regulation changes were tabled for a month to give G&F time to digest the FCF input.

Lynn spoke with Doyle Shook late last week and learned that he had decided to go against the request of the FCF and continue with the proposed regulations that would have banned the possession or importation of lion, tiger, or cougar by any future USDA licensed facilities

The proposed regulation changes would be presented the following Thursday at the

monthly G&F Commission public meeting and then the 30-day public comment period would begin. On Sunday, Lynn Culver wrote Director Henderson and all the G&F commissioners with an impassioned plea to question Doyle Shook about the proposed changes and do what they could to stop this change.

By Monday, Lynn had arranged for herself and Julie Roper to be present for the monthly director/commissioner planning session on Wednesday afternoon, which is the meeting where everyone is briefed in preparation for the public meeting the next morning. While the ladies would not be allowed to speak during the meeting, it would give them an opportunity to listen and potentially discuss these concerns with the commissioners before hand.

Lynn had also called Beverly Sutton, the secretary of the commissioners and plugged me in for a seven-minute presentation at the public commission meeting, complete with local reporters, etc. I am sure it helped with Lynn being able to say, "the FCF Regional Director will be speaking at the meeting to present our position." It gives the FCF key resources to bring into play on issues.

On Tuesday, Lynn received a call from David Goad, the deputy director of the Arkansas G&F, and also the person that Chief Shook reports to—Doyle Shook's boss, if you will. Mr. Goad wanted to personally inform Lynn that he had read her letter concerning her opposition to the need for the proposed regulation change that would prohibit any new big cat facilities in Arkansas, and he said it is now officially dropped!

As the field representative for the area that covers Arkansas, G&F Breeder/Dealer, and USDA licensed resident as well, I sent a follow-up letter to Mr. Goad and all the G&F Commissioners thanking them for dropping the proposed ban.

Analysis:

- Request written notice of pending regulation changes to stay informed.
- Meet with official decision makers early, before the public comment period if possi-

ble. By the time a G&F Commission has voted, they have pretty much made up their minds.

- Ask for face-to-face meetings where possible.
- Write letters to key decision-makers.
- Present a combined front with key members of the FCF taking action. The power of an organization to bring different players onto the scene as needed provides leverage from both a positional and tactical view.
- Be persistent.

Thank you Regional Directors. I am proud to be part of this organization. Please congratulate Lynn Culver on her persistence on this issue. And also, we as regional directors should be proud of the efforts we have started with the Regional Field Representative program. Our organized efforts are making a difference! •

Regional Directors Need FCF Volunteers for State Representatives

Help us to formulate the best plans in representing the FCF and you! Volunteer for State Representative and help FCF keep us all informed of new legislation and regulation developments at the state, county and local levels! All states need representatives, even states presently closed to captive ownership.

The Field Representative Program is a team effort. Be a part of this team! Ownership of exotics is not necessary, however, interest in preservation and conservation for the cats is!

The Regional Directors have begun soliciting and recommending members for state representative. If this is something you wish to get involved with, contact your Field Representative. Check on the inside front cover of this journal for your Regional Director's contact information. •

Captive Wildlife Safety Act starts September 17, 2007 What does this mean?

By Lynn Culver

The Captive Wildlife Safety Act prohibits any interstate transport of the seven large cat species and hybrids thereof, except by certain exempted entities, i.e., USDA licensed facilities, vets, rehabbers, and sanctuaries that are non-profit, non-breeding, and non-touching.

When the act was first proposed, FCF worked diligently to determine if the word “commerce” was describing the exchange of money for the cats, a definition we are used to with the Endangered Species Act and its requirements for Captive Bred Wildlife Permits to sell endangered species. Now we know the answer—transports that do not involve sales are also commerce in this Lacey Act amendment.

The F & W drafted regulations in early 2003 and published them in the Federal Register for comment. As the FCF Legal Affairs Director at that time, I questioned the prohibiting of private owners wishing to make interstate household moves to transport their large cat to their new property, noting that using an exempted entity to move cats should satisfy the letter of the law, and not violate the congressional intent of the law. FCF comments submitted created a need for F & W clarification on this matter.

An excerpt of the official FCF comments sent March 1, 2003 is reprinted below:

...the F & W Service draft regulations did not specifically state that utilizing the services of an exempted transport agent to make an interstate move of a large carnivore on behalf of a legal carnivore owner is prohibited. Allowing such transport would meet the goals of the legislation by insuring that those engaged in the interstate movement of large carnivores are qualified and licensed by the USDA.

Utilizing an exempted entity to transport personal property is not any of the prohibited activities—it is not ‘acquiring’, or ‘receiving’, or ‘buying’ or ‘selling’, the property does not change hands it is merely ‘transported’ professionally, safely, and by an exempted party, across the public highways, with no resulting change in owner-

ship.

This one act is an entirely unique action, since there is no change of ownership, making it unlike all other listed prohibited activities. That is, it is not a two-step process at all—there is not a change in ownership followed by an interstate transport, there is only an interstate transport.

Therefore the FCF will interpret this omission of clarification by the F & W Service in the draft regulations as an admission through omission, that an owner may utilize the services of an exempted professional and this transporting falls within the CWSA and as such is a legal action and so the FCF will advise private individual owners desiring to move their residence and their already possessed personal animals to another state that they must acquire the services of a professional exempted entity to transport their large feline carnivore.

The final rules were published in the August 16, 2007 Federal Register. Again F & W didn’t specifically address whether a pet owner may use the services of an exempted entity to make their move. F & W only states that a pet large cat owner may not do the transporting of their pet across state lines as part of a household move or for any veterinary needs. I am curious if F & W will actually try to prosecute before a federal judge a household move of a prohibited large cat when the congressional intent of this law was clearly to try to put restrictions on sales for pets.

One approach to an owner’s desire not to abandon their commitment to the lifetime care of their large cat when facing an interstate household move would be for the owner to donate the cat to a trusted USDA facility in another state. Once the paperwork is official, they may now transport the feline under exemption D stated in the CWSA amendment to the Lacey Act.

(D) has custody of the animal solely for the purpose of expeditiously transporting the animal to a person described in this paragraph with respect to the species. Translation—everyone in the world is exempted from the prohibitions against

interstate transport when they drive a large cat across state lines to a USDA facility, a vet, a rehabber, or an exempted sanctuary.

Once the ownership of a prohibited cat is safely and legally transferred to a USDA licensed facility in another state, you may now legally drive the cat to the exempted entity, even crossing state lines, then you may continue about the business of your own household move and finish construction of your large cat enclosure and then apply for any state permits required. When you are state permitted and ready, you may purchase back your large cat from the broker or exhibitor you donated the cat to.

I have just advised you to follow the letter of the law to obtain the desired results of keeping your large cat when you move from one state to another. Have I just advised you to circumvent the congressional intent of the law? I don’t think so, nowhere in the background information supplied to Congress by the animal rights industry are any statistics or compelling arguments to stop large cat owners from keeping their cats when moving from one state to another. Indeed, this is just an unintended effect of this far-reaching federal answer to a largely overblown problem that has been solving itself on a state-by-state basis for years.

In another situation, such as the non-exempted person wishing to acquire a prohibited large cat species, passage of the CWSA means they may only purchase in-state. If no in-state sources exist, USDA licensed brokers will probably find themselves doing more brokering business. For instance, would it be illegal for a USDA licensed broker in the state of Florida, which permits personal possession of cougars for pets, to buy a cougar litter from a breeder in another state, import them into Florida and resell the cubs to state residents? Has any law been violated? I don’t think so. Has the intent of the law been circumvented? Maybe, but a broker is specifically licensed to do just that, buy from one person and sell to another. The law does not prohibit brokers from brokering. I do strongly advise that any would-be big cat

pet owners contact in-state brokers only, and stay completely out of any communications to arrange any interstate brokered deals, otherwise the federal prosecutors may decide you are conspiring to circumvent the law.

So what really happened here with the passage of the CWSA? The auction sales and Internet advertising of baby large cats to the innocent ignorant, is now a Lacey Act violation. Great, but how much of that was really going on? How come I cannot find any unscrupulous tiger farmers that sell \$300 baby tigers to the average Joe on the street? The cat community is really a small world, and that makes me believe this myth was an urban legend perpetuated through countless media quotes.

Very few owners may someday flee a closing state with their pet tiger or cougar because most big cats are already in USDA and sanctuary facilities that are exempted. But to the person in this situation, it is a grave problem indeed.

What is the punishment for getting caught violating the F & W and not giving away your large feline when you need to move to another state? Right now, maybe nothing, since the F & W will have difficulty prosecuting anyone. The CWSA as writ-

ten is still flawed, and the prohibitions are written into the criminal code section of the act that requires that the violator know the animal was illegal when it is transported, a two-step process. The only violation in the CWSA is the single act of transporting a legally owned animal, so you cannot be found guilty.

This is where the technical amendment comes in along with its addition of primates to the list of prohibited wildlife. If SB 1498, the Captive Primate Act passes, then this violation is moved to another section for punishment. If Congress passes the CPA and you knowingly violation section (e) of the title:

You may be assessed a civil penalty by the Secretary of not more than \$10,000 for each such violation: Provided, That when the violation involves fish or wildlife or plants with a market value of less than \$350, and involves only the transportation, acquisition, or receipt of fish or wildlife or plants taken or possessed in violation of any law, treaty, or regulation of the United States, any Indian tribal law, any foreign law, or any law or regulation of any State, the penalty assessed shall not exceed the maximum provided for violation of said law, treaty, or regulation, or \$10,000,

whichever is less.

If the value of the animal is more than \$350, then you may also be jailed for up to a year. And under the forfeiture section it appears that anyone violating the Lacey Act also runs the risk of government imposed forfeiture of the feline and even the vehicle used to transport the feline. •

...

Establishing the Bounds of Oregon's Fish & Wildlife's Authority

As an outcome of last session's legislative hearings, there will be a hearing for establishing the bounds of Fish & Wildlife's authority. In reaction to an Oregon Supreme Court ruling which limited Fish & Wildlife's authority to native animals, the legislature passed SB 804, making the State of Oregon the "owner" of all fish, fowl, and mammals, to be managed under the department of Fish & Wildlife. And yes, that definition is so broad it technically even includes humans. The purpose of the meeting is to gather input on how to narrow this down. The Fish & Wildlife hearings which established their previous boundaries were closed to animal owners in the private sector, but included representatives from the Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, the AZA, and other individuals who definitely did not share our interests. The private owners at the time needed to obtain a lawyer and place a legal challenge, in order to gain admittance. After gaining admittance their input was ignored by the committee.

With this as a background, a few of us from the private sector who participated in the legislative hearings requested to be a part of this new Fish & Wildlife hearing. With this mandated by the legislature, Fish & Wildlife has invited myself and two other individuals to represent private owners. The hearings will occur on August 28 and 29. If it is anything like the previous Fish & Wildlife hearings, things should be interesting.

—John Turner

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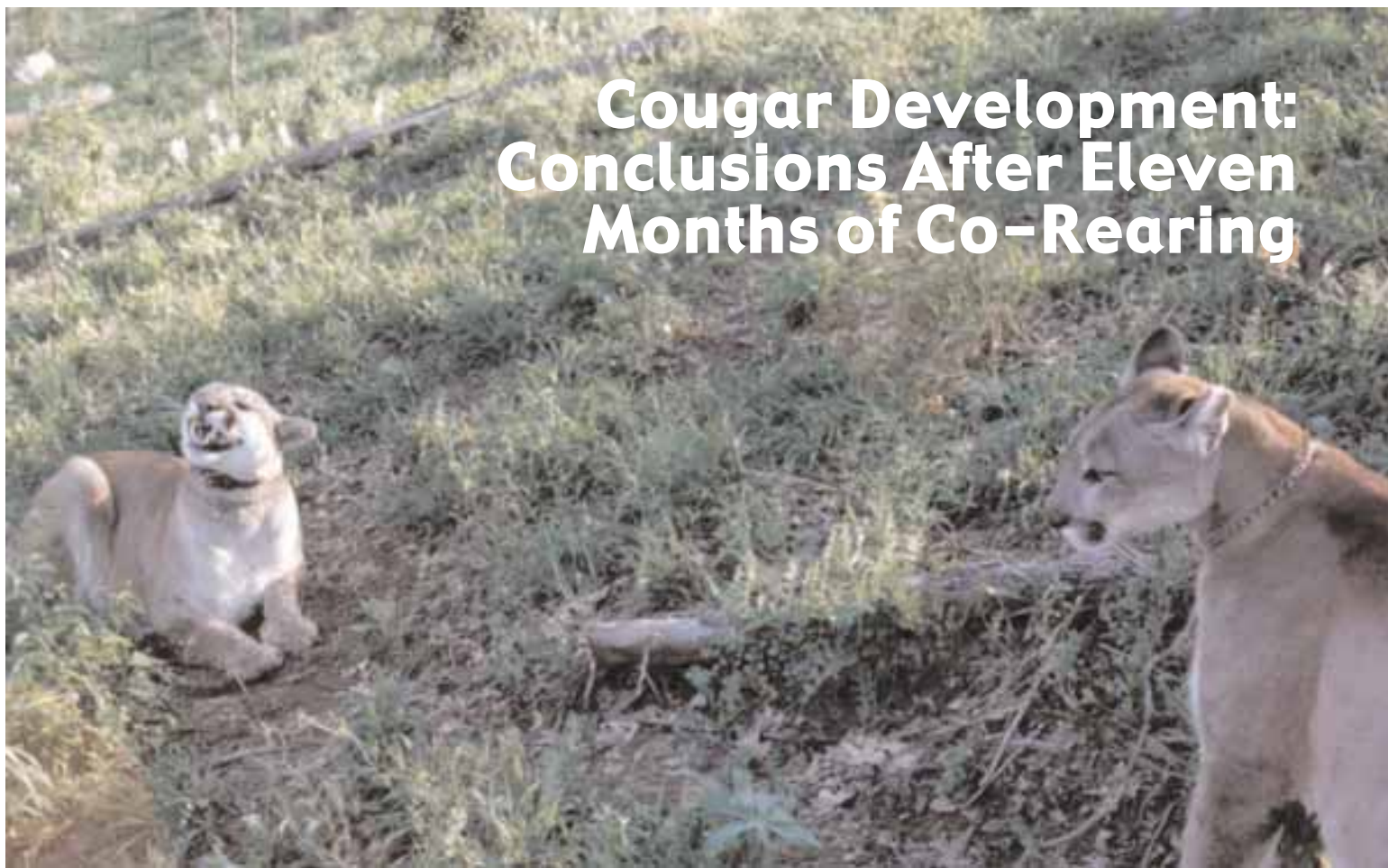
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Cougar Development: Conclusions After Eleven Months of Co-Rearing



Excerpts from the journal logs—May 5, 1989 to June 21, 1989.

Friday, May 5, 1989

I have been suspecting that Tara was getting ready to enter another estrus phase. For instance, about a week ago I was pulling ticks off her butt and she immediately got into the lordosis position. Then on Wednesday night I visited Mercury and Tara. Mercury was friendly but he did not want to love on me, which is also another indication of Tara being in estrus. Mercury and I were visiting inside of his house. He was lying beside me and purring. Tara entered the house and Mercury started licking her on the neck very affectionately and she was purring. He continued to the point that she actually let out a little sexy growl. I was trapped inside their house as they were blocking the entrance with their heads. I waited, being kind of scared to move, and then I got up my courage and said, "Excuse me" a few times and then I just barged through their grooming activities to exit their house and nobody bit me or anything.

On Thursday I heard Tara screaming twice but Mercury was just licking outside her vagina. He hasn't asked for any of my attention. This morning I heard Tara screaming but it only lasted a minute and I didn't see any mating. I have her locked up now and nobody is complaining.

Friday, May 11, 1989

Tara has been separated from Mercury for a week now. I am extremely surprised at how well Mercury is taking this. He hasn't been complaining to gain access to Tara. Bart is convinced that Tara is putting out a pheromone in the air that is making the male cougars 'high' that is, super sweet and gentle. Mercury will lie beside Tara's nursery and seems to be satisfied just to be near her.

Yesterday Mercury began calling and since I had already fed him, I figured he wanted to go to Cougar Country. Tara vocalized her sexy, gravelly call. It was early evening and I wondered if Mercury might just want to move over to her nursery. I leashed him up and opened the door

and he practically bolted out towards Cougar Country, not missing Tara at all. He and I went for about a forty-five minute walk in the woods. He stalked and pounced me twice, both times good-naturedly. The kids were begging to be let in with Mercury and typically Mercury was ignoring them. Mercury checked out several spots where the kids play including a spot in the dogwood woods where lots of ground cover was smashed flat. The kids must have rolled or tumbled there.

The kids ate a bunch of grass the other day and then threw up on the first level of the Cougar Country tower. In the throw up was a piece of plastic. It must be from one of their toys but I couldn't identify it.

Tara must be getting tired of being locked up but I just don't want to chance anything so I will continue for two or three more days. If I touch near her butt to remove a tick she will immediately go into the lordosis position and began calling. The day before yesterday she didn't eat any of her dinner. Yesterday she ate most of her dinner but I have cut down on the size of

her meal; she just isn't thinking about food. Thursday morning I threw Tara's chicken to Mercury and he ate it.

Cinni, Arjan, and Sharu have been locked out of Cougar Country for two days. I know they want to visit and we will let them in today. On Wednesday I needed them out of Cougar Country. I called and called and finally Cinni showed up. I directed him to the Big Top and stuffed him through the slide gate opening into the cage. Then I walked the entire 2,000 feet of fence line calling for his brothers. I gave up and left Cougar Country and then later returned to try again. Finally Sharu answered me and I found him. He followed me back to the Big Top and I locked him in. Then I backtracked again and found Arjan and got him to follow me also. They really are pretty good about coming when called and leaving Cougar Country when asked.

The kids still want breakfast. I have been trying to wean them off that meal and I did for about a week but they have begun requesting food by noon again. They eat a large chicken each per day, half in the morning and half at night. Mercury eats one

chicken a day and Tara less than one, about half. This is their summertime appetite.

Monday, May 15, 1989

Yesterday I returned from a three-day visit to Texas. Bart took care of the cougars. He decided that Tara was out of heat Sunday because when he stroked her back or around her tail she didn't respond with a lordosis position. She has been locked up since last Friday. Sunday afternoon I heard the cougars mating, only it was different than usual. Tara would begin to scream for about five to ten seconds, and then Mercury would scream and then Tara would growl at him. I walked over to check things out. My presence intimidated Mercury and he dismounted from Tara in front of me.

Later I heard them again. It was the same. The mating was very short, ending with Mercury screaming. I assumed maybe Tara was moving and hurting Mercury's penis or Mercury was thrusting and missing, causing him to bend his penis. But what I saw wasn't like that. Mercury would be very still and so was Tara, but he would interrupt the mating with a scream and then dismount. I think it was a scream of pain and I plan to call a few vets today. I managed to lock Tara back up in the nursery later that afternoon and she is there still.

The kids gave me a super greeting, all running up from Cougar Country to see me in the Big Top. I was wearing shorts but they didn't attack my legs. I think they are getting used to seeing my bare legs. I also went for a walk with them in Cougar Country later in the afternoon. Sharu lay on a pile of wood and I sat near him and picked a few ticks off him. He ate them like Mercury does. He was purring loudly and happy to be near me. That evening I also visited them in the Big Top enclosure and Cinni loved on my hand while Arjan cuddled up to me and purred. Sharu wouldn't come over. He found a piece of meat to eat instead. They were wonderful.

Wednesday, May 31, 1989



Lynn scratches Mercury

Tara has been in heat for almost four weeks. We have been careful to keep Mercury and Tara separated. After she had been in heat for ten days we put them together and they began to mate, so we separated them until it had been 14 days, which is longer than she has ever been in heat. She was no longer assuming the lordosis position if we touched her tail area so we allowed them to be together again. They began to mate so Bart called Tara back into her nursery cage and we separated them for another three days. Then we gave them access to each other at 17 days but they began to mate again, only Mercury would cut off the mating after about five seconds, seeming to scream out in pain. This had happened once before after ten days. So once again we tricked Tara into the nursery cage for three more days. At 22 days we allowed them together again but once again they started to mate, only this time there was no screaming of pain by Mercury and the mating lasted a more normal amount of time. They stayed together overnight before we succeeded in separating them. Yesterday Mercury spent the day in Cougar Country and Tara had the run of the Cougarama hillside exercise area. When Mercury returned back home and we allowed Mercury access



Sharu at boundary of Cougar Country.

to Tara after her 26 days of estrus, once again I heard them mating but they only did it about three or four times. Last night in the dark I walked outside and heard Tara growling at Mercury and avoiding him. They haven't mated this morning so maybe Tara's estrus cycle is finally over.

Wednesday, June 21, 1989

Tara ended her heat on June first. I don't think she is pregnant but I won't know for sure for at least two more weeks when she should either return to estrus or her nipples should start swelling. She has been most affectionate to me, which sort of indicates she is pregnant, but it could also mean that all the hormone and jealousy behavior is behind her.

Tara has visited the kids three times this month. Each time she has wanted to go into the Big Top, but once inside she has been very growly and intolerant of her kid's attention. She has rebuffed their grooming of her and she doesn't even let them lay beside her. Their first reaction to her when

she first enters their Big Top enclosure is to gang up on her and chase her and she is not pleased with this behavior at all.

I feel this change in behavior means that either she is pregnant or that once having returned to estrus she is hormonally controlled to sever ties with her first litter. It is surprising to me because I really thought Tara would always remain friendly to them. After all, she loves Mercury's company and he is a male. The kids don't understand Tara's reaction to them. I feel that Tara's rejection of them has made them more affectionate to us. They realize that we will always love them and if they want loving they will have to please us and seek us.

Sharu is especially purry lately and since Tara has rejected him he wants our love. Cinni is without a doubt the most affectionate cougar in the world. Arjan is a showman. He is the best jumper and game player. Bart has been working with him and he has learned several commands and tricks on the pedestals. He will stand up and jump the entire five pedestals one after another.

He is also very affectionate.

I have visited them numerous nights and received much loving from them. Last night Bart and I both visited them in the full moon light. They ambushed us several times and Bart ended up being bitten on the head by Arjan who jumped him from behind while Bart was disciplining Sharu, who had been biting earlier. Their behavior was very mischievous and out of character. They could definitely be very dangerous full grown if they don't learn more respect. But I understand that this is part of their age and the maturing process. Sharu bit me in the neck, which is definitely a no-no. They bite each other on the neck, often with the victim and the aggressor purring.

It is a love bite but they need to understand that their skin is much tougher than ours.

Mercury has been screaming at night lately and it really is bothersome. I realize that it is a full moon and he is a nocturnal animal but I can't be getting up in the middle of the night to play with him. He has been to Cougar Country several times this past week without Tara, as she was visiting with her kids in their Big Top. Mercury has not been very good about staying in Cougar Country without our company and I have to spend time walking with him to keep him happy. He sleeps most of the day on his tower and he is extremely friendly and purring.

I have been estimating their food needs very well lately and there hasn't been much wasting of food. They are eating entire roosters and hens without leaving the backs and thighs as they have in the past. And they have eaten more horsemeat than usual, as I wanted to clean out the freezer of older meat.

Conclusion after eleven months of co-raising cougars

It is a complete surprise to me that Tara would reject her boys after her estrus. It was a surprise that Tara returned to estrus after only nine and a half months from her delivery of the three boys. In nature it would have been another six to 12 months before she returned to sexual receptivity, but our experiment has still resulted in a much longer interval between estrus cycles than average, so I feel that the kids' presence and interaction with Tara did influence her hormones. Perhaps lately we weren't letting Tara see them enough and so she returned to estrus, but we are busy and sometimes Tara only saw them once a week.

She always got along with her boys before she returned to estrus. They always ganged up on her when Tara first entered their Big Top compound and they always chased her around, the difference is after her estrus she was growling and grumbling at them. Perhaps she now feels threatened by their size and numbers and this is just her way of establishing dominance. When we leash her up to move her, she does walk toward their compound instead of Cougar



Cougar cuddle: Lynn hugging Arjan.

Country so maybe things will even out over time. For now things seem hostile, though Tara stays with them for hours and eventually things settle down.

The kids love us dearly and want to please us. They are comfortable with us though they haven't been trustworthy with strangers. Arjan and Cinni are both terrified of the lawnmower, racing the back fence line the whole time I am mowing. I never remember Mercury or Tara acting like that. Overall they are very domestic cougars. I feel comfortable with them though they do need to mature a little more before they grow up. They can be very dangerous if they choose.

After almost a year of sharing the cubs with Tara I have to say that the idea works and produces well-adjusted cougar personalities. One has to be careful of the mother at times, especially if the cubs show favoritism toward their humans. Tara definitely was dangerous for a few months, attacking me when I wasn't looking and being very untrustworthy. I

still don't trust her but she has been very loving lately and seems to harbor no more aggression toward me. It is hard to share your kids and I completely understand Tara's feelings. She is a very special lady to tolerate all of our interference and dominance of *her* offspring.

Mercury, I am afraid, will never have contact with Cinnabar, Arjan, or Sharu. He still growls at them and avoids their compound when he is in Cougar Country. The kids still call to him but it could be that they just want to be in Cougar Country, not that they want to be with Mercury. It is all right that things ended up this way. Four cougars in one compound are really too many to watch out for. •



Sign of danger: Home-made cougar warning sign outside of enclosure.

Cougar Development DVD

Cougar Development covers a two and a half year period of research and behavior observation.

It is produced and shot by Lynn and Bart Culver at the Natural Order Animal Husbandry (NOAH) Feline Conservation Center.

Shot in 1988 to 1990 with a video camera and now remastered on DVD, the amazing two hour program offers viewers entertainment as well insight into the stages of growth, behavior, and personality development of America's great predator, puma concolor.

This video contains amazing footage that could not have been captured without the close bond of love and trust existing between cougar and researcher. View-

ers of this video watch Tara's natural instincts guide her through her first delivery. Other scenes include Tara and her sons playing in the snow, the adolescent cougars running through their spring-fed watercourse, fantastic jumping demonstrations in a lively game of catfishing, and finally, the adult cougars walking with researchers through Cougar Country.

Cougar Development teaches you about the patience necessary to be a cougar mother, the sibling roughhousing which is a natural part of cougar behavior, the humor, good nature, and the incredible capacity for love that exists in these wondrous creatures. Order a copy today for only \$25.00. Mail check made out to FCF to: Cougar DVD, 7816 County Road 75 W, Shelburn, IN 47879.



FCF General Membership Meeting Minutes

Dallas Convention, July 28, 2007

The general membership meeting was called to order by Brian Werner, vice president.

Lynn Culver, president, announced the resignation of and offered thanks to Bob Turner and J. B. Anderson for their long history of service to the FCF.

The board members that were present were introduced.

Evelyn Shaw gave a brief review of the new Field Representative Program and those field directors that were present where introduced. A call for volunteers to apply for the State Representatives was made.

Lynn Culver reviewed the registered handlers program and the Facility Accreditation Program and asked the membership to support and participate in both. "Doc" Antle, a member of the accreditation committee, spoke on the importance for FCF and its members to apply for accreditation. He gave advice to build structures that are of sufficient strength and will last for the many years of the life of the cat.

Kevin Chambers presented a brief overview of the treasurers report.

Lynn asked the members to become more active and promote new membership. The FCF has produced a full-color glossy brochure available to spread awareness of the organization. The brochures can be requested by members to help recruit new members. They will be sent to field directors and state representatives for distributing to media and legislators when contacting them. Enough have been printed for distribution to FCF exhibitor members for display in their gift shops.

Several members expressed some concern over the possibility of loss of control of the organization from within by intensive membership drives. Lynn asked that everyone try to promote a positive media image by building personal relationships with the local feature reporter and pitch good news stories in your communi-

ty.

Betsy Whitlock told the membership that the board had voted to accept TIBBA (The International Bengal Breeders Association) as an affiliate. FCF will continue to reach out to hybrid breeders and other cat groups to ban together for legislative support.

Evelyn Shaw gave a brief review of the status of Haley's Act, the Primate Safety Act, and how it might affect enforcement of the Captive Wildlife Safety Act.

Brian Werner announced the two new board positions, Director of Marketing and Director of Development. These will replace the two Directors-at-Large positions. He asked the members to consider volunteering to fill those positions.

Lynn Culver announced that the board was looking into another Africa trip raffle and more information would be forthcoming.

Lynn Culver adjourned the meeting.
—Elizabeth W. Whitlock, FCF Secretary

Feline Conservation Federation	
Balance Sheet	
As of July 23, 2007	
	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
First Nat'l Bank & Trust CD's	25,000.00
First Nat'l Bank & Trust Ken Hatfield CD	12,541.87
First Nat'l Bank and Trust Checking	11,846.29
Harris Ebay Checking	52.91
Paypal	1,423.88
Smith Barney Savings	0.92
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 50,865.87
Accounts Receivable	
Accounts Receivable	850.00
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 850.00
Other Current Assets	
Undeposited Funds	405.00
Total Other Current Assets	\$ 405.00
Total Current Assets	\$ 52,120.87
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 52,120.87
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Total Liabilities	
Equity	
Opening Balance Equity	46,260.83
Retained Earnings	106.95
Net Income	5,753.09
Total Equity	\$ 52,120.87
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 52,120.87



Board Meeting Minutes, July 26, 2007, Convention, Dallas Texas

Morning Session:

Meeting was called to order by Brian Werner. Lynn Culver, president, Brian Werner, vice president, Betsy Whitlock, secretary, Kevin Chambers, treasurer, Mindy Stinner, Carol Bohning, Evelyn Shaw, and J.B. Anderson attended the meeting.

Brian presented several topics for the board's consideration and review but requested no vote at this time allowing the board to give additional consideration to items included but not limited to:

- 1) Brian suggested we have the following law firm perform a "Legal Audit." William J. Olson PC AAL, 8180 Greensboro Drive, Suite 1070, McLean, VA 22102-3860. Mr. Olsen is experienced in auditing nonprofit corporations to assure that nothing in the bylaws will conflict with public image and fund raising.
- 2) Concerns for fund raising
- 3) Growth of the organization and income
- 4) Disciplinary processes
- 5) Brian set a goal to have the board review

a set of tentative bylaw changes, comment by September 1, 2007, and deal with them at an October board meeting.

Kevin Chambers, treasurer, moved that the Mission Statement in the new brochure created by Lynn Culver be adopted: "The Feline Conservation Federation, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that conserves wild felines through preservation, education, and research." Evelyn Shaw seconded the motion. 8 yes, motion passes

Kevin Chambers, treasurer, moved that the FCF motto be changed to: "Preserving, Protecting, and Propagating since 1955" Lynn Culver seconded, 7 yes, 1 abstained, motion passes.

Brian Werner proposed that the FCF consider tiered membership. It was further proposed that there be separate funds for rescue, conservation, and education. No action was taken on either proposal.

Mindy Stinner moved that Brian build a sample web site for future use. Lynn Culver seconded the motion. 7 yes, 1 abstained, motion passes. The board asked that Brian

have this sample complete in 90 days.

Brian moved that the board approve a position of executive director be created once funding is in place and that an administrative assistant also be approved subject to funding. Mindy Stinner 2nd the motion, 7 yes, 1 no, motion passes.

Betsy Whitlock moved that the minutes of the Board Meeting from 5/21 to 5/28 be approved, Evelyn Shaw seconded the motion. 8 yes votes, motion passes.

Kevin Chambers presented the treasurers report. He indicated that there is a problem with collecting for advertising and fund raising. He reported that \$2,600 was collected in the fund for speakers and asked that the board consider dispersing the additional funds to the speakers for the convention since their expenses had exceeded the original \$2,000 projected flight costs.

It was suggested that we organize another raffle for a trip to an African destination. Kevin will work on details.

Brian moved that Kevin pursue filing in small claims court to recover the expenses charged by Evers and Company, the accounting firm the board feels is responsible for the botched election vote count. Mindy Stinner seconded the motion. 7 yes, 1 abstain, motion passes.

It was discussed and agreed to extend the eBay store for one year to allow time for it to develop.

Lynn Culver moved that we approve an affiliated membership to TIBBA. Evelyn Shaw seconded the motion. 8 yes, motion passes. It was discussed that the FCF reach out to other hybrid and cat based organization for support in fighting negative legislation initiatives. It was agreed that the Regional Directors should handle this.

Ten minute break to move to the restaurant and continue over lunch.

Evelyn Shaw discussed writing a bill to preemptively strike legislation in various

Feline Conservation Federation



www.felineconservation.org



Once plentiful in nature, the current African lion population is estimated at between 18,000 and 23,000, a 90% decline in the past century.

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The new glossy FCF brochure

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|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
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| ✓ <i>Husbandry</i> | ✓ <i>Management</i> |
| ✓ <i>Identification Guides</i> | ✓ <i>Reference Books</i> |
| ✓ <i>Encyclopedias</i> | ✓ <i>Veterinary Manuals</i> |

Feeding Supplies:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ✓ <i>Feline Nipples</i> | ✓ <i>Marsupial Nipples</i> |
| ✓ <i>Fritz Brand Nurser Kits</i> | ✓ <i>Small Bottles</i> |
| ✓ <i>VPL Nurturall Nurser Kits</i> | ✓ <i>Bottle Brush</i> |
| ✓ <i>Lamb Nipples</i> | ✓ <i>Calf Bottles</i> |

Gift Items:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| ✓ <i>Statues</i> | ✓ <i>Puzzles</i> |
| ✓ <i>Greeting Cards</i> | ✓ <i>Jewelry</i> |
| ✓ <i>BrushArt Ornaments</i> | ✓ <i>Stuffed Animals</i> |
| ✓ <i>Outdoor Signs</i> | ✓ <i>Afghans</i> |

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states. She reviewed the field rep program status and indicated that they are working on contact lists, contact info, and a central email site.

Evelyn Shaw moved that FCF not renew the affiliation with the OAAO. Brian Werner seconded the motion. 6 yes, 1 abstain, 1 no, motion passed.

Carol Bohning reported on the NY husbandry class. She had 19 students and netted \$323.19, less the expense for reprinting books. She had 30 students in the convention husbandry class, and she suggested we advertise the class in various venues. The board discussed the need for additional teachers, consider paying teachers, offering short courses in specific topics like nutrition. Carol said we should organize another Ohio class.

J. B. Anderson reviewed some of the Lotty changes implemented by Bob this year. Brian proposed that the Lotty bylaws be removed from article 12 (12.1) and be placed in a policy and procedure manual. Lynn Culver seconded the motion. 7 yes, 1 abstained, motion passes.

J. B. Anderson discussed writing grant proposals to the Safari International club to obtain additional funding.

Lynn Culver moved that we secure trademark protection for the Feline Conservation Federation. No vote was taken.

Discussion was held regarding promoting the Africa trip with a cutoff date of October 1, 2007 by FCF members. No action was taken.

Lynn proposed a request from Mike Friese that FCF mail out an anonymous cat

inventory survey of the member's animals. The discussion of the board indicated that the majority did not feel it would be of value.

Lynn proposed a request from Mike Friese that FCF offer in the Nov/Dec Journal issue a flyer to members to purchase \$20 gift certificates for a 1-year journal subscription to give to friends, family, and associates (not full membership rights), followed by an invitation to the journal subscribers to join the organization as a full member when the subscription expires. Mindy Stinner seconded the motion. 5 yes, 1 no, 1 abstained, motion passes.

Evelyn Shaw moved to amend the bylaws to eliminate the second Director at Large position and change it to a Director of Development, and that the position should be responsible for soliciting advertisers for the journal, convention, FCF events, and the website. The amended bylaw would read 6.1F "Director at Large (one position)" and add 6.1 G Director of Development. Lynn Culver seconded the motion. 6 yes, 1 no, motion passes.

Evelyn Shaw moved that we amend by law 6.7 Public Relations. That we strike "Solicits display advertising for the FCF magazine and web site" from the Public Relations description add by law 6.9 Development: Solicits display advertising for the FCF Journal, convention, FCF events, and web site. Lynn Culver seconds the motion, 6 yes, 1 nay, motion passes.

Discussion on the location of the 2008 FCF convention was tabled.

J. B. Anderson moved that the board

move to executive session to discuss personnel issues. Brian Werner seconded the motion, 7 yes, motion passes.

J. B. Anderson was concerned over what he referred to as "mode of conduct" by some members. J. B. tendered his resignation as Director at Large.

Kevin Chambers moved we adjourn the meeting, Mindy Stinner seconded the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

—Elizabeth W. Whitlock, FCF Secretary

FCF Board Meeting Minutes Evening Session

Meeting called to order by Lynn Culver to discuss the new opening on the board caused by the resignation of J. B. Anderson. Lynn Culver President, Brian Werner Vice President, Betsy Whitlock, Secretary, Kevin Chambers, Treasurer, Evelyn Shaw, Carol Bohning, and Mindy Stinner attended the meeting.

Evelyn Shaw moved that in bylaw 6.1 F Director at Large be stricken and that a new positions Director of Marketing replace and that the position be defined at a later meeting of the Board. Kevin Chambers seconded the motion, 7 yes, motion passes

Evelyn Shaw suggested that Bob and J. B. be thanked for their past services and that the board tries to dispel rumors from the membership.

There was discussion on what should be on the agenda for the general membership meeting.

Lynn Culver adjourned the meeting.
—Elizabeth W. Whitlock, FCF Secretary

SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman



FOCUS ON NATURE® *Insight into the lives of animals* ASIAN GOLDEN CAT



Predatory eyes secretly watch the movement of a muntjac as it nervously forages on moonlit vegetation. Calculating the best approach, the hungry ASIAN GOLDEN CAT (*catopuma temmincki*) sinuously moves through the thick brush to within several yards of her intended prey. Moments later the successful cat rests alongside her new meal which will be brought back to her three kittens safely hidden within the cavity of a tree. They're almost six months old and ready to be weaned. A proud and protective parent, this female has been teaching them how to hunt smaller prey such as rodents, reptiles, and small birds, which seem like appetizers to the adult cat. Some day when the kittens are much bigger and their confidence runs high, they will learn to hunt more challenging animals such as water buffalo calves.

Living with people definitely requires the skill of evasion but the good thing is

that they usually come with tasty poultry, goats, and sheep. The Asian golden cat knows that hunting their livestock only instigates retribution but as forest habitat slowly (sometimes quickly) disappears, the cat feels it doesn't have much of a choice. Because this wildcat is an opportunistic feeder eating whatever it can catch on the ground or in the trees, it may have a better chance of survival despite continuous persecution.

This uniformly-colored (reddish to golden brown to grayish brown), 19 to 33-pound wildcat usually lives in tropical and subtropical rainforests and dry deciduous forests up to 10,000 feet. It also inhabits more open, rocky, and grassy areas. Scattered populations reside in Nepal, northeast India, China, and through Southeast Asia to Sumatra.

Named after the Dutch naturalist, Coenraad Jacob Temminck, the behavior and

ecology of the Asian golden cat is still largely unknown due to lack of study. However, attempts to improve captive-breeding techniques for this wildcat continue.

Even in the 21st century little is known about the small wildcats, weighing less than 45 pounds and comprising three-quarters of the world's 36 cat species. However, as the public's understanding and interest blossom, starting with a visit to the local zoo, conservation programs there along with organizations such as the Small Cat Conservation Alliance can garner support needed to study these elusive cats. Ultimately, conservation through understanding benefits all.

© 2007 Rochelle Mason. Rochelle Mason raises awareness about endangered species through her paintings, columns and traveling exhibits. Her wildcat paintings and prints are sold through www.Rmasonfinearts.com



Your best Shot

From top:

Fred Boyajian kisses his Romeo, the Hardison's Siberian lynx—Phil Parker • Christy, Julia, and Jesika (L-R) socialize Teresa Shaffer's baby servals—Mike Frieze





Cheetah chasing lure at Cheetah Outreach, an educational facility in South Africa. Photo by Thierry Plaud. Nikon D200, Nikon 200-400 VR lens.

FCF Upcoming Events

Saturday, October 20, 2007, Husbandry Course. 8:00am-5:00pm. Columbus, Ohio. (Airport CMH) Butternut Farms Wildcat Sanctuary is hosting the next FCF Basic Wild Feline Husbandry Course. This 8-hour course is a must for the responsible private owner. Topics include regulations, nutrition, caging, contingency plans, natural history, and more. Registration flyer inside. On Sunday students may tour Butternut Farms Wildcat Sanctuary, home of bobcat, Siberian lynx, cougar, and serval. Send \$65 registration fee (\$95 non-FCF members) to: Butternut Farms, 13740 Blamer Road, Jamestown, OH 43031. Questions? Call Carol Bohning 614-562-5647.

January 18-27, 2008, Safari. FCF's own 7-night safari to South Africa. Fly from Dulles to Johannesburg. Experience 4 nights at Savannah Cheetah Foundation in the company of tame cheetahs. Enjoy guided game rides and walks, canoe the Vaal River, or relax by the pool. Next, take a short flight to Sabi Sabi private game reserve in Kruger National Park for 3 nights stay at Little Bush Lodge where you will take escorted game drives to see the big five (lions, leopard, giraffe, rhino and buffalo.) Book by October 1, 25% deposit required, \$5,900 total per person, double occupancy. All transportation, lodging, meals, and taxes included. Questions? Call Gail Laviola at 479-394-2237.

