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Get Your Tickets Now for the 2006 Fur Ball

Have FUN and win fabulous auction and raffle prizes while helping protect the big cats at the 7th annual “Fur Ball”. The fund-raising dinner and auction event will be held on Friday October 13th, 2006 at A La Carte and will be hosted by Chadd & Kristi Thomas from the Magic Morning Show on The New Magic 94-9!

Proceeds from the ball will go toward our Wall Fund. As development closes in around the sanctuary, it is increasingly critical that we have a high impenetrable wall to protect the cats from intruders. Thank you for helping us protect the cats!

This event has sold out in the past - Purchase your tickets NOW!

INDIVIDUAL TICKETS $150

TABLE FOR 10 $1500.00

Includes preferred table placement near the stage, Table Sign with Company or Host Name, recognition as a Table Sponsor in the Program, on our Web site, on the large event Sponsor Sign, and in the Big Cat Times quarterly newsletter. In addition, each guest receives a hardcover copy of Mary Hessler Key’s thought provoking book “What Animals Teach Us” and a free pass to Big Cat Rescue.

Tickets can be purchased:
online at www.bigcatrescue.org/2006furball.htm
by phone - call Sharon at 813-426-5948
by sending a check to Big Cat Rescue
PO Box 340189, Tampa, FL 33694-0189

-Please include full contact information, guest names, and indicate if you prefer the vegetarian meal.

For questions or more info email info@BigCatRescue.org

Photographs by Jamie Veronica
Your Invited to Party With The Big Cats at the Fur Ball on October 13th

SAFARI COSTUME FORMAL

We call the unique Fur Ball attire, Safari Costume Formal. Get dressy in traditional formal attire, outfit yourself in full blown safari gear, mix and match animal or jungle print with costume, or any mix in between, such as part formal with cat print accessorizing. Be creative and have fun with it! The key here is to let your wild side shine through, because the Fur Ball is all about ferocious fun! Prizes will be awarded! Use your imagination and go wild! For examples from the past visit www.bigcatrescue.org/2004FurBallPhotos.htm.

PSYCHIC READINGS

Clang a psychic entertainer will be offering tarot and palm readings for those who want a peek at what their future has in store...who says curiosity killed the cat! These readings are positive and uplifting, So don't be a scardy cat!

CASINO GAMBLING

Can you get lucky on Friday the 13th? The primary activity at this year's Fur Ball will be over 50 Casino Tables provided by DanMar Productions, including Blackjack, Roulette, Texas Holdem, Craps and Slots. Not sure how to play? No worries! The dealers and attendants will be happy to coach you! At the end of the night, cash in your chips for raffle tickets to win fantastic prizes like a week in a mountain resort or a week driving a $95,000 Mercedes SL Sports car!

BEAT TO YOUR OWN DRUM

Go tribal as Jana Broder returns, back by popular demand, with her wild drumming circle. Sit down behind a djembe drum and follow the beat. You will be amazed at how easy, how mellowing, and how much fun it is! Everyone who tries it raves about it.

SINK YOUR TEETH INTO A BEASTLY FEAST

A La Carte chefs will tantalize the taste buds with a gourmet dinner fit for a king. Choose between a mouth-watering fish entree or go for a vegetarian fare. And for the sweet tooth, Heavenly Fountains is generously providing three decadent Chocolate and Ghiradelli Caramel Fountains & free Papio Wines all evening.

GET FRISKY ON THE DANCE FLOOR

WOW! The Wholly Cats really know how to get things swinging! Strut your stuff to the groovy sounds
BIG CAT BARGAIN SALE

A new take on an old idea. In place of a silent auction this year, all donated items will be sold for a predetermined price. Gift Certificates, artwork, home decor, gift baskets, event tickets and more will be sold for a great bargain. This is a great way to support the cats while saving on meals, gift shopping, or other items you want or need. Instead of the famous 'Filene's Basement' in Boston, we are creating the 'Feline's Basement' here in Tampa. Be sure to come early to have first dibs at the bargain items you most want!

WIN THESE & MORE LIVE AUCTION & RAFFLE ITEMS

AFRICAN PHOTO SAFARI
An awesome adventure that leads to Nairobi. This once-in-a-lifetime photo safari is nine days / eight nights from your date of departure and includes roundtrip airfare, six days / five nights accommodations in Africa, six game excursions, and all meals.

THE BEST OF ITALY
Seven day/six night tour of Italy including Venice, Florence, and Rome. Airfare, deluxe accommodations, train transportation, excursion to the Island of Murano, midnight gondola ride and breakfast included.

ARGENTINA ADVENTURE
Escape to the most exotic vacation spot in the Western Hemisphere for a week. Marvel at the extraordinary Iguazu Falls surrounded by lush tropical rainforest. Airfare for two included.

TAME A JAGUAR
Spend 30 days in a sleek Jaguar S-Type donated by Jaguar of Tampa. Jaguar of Tampa has been a major supporter of Big Cat Rescue since 2003, when they generously sponsored the rescue of 2 Jaguars. www.JaguarOfTampa.com

LEWA WILDLIFE CONSERVANCY
Several Big Cat Rescuers have visited Lewa and return year after year. Now you too can have the chance to visit this unique safari camp. Enjoy full accommodations and game drives for four days for two people. Airfare not included.

FLY A C-130 HERCULES SIMULATOR
You and one companion will spend 60 minutes in a high tech flight training device. Under the guidance of an expert pilot, you can take off, fly and land this four engine turboprop military transport aircraft. This simulator is being used every day to train U.S. and international military air crews.
Keeper Log: The Battle with Mosquito Season

The daily thunderstorms we experience each afternoon are a normal part of a Florida summer. They are essential for the lush tropical vegetation that thrives here, but unfortunately also give life to another local resident, the mosquito!

The staff and volunteers at Big Cat Rescue take all the normal measures to discourage the blood thirsty pests by maintaining a grueling mowing/landscaping schedule, by eliminating any standing water in man-made containers and by keeping all of the drainage ditches clear, but there still seem to be clouds of mosquitoes. The little monsters seem to be everywhere and not just at night. Since most of the sanctuary is shaded they are free to seek victims all day as well.

Using chemical sprays would be too toxic for the animals (and the volunteers!), therefore, Big Cat Rescue has employed a rather special kind of trapper to lure the annoying buzzers to their unsuspected death. This terminator of blood sucking bugs is known as a mosquito magnet. It is about the size and shape of a barbeque grill and also runs on propane. It “exhales” warm CO2 just like a human and has a vacuum tube to suck the attracted insects into a mesh trap. They are incredible machines and have made a huge difference in the most infested areas of the sanctuary. There are currently six operating mosquito magnets onsite, which have an individual range of up to one acre.

The machine near Shaquille and Nyla the Leopards and Sultan the Ocelot has improved the quality of life for these allergy-prone cats immensely. During the hot and humid summer months, cats can develop “hot spots”, which are irritated patches of skin caused by insect bites and allergies. All of the cats at Big Cat Rescue are treated monthly with Advantage or Frontline to prevent fleas and some of the more vulnerable cats are actually sprayed with Avon’s Skin So Soft to repel mosquitoes. The mosquito magnets have become another staple in the regimen of keeping the animals bug free.

The sanctuary could use about ten more mosquito magnets, which cost $350 each to purchase. Donations of new unopened bottles of Skin So Soft are also greatly appreciated. If you would like to purchase a mosquito magnet or help cover the cost of propane, Advantage or Frontline, please direct any donations to “Mosquito Magnet” on your donor envelope.

Keeper Log: Sugar Recovers and is Reunited with Shadow

Sugar the Cougar would like to say thank you to everyone who wished her a speedy recovery during her recent illness. She became sick from a serious bacterial infection and had to spend about a month in the West Boensch Cat Hospital at BCR. The staff is happy to report that she had a friendly reunion with her companion Shadow, who was lonely without her company during their separation. Sugar and Shadow are western Cougars, also called Mountain Lions, and are two of the largest cougars at Big Cat Rescue. Cougars are the largest felines that can purr and are classified as the largest of the “Lesser Cats”. Big Cat Rescue does not breed animals, so Shadow has been neutered to prevent any more Cougars born to spend their life in a cage.

Keeper Log: A Sad Farewell

Sadly, Samantha the Ocelot had to be euthanized recently after a long battle with renal failure. As is often the case with felines in captivity, Samantha far exceeded her natural life span and at twenty one years of age, her kidneys simply could not keep up. She was a familiar face at the sanctuary to volunteers and visitors alike, and was one of the first Ocelots to call Big Cat Rescue home. She was a special favorite of Operations Manager Scott Lope and was the first cat he bonded with as a Trainee level Volunteer over eight years ago. Lope hopes that Samantha is at peace and is reunited with Oakey the Ocelot, her long time companion, who passed away a few years ago. As with many of the animals at the sanctuary, Samantha was a former pet who became “too dangerous” as she hit maturity. She was much loved and will be greatly missed.

Keeper Log: A Sad Farewell

GIVE THE GIFT OF MEMBERSHIP!

Join Big Cat Rescue’s Membership Program today and start enjoying your exclusive Membership benefits. Invites to all Big Cat Rescue events, 10% off your Trading Post purchases, Tour Passes, Photos, special discounts and offers at several Florida attractions, including MOSI, and more are all part of the welcome package that you will receive. The Membership kit also makes a great gift.

Each kit includes an 8x10 color photo, personalized address labels, membership welcome newsletter, and the following gifts:

- Animal Lover $30 - 1 Tour Pass
- Forest Friend $50 - 2 Tour Passes
- WildLife Protector $150 - 6 Tour Passes & BCR Tee
- Habitat Defender $500 - 10 Tour Passes, Tee, & Night Tour

Order your kit using the order form on page 8. For details on the Membership levels below request information using the order form, call (813) 920-4130 or visit BigCatRescue.org

Clockwise from top left: Adonis, male Black Leopard, Samantha, female Ocelot, Sarabi, female Lioness, Sugar and Shadow female and male Cougars

Photos by Jamie Veronica
Rescued Cougar Cubs

It’s hard for BCR’s Operational Manager, Scott Lope to believe that it has been almost a year since he received a phone call from a wildlife rehabilitator in Idaho. Mady Rothchild told him of a tragic story about a female Cougar who was killed by a hunter and her three tiny orphaned cubs. Her request to Big Cat Rescue was simple, she wanted the sanctuary to provide a home for these babies. She knew that BCR did not breed animals and that staff and volunteers would do their best to keep them together even into adulthood.

As many of you know, BCR was able to provide a home for these orphans thanks to Southwest Airlines and generous support from its donors.

As their first birthday approaches, Lope gives a first hand account of their progress so far.

The female cub named Artemis was only three pounds and the males, Orion and Ares, were only four pounds when they first arrived at BCR. Artemis is now 70 pounds, Orion 78 pounds, and Ares a whopping 80 pounds.

The cubs are now eating about four pounds of food each day consisting of beef, chicken, and a commercially prepared carnivore diet containing lots of vitamins and calcium for their rapidly growing bones and teeth!

The cubs have all learned to climb trees and can be found peering out from the top branches any time a lawn mower goes by...

They are incredible swimmers and divers, especially Artemis, who seems to be more Otter than Mountain Lion when she chases the goldfish around in her pond. All three love the water and every night as they rush over for their dinner they are soaking wet.

They all still get along very well and have very distinct and different personalities. Ares is the most reserved, the strong silent type. Artemis is still known as “Baby” and she remains a spoiled rotten “Daddy’s Girl”! She is easily the most mischievous of the group and always the instigator. Orion is the most outgoing, first to chirp a “hello” to friends and visitors. Orion is also the class clown, always goofing around, except at feeding time when he spits and growls at his puzzled siblings if they get too close to his dinner.

All three have been spayed and neutered and seem to be in great health.

Their permanent home should be completed in time for a wonderful birthday move in. We are still hoping to bring in their original rescuer, Mady, to join us for the big event. The enclosure covers about two and a half acres and has a huge common area containing massive vertical and horizontal climbing logs and of course a brand new swimming pond. The Cat-a-tat is large enough for the three to run at top speed and has separate den areas for each cub, if they want a little “alone time”.

“To watch these Cougars grow and thrive is very bitter sweet for me. Their story has touched many lives and really opened a lot of eyes about hunting and habitat loss. Even though I know that these cubs receive the best of care and are very much loved, I know in my heart that they deserve more; they deserve to be free” Lope says.

The Big Cat Trading Post presents - Logo Gift Items

Order these gift items using the order form on page 8. S & H within the United States as well as tax has already been included in the price. Remember the proceeds go to help care for the felines at Big Cat Rescue.

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More Logo Merchandise

Top: Orion lounges atop a large oak log
Above: Ares and Artemis splash in their pond
Photos by: Justin Boorstein
White Tiger Wins

13 years ago when Windsong the Bobcat first came into my life, the world of exotic animals was a far different place. White tigers were selling for as much as $60,000.00 and some people were so allured by the thought of easy money that they were buying and breeding tigers who were said to carry the “white gene” with no thought to what would become of the others. There were virtually no laws that prohibited keeping tigers as pets (because who ever thought we would need a law for something that bizarre) and the discarded golden tigers were being given away as pets to anyone who would cart them off. Zoos were finding that their sagging business could be lifted by displaying white tigers and even though they surely knew the genetics behind the creation of the “white gene” they put aside ethics in favor of increased attendance.

A couple of circus performers were all the rage in Vegas and no one questioned their claim to be saving the Royal White Bengal Tiger. Anyone with any real genetic background or understanding of tiger conservation programs, knew the claims to be ridiculous for several reasons:

There is no such thing in the wild as a Royal White Bengal Tiger. They can’t exist in the wild because they have no camouflage.

The cats being used to create white tigers were not pure bred tigers of Bengal blood, but rather were cross bred to other subspecies. Anyone who could read a pedigree could see that this severe level of inbreeding would never produce a cat capable of survival in the wild.

The problem was that the paying public was grossly uninformed and those who knew better had jobs to lose if they spoke out against the practice.

We knew that breeders were purposely inbreeding to get the white cats because we had seen so many of the cats who were being bred constantly but who would never be seen by the public. These cats had eyes pointing in all directions, teeth jutting from places teeth should never be, noses on the sides of their faces and club feet. The cubs who looked normal would fetch a price that made the breeding and discarding of the others a lucrative business. We couldn’t prove our case however, until 2001 when Dr. Daniel C. Laughlin, DVM, PhD came across our web site denouncing the practice and offered his assistance in getting the whole story exposed. When Dr. Laughlin completed his research into the accurate genealogy of the white tiger he had well over 250 tigers in his practice alone. With his help we were able to show the entire sequence of events and expose the greed that had fueled the mass illusion that breeding white tigers was something of which to be proud.

To quote from Dr. Ron Tilson, Head of the Tiger Species Survival Plan, “The white tiger controversy among zoos is a small part ethics and a large part economics. The tiger Species Survival Plan has condemned breeding white tigers because of their mixed ancestry, most have been hybridized with other subspecies and are of unknown lineage, and because they serve no conservation purpose. Owners of white tigers say they are popular exhibit animals and increase zoo attendance and revenues as well. The same rationalization can be applied to the selective propagation of white lions, king cheetahs and other phenotypically aberrant animals.”

“However, there is an unspoken issue that shames the very integrity of zoos, their alleged conservation programs and their message to the visiting public. To produce white tigers or any other phenotypic curiosity, directors of zoos and other facilities must continuously inbreed father to daughter and father to granddaughter and so on. At issue is a contradiction of fundamental genetic principles upon which all Species Survival Plans for endangered species in captivity are based. White tigers are an aberration artificially bred and proliferated by some zoos, private breeders and a few circuses who do so for economic rather than conservation reasons.”

The term “White Tiger,” when typed into Google yields 44,600,000 competing sites, but ours comes up at the top of the first page. Within a couple of years the American Zoological Association could no longer take the heat as people were beginning to question why accredited zoos were purposely inbreeding animals, outside of the recommendation of the Species Survival Plans, and the AZA issued its denouncement of the practice.

La Wanna Jones, the volunteer who creates most of our online games, had been a big fan of zoos until she first visited Big Cat Rescue in 2004 and found out the truth about white tigers. She helped us compile a CD for last year’s Fur Ball called The Truth About White Tigers because she was amazed that someone who spent as much time in zoos as she did would not know the truth. She donated some photos to us of a white tiger with horrific external birth defects that are associated with inbreeding and we had them on our web site. This year a zoo in Boston contacted us for use of the photos and we passed them on to La Wanna. She encouraged them to use her photos on their white tiger display to educate people about how the cat came to be and to encourage the public to not support the continuance of such misery by paying to go see the latest baby white tiger.

This summer La Wanna cut her visit to another major zoo short when she discovered that they had brought in baby white tigers to attract the public. She explained that other zoos were being truthful about the history of the white tiger with signage and how others were refusing to breed more or rent more white tigers. She told the curator and staff that she was disgusted with their lack of compassion for the animals and vowed to not help them with her donated services as long as they used such tactics. The curator contacted her a couple days later and asked La Wanna for more information on how they could create signage to educate the public.

So here we are, 13 years later, and breeders and zoos are giving away white tigers. There is no longer a market for them because the public knows the truth. For the most part, only shameful little traveling acts that use babies for photo booths and then discard them are still breeding or buying white tigers. As we reach the masses about what happens to those cute little cubs when they can’t be used any more we will see another exploitive use vanish into history. Thank you for helping us get this message out. For more details visit: www.BigCatRescue.org/White_Tigers.htm

Left: Zabu, a female White Tiger playing with her “Indestructible Planet Ball”  Photo by LeWanna Jones
Below: Armani, a female African Leopard  Photo by Jamie Veronica

Adopt a Wild Child

All of Big Cat Rescue’s animals are available for sponsorship. Sponsorship fees go directly to the care of all the animals to provide them with food, toys, enrichment, a large natural Cat-a-tat, medical and preventative care, and overall a higher standard of living. The Sponsorship Kit includes an 8x10 glossy photograph of your chosen species, a 4-page color newsletter filled with interesting facts about the habitat, social system, hunting and diet, and colorful photos of your chosen species, a financial breakdown of just how your donation is used, a list of all the animals we have that are the species you chose, with a black and white photo and personal history of each one so that you can choose which one you would like to sponsor and have appear on your personalized Certificate, and most importantly your registration card that when returned will entitle you to personalized address labels and your Sponsor Certificate.

Choose Your Species!
Lion, Tiger, Cougar, Black Leopard, Bobcat, Golden Leopard, Ocelot, Jaguar, Snow Leopard, Canadian Lynx, Siberian Lynx, Serval, White Serval, Caracal, Sand Cat, Fishing Cat, Jungle Cat, Leopard Cat, Geoffroy Cat
Fill out the order form on page 8

Sponsorship Kit $25 Donation!
Pod Cats of the Day

Big Cat Rescue now brings you PodCasts directly from our cats and we are calling them PodCats!

You can subscribe to our PodCats by adding our feed to your PodCatcher with a link available on the BCR website. http://www.bigcatrescue.org/podcast.htm

If you have an iPod you can watch our PodCats in video form, or audio form by going to iTunes and following these simple steps.
1. Open iTunes with your iPod connected
2. Click Advanced on the top navigation
3. Select Subscribe to Podcast
4. Copy and paste the URL in the browser bar that you see when you click on the XML link on our PodCats page.

You’re done! Now every time we post a new PodCats you will automatically get it when you sync up your iPod. It couldn’t be easier.

We have text podcasts, audio podcasts and video podcasts being updated all the time and there are lots of players on the market. I only listed iPod because it is most popular. Check our blog pages too as those are updated several times a day at BigCatRescue.org/Blog

You can watch the PodCats as many times as you want and share them with your friends.

Camera Trapping Project

Here are the latest from our camera traps at JB Starkey’s Flatwoods Adventure Park. No Bobcats this time, but a very cute fawn was caught on film with his mother just peeking her head into the frame. Pictured below Interns Sara Allison, Rebecca Simmons, Jon Fuhrman, Rebecca Small and Volunteer Justin Boorstein

The Big Cat Trading Post presents - Big Cat Gift Items

Order these gift items using the order form on page 8. S & H within the United States as well as tax has already been included in the price. Remember the proceeds go to help care for the felines at Big Cat Rescue.

**Big Cat Rescue Mug**
White ceramic mug with wrap around design showcasing photos of the Big Cats including Shere Khan, Cameron, Zabu, Sarabi, Hercules, Sugar & Adonis. BCR logo and web address in black. $13.70 each

**Crazy Cat Lady Action Figure**
Every family & neighborhood has one, this hilarious lady comes with 6 separate cats and she has movable arms and legs. This is a Perfect addition to any true feline lovers collection. The crazy cat lady action figure was also one of BCR’s top selling items this holiday season. $12.63 each

**Tiger Shot Glass**
White ceramic shot glass with wrap around photo of Shere Khan swimming and BCR logo in white. $6.82 each

**Youth Big Cat Tees**
- Toddler Blue w/ Lion, 2T, 3T, 4T $9.63
- Toddler Yellow w/ 3 Cats, 6M, 12M, 18M, $8.56
- Child Blue w/ 3 Tigers or Pink w/ 1 Tiger 2-4, 6-8, 10-12, 14-16 $10.70
- Youth Green Snow Leopard or Rust Tiger Size S, M, L $12.84 each

**Haunting Eyes Tees**
Black w/ Bengal Tiger, w/ BCR logo on sleeve. Adult S, M, L, XL $24.40

**The Big Cat Picture**
60 min. DVD or VHS featuring 19 Species of BCR’s cats. $24.40 each

**Pod Cats of the Day**

Big Cat Rescue now brings you Podcasts directly from our cats and we are calling them PodCats!

You can subscribe to our PodCats by adding our feed to your PodCatcher with a link available on the BCR website. http://www.bigcatrescue.org/podcast.htm

If you have an iPod you can watch our PodCats in video form, or audio form by going to iTunes and following these simple steps.
1. Open iTunes with your iPod connected
2. Click Advanced on the top navigation
3. Select Subscribe to Podcast
4. Copy and paste the URL in the browser bar that you see when you click on the XML link on our PodCats page.

You’re done! Now every time we post a new PodCats you will automatically get it when you sync up your iPod. It couldn’t be easier.

We have text podcasts, audio podcasts and video podcasts being updated all the time and there are lots of players on the market. I only listed iPod because it is the most popular. Check our blog pages too as those are updated several times a day at BigCatRescue.org/Blog

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- If you have an iPod you can watch our PodCats in video form, or audio form by going to iTunes and following these simple steps.
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  2. Click Advanced on the top navigation
  3. Select Subscribe to Podcast
  4. Copy and paste the URL in the browser bar that you see when you click on the XML link on our PodCats page.
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Ban Big Cat Contact and Fatal Attractions

There is a federal bill that would ban contact with big cats. It is important to pass this bill because it would put an end to the practice of breeding baby tigers for photo booth use who are then discarded when they are too big to use. It would also prevent places from using big cats as a draw to get people to come pay and play with them which has resulted in a number of deaths and loss of limbs.

The bill is called Haley’s Act HR 5909 in memory of the 17 year old high school student who was killed by a tiger while posing with the cat for her senior year book photo. You can watch videos of her mother testifying before the Kansas legislature for a similar bill, that became law at the state level, by visiting our page at www.BigCatRescue.org/LawsHaleysAct.htm.

On that same page you can watch others testify as to the loss of their loved ones and why it is so important that we have Federal laws to protect us from those who use these cats to support themselves with no regard for public safety. You can also download the IFAW report called Fatal Attractions that exposes dangerous conditions at 42 USDA big cat facilities.

GR-R-REAT GIFT!

Show your passion for the big cats by wearing an “I SUPPORT BIG CAT RESCUE” wristband.

To order fill out the form below. The Big Cat Rescue Wristbands are $2.68 each, tax included.

VISIT BIG CAT RESCUE

Kids Tour

Big Cat Rescue now offers regularly scheduled, guided, kids tours. This is a complete guided tour where children of all ages, and their parents can get up-close and learn about exotic cats and other animals.
- Tour Time is 9:00 a.m. Saturday
- $12.00 per person (price subject to change)
Children must be accompanied by a parent or adult guardian.

Day Tours

Monday - Friday 9AM & at 3PM
Saturday 9:30, 11:30, & 1:30
Tours are guided and take 1 1/2 - 2 hrs. Admission is $22.00 per person (price subject to change).
Reservations are not required. No children under 10 years of age. Casual attire is recommended.

Ultimate Expedition - A Big Cat Adventure

This is the most exclusive and up close program that we offer. Your all day adventure includes a Tour of the refuge, Big Cat Training observation, Enrichment (making natural toys and food puzzles for the cats), and Feeding (follow along as Keepers feed the big cats and learn about their nutritional needs).

$100.00 per person. Call for reservations.

Wild Eyes At Night Tour

Night Tours are the only way to see the animals come alive at night! As you journey through the 45 acre sanctuary you will be stalked and pounced at from the shadows! No worries though, all the animals will be safely in their enclosures. This is an adventure that’s sure to please! $22.00 per person. Call for reservations.

Photo Safaris

Photo Safaris are one of the most up close and personal tours that we offer. A qualified guide will help you get great pictures of our animals without any fence or wire in the way. You can tour the entire sanctuary and get great pics along the way, or you can spend the entire time photographing your favorite feline. Call for prices and reservations.

Private Parties

Big Cat Rescue also offers -

WILD WEDDINGS

Volunteer & Intern Programs

Gift Certificates are available for all of our programs and make the perfect gift for that person who has everything!
DONORS - MEMBERS - SPONSORS

Donations $1,000-$2,000
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A very special thank you to all of these donors, without generous supporters such as these the great work that Big Cat Rescue does would not be possible.

More than 10 Feet Donors
Eleanor Millan 50’

6 - 10 Feet Donors
John Williams 8’
Maryann Van Bruin 6’

3 - 5 Feet Donors
Beth Ann & Rich Bluder 5’
Claire Moores 5’
Clay R. Smith, Jr. 5’
Connelly’s Auto 3’
Erin Newman 3’

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Jay & J Aalberg
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Charlotte Berman

Many Thanks to Our Wall Project Donors

In 1993 when the sanctuary moved to Easy Street from Carole’s house, it was surrounded by farm land. There was no mall and no expressway. The four foot hog wire fence and later the current chain link fence were all we could afford and all we needed back then. The only likely intruders were cows and pigs.

Now, as development closes in, bringing people to our borders, it has become increasingly important that we build a solid wall that cannot be penetrated or climbed over. This will be an enormously expensive project because our perimeter is almost 7000 linear feet.

Donations of any size are most appreciated. If you are able to donate the cost of one or more feet at $80/foot, your name will appear on a permanent plaque, listed by the number of feet as shown below. If you use the order form in this newsletter, please enter “Wall Project” as the item, and if your donation is one or more feet of wall, you would like the recognition line to read if other than your name as it appears on the form (maximum 50 letters and spaces).

In the process of converting our computer records on the wall donations, we believe there may have been a small loss or corruption of data. If you donated to the wall and are not listed here, or are listed incorrectly, please email finance@bigcatrescue.org or call Sharon at 813-426-5948 so we can correct our records, and please know that the omission or error was not intentional. Thank you for your understanding. And thank you for supporting this critical project!

Above: Sundari, female Asian Leopard, photo by LeWanna Jones
NOTABLE VISITS AND QUOTES

Our featured visitors this issue include an executive from one of our most valued corporate sponsors, a stateswoman who is involved in a race for U.S. Congress that is getting national attention, and Florida State Representative Frank Farkas.

Keith Lawless  The six Tampa area Cox Radio stations have been wonderful supporters of the sanctuary, and particularly of our Fur Ball. So we were delighted when Keith Lawless, who moved into the role of General Manager of three of the stations within the last year, brought his family to visit. In this photo, Snorkel the tiger pretends to be camera shy behind Keith’s wife Jennifer and daughters Samantha and Abigail. The visit was followed up by an adorable note from the two children as well as this email from Keith: “My family and I thought we knew what the Big Cat Rescue was all about. We had no idea it was this expansive. We were amazed at the number and variety of big cats being helped and so impressed with the quality of life and care that was taken for these helpless and beautiful animals. The rescue, rehabilitation, general care, and retirement of these massive beautiful cats is clearly a very exhausting and expensive undertaking. Support of Big Cat Rescue is something we are very proud to be part of!”

Phyllis Busansky  Despite her demanding campaign schedule, candidate for US Congress Phyllis Busansky, shown here with Reno the Asian Leopard, honored us with a visit recently. We appreciated her having made time for the cats and are particularly grateful for her supportive comments afterward: “The cause Big Cat Rescue promotes has always been one I’ve held close to my heart. These creatures are truly beautiful – and the fact that this operation exists in our own backyard speaks volumes about this community’s awareness and regard for all creatures, big and small. The majesty of these animals should inspire us all to do everything we can to protect them. I’ve always enjoyed my visits here, and my family and I look forward to supporting their efforts in the future.”

Frank Farkas  On Thursday, July 6th District 52 (Pinellas County), Florida State Representative, Frank Farkas, visited Big Cat Rescue for the first time. He visited BCR in response to an invitation from one of his constituents and BCR volunteer, Lisa Shaw. As he accompanied Founder, Carole Baskin and Lisa through the sanctuary for more than an hour he was amazed, surprised, fascinated, saddened, inquisitive and more. He showed true concern and interest in what BCR does and has graciously offered to help with legislative wording and pointers for BCR’s efforts in Tallahassee. In a thank you note he said “Carole, thank you for taking the time for my personal tour of Big Cat Rescue. Your passion, compassion and attention to detail are quite evident. You have a new supporter; I hope that I get the chance to champion your cause (and the cats) in the Florida Senate!”

We hope to see Representative Farkas and his family return to Big Cat Rescue in the future!

Representative Farkas was particularly enamored of one of our senior residents, Buffy the Tiger shown here in the photo behind him. Buffy was recently featured locally as one of the oldest animals in the area.

Bucs’ Quarterback Brings Kids and Big Cats Together

The following report by Jonathan Kaminsky appeared in the Tampa Tribune on July 8, 2006

In the midday heat on a recent afternoon, Chris Simms stood admiring a reclining leopard with an unyielding stare. Simms was awaiting the arrival of a dozen youngsters eager to accompany him on a tour of the 45-acre feline sanctuary. It was the first of three trips Simms planned to take with the youngsters from The Children’s Home, a group home for abused youth, over the next month. The outings are Simms’ way of giving back to the community, he said, by combining two of his favorite things: kids and animals. In short order, the children filed out of a large van, and the tour commenced. As the heat poured down, Scott Lope, Big Cat Rescue director of operations and tour guide, led the group from one fenced-in enclosure to the next. The overall feeling toward the cats was one of enthusiasm. Simms spent part of the afternoon snapping feline photos with his cell phone to send to his wife. “She wanted to come,” said the recent father. “But with the baby and all ...” Soon, the tour was complete, the appreciative kids were piled back into their van, and Simms was making plans with Lope for a return visit with his family. What did he think of Big Cat Rescue? “I think I liked it more than the kids did,” he said.

Photo Above: Pharaoh, male White Serval by Jamie Veronica

LIGHTNING STRIKES BIG CAT RESCUE

It is a sure sign that hockey season is just around the corner when Tampa Bay Lightning players and their families start appearing at the sanctuary. Many of the players, like Nolan Pratt, who recently visited Big Cat Rescue are long time supporters of the sanctuary and know many of the animals by name. Thanks again to Nolan Pratt and his family and all of our friends from the Tampa Bay Lightning. Best of luck in the upcoming season...Go Bolts!
We maintain a cemetery at the sanctuary where some of the cats who have passed on are buried and the rest are memorialized. With the help of supporter Bob Argus of Laseresque, Inc. we are embarking on a project to provide a more suitable memorial for the cats. In addition, the program will provide an opportunity for those who love the cats to be permanently recognized for their support of these memories. Each one of the cats who have come to

Big Cats Deserve Better Than a Life of Exploitation

Too many people make their living carting exotic big cats around in tiny transport cages. They call themselves educators. They claim to be exhibiting and breeding these unfortunate animals to save them from extinction and raise public awareness. They often claim non-profit status to avoid paying taxes on the money they make by deceiving the public.

More often than not, the facts of the situation are far from what is represented. On display, the cats are in cramped, barren cages. An observant person can see clearly that they are dejected, and often in substandard physical condition. These so-called “educators” usually will not allow you to see where the animals live when not being exhibited, because if the public were aware of the miserable conditions they would not support these people. Nor will they tell you that every six months when those adorable cubs outgrow their usefulness they are discarded, either by sale to private owners ill prepared to care for these dangerous animals, or they are shot in “canned hunts” or destroyed and sold for parts to the lucrative Asian medicine trade.

There is not one program in existence today that is breeding cats for return to the wild. NO ONE who is operating some road side (non accredited) zoo, pseudo sanctuary or “educational” outfit is participating in the sanctioned Species Survival Plan (SSP) for conservation.

In the state of Florida there are 3,837 people with commercial permits to own dangerous wild animals. Of that number 389 facilities are permitted to own tigers, gorillas and other Class I & Class II dangerous animals, but only 21 are accredited zoos and only 3 are accredited sanctuaries. 0.0002 of FL’s populations owns exotic animals and yet all of us pay the price in safety and damage to the environment when no-longer-novel pets are turned loose.

Florida also has 262 USDA licensed exhibitors with big cats; more than any other state. Florida and Texas top the list for the number of tragic incidents involving big cats according to the International Fund for Animal Welfare. The USDA’s own internal audit shows that they are not effectively enforcing the Animal Welfare Act, especially in the Eastern Region of the U.S. and you can read that report on our site.

As recently as February 2006 tigers and pet cougars have been found wandering loose in neighborhoods where children play. They escaped or were turned loose when no longer wanted by their owners.

This has to stop. We need better laws and regulations that ban the breeding, selling, and exploiting of exotic cats. It is cruel for the cats, and dangerous to the community. Do not support the roadside exhibitors of wild cats, or the businesses that hire these people for commercial purposes. Write your legislators and tell them you want to protect the cats and the public at www.CatLaws.com. Thank you!

Exotic Pet Ownership in FL

Last year the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission opposed the Python Bill which would have restricted the ownership of boa constrictors and other dangerous snakes and reptiles which are now wreaking havoc in Florida as their owners dump them. The bill passed every committee with unanimous support, but never made it onto the calendar for the final committee so it did not become law this year.

The FWCC has proposed their own regulations to control these dangerous reptiles and hopes to fend off any more attempts by the legislature to take matters into their own hands. These proposed rules were heard at 4 locations in Florida and the breeders and dealers were invited for their comments. The public almost never knows about these sessions. Carole Baskin wanted to be sure that the citizens of Florida, who are opposed to the keeping of wild animals in cages, were heard. Here is her report:

I listened for two hours to a room of 60-70 dangerous exotic animal breeders complain about the proposed rules. The FWCC kept insinuating that there are two very powerful animal rights groups in FL who are causing them to have to make the rules tougher or else it is going to become a legislative matter and these breeders may lose their “rights” altogether.

I was the next to the last speaker. I walked up with a huge box and plopped it down on the table with a thud to let everyone in the room hear the impact of the weight. I then explained to the group that at the beginning of the process I had submitted the 100 page draft of what I believe is needed to end the problem in Florida. The box contained 1119 letters in support of that draft verbatim. There was also in the box a petition signed by almost 80% said they would support a ban on the private possession of exotic animals. I made it clear that this is the growing trend because people are learning more about animals and with that awareness is coming a change in perception about how they should be treated.

I told them I was in favor of these animals all being confiscated and killed and I told the crowd that what I had asked for in the draft was that all of the animals stay where they are until they die out but that no more animals be bred or traded.

If this did any good at all it was to let the people in the room know that if they don’t agree to the minimal things being asked by the FWCC they could find themselves owning a lot of exotics they cannot legally unload if they don’t support the FWCC in trying to preserve somethingsome aspect of their lifestyle. The last speaker got up and said that he would never support more regulation, but even he acknowledged that if the breeders wanted to keep breeding and dealing in dangerous exotics they may be wise to allow some of the tracking and animal management requirements that were being proposed by the FWCC.

You can submit your comments no later that 9/05/2006 by email to Captain LindaHarrison@myFWC.com

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Everyone Loves Enrichment at Big Cat Rescue. Enrichment is a form of stimulus given to the cats to encourage natural behaviors. Enrichment items include, treat filled boxes and cardboard tubes, scented paper bags, frozen bloodcicles, large bones, scents and whole prey.

From top left; China Doll, female Tiger, Cheetaro, male Leopard, Moses, male Bobcat, Sylvester, male Cougar, Willow, female Siberian Lynx, Esmerelda, female Serval, Sundari, female Leopard, Ruffy, male Tiger, Precious, female Bobcat, Cameron, male Lion, Kanawha, female Siberian Lynx.