FLORIDA BOBCAT GETS SECOND CHANCE - By Jamie Veronica

The Bobcat Bounded Towards Freedom After Eight Long Months of Rehab

Last fall, in just four weeks, four Florida bobcats found themselves pushed out of their homes by rampant development and in need of rescue.

One by one Will, Ace, Chance, and Kennedy found their way to Big Cat Rescue. Along with our mission to end the exploitation of exotic cats in captivity, BCR has taken an active role in preserving habitat for wild big cats. Providing an active rehabilitation program for Florida’s wild felines goes hand in hand with this goal. Big Cat Rescue has successfully rehabilitated several Florida bobcats and plans to continue with this program not only as a community service, but also because it’s the right thing to do, for these displaced animals.

Two of these bobcats have very special stories. The first is the story of Chance. Chance, a young male bobcat, was captured by office security inside the confines of a tennis court at a nearby business park. He was given the name Chance in honor of the second “chance” he would be given. Chance had suffered some sort of trauma causing a large grapefruit sized swelling on his side, which turned out to be a hernia in his abdominal wall, as well as the loss of his right eye. After several months of rehabilitation, Chance was doing great, he had completely healed from his surgery and had become quite the skilled hunter. To keep Chance in peak condition and to prepare him for release back into the wild, he was fed a diet of live prey which included both rats and rabbits. In Florida the bobcat’s diet consists primarily of the cotton rat. Each month Rehabber and
Florida Bobcat Gets Second Chance continued

BCR President Jamie Veronica drives half an hour away to pick up the sanctua-
ry’s monthly order of frozen whole prey in-
cluding both rats and rabbits. When there are
bobcats being rehabilitated, she com-
es back with several cages filled with natu-
ral colored live rats. More than sixty live rats
were brought to the sanctuary each month and
cared for by BCR interns. Each night Jamie
would feed Chance a live rat. It was
very important that, during his re-
habilitation, Chance would not associate
food with humans. So a unique tunnel
system was utilized for feeding the rats
to Chance. The rat would be placed into
a drop box at the end of a large pvc pipe
thirty feet from the enclosure. This pipe
ran along the ground towards the enclo-
sure and then broke off into two separate
directions that exited into the enclosure.
Each rat was different and would take
anywhere from ten minutes to two hours
to exit the pipes into the enclosure. Since
there were two ways to go, Chance could
not predict which side of his enclosure the
rat would emerge from so he had to be on
high alert at all times, just as he would
need to be once he was on his own in the
wild. Jamie kept a close eye on Chance’s
progress through the use of surveillance
cameras installed in his rehab enclo-
sure. After nearly eight months of reha-
bitation and the arrival of spring, Jamie
knew the time had come to set Chance
free. Rescuers were given permission by
Starkey Park to release Chance on their
2,000 acres of natural Florida habitat.
This location is ideal because it borders
20,000 acres of protected wetlands. This
was also the release site of Faith, a fe-
male Florida bobcat, who was released
by BCR in April of 2005. The afternoon
before Chance’s scheduled release day he
was tranquillized and
put into a special crate
that would transport
him to his new home.
Early the next morn-
ing Chance would be
free once again. Staff
and volunteers gath-
ered at the sanctuary
on Thursday April
24th before sunrise to
witness the event. Ja-
mie Veronica, Operations Manager Scott
Lope, and Senior Keeper and Veterinari-
yan Dr. Liz Wynn loaded Chance into the
Big Cat Van and hit the road followed by
an entourage of Rescuers. Upon arrival
at Starkey Park hearts were
racing in antici-
pation. The morning
was quiet and the
land covered in
a blanket of fog.
Volunteers set
up in position
with cameras
ready at a view-
able but safe
distance from
the release site.
Liz opened the
van door then
Jamie and Scott carried the wooden crate
out into the pasture and placed it gently
on the ground facing the forest. After
quickly checking to see that everyone
was ready, the moment had arrived and
the door was slid open. All eyes focused
on the dark opening of the crate. All
of a sudden Chance burst forth, circled
around behind Jamie and Scott who were
crouched behind the crate, then bounded
towards freedom. He looked quite grace-
ful running and leaping over the tall grass
in what seemed like slow motion. Once
he reached the edge of the woods, he
stopped and turned back to look at Res-
cuers as if to say “thank you” before dis-
appearing into the thick underbrush. Tears welled in the
eyes of many see-
ing Chance get his
deserved second
“chance”. This is
what Big Cat Res-
cuers live for.

While Chance’s
story was every-
thing that Rescu-
ers hope for when
rehabilitating a
wild bobcat, the story of Ace was one of
heart-breaking realization. Ace, an el-
cerly female bobcat, was found by
employees of a nearby office complex
laying on the front steps of
the building. The area in which she
was found was heavily developed
meaning this bobcat must have
been very skilled at both hunting
and concealing herself from
humans to have been able to survive
so many years. She was appropri-
ately given the name Ace as she
was a true pro at being a bobcat.

As procedure, blood was
drawn to test for infectious
diseases. With no outward
injuries, rescuers had high
hopes for her return to the wilds of
Florida. That was until her blood
test results came back with unfa-
rorable news. Ace tested positive
for FIV, Feline Infectious Virus,
which is the equivalent to human
AIDS. At first we had hoped that
it would be possible to release
her into a wild population that is
known to carry the virus. These
hopes were crushed when we re-
alyzed that we could not know-
ingly release an infected cat that could
possibly spread the disease on to the en-
dangered Florida panther. Even though
this was a highly far fetched possibility it
was a possibility none the less. While Res-
cuers struggled with this fact, Ace seems
to have become quite ac-
customed to her new
home at Big Cat Res-
cue. Growing up in
the middle of an over-
ly developed area Ace
is very comfortable
around humans, to a
fault. By using the
surveillance cameras,
once again Jamie was
able to monitor Ace’s day to day activi-
ties and evaluate her behavior and overall
comfort in the confines of her enclosure.
She was surprised to discover how laid
back Ace was. While a more wild bob-
cat may pace or even try to dig out to get
to freedom, Ace was content to lounge
the day away. This was a very pleas-
ing discovery. If it had been determined
that Ace was constantly stressed out and
miserable, euthanasia may have been
the most humane option. Instead she
will have a permanent home at Big Cat
Rescue; however, her new home comes
at a price. Ace will remain in one of the
rehab enclosures and will act as a
teacher to young bobcats that are in
the process of reha-
bitation. These bobcats will be able
to learn how to com-
municate with oth-
ers of their kind and
will even learn how
to hunt by watching
their “trainer” next
door.

ONSITE RESIDENCE GETS MAJOR UPGRADES

Rescuers worked feverishly to remodel Chris’ future residence at BCR. Opera-
rations Manager Scott hauled out carpet, padding, and appliances and loaded
up a trailer to haul things away to the dump. Senior Keeper Dr. Wynn negoti-
ated a better price on tiles from Home Depot, Keeper Joel tore apart the
bathroom to caulk and reinstall toilets as well as correct electrical problems,
Keeper Marie volunteered almost every day and then joined Senior Keeper
Julie to help paint the walls and the subfloor. Keeper Rich worked on the
mechanical issues, Keeper Kym took out and washed every curtain, towel,
or sheet so everything was clean and fresh. Every volunteer on property came
to do a shift of floor staple removal to prep the floors for tile, and the
interns moved all of the furniture and then moved it all back in. In short,
there were so many who have contributed in one way or another towards the
transformation of this trailer. A very special thanks also goes to John Pando
of Pando Flooring, 6826 S. MacDill Avenue, for donating labor valued at $2,170
to install the new flooring. “I’m still amazed it all came together.........and yet
our normal daily jobs of taking care of the animals and getting all the myriad
of other chores done didn’t suffer. Every time you [Founder Carole Baskin]
mention that you’re blessed with such wonderful volunteers, I can’t help but
say, “Amen!” – Julie Hanan
Go Green and Make the World a Better Place for the Big Cats and You - Jamie Veronica

We are very excited that so many organizations as well as individuals are turning “Green”. By now we all know the reasons why this is so important; preserving and restoring the environment, protecting wild habitat, sustainable resources, even saving money. The list goes on and on. So in order to encourage and inspire our readers to join the effort we will be featuring a column in each issue of the Big Cat Times with simple ways that the average person can make a huge impact on the welfare of the planet. In honor of spring time and the green thumbs that come along with it, this article will focus on how we can be “Green” in our own back yards.

Let Your Grass Grow - Spending less time tending to your lawn actually makes it greener -- in every sense of the word. Most grass species fare best when they're kept at least 2 1/2 inches tall. The length creates more surface area to absorb sunlight, which creates thicker turf and deeper roots, which means you won’t need to water as often. Save even more money by letting grass clippings remain on your lawn; it adds nitrogen to the soil and discourages weed seeds from germinating. You’ll need less fertilizer and herbicide. Plus, leaving clippings on lawns means less in landfills.

Facts - In 2005 Americans disposed of more than 12 million tons of yard waste. Only 10% of the 35,000 pesticides introduced since 1945 have been tested for their effects on people.

Create A Compost Pile - It’s easy to do. Find a corner of the yard that’s out of the way. Carefully throw food wastes (leftovers, eggshells, coffee grounds, spoiled vegetables, etc.) into a pile and mix with dirt, straw, or dead leaves. Every week or so, turn the pile over with a shovel to give it more air. In a few weeks, it will turn into a rich, nutritious soil that will help plants grow. What used to be “garbage” is now a valuable substance!

Facts - 84% of a typical household’s waste including food scraps, yard waste, paper, cardboard, cans, and bottles can be recycled.

Grow A Garden - A garden provides flowers, vegetables, and environmental benefits. It can help to reduce soil erosion and help to alleviate the pollution associated with fossil fuels used to transport food. By growing some of your own food you will be reducing the amount of fossil fuel that has been used to transport your food to ZERO, and that’s a great number!

Facts - The typical American meal travels on average 1,500 miles before it gets to the diner’s plate. In order to feed a projected population of 9 billion people, we will need to grow more food over the course of the next 50 years than has been grown over the course of the past 10,000 years combined.

Plant A Tree - Plant a tree in your own backyard or even at Big Cat Rescue! Either way the tree will provide food and shelter for wildlife, reduce sound, produce oxygen, store carbon, clean the air, shade and cool, reduce wind and erosion and increase property values.

Facts - Nurseries provided 1.5 billion trees for planting in the United States last year. This represents over six trees annually propagated for every U.S. citizen. The United States Forest Service reports that nearly 3 million acres were forested with those billion and a half baby seedlings.

COOL CAT CAMP RETURNS FOR ANOTHER SUMMER!

Hard to believe that school is almost out and summer will be upon us quickly. If you haven’t had a chance to plan activities for your kids yet, we still have room in the 2008 Cool Cat Camp. Summer camp at Big Cat Rescue is an exceptional behind the scenes experience of the sanctuary, along with indoor and outdoor educational activities and a big helping of fun along the way. Tuition is $190 per camper per session and our schedule is:

Camp Schedule - 9:30 am - 4:00 pm Daily
Session 1: June 16-19
Session 2: June 23-26
Session 3: July 7-10
Session 4: July 14-17
Session 5: July 21-24
Session 6: July 28-31

For more information and to register contact Beth or Coleen at 813-323-3265
education@bigcatrescue.org

INNISBROOK PGA GOLF TOURNAMENT RAISES $9,765 FOR THE CATS - Howard Baskin

The PGA tournament held at the fabulous Copperhead course at Innisbrook Resort in Tarpon Springs has a wonderful matching program to benefit qualifying local nonprofit organizations. This is our fourth year as a participant. Under the program, supporters of a nonprofit can submit up to $50,000 in donations to the Birdies for Tampa Bay Charities 501(c)(3). “Birdies” then forwards those donations to the nonprofit along with matching funds. This year the match was based on participation and turned out to be over 19%. So the $50,000 submitted by our donors brought in an additional $9,765! That feeds two tigers for a year! We would like to especially thank the donors of $5000 and above: Surrilono Foundation, Little Family Foundation, Murray DeYoung Educational Foundation, and author Caleb Carr.

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PUBLIC INTEREST ENVIRONMENTAL LAW CONFERENCE - Carole Baskin

Alan Green wrote Animal Underworld in 1999 which was, to my knowledge, the first documented expose on how it is that wild animals go from our nation’s most respected zoos into backyard cages, garages and basements as pets. His four year investigation culminated in the book that rocked the exotic animal industry in ‘99 and validated much of what I suspected, but had not been able to prove. The animals being bought and sold in flea markets and livestock auctions were surplus animals from zoos who were being sold to brokers who then sold them to anyone with cash in their pockets and empty space between their ears. Alan Green spoke up when no one else dared and was my hero, so when he was unable to be a panelist at the 25th annual Public Interest Environmental Law Conference, you can imagine my trepidation at being asked to fill his shoes.

People were expecting a legend, an icon, and they were going to get me. I sure would have been disappointed if I were them, but the opportunity to get the plight of the cats in front of 3,000 attendees, who were already predisposed to protecting the planet, was irresistible. Monica Kerslake, a law student who will be graduating this year, has headed up the Animal Defense League chapter at the University of Oregon and she wanted to make sure that animal issues were included in the program because, as she so aptly said, “It’s all connected.” Who could tell her “no”? I would have loved to have stayed for the entire four day event as the topics were timely and important to the preservation of life as we know it on mother earth. It was also just awesome to be surrounded by so many people who see the big picture and who are passionate enough to do something about it.

My fellow panelist was Adam Roberts, Executive VP of the newly combined forces of Born Free’s US presence and the Animal Protection Institute. Adam and I serve together on the board of the Humane USA PAC, the nation’s oldest and largest political action committee devoted entirely to the promotion of animal friendly candidates at the state and federal levels. Although we see each other frequently at political fundraisers, I had never had an opportunity to hear Adam speak and that alone was worth the cost of flying from Tampa to Eugene, OR.

Adam shared the plight of endangered species in the wild and I focused on the domestic trade in exotic pets. My presentation was truly a group effort. Howard Baskin, my husband, had been asked to speak to a group of Rotarians, and had totally revamped our standard presentation. His focus and ability to lead listeners to an inescapable conclusion was the perfect framework on which to hang some of the legislative issues that would be of more interest to my crowd, but to keep the crowd engaged I included Jamie Veronica’s video that debuted at the Fur Ball called “I Will Remember You.”

The net result after Adam and I tag teamed the group for an hour and a half was a powerful group of well informed individuals who had laughed together, cried together and who had benefited from the collective consciousness of people who are effecting change. I am so uplifted by the knowledge that there are so many people who share our view of a world where all wild animals live free that I could almost fly home without the aid of Northwest Airlines. We have seen the shift in the way people perceive animals and every day brings us closer to our goal of a world where we all treat each other with respect and compassion.

HAVE YOU SAVED A TIGER TODAY?

More than 30 organizations, representing millions of people around the world, are calling upon the Chinese government to stand firm, maintain its 14-year tiger trade ban, to close down tiger farms and to increase investment in stopping illegal tiger trade. Losing the wild tiger will be a shameful indictment on all of us. The success of our collective desire to save the tiger depends on action. Don’t close your eyes to what’s happening. Join more than 5,000 people that have already signed our petition to stop tiger farming at CatLaws.com

YOU COULD WIN BIG BUCKS - BIG CAT BINGO

Instant Bingo works like the Florida Lottery and became legal in FL in July of 2007. This is a great way to make your donation dollars go farther because for $1.00 you could win $500.00. That money is yours to take home, or you can donate it back to the cats. Many of our supporters say, “When I win the lotto I am going to give it all to Big Cat Rescue!” Now is your chance and your odds of winning are considerably better with us than the state. Everybody wins because even when you lose, the money goes to the big cats. Visit us in person to play Instant Big Cat Bingo. You must come at a regularly scheduled tour time in order to access the gift shop. Tour times are at 9 AM and 3 PM M-F and at 9:00, 9:30, 11:30 and 1:30 on Sat. Closed Sun. Visit this web site to play a new wild cat version of free online bingo or if you are a non US resident and are 18 or older you can play for cash & prizes. Void where prohibited.

BRA PLANTS IMPROVE HEALTH AND LOOK OF LAKE - Howard Baskin

Biological Research Associates is an environmental consulting firm that has generously donated time to help the sanctuary during our rezoning efforts and other times. Kevin Atkins, Senior Project Scientist and VP, has been our main contact. Early in his career Kevin spent time in India working on tiger conservation. Recently, with the help of colleagues Chuck Pons, Rick Gross, Chris Joiner and others, and with the generous consent of management, Kevin spearheaded an effort to donate and install 2,000 plants along the perimeter of the north section of our lake. Here is how Kevin described the project: The intent of the plantings is to provide a biological method for nutrient uptake in the pond to assist in maintaining water quality, to abate and safeguard against shoreline erosion, and to provide shoreline habitat enhancement, as well as aesthetic enhancement for the water feature. The native wetland plant species should fill out the littoral zone edge of the pond over the next few months and persist potentially indefinitely. The selected species are intended to grow in the emergent zone just below the water and slightly above the water, and will require no maintenance. They will help to filter storm water runoff into the pond and provide cover, feeding and breeding areas for fish, turtles, waterfowl and wading birds. The indigenous plant species used were: pickerelweed (Pontederia cordata), golden canna (Canna flaccida) and gulf coast spikerush (Eleocharis cellulosa). Periodically, these plants will produce purple and yellow flowers along the pond’s periphery, and should attract more native aquatic fauna and bird life to the sanctuary. Bottom line, these plants will make our lake more beautiful, healthier and a better home for wildlife. We thank BRA, Kevin and colleagues for the many hours and costs associated with this wonderful donation.
**U.S. REPRESENTATIVE KATHY CASTOR VISITS THE BIG CATS**

Howard Baskin

When Representative Castor’s daughter Julia turned 11, her choice of what to do with friends to celebrate was a visit to Big Cat Rescue. She had been before, but many of her friends had not. They are pictured here with tiger Bengali who is demonstrating the “up” position in our operant conditioning program. Representative Castor has visited before and she and her staff have shown strong interest in exotic animal issues and animal issues in general. After the visit she sent us the following note, which we appreciated very much:

“I recently toured Big Cat Rescue with my family and we had a great time. My daughters were able to appreciate the magnificent animals in natural settings, and learn about the different species and the issues they face in captivity and in the wild. Big Cat Rescue is a wonderful educational resource and great asset to our community. They provide a great home for the animals and help reduce the number of cats that suffer abuse, abandonment or extinction by teaching people about the plight of the cats, both in the wild and in captivity, and how they can help through their behavior and by supporting new laws to protect the cats. I would encourage any parent or animal lover to take the tour.”

**U.S. Representative Kathy Castor (D-FL-11)**

**LEGACY SOCIETY GR-R-R-O-WING**

Our Legacy Society honoring those who have made provision for the cats in their estate planning now has 17 members listed below. If you have made such a provision and have not advised us, or have advised us and are not on the list, please email hbaskin@BigCatRescue.org or call 813-920-4130 and leave a message for Howard. Our sincere thanks to the people listed here who will leave behind a personal legacy of caring for the cats.

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<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
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<td>Patricia Francis</td>
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<td>David H. Lytle</td>
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**FOREVER REMEMBERED**

Jamie Veronica

Big Cat Rescuers have had to say a lot of really hard goodbyes during the past few months. Four beloved cats have crossed over the rainbow bridge. These cats have touched thousands of people with their heart wrenching stories and have also made a deep impact on the lives of their keepers. They will be sorely missed, but Rescuers will ensure that their stories live on and aid in the fight to end the exploitation of exotic cats world wide. Crackle arrived at Big Cat Rescue on 12/9/94. She was a victim of the pet trade. Thousands of wild cats have been displaced solely because of the exotic pet industry. These cats are wild animals and do not belong in pet homes and sadly it is these cats who pay the price when they end up not making a good pet. Alpha AKA Alphie arrived on 6/27/97 after he was retired from a breeding program along with two other servals. While “breeding to save the species” may sound like a good idea, there are in fact no release programs for these servals or any other exotic cats for that matter, in existence today. Sheera too was a pet and is yet another example of how these cats suffer because of the trade. Shaquille arrived on 3/4/96. He was retired from a nightclub act in Las Vegas. In order to force him to perform his owner beat him to the point that the skull around his eyes had been so badly damaged that his eyelids rolled in, causing his eyes to constantly tear. Perhaps they are tears for all of his kindred spirits who are still made to perform for man’s entertainment.

**CELEBRATING EARTH DAY THE BIG CAT WAY!**

Earth Day 2008 was the biggest yet! Millions of people around the world raised their voices to urge significant and equitable action on climate change and other environmental issues that affect us all. Our Education Department participated in outreaches all over Tampa and Orlando. With the help of our dedicated interns and volunteers we tabled for the cats at two Disney locations, Nature’s Classroom’s inaugural public event, the Earth Force Youth Summit at Al Lopez Park, and several other outstanding events. This was a valuable opportunity to reach literally hundreds of adults and kids with our message about the challenges that the cats face in captivity and in the wild. It was encouraging to share information with like-minded people on the various issues facing our community and our planet. We were enthusiastically received everywhere we went, leaving no doubt that as awareness reaches a critical mass the solutions will be just around the corner.

-Beth Kamhi

**Chat Big Cats Online at www.ChatBigCats.com**

People who love animals love to share their photos and stories. Now Big Cat Rescue has a Chat Big Cats community. Only animal lovers need apply. This site is for you and about you and it’s free. You get unlimited storage space for your photos, videos and music. Post your own blogs, or join in our forums and contests. Check out this YouTube/ Myspace styled community made up entirely of animal lovers. Watch some of the funny animal videos or maybe add a few of your own.
ENDOWMENT FUND ADDS 33% TO YOUR DONATION! - Howard Baskin

To ensure our ability to care for the cats into the future, we have begun an Endowment Fund at the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay (CF). Aside from making an endowment fund cost effective for a relatively small nonprofit, a very exciting part of the CF program is what they refer to as their “Challenge Grant”. Under this program, we choose a goal to reach over three years. If we reach 75% of the goal (and we will), a fund set up at the CF will put in the other 25%, which means a 33% match. So, for every $75 one of our donors contributes to the endowment, the CF fund will put in $25. We set a goal of $200,000, meaning when we raise $150,000, the CF fund will donate the remaining $50,000!

One requirement of the Challenge though is that we had to raise 10% of our goal within 90 days. We achieved this with the help of the Reitzel Foundation, who began the process with an incredibly generous donation to the endowment of $25,000! Many thanks!

If you like the idea of your donation generating an extra 33%, please consider donating to the Endowment Fund. Donations of ANY amount help. If you are sending a check, please make it out to Community Foundation of Tampa Bay, put Big Cat Rescue Endowment in the memo section, and send it to us at PO Box 340189, Tampa, FL 33694-0189. If you donate online, please send an email indicating you would like your donation to go to the Endowment Fund to Finance@BigCatRescue.org. If you have any questions please email that same address or call us at 813-920-4130 and leave a message for Howard Baskin, Treasurer.

The best way for us to insure that we can take care of the cats in the future despite fluctuations in the economy is to develop an Endowment Fund whose earnings will be there in good times and bad. Your donations of any size to the Endowment Fund will help provide a secure future for these deserving creatures.

THERE MAY BE HOPE FOR THIS ORPHANED BOBCAT KITTEN YET -Jamie Veronica

On May 3rd Rescuers were called upon once again to save an orphaned Florida bobcat kitten. Three teenagers had found the tiny ball of fur in the middle of a road near Lutz Lake Fern and Gunn Highway in Tampa. The once rural area has exploded into a frenzy of development and in fact at the very location the kitten was found hundreds of acres had recently been cleared for the construction of a new housing development. Rehabber and BCR President Jamie Veronica set out to survey the area and see if there was any possible way that the kitten could be reunited with its mother. The two-week-old kitten was in very good health and appeared well cared for so Jamie had hoped that perhaps the mother would be nearby calling out for her lost baby. Unfortunately this reunion did not take place. Now here she was with a wild kitten that was still nursing. Would it be possible to bottle raise a bobcat and successfully rehabilitate it for release? Could the kitten be handled by humans during these impressionable times and still remain wild? Would she be able to learn how to hunt? What about how to establish her own territory? Rehab of one so young has never before been attempted by Big Cat Rescuers. Jamie thought about it long and hard before throwing caution to the wind and hoping for the best. In honor of the wish that this little kitten could be sent back to the wild one day, she was appropriately named Hope. Now that this difficult decision had been made the real work began. Jamie gathered all of the supplies she would need to bottle feed and house Hope. She would need special formula, bottles, towels, blankets, stuffed animals, and a heating pad to keep the one pound kitten warm. These things came easy, however, getting Hope to take to a new formula that tastes nothing like her mother’s milk proved-excruciatingly difficult. As the hours wore on Hope became hungrier and hungrier and Jamie’s patience was truly tested. In the end this patience paid off and Hope finally began to nurse. How often does a kitten this age need to nurse one might ask. The answer is as often as it wants, which meant that Jamie was up to bottle feed the kitten around the clock every three to four hours. As the days passed and the kitten kept doing better and better, Jamie discussed the challenges that lie ahead with Operations Manager Scott Lope and BCR Founder Carole Baskin. It was of utmost importance that this young kitten did not imprint on humans, while it also needed to be taught the fundamentals about being a cat. Everyone agreed that the best solution would be to get a foster mom that was nursing kittens. This way Hope would need very minimal care from humans and would imprint on her own kind “hopefully” turning feral in the process. Since it would be all but impossible to find a wild bobcat mom to foster Hope, Carole came up with another idea. She sent an enticing email with a rarely seen headline “mother cat with kittens WANTED” to friends of Big Cat Rescue at the Humane Society, St. Francis Society Animal Rescue and Cat Call. Within the afternoon a mother had been found that was still nursing two of her own kittens. At the time the APB went out, Jack Talman was fostering this laid back mom and her babies and asked if we could come over and give them to BCR. Kathy Walvoord of St. Francis graciously picked them up and drove for hours to bring them to the sanctuary. Everything was falling into place. Will this domestic cat mom accept Hope as her own offspring? Will the kittens teach Hope the skills of hunting through play-fighting? Will Hope revert to her wild ways and resist imprinting on humans? All we can do now is “hope” for the best. Stay tuned…

CHARLES RUTENBERG REALTY GOLF TOURNAMENT GENERATES $3,500 - Howard Baskin

Charles Rutenberg Realty held their third annual company golf tournament on April 12. The company, founded by John and JoAnn Nestor, has about 3500 brokers. In addition to the Clearwater, FL headquarters they have offices in Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, Chicago, Manhattan and Long Island. Over 100 of their associates converged on East Lake Woodlands Golf Club for a spirited day of golf and socializing. Big Cat Rescue was a co-beneficiary for the second year in a row.

BCR Volunteer Merrill Kramer tended our booth at the event spreading the word and passing out Ink recycle bags. Stuffed toy tigers atop the beverage carts, like the one pictured here, added our big cat theme to the event. The tournament raised $3500 to support the cats, an increase of about 10% from last year! Our sincere thanks to all who attended, and special thanks to owners John and JoAnn Nestor, Managing Broker John Rurkowski, Lori Ford and Linda Russell for making the tournament and our participation possible! If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in any of their markets, please consider thanking them for their support with your patronage.
The planning for our big annual fundraiser has already begun and we hope to make this event greater than ever before. We are currently gathering items for our silent auction and bargain sale room at this spectacular event and you can help! Are you a hairstylist, a dentist, a mechanic, a restaurateur? Perhaps you are an artist, an interior designer, a store keeper, or a hospitality specialist? Whatever you do, by donating an item or services, you can make a difference, raise funds and contribute to the purr-fect charity.

How your donation will benefit you:
- Name recognition for your business. Your donation will be seen by 700 ball guests, as well as on our website with over 500,000 visitors per month.
- Tax benefits of donating to a 501(c)(3) charity
- Personal satisfaction of knowing you have a role in providing a safe home for these wonderful cats

To contribute to Tampa’s party of the year contact us at 813-920-4120 or furball@bigcatrescue.org. We can arrange to pick up items, or you can bring them to the sanctuary. Gift certificates can be mailed to Big Cat Rescue, 12802 Easy Street, Tampa, Fl 33549, attn: Fur Ball Committee. Receipts will be provided for your tax records.

Every little bit helps and we sincerely appreciate whatever help you can give to support the cats and make the 2008 Fur Ball a roaring success.

IN MEMORY OF “CLANG”

Those of you who have attended our Fur Ball in recent years cannot help but remember the diminutive, uncontrollably cheerful lady in colorful garb who spent the entire night using tarot cards and palm reading to give guests a greater insight into their lives and future. We are very sad to report that Carol Morgenstern, affectionately and professionally known as “Clang”, passed away recently. She had a heart that was far bigger than the rest of her. Her favorite cat was Saber the black leopard, whose playfulness and spirit remind us of her. She will be sorely missed. We thank her husband John Daly for asking mourners to donate to Big Cat Rescue in her name and thank the many friends who have done so.

Howard Baskin

Big Cat Rescue would like to especially thank those that have made contributions in Carol Morgenstern’s Memory

Linda Amen $100
Karin & Ricky Dusek $100
Therese Murphy $100
Barbara &
Michael Ryan $100
Lothe Speer $100
Beverly Koeppl $75
Patricia Trosil $50
Rob Broms &
Record a Hit $50
Thomas Field $50
Harry & Sharon Binker $25
Anthony Navarro $25
Kent & Joanne Potthast $25
Barbara Cohen

Wine King by Will Bullas

Do you love the big cats like we do? Do you support Big Cat Rescue’s mission and want to help? Do you or your place of business have products or services to donate to a worthy cause?

Gussie Sirovatka of Beaufort, S.C. who is 9 years old decided to take on a fund-raising effort after researching bobcats and visiting Big Cat Rescue for a tour. Gussie has rallied her school community at Port Royal Elementary School to create a cookbook called “PRES Helping Big Cats” which she is selling for $10 each. They are also organizing car washes and bake sales. Gussie, family and friends, plan on visiting us in person to deliver the proceeds, with a goal of $1,000.00 and prospects of exceeding even that impressive effort. Our thanks to Gussie and family for the efforts and the inspiration!

Outstanding Young People the Next Generation of Animal Activists - Beth Kamhi

It is truly heartwarming to see the efforts made by young people on behalf of the cats.

“Coins for Cats”, a group of young people in Valrico, Fl was started by Ms. Christina Hendryx and friends. This group fell in love with our cats after reading their stories on our website, and following our activities on YouTube. Since they are too young to volunteer they decided to find a way to help and agreed that selling homemade cookies was the way to go. Acting in a very professional manner, Christina contacted us for permission to use our name, has been setting goals, and is keeping us up to date with their progress. We recently received a check for $105.50 in what will likely be the first “installation” in an ongoing campaign. It seems that the word is spreading and people are signing on to order their cookies on a regular basis along with learning something about Big Cat Rescue’s mission in the process. These kids are helping fund the care of our cats, and raising awareness of the bigger issues of wildcats in captivity among their peers.

Mackenzie Mondo has organized a fund raising activity to support the cats for the second year in a row. In January she put together a “lemonade stand” with lemonade, coffee, brownies and Rice Krispie squares to sell at the Hampton Chase Community Garage Sale. She is pictured here with Gift Shop Manager Honey Wayton and Senior Keeper Susan Mitchell proudly turning over her hard earned $43 profit.

For the third year in a row, we were honored to host the Independent Day School’s “Cool Cats” on tour here at the sanctuary on Monday April 7th. Students, ages 6 through 8 years of age, came out to present Big Cat Rescue with a remarkable donation they raised of $1,540.00. This result was the best ever in their educational fundraising to benefit our cats, surpassing last year by 12%. Wow! Young people putting forth their best efforts together are a force to be reckoned with. One student, Ms. Nicole Sambo, also ran her own lemonade stand individually which added another $40.80 to the total. It just goes to show that at any age people can make a difference. We extend our sincere thanks to the students and teachers of the Independent Day School.

These are just examples of the kids we have the privilege of knowing in our roles at the sanctuary. Regardless of age, these young people have the same passion for the cause that we all share, and they are taking positive action. This is the next generation of voters, activists, and lawmakers. These are the people who will make our world better for all living things.

Has your child made a similar effort to raise awareness or donations for Big Cat Rescue? Submit your story along with a photo and it could be featured in a future edition of The Big Cat Times.

Emails can be sent to: savethecats@bigcatrescue.org

913.920.4130 - WWW.BIGCATRESCUE.ORG - SUMMER 2008 - THE BIG CAT TIMES - 7
The Big Cat Trading Post - Shopping Guide

Order these gift items using the order form on page 10. 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lilypad, Planet Earth Tee</td>
<td>$21.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR Savannah Silhouette Long-sleeve Tee Orange or Yellow</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sticker</td>
<td>$4.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjustable Cap, Navy</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCR Savannah Silhouette Tee</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR Savannah Silhouette Tee Chestnut, Tan, Leaf or Blue</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo License Frame</td>
<td>$7.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lion Vanity Plate (or Tiger)</td>
<td>$11.56</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wooden Gifts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR Logo Fitted Tank</td>
<td>$19.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where’s The Pride Zabu White Tiger Tee Black or White S-XL</td>
<td>$31.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haunting Eyes Tee, Black with BCR Logo in White</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Cat Rescue - Tiger Art Poster 24”x36”</td>
<td>$8.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metal Magnets Choose Tiger, Cougar, Lioness, Lion, Snow Leopard, Black Leopard, Ocelot, Serval, or Bobcat</td>
<td>$5.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood Box w/ BCR Logo</td>
<td>$24.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photo Magnets and Key Rings</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themed Monopoly Board Games</td>
<td>$26.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>LED squeeze light key chain</td>
<td>$8.42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bottle-opener, key chain</td>
<td>$8.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pen</td>
<td>$7.95</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lighter</td>
<td>$8.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Money Clip</td>
<td>$8.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Photo Bumper Sticker</td>
<td>$5.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCR Magnetic Car Ribbon</td>
<td>$8.35</td>
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<tr>
<td>Logo Mousepads Lion, Tiger, or Big Cats of BCR</td>
<td>$15.84</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mints in a Souvenir B&amp;W Tin w/ BCR Logo</td>
<td>$5.68</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi-Tool Wood w/ Logo</td>
<td>$17.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coasters featuring paintings of BCR Cats, set of four with stand</td>
<td>$24.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Tank with Tiger and BCR in Rhinestones</td>
<td>$17.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCR Logo Fitted Tank</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Longsleeve Tee Tiger Stripe Design</td>
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ITEM ON SALE

2008 Big Cat Rescue Calendar - A Year in Cats
Each month is a different artist created works inspired by the cats of BCR $7.00

Lehi the Lynx 12" $13.70
Snow Leopard 12" $15.84
Flopsie Babies tiger, leopard, black leopard or lions 6" $13.70
Cougar Nature Baby 12" $13.70
Black Leopard 19" $24.40
Adventures Leopard 8" $24.40

28x37] 813.920.4130 - www.BigCatRescue.org - summer 2008 - The Big Cat Times - 9
BIG CAT SHOPPING NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE

All of your favorite Big Cat Rescue merchandise is just a click away! BigCatRescue.biz is the new online store for all of your wildcat needs. This website is an excellent way to help Big Cat Rescue, outfit your wardrobe, decorate your house, and check off your gift list. You can find us by going straight to BigCatRescue.biz, or by clicking the “Shop” icon on our main website – no waiting for the return postcard. BigCatRescue.biz makes it easy to combine shipping, request gift wrap, and even has a comments section in the checkout so that you can choose your gifts receive the personal touch of a hand written card. But after you take a look around, you may want everything shipped straight to you!

Date: __________________________  THE BIG CAT TIMES ORDER FORM  Summer 2008

Billing Address
Name
Address
City, St, Zip
Day Time Phone
Evening Phone
Email

Recipient Address (if different than Billing)
Name
Address
City, St, Zip
Day Time Phone
Evening Phone
Email

Method of Payment
☑ Check ☑ Money Order
☑ Visa ☑ MasterCard ☑ American Express ☑ Discover

Description
Qty.
Size
Price Each
Total

Yes! I want to purchase tickets for the Rolex Raffle $20 each or 7 for $100 $

Yes! I want to make a donation towards The Wall Fund ($100=1 linear foot) $

I want to join the automatic giving program, please charge my card each month $

Yes, I would like a receipt for tax purposes

Yes! I would like a free magnet with my order totaling more than $50

Grand Total $

This is a gift, please make card to: ___________________________ from: ___________________________

Brief message to say: ________________________________________________________________

Automatic Giving Program
Big Cat Rescue makes it easy and convenient to donate monthly with no worry. You can do this either by credit card or by direct debit to a checking account for as little as $5 per month. For credit card donations, just fill in the highlighted line on the order form above and provide your credit card information. For checking account direct debit visit www.bigcatrescue.org/AutoPay.htm, email finance@bigcatrescue.org, or leave a message for Howard at 813-920-4130. This is a G-R-R-eat way to spread our donations and provide steady support that is so meaningful for the cats.

Special Comment, Request, Personalizations or Question:
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________

Big Cat Rescue is a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization, FED 59-3330495. Our Florida registration number is CH-11409. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING 1-800-HELP-FLA TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE. REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. Big Cat Rescue does not utilize the services of professional solicitors so 100% of all contributions go directly to Big Cat Rescue Corp.

Your tour fees are a major source of revenue to support the cats. Thanks for visiting and caring!

Kids Tour
Big Cat Rescue 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. The tour is given on a child’s educational level. Reservations not required.
- Tour Time is 9:00 AM Saturday, 1 hr
- $15.00 per child under 10 years
- $25 per child 10 years & over and per adult
Children must be accompanied by adult guardian.

Day Tours
Monday - Friday 9 AM & 3 PM, 1.5 hrs
Saturday 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM, & 1:30 PM, 1.5 hrs
Guided tour of the sanctuary. Admission is $25.00 per person. Reservations are not required. No children under 10 years of age.

Feeding Tour
Friday and Saturday at dusk. During this tour, you will follow along with two big cat keepers. As you observe the big cats being fed, you will also learn about the cats nutritional needs in captivity. Admission is $50.00 per person. No children under 10 years of age. Call for reservations 813-426-5948

Big Cat Keeper Tour
This tour takes you behind the scenes where you will enjoy making enrichment (treats and food puzzles) for the animals. After which you will follow along and watch as the keepers hand out the enrichment you made to the cats. You will also observe special operant training sessions with the big cats. $100.00 per person. The 2 hour Keeper Tour is offered every Saturday as well as the last Friday of the month at 2 PM. No children under 10 years of age. Call for reservations 813-426-5948

Wild Eyes At Night Tour
Night Tours are the best way to see the animals come alive at night! As you journey through the 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! $50.00 per person. No children under 10 years of age. Call for reservations 813-426-5948

Big Cat Rescue also offers -
WILD WEDDINGS, PRIVATE PARTIES, VOLUNTEER & INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS
AND GIFT CERTIFICATES are available for all of our programs and make the perfect gift for that person who has everything!

NOTICE: Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change.

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The Reitzel Foundation
$25,000
Birdies for Tampa Bay Charities $3,756
Little Family Foundation $9,000
Celia Carr $5,000
Maxine Big Boy $5,755
Murray DeFeau
Educational Foundation
$5,000
Thomas Matthews $5,000
Charles Rutenberg Realty $3,500
Big Cat Foundation
$3,000
Albert Charleston $3,000
Edward Reader $3,000
Frank & B. Catherine $3,000
Ioss Cool Cats $3,000
Judy Nagy $1,000
Lawrence Thomas $1,000
Mark Price Foundation $1,000
Robert & Lorn Farmer $1,000
Melanie R. & Michael $1,000
Jerry & Cheri Poore $1,000
Angela Poore $1,000
Stephen & B. $1,000
Pamela Dockins $2,000
Edith Parker $2,000
Brett Mitchell $2,000
Alan Moxhay $2,000
Quinn-Bennett $2,000
Pattie Ann Castor $2,000
Vinnie Mazzone $2,000
Richard & Beverly Bosley $2,000
KimThemis $2,000
Kathy Beck $2,000
Jennifer Greene $2,000
James & Patsy $2,000
Daniel & Patsy $2,000
Ray, Debbie, & Adam $2,000
Paul Augustine Jr Ttee $2,000
Paul Martin $2,000
Orlene Kelting $2,000
Nancy Loetschert $2,000
Michael & Linda $2,000
Judy & Lorey $2,000
John & Sandra Doran $2,000
Jennifer Grassini $2,000
Keli Wells $2,000
Mary Sherman $2,000
Jean Seeler-Fischmann $2,000
Linda Dau $2,000
Henry Sininski $2,000
Daniel B. & Monica $2,000
Bethany Solt $2,000
Kristen Nybarger $2,000
Aisya Datta $2,000
Matthew Ned $2,000
Karin Brown $2,000
Lisa Rutherford $2,000
William Guza $2,000
Affinity Holistic Clinic $2,000
Jean Austin $2,000
Sally Envidoll $2,000
Sara Inger $2,000
Shelby Bruhaker $2,000
Shirley Whittle $2,000
Sally Gilliam $2,000
Seth Garrison $2,000
Kris Whitten $2,000
Enid Caprio $2,000
Alycia Angelos $2,000
Carol Altaviza $2,000
Kim Thompson $2,000
Christina County $2,000
Cynthia Katsuolas $2,000
Daniel & Diane Littleston $2,000
David R. & Du Pont $2,000
Some species information packet, purrr-sonal stories of the cats at the sanctuary and wildly personalized address labels and certificate of adoption.

Barbara Kliss $50
Sally Linn $50
Lori J. & Judy Fletcher $50
Lori Antony $50
Louis Covacs $50
Evelyn Coope $50
Garrett Michael $50
Harold & Anita Teiling $50
Helen Rogers $50
Hilka Klassen $50
Honor Collins $50
Howard & Phyllis Gruzynski $50
Ira Spear $50
James & Mariannes $50
Mary Greater $50
Jane Kelody $50
Jennine James $50
Jennifer Grassini $50
Joseph Jackson $50
Lawrence and Lyre $50
Jennifer S. & Debbie $50
Jon and Jennifer $50
Charles Deaton $50
Candace Goodman $50
Carol Barlow $50
Teresia Cao $50
James D. & Jodi $50
Charles Nicholas $50
Charlotte Biddle $50
Bruce Porter $50
Brett Corner $50
Bob Reigle $50
William Pope $50
James & Mariann $50
Michael & Jeffrey $50
Jennifer Mitchel $50
John & Jerry $50
Susan Hunter $50
Lawrence & Lyre $50
Dr. Medallion $50
Mary & Larry $50
Jeni & John $50
Mary & Sandy $50
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CAT-A-TAT RENOVATIONS

Rescuers spent the last couple of months working on a two major projects at the sanctuary, updating Shere Khan and China Doll the tiger's pad and Cloe the snow leopard's rocky lair. Improvements to both Cat-a-tats are complete and everyone is loving their newly refurbished homes.

Shere Khan and China Doll Cat-a-tat
Remodeling this 3-acre enclosure was a huge task. Their square concrete den box was transformed into a lush grassy hill that encompasses an extra large rock den big enough for the 600-pound Shere Khan. In order to get all of the dirt needed for this tiger mountain inside the enclosure, Cat-a-tat Builder Vern Stairs had to remove several panels of the enclosure walls so the front-end loader could be driven inside. Next on the list was to fill in the eroded lake bank where the tigers swim. A large path was cleared so that the loader could make it as close as possible to the lake, but from there staff, volunteers, and interns pitched in to help plant pine trees, butterfly plants, and other lush foliage all along the front of Auroara, Shere Khan, and China Doll’s Cat-a-tats. These new plantings are not only beautiful, they also provide a visual barrier and privacy for the tigers from the main parking area.

Cloe the Snow Leopard Gets New Addition
Cloe and Hercules live in a large tri-plex Cat-a-tat. However, since they do not want to share only one can have two sections of the enclosure at a time. Rescuers decided to add on to Cloe’s Cat-a-tat by connecting it to an empty enclosure next door. The new addition more than doubles the space that Cloe previously resided in. Along with the addition, the usual improvements were made including; painting the enclosure wire with rust prevention paint, planting new grasses and bushes, fixing up some old sagging spots in the roof, repairing a few cracks in the two large rock dens, and moving in some new logs to scratch. She seems to really be enjoying the new space.

Designing the purr-fect garden, she hit the road and began knocking on nursery doors soliciting for donated plants. John Deere Landscapes donated plants valued at $1260 thanks to the manager Scott Heinold and Tampa Bay Nursery owned by Riley and Gloria Maseda donated more than $1000 worth of plants. Staff, volunteers, and interns pitched in to help plant pine trees, butterfly plants, and other lush foliage all along the front of Auroara, Shere Khan, and China Doll’s Cat-a-tats. These new plantings are not only beautiful, they also provide a visual barrier and privacy for the tigers from the main parking area. Thanks Babs!

Big Cat Keepers Have Green Thumbs
Big Cat Keeper Bab’s Riddle took on a hefty landscaping project recently and the results are absolutely stunning. With her own landscaping service Garden Magicians, Bab’s had all the tools and know how to complete this massive project. After designing the purr-fect garden, she hit the road and began knocking on nursery doors soliciting for donated plants. John Deere Landscapes donated plants valued at $1260 thanks to the manager Scott Heinold and Tampa Bay Nursery owned by Riley and Gloria Maseda donated more than $1000 worth of plants. Staff, volunteers, and interns pitched in to help plant pine trees, butterfly plants, and other lush foliage all along the front of Auroara, Shere Khan, and China Doll’s Cat-a-tats. These new plantings are not only beautiful, they also provide a visual barrier and privacy for the tigers from the main parking area. Thanks Babs!

Now Win Two Rolex Watches Worth $8,500!!

Thanks to the generosity of AvantGold Jewelers, the prize for this year’s raffle has been increased to TWO Rolex watches, the men’s watch announced in the last issue of the Big Cat Times PLUS a gorgeous matching woman’s watch of even greater value! The men’s watch is an elegant men’s Rolex Oyster Perpetual Airking stainless steel watch with white Roman numeral dial, oyster bracelet, and engine turned bezel (retail value $3675). The matching ladies watch is a Ladies Rolex Oyster Perpetual Watch, stainless steel with an 18k white gold fluted bezel, silver Roman numeral dial and oyster bracelet (retail value $4,850).

Purchase tickets for your chance to win both of these beautiful watches. The drawing will be held at the 2008 Fur Ball on October 10th. You do not have to be present to win, but wouldn’t that make the night that much more special?! Enter as often as you like to put the odds in your favor.

It’s Fur a Good Cause!

For complete details and rules visit BigCatRescue.org/rolex.htm
1 ticket for only $20, best deal is 7 tickets for $100. To purchase tickets call 813-920-4130, use the order form on page 10, or visit www.BigCatRescue.org/Rolex.htm