



SPRING 2012 ISSUE



TIGERS UNLEASHED!

Premiered Friday, November 18, 2011 as part of the Animal Planet series Fatal Attractions. The episode features Bella & TJ and the breeding center from which they were rescued. Check out AnimalPlanet.com for local rerun listings and this address for a deleted scene showcasing their rescue:

<http://tinyurl.com/6lwh7gp>



A STORY OF HOPE

The story of Hope, an orphaned bobcat, who was rehabilitated and released back into the wild by Big Cat Rescuers is featured in the March 2012 issue of National Geographic Kids magazine!

Photos by Jamie Veronica unless otherwise noted.



THE BIG CAT TIMES

There are reported to be more tigers in backyards in Texas



BIG CAT CRISIS



than are left in the wilds of India

THE ZANESVILLE MASSACRE COULD HAPPEN ANYWHERE

At 5:30 a.m. on October 19, 2011, the phones at Big Cat Rescue began ringing with the news that Terry Thompson, a private owner and collector of exotic animals in Ohio, had released 56 of his lions, tigers, leopards, cougars, wolves and bears before committing suicide.

As the watching world soon learned that day, Thompson had purposely cut the doors off his animals' cages so they could not be returned to them. And because the perimeter fence around his property was a mere four-foot high cattle fence, and it was getting dark, the authorities who arrived on the scene were forced to shoot and kill all but six of the dangerous wild animals.

This senseless tragedy unfolded in Zanesville, Ohio, but it could happen just about anywhere in the U.S.

The reason is because there is a patchwork of laws across our country and a dire lack of funds to enforce them. All too often it takes a tragedy like the Zanesville massacre before the public finds out that crazy people and government agencies are playing Russian roulette with their lives.

Most people were shocked to learn that Thompson, a convicted criminal, could have a back yard full of the world's most dangerous predators with no government oversight. Ohio had no state laws restricting such behavior. And Thompson did not have the USDA license he was required to possess in order to exhibit his exotic animals. Despite often being in the local news for exhibiting his animals at schools, he was never forced to comply.

USDA only requires that cages be big enough for an animal to stand up and turn around; there are no set standards for cage space, fence heights or cage construction materials. Depending on the inspector, a USDA licensed facility may be asked to have an eight-foot high perimeter fence. But an exotic animal facility in Dade City, Fla. that offers public swimming with tigers reportedly has a fence that is only three

Above: A tiger kept in a shed in a FL woman's back yard for years, China Doll in her enclosure at BCR Right: Warning sign on highway during Zanesville incident



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strands of wire; and not hot wire at that! Despite multiple citations, the facility has not yet been fined and continues to operate under the auspices of being “inspected and approved.”

The Florida Wildlife Commission boasts the most stringent wild animal possession laws, yet Florida leads the country with the most killings, maulings and escapes by dangerous wild animals. Having better standards than Ohio hasn’t done much to minimize the danger to Floridians and the environment. Most people who don’t follow animal issues are aware that the Everglades are overrun with giant non-indigenous snakes that are swallowing alligators and deer whole. These snakes,



Above: Map indicating private owners of dangerous Class 1 & 2 exotic animals in Florida
Right: White tiger in backyard pen in FL

which quickly grow to 13 feet and over 100 pounds, have been found to have Florida panthers, bobcats and many species of endangered native wildlife in their bellies when captured. A recent survey of prey animals in the area shows a 97% decline in many of them and a 100% decline in the number of rabbits seen.

In June 2007, Florida Governor Crist signed into law SB2766, a bill to regulate the possession of reptiles, but more importantly, included the requirement for a \$10,000 bond to be posted by anyone exhibiting a Class I animal, which currently includes lions, tigers, leopards, jaguars and cougars. The FWC thwarted that legislative mandate by changing their regulations to allow people to call their private collections “sanctuaries” and forego the bond requirement. Big Cat Rescue CEO Carole Baskin contacted every member of the Florida House and Senate in 2009 to let them know how their



law had been circumvented and they almost unanimously agreed to close the loophole by amending the wording to say that all who “possess” (rather than “exhibit” as the 2007 law read) Class I animals must post the bond.

Perhaps the scariest element of the Zainesville tragedy is not what it tells us about the lack of laws prohibiting inappropriate ownership of exotic animals. Rather, it is what it tells us about the kind of person who is likely to fill their backyard with dangerous lions, tigers, bears, pythons and such. The owner of a much larger facility that claims to have 1,400 animals has publicly stated that he would kill his animals before he would give them up. The obvious conclusion is that the only way to prevent such disasters is to ban the private possession of wild animals.

The BBC did an excellent

documentary called America’s Most Dangerous Pets, but they concluded in an article about the show that they probably should have called it America’s Most Dangerous Pet Owners. See it here and decide for yourself:

<http://goo.gl/Nr0ZM>

OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

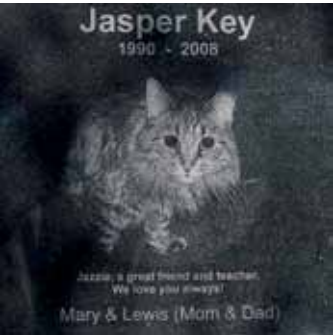
According to the National Christmas Tree Association, Americans purchased a whopping 27 million Christmas trees in 2010 spending an average of \$36 per tree for a grand total of \$976 million! Where do all of those trees go once the holidays are over? A lot of places actually. Discarded Christmas trees are mulched for landscaping use, used whole on shorelines to prevent soil erosion, and even burned to produce electricity. Did you know that the big cats like Christmas trees? They more than like them, they love them!



Above: Volunteer with tree, lion, and tiger photo by Chris Poole

“FOREVER REMEMBERED” HONORING YOUR BELOVED ANIMAL COMPANION THAT HAS PASSED

As a way to permanently remember a beloved pet that has passed and help support the big cats at the same time, Big Cat Rescue offers your pet the same beautiful 8”x8” engraved granite plaques we create when one of the sanctuary’s cats crosses over. These elegant laser engraved plaques contain an image of your pet, the years they were with you, an inscription and your name. They are then permanently displayed on a wall along our tour path.



The donation for these plaques is normally \$500, like the donation for the plaques in memory of the big cats. In order to allow as many animal lovers as possible to honor their pets in this unique way, in this issue of the Big Cat Times we are offering the plaques for a donation of only \$250. We will need a high resolution photo (preferably 300 dpi .jpg) of your pet in order to engrave the image. Close up head shots work best.



This is a wonderful way to help support Big Cat Rescue while at the same time “Forever Remembering” the love you shared with a special companion that has shared your heart and home.

To arrange for a plaque, fill out the order form in this issue or go to <http://tinyurl.com/6tvoapv>

SAD FAREWELL TO FOUR GREAT CATS

By Jamie Veronica

Big Cat Rescue was founded 19 years ago and 86 of our 100+ sanctuary residents are now over the age of 15 (90+ in cat years). It is with great sadness that we must say goodbye to these four wonderful felines.

SIMBA



1994 - 2011

Simba was rescued in 2007 from a facility in Ohio that was shut down by the USDA. Her previous owner charged the public to go in with Simba to pet her and take photos straddling her. In order to make it "safer" to do this she had Simba declawed and her large canine teeth removed. After years of this abuse and several incidents where these paying guests were harmed, her owner finally lost her licensing and was evicted from the property. Simba was rescued along with Nikita the tiger and Joseph and Sasha the lions. With all she had gone through, Simba still had a very warm personality and would approach the side of her enclosure and greet passersby with an enthusiastic "chuff." Our heart was broken having to say goodbye on Thanksgiving Day 2011 to one of the sweetest tigers as she chose to journey on. At 17 years old Simba passed quietly in her sleep, her kidney disease having claimed her life.

ZOUL came to Big Cat Rescue from New York in April of 2011 along with Zouletta, Zimba, Santino, and Doodles. The 5 servals were kept as pets in a basement room just a few hundred square feet in size. Their owner was battling cancer, her sister had recently abandoned her 3 children with her, and she was also in foreclosure. All 5 servals came to the sanctuary where for the first time they enjoyed an outdoor enclosure nearly 3,000 square feet in size. They had grass and bushes, platforms, trees and logs, lots of dens, and even a pool. Zoul lived the good life his last few months. When he suddenly stopped eating he was taken to the vet for diagnostics. He had kidney disease, fluid in his lungs, and one of the worst cases of spondylosis the vet had ever seen. Yet, he had shown no signs of this painful and debilitating condition. Zoul was not able to wake up from the sedation, despite the heroic efforts of his caregivers, and sadly died from a heart condition that was the cause of the fluid in his lungs.

ZOUL



1997 - 2011

ACE



? - 2011

Ace was rescued in 2007. She was a wild bobcat that was found collapsed at the front doors of an office building near the airport. She was brought to the sanctuary where she would be rehabilitated and released back into the wild. Shortly after her arrival she was sedated and examined by Big Cat Rescue's veterinarian. Unfortunately she tested positive for FIV and was not a candidate for release as she could spread this disease easily to other bobcats. Ace became a permanent resident of the sanctuary. When she first arrived she was believed to be approximately 15 years old making her nearly 19 at the time of her passing.

HALLELUJAH came to the sanctuary, at only 4 days old, from an auction where people dump unwanted animals. Hal was always a very mischievous cougar. He kept his keepers on their toes because one of his favorite things to do was snatch a water hose, bite into it, and pounce the streams of water that ensued. Hal stole the hearts of all he met. At the ripe age of 18 Hal had given up his fight against advancing kidney failure. The tough decision was made to ease him over to the other side. Surrounded by those who loved him Hal gently passed on and was freed forever from his life behind bars.

HALLELUJAH



1993 - 2012

LIGHTNING STRIKES BCR – IN A GOOD WAY!

The Tampa Bay Lightning organization has a wonderful culture of community service. On December 14, 2011 Big Cat Rescue was the grateful beneficiary of a terrific program that allows the Lightning staff, along with employees of locally headquartered technology firm Jabil Circuit, days off to volunteer in the community.



Two groups of about 25 Lightning and Jabil Circuit staff came out that day, one group in the morning, one in the afternoon. They were incredible! Some of them took down 220 feet of old chain link fence that had separated the 10 acres we purchased in December 2010 from the rest of the property. The others worked to remove years of dead foliage and trim up trees on about 3 of the ten acres to make them usable.

The Lightning videographer filmed their work and, of course, Bengali the tiger and lions Joseph and Sasha who were intently watching the workers the entire time. That video was then played on the huge four screen Jumbotron that hangs over the rink in front of a sold out crowd of over 20,000. What a great way to build awareness of the sanctuary! You can see the video at <http://tinyurl.com/7axufka>

Our sincere thanks to the Lightning organization for caring so much about our community and the cats!

ANIMAL LAW STUDENTS VISIT

Big Cat Rescue's Founder Carole Baskin's favorite people are those who are getting involved in politics to end the abuse of big cats. In 1963 Dr. Martin Luther King said, "It may be true that the law cannot change the heart but it can restrain the heartless." While we are working hard to change the way people think about big cats, by showing them how smart they are and how deserving they are of our protection and respect, we have found that the only way to save them is by encouraging bans on their possession as pets, props and for their parts. Carole gives complimentary group tours to people who are dedicating their lives to these same ideals and recently hosted the Ethics class at Eckerd College and Animal Law Students from both Stetson and Barry University. "These are my favorite tour groups because they already get the big picture and are visiting to remind themselves of what they are fighting for," says Baskin.

COMEDIAN GALLAGHER TAKES CUE FROM BIG CATS



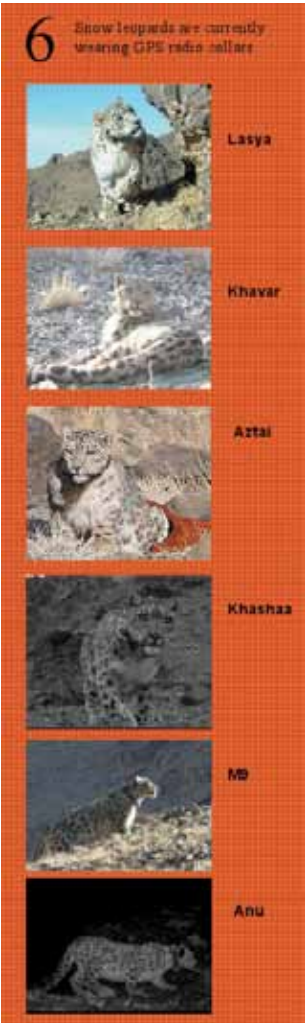
In February the sanctuary was visited by one of the great long time names in comedy, Gallagher. He is working on an animated animal based cartoon that will feature a lion, tiger and leopard in supporting roles. He came to the sanctuary to learn more about their behavior. Based on his pose in the photo, he is a quick study!

Big Cat Fun

Visit www.BigCatFun.com for tons of free e-cards, screensavers, wallpapers, games and more. Send the purr-fect e-card for Mother's Day (5/13) and Father's Day (6/17). It's fun and free! There is always lots of new stuff being added, so check it out today and visit often!



SNOW LEOPARD GUARDIAN ALLIANCE



In addition to providing a permanent home to more than 100 big cats and advocating on their behalf to promote legislation that will protect captive wild animals, Big Cat Rescue also provides aid for programs focused on conservation. Our most recent project is the funding of a GPS tracking collar that will be monitored by researchers with the Snow Leopard Trust. Founded in 1981, the Snow Leopard Trust is the world’s leading authority on the study and protection of the endangered snow leopard. This collar will allow researchers to track a wild snow leopard in order to study its habits and territory needs.

We are excited to provide you with this teaser update on the field project from the Snow Leopard Trust researchers: A GPS tracking collar has been placed on one of the cubs of Khashaa, a female and mother snow leopard, within the study area. The cub, a male, is already pretty big at one and a half years old. We find this so exciting because it will help us begin to answer some of the unanswered questions about snow leopards, including information about dispersal patterns.

The Snow Leopard Trust is allowing us to share some of the great inside stories and tracking information that is only made available to those

who sponsor the \$5,000 Collar Project. If you would like to receive access to these updates and photos directly from the field you can join a limited number of individuals by becoming a member of Big Cat Rescue’s **Snow Leopard Guardian Alliance**. Membership is \$5 and as a member you will receive access to exclusive updates and photos for one year. Membership is limited to the first 700 who sign up. The membership fees collected will go directly towards funding the collar project. The remaining \$1,500 of the project has been funded by Big Cat Rescue in honor of our extraordinary team of staff and volunteers whom we refer to as Big Cat Rescuers.

Sign up today and get full access to the first of many updates and photos to come. To sign up visit our online gift shop at:

<http://tinyurl.com/83raqqo>

THANKS TO OUR LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS *By Howard Baskin*

The number of people who have so kindly remembered the cats in their estate planning and become part of our Legacy Society continues to grow. We would like to thank the people listed below for providing for the cats in this way. In addition to the condolences we have expressed at the time of their passing, we would like to again express our sympathy to the family and friends of Thomas Daly, Peter W. Jasin, Jean Matusinka, Terry Nordblom and Robert C. Williams, all of whom passed away in 2010 and have helped provide for the cats with their generous bequests.

Jean & Peter Albini	Amy Davis	David H. Lytle	Pat O’Shea	Robin Tyler
Candace Barbara	Lynne Daub	Jean Matusinka	Nancy Rodgers	Patricia Webber
Carole Baskin	Dorothy Edwards	(deceased)	Pamela Rodriguez	Karen Wells
Howard Baskin	Fran Ezer	Terri Mimbs	Veronika Silvani	Ron & Joy
Ebe Bower	Ian Ira Fischer	Marcella Mirande-	Diane Smith	Wentworth
Marie Collart	Patricia Francis	Ketcham	Morgan Jane	Carol Wettersten
Joan & Richard	Hester Fuller	Cecilia Nelson	Smith	Odette Wilkins
Czeck	Peter W. Jasin	Terry Nordblom	John Richard	Brandy Williams
Thomas Daly	(deceased)	(deceased)	Smalarz	Robert C. Williams
(deceased)	William Kuni	David Nugent	Starla Trivilino	(deceased)
				John A. Varnado

This list is maintained manually. If you have provided for the cats in your estate planning and are not listed here, please accept our apologies, and contact Finance@BigCatRescue.org so we can update the list. Thank you!



Leopard Kisses 25 Cents - Armani and Jade, two female African leopards, had a wild time playing with this Kissing Booth box created especially for them! xoxo

SUMMER CAMP AND TEACHER TOURS

Big Cat Rescue’s Summer Camp 2012 is almost here! Registration opens March 1st! Join us for outdoor exploration on our 55-acre campus while learning about animal habitats, diets, adaptations and conservation. Interactive learning opportunities include diet preparation, scavenger hunts and keeper demonstrations of feedings and behavioral training with the cats.



Free Teacher Tours will be offered on select dates during spring break for Pinellas, Pasco and Hillsborough county schools. Don’t miss out on this special offer.

Summer Camp schedule and Free Teacher Tour dates will be posted soon at: BigCatRescue.org/education for more information you can email;

education@bigcatrescue.org

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Let us Prey

As those of you who follow Big Cat Rescue's efforts to stop abuse know, a major portion of our effort for the past year and half has been to stop the abusive use of tiger and other big cat cubs in "pay to play" petting exhibits. We, along with Born Free USA, HSUS, The Ian Somerhalder Foundation, IFAW and WWF, have jointly produced the following detailed Fact Sheet to educate the public, regulators and legislators about this issue. If you hear of a cub petting exhibit coming to your area or see one in your area, we would appreciate your alerting Susan.Bass@BigCatRescue.org

THE BIG CAT HANDLING CRISIS



INTRODUCTION

Current USDA policy uniformly suggests that tiger cubs under 8 weeks are too young for public exhibition and cubs over 12 weeks are too dangerous for public exposure.

Developed as the result of several internal determinations made by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), the informal policy presents significant enforcement and welfare challenges because it leaves a 4 week gap where tiger cubs are able to be handled by the public, giving exhibitors incentive to breed the cubs and make major profits at the risk of human health and safety, captive tiger welfare, and conservation of the species in the wild.

Based on these issues, the USDA should adjust their policy and close the 8-12 week loophole so that no cub at any age can be used by exhibitors for public interaction.

BACKGROUND

The 8-12 week policy is a regulatory loophole where big cat cubs such as tigers and lions can be handled by the public after they are considered to have adequately developed immune systems (8 weeks old) until they are deemed a threat to the public (12 weeks old). This window was created as the result of several internal determinations made by the USDA, none of which were codified into the Code of Federal Regulations. Those documents, combined with the administrative decision in the Palazzo case recognizing the informal policy, have left an opening for opportunistic businessmen and women to exploit animals and put humans at risk.



THE RESULTING PROBLEMS

Intensive breeding to feed demand for big cat cub handling has generated serious consequences. At least 33 facilities in the US are regularly advertising opportunities for the public to handle lion and tiger cubs – in traveling mall exhibits, private menageries, or road-side zoos. Given cat reproductive biology, and that every cub is only legitimately lawful for four weeks of handling, to meet this advertised supply the 33 breeding facilities would have to produce a minimum of 200 cubs each year for petting.

• Animal Welfare Abuses

Cubs used in petting exhibits are prematurely taken from their mothers, causing emotional pain and physical stress. The cubs are then typically confined in small cages, transported to unfamiliar settings, handled for long periods of time by scores of people, disrupting their sleep, to make the most profit for the exhibitor.

• Disease Transmission to Cubs

Young cubs are most vulnerable up until 12 weeks, therefore human contact with cubs during this time poses risks to the health of the animals. Increased stress levels from being transported, handling, being prematurely removed from their mothers, and fed a nutritionally-deficient diet weaken their immune system, predisposing the cubs to disease. Such contagious diseases may be transmitted through direct and indirect contact with the public. Bite and scratch wounds can result in bacterial infections, ringworm can be contracted through handling, and small children are put at risk of E. coli, Toxoplasmosis, Staphylococcus, and Streptococcus.

• Age Violations

Numerous big cat cub handling operations have been found to be clearly violating the 8-12 Week Policy by exposing cubs younger than 8 weeks and older than 12 weeks to public handling – despite potential harm to the cubs and to the general public.

• Little or No Enforcement

The disparity between the number of available Department of Agriculture inspectors versus facilities is telling: during fiscal year 2009, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) had only 97 Animal Care inspectors to perform over 4,300 inspections (pertaining to more than 2,700 exhibitors) on a wide array of facilities including but not limited to; commercial breeders, zoos, dealers, sanctuaries, and circuses.

• Sanctuary Saturation

The need for taking in big cats after they have outgrown their private owners has outpaced the number of facilities in the U.S. that can take them in. Consequently, big cats coming out of these handling-operations not only face the possibility of being killed, for the illegal trade of their parts, they may enter the "pet" trade, further exacerbating animal welfare and human health and safety concerns.

• Too Many Big Cats in Private Ownership

The U.S. is believed to be home to about 5,000 captive tigers – almost double the number left in the wild. The 2009 OIG Audit of USDA found that 70% of the licensees with four or less animals were in fact pet owners. This creates a scenario where unqualified individuals are keeping large, dangerous animals in residential areas. Neighbors and emergency first responders are all put in direct danger if these animals are not being kept in secure facilities.

CONCLUSION

There is no age-appropriate window for tiger cubs to be placed in public situations with constant human contact. The danger of exposure to disease or illness to both the animal and human during the 8-12 week window is enough to warrant closure of this regulatory loophole. Coupled with unenforceable age requirements, lack of consistent government oversight and inspection, numerous animal welfare concerns, and a resulting surplus of unwanted big cats in private hands, closing down "petting for profit" operations should be a priority for the US government.

THE SOLUTION

Since the 8-12 week policy is an interpretive rule making, USDA can close the four week window by simply revising its Exhibitor Handbook and Big Cat FAQ's on the website and adding a requirement to keep cubs a reasonable distance from the public for the safety of both.

Big Cat Rescue | Born Free USA | Humane Society of the United States
Ian Somerhalder Foundation | International Fund for Animal Welfare | World Wildlife Fund



THE BIG CAT TRADING POST - GIFT GUIDE

Proceeds from your gift purchases help take care of the big cats. Order these gift items using the order form on page 10 or visit **BigCatRescue.biz** to see all of our gift items and purchase online. S & H within the US as well as tax has already been included in the prices listed here. You can also upgrade your shipping to Priority for just \$3 for your entire order. For luxury cat themed gift items visit **BigCatLuxeGifts.com**



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\$21.19



1.75" Cat & Fish Pin
\$13.84



1" L is For Lion Pin
\$9.56



1" Tiger Pin
\$7.35

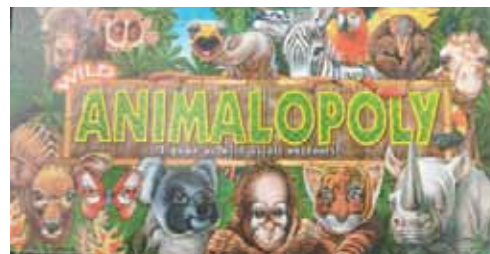


Big Cat Rescue Vanity Plates Choose Saber - Black Leopard, Hal - Cougar, Cloe - Snow Leopard, Joseph - Lion, Shere Khan - Tiger, Freckles - Liger, Windstar - Bobcat, Genie - Sand Cat, Simba - Leopard, or China Doll - (not shown) **\$10.56 each**



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Big Cat Rescue
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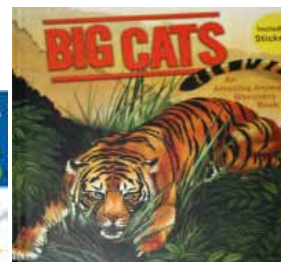
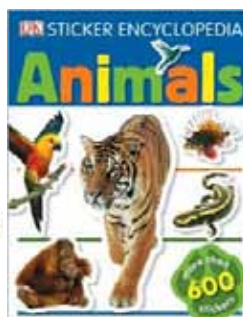


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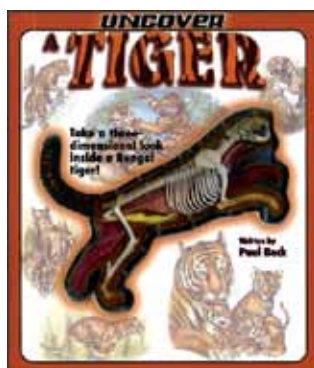
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Logo Frisbee, Black, Green, Blue,
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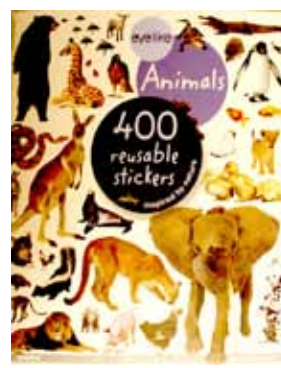
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Property of BCR Juniors Zip Hoodie Clover S, M, L, & XL **\$46.87** XXL **\$49.01** Brown S, M, L, & XL **\$44.73** XXL **\$46.87**



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Longsleeve Tee with Tiger Stripes on Chest & Sleeves and Big Cat Rescue on Back S, M, L, & XL **\$29.75** XXL **\$31.89**



Extra Large Eco-Grocery Bag with Big Cat Rescue Recycle Logo on Front 13" W by 10" D by 15" H **\$13.70**



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Wild Neck Pillow Choose Leopard or Tiger **\$13.70**



Cylinder Pillow with 3D Leopard or 3D Tiger **\$11.56**



Khaki Green Canvas Field Bag with Embroidered Logo **\$29.75**



Navy & Gray Junior Raglan Tee S, M, L, XL **\$24.40**



Chocolate Rhinestone Junior Fitted Tee S, M, L, XL **\$24.40**



Shorty Sock Tiger Medium **\$9.49** Shorty Sock Leopard Medium **\$9.49** BCR Logo Sock Black Tiger Medium **\$9.49** Gray Cats Medium **\$9.49** Lion March Sock Medium **\$9.49** Tiger Facts Sock Medium **\$9.49** BCR Logo Sock Brown Tiger Medium **\$9.49** BCR Logo Sock White Lion Medium **\$9.49** Shorty Sock Pink Tiger Medium **\$9.49** Shorty Sock Recycled Tiger Medium **\$9.49**



Brown Bengal Tiger Kids Tee or Tan Lion Kids Tee Big Cat Rescue on Front XS, S, M & L **\$15.91**



Puffy 3-D Tiger Youth Tee w/ Logo on Sleeve Choose Yellow, White, or Red S, M & L **\$15.91**



Orange/White Tiger Baby Creeper BCR on Front XS, S, M & L **\$13.70**



BCR Logo Youth Hoodie Choose Red or Baby Blue S, M, L & XL **\$29.75**



Paws Off Lion Kids Tee S, M & L **\$16.91**

BCR SUPPORTERS			
\$33,269 Toyota	\$750 Jonathan Kean	\$500 The Chicago Community Foundation	\$250 Denise & Dick Reynnders
\$25,000 Reitzel Foundation	\$750 Nicole Wurster	\$500 The Rorer Foundation	\$250 Greg & Kelly Robertson
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\$10,000 Keith Brodie	\$625 Kristen Garnes	\$450 John Johnson	\$250 Mary Santina
\$10,000 Lawrence & Pamela Trissel	\$600 Steven Carter	\$450 Sindhu Mathew	\$250 Joseph Se;F
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\$7,160 Mireille McGail	\$560 Caleb Carr	\$400 Beverly Ford	\$250 Deborah Spade
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\$2,000 Gunst Family Foundation	\$500 Noe & Rachelle Hernandez	\$300 Michelle & Scott Chamberlin	\$223 Janet Wetter
\$1,950 Sole Riley Marittimi	\$500 Lance Hill	\$300 Diane Freeman	\$222 Shelley Pavlovich
\$1,780 Carl & Betty Schino	\$500 Christine Hoke	\$300 Susan Goodman	\$217 Chelsea Deming
\$1,500 Lilian Giraldo	\$500 Richard & Louann Hunt	\$300 Nancy Lawton	\$201 Gloria Cox
\$1,500 Patricia Stephens	\$500 Carolyn Inman	\$300 Nicki & Paul Lyford	\$201 Creative Horizon Inc
\$1,500 Audrey Yow Mislán	\$500 Mitchell & Louise Kanaan	\$300 R. Gordon Machemer	\$200 Donna Alexander-Collins
\$1,500 BMO Harris Bank	\$500 Jessica Katz	\$300 Roger Mick	\$200 Kelsey Bakaletz
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\$1,000 Valerie Martin	\$500 Robert Doherty	\$250 Rob Abrom	\$200 Fred & Aleta Fisher
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	\$250 Donna Hlebakos	\$250 Ellen Sorce	\$250 Denise Watkins
	\$250 Rachel Janner	\$250 Stephen & Jeanette Szabo	\$250 Karen West
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	\$250 Joseph Poranski		
	\$250 Jonathan Randal		

EXTREME MAKEOVER
CAT-A-TAT EDITION

As usual Big Cat Rescuers have been very busy over the holidays.

A few of the most recent projects have included an enclosure addition for Purr-sistance and Purr-fection the ocelots and Windstar the bobcat. Not only do they have lots of extra space, but we are now able to shift them easily from one side of their enclosure to the other making maintenance a breeze.



Breezy and Raindance the bobcats were moved from their single-sided enclosures to two enclosures twice the size. An addition was added to Breezy's previous home and Angie the bobcat moved in gaining twice the space she previously had. Once Angie

BIG CAT RESCUE FREES SERVAL FROM BEING HOUSED
IN A BIRDCAGE IN BASEMENT

When a caller asked Big Cat Rescue to relieve him and his wife of the serval they had kept in a bird cage in their basement, we were full after just rescuing 3 tigers from a large sanctuary in Texas that went bankrupt. The serval was a three-year-old,



intact, declawed male that had been bred by Sue Arnold in Okeechobee, FL and sold to this Ohio couple. Only the wife could get near the cat and "he wasn't fun any more now that he was an adult." Note that almost all of the calls we get from people trying to get rid of servals and jungle cats report that they originated at Sue Arnold's exotic kitten mill. All of the accredited sanctuaries were full as well; many because of the failing of the TX facility. So we began looking to other facilities where we knew Ollie the serval would have a good home and not end up back in the pet trade. Thankfully, Christine Janks of Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation had a 20 x 60 foot enclosure available and was willing to take on another exotic cat, which would be a huge commitment to feed and care for throughout the next 15 years of his life expectancy. Christine had also recently taken in 3 tigers from the now defunct wild animal sanctuary in Texas.

was moved, Kanawha the lynx regained full access to her double-sided enclosure which she had been sharing with Angie.



Pharaoh the serval, and Anasazi, Will, Bailey and Moses the bobcats all have

new space to explore as well. Their enclosures were connected with a series of tunnels so that they can each be shifted to the neighboring enclosure. Shifting enclosures is quite enriching for the cats. Each enclosure offers a different view of the surroundings and provides the cat with a host of new and intriguing scents to discover.

These relocations, connections and enclosure additions resulted in 12 cats gaining double the space.



Reno and Simba the leopards were the lucky recipients of massive jungle gyms designed and constructed by Big Cat Rescuers Darren and Jennifer Holley. They love the series of platforms and catwalks and show their appreciation by spending nearly



all of their time lounging on the highest of the platforms. In addition, Purr-fection, Bailey & Moses and Anasazie & Will also received jungle gyms.

These enclosure improvements and platforms are thanks, not only to the dedicated volunteers who give of their free time to help with building, but to our generous supporters like YOU! Your donations make it possible for us to give every cat in our care the very best life possible in captivity. So on behalf of the cats, Thank You!!

Clockwise from top left: Pharaoh checks out his extra space, Reno enjoys his platform, Interns landscaping Simba's platform, Rescuers working on addition

SKIPPER'S SMOKEHOUSE FUN
FOR ALL BALL A WILD TIME AND
ROARING SUCCESS

We would like to sincerely thank the staff of Skipper's Smokehouse and the bands who participated in the 1st Fun for All Ball. The event was a great success and a lot of fun too! Admission, raffle ticket and gift shop sales combined equaled \$1,137.

\$785 was BCR's 75% take of the door (just over 100 attendees), \$206 in Raffle Ticket Sales, \$146 in BCR Gift Shop Sales, for a grand total of \$1137 raised for the cats!

FAUCETS FOR FOOD-PREP

We would like to sincerely thank T&S Brass and Jona Thomas for outfitting our food prep building with brand new faucets that are supremely functional. A huge thank you to John Greschuk of HUGHES Supply as well for facilitating the donation valued at approximately \$1,200. These new faucets will make the daily food preparation and clean up a breeze for Big Cat Rescuers!

FLAVIO THE TIGER'S
23RD BIRTHDAY BASH!

Flavio the tiger celebrated his 23rd birthday this year with a one-of-a-kind "cake". Big Cat Rescue's Enrichment Committee prepared a 23 pound meat cake using a variety of Flavio's favorite treats and spelled out the birthday boy's name on the top of the cake using strips of steak. On Saturday February 11th, staff, volunteers and interns gathered around to watch as Flavio was presented with his special birthday cake. As you can see from his expression, Flavio could hardly believe the decadent dessert was all his! A roaring thank you to everyone that helped make Flavio's birthday a day he will not soon forget.



Photos by: Brenda Flanagan & Chris Poole

WEEKLY GROCERY SHOPPING CAN HELP THE BIG CATS

Instead of buying the many cleaning and grocery products we use to get at the supermarket, Big Cat Rescue has started ordering quality products online. These products are eco-friendly, safe around animals, and economical. In addition there is a residual income that is helping support the sanctuary and our people who chose to get involved.



The products are great and in every case, so far, have proven to be more effective than the store brands. The dish and floor cleaners are great for washing down our cooler, food prep and cat hospital floors and for cleaning food buckets. Since the products are concentrated they are cheap to ship and last a long time.

Because of the hectic holidays we are just now beginning to market this brand. So far with just 9 of our staff and volunteers signing up to purchase these wonderful products that they use every day, and 7 of their friends doing the same, Big Cat Rescue has already received commission checks for a total of \$801.95!

Find out how your grocery shopping can help save big cats and how you can make an extra income by helping others here:
<http://bigcatrescue.org/household>

TOYOTA’S 100 CARS FOR GOOD A BIG WIN FOR THE BIG CATS

We want to send out a huge THANK YOU to everyone who voted for us in Toyota’s 100 Cars for Good contest. Big Cat Rescue won and celebrated with Stadium Toyota in Tampa.



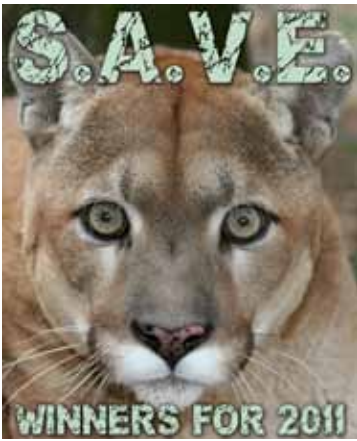
2011 S.A.V.E. WINNERS

Congratulations to the following Big Cat Rescuers who were recognized last year for their outstanding commitment to the mission of Big Cat Rescue. In honor of this commitment they were each presented with an award called the S.A.V.E. and allotted \$500 to spend on their favorite feline friends.

S.A.V.E stands for Scratch’s Award for Volunteer Excellence. Named for an outstanding cougar named Scratch, whose lifespan reached 30 years, the SAVE Award recognizes one volunteer or intern each month who is doing an outstanding job.



- January - John Amsellem
- February - Meredith Penino
- March - Edith Parker
- April - Jessica Allen
- May - Jennifer Pierce
- June - Hana Friend
- July - Phyllis Middaugh
- August - Callum Lees
- September - Christina Mastry
- October - Regina Rinaldi
- November - Sharon Dower
- December - Kim Dever



ACTION ALERT - Ban Wild Animals in Traveling Shows

Save big cats from life in the circus. The use of wild animals in traveling circus acts has been banned in many other countries because most people agree that it is animal abuse. Finally the United States is considering such a ban. Ask your representative to support this bill. Only U.S. addresses will be able to send letters to lawmakers on this alert at: **CatLaws.com**



HEATED DENS

Many of our resident felines are elderly and several are very tiny. Thanks to a grant awarded to Big Cat Rescuer Marie Schoubert for winning the SAVE back in 2010, these fragile cats had an extra warm place to escape the chilly winter this year. Eight cats in all including 2 sand cats, 2 leopard cats, 1 Geoffroy cat, 1 Savannah cat, 1 jungle cat and 1 bobcat had weather proof heating pads installed in their dens topped with a warm fuzzy bed. These heated dens were a big hit and thoroughly appreciated. Thank you Marie!



CHARITY NAVIGATOR GIVES BIG CAT RESCUE 4-STAR RATING

Big Cat Rescue has a 4 - Star Rating with Charity Navigator. We are also pleased to announce that Big Cat Rescue has the highest overall score of any sanctuary.



PAVE THE WAY: HONOR SOMEONE SPECIAL



The project to pave the walkways around our Trading Post with rich looking engraved bricks is under way and makes a great gift for the purr-son in your life who has everything. The laser engraving changes the brick color to create the letters deep into the brick and will never wear off. There are two sizes, 4x8 for a donation of \$100 and 8x8 for a donation of \$200. What a great way to support the cats and create a memory for yourself or someone else. You can order on page 10, or online: <http://tiny.cc/k8ey0>

COOKIE TIGER GOES UNDER THE KNIFE...TWICE

Cookie the tiger was rescued from a facility in Mississippi along with Alex, another tiger. She had been abandoned by her owner along with 13 other big cats.



Big Cat Rescuers recently noticed a quarter-sized mass that had developed on the inside of Cookie's rear leg. Arrangements were made by staff and veterinarian Dr. Wynn to sedate Cookie to remove the mass. While Cookie was sedated a routine examination was performed. The 17-year-old tigress weighed 305 lbs. Blood was drawn and samples of the mass were collected for testing. Her overall condition looked great for a cat her age, with the exception of two of her canine teeth. One of her upper canines had long since broken off (prior to her arrival) and was rotting and one of her lower canines was chipped exposing the root. In addition, a tennis ball sized mass was found in her abdomen, samples of which were also collected for testing.

During the next week, Dr. Wynn made arrangements with veterinary dental surgeon Dr. Peak, who runs 2 dental offices by the name of The Pet Dentist in Largo and Wesley Chapel. Some of Dr. Peak's wilder patients have included a gorilla, an elephant, and our very own dearly departed Freckles the liger. Dr. Peak agreed to bring his equipment and support staff to Big Cat Rescue to perform Cookie's needed dental surgery onsite.

The surgery took just over 3 hours, in which time Dr. Peak removed Cookie's upper canine and did a root canal on her lower canine. The procedures went smoothly and Cookie is now happily back in the comfort of her enclosure. She certainly feels much better thanks to the heroic efforts of Dr. Peak, his staff, and Dr. Wynn.

LARGEST TIGER AT BIG CAT RESCUE SEDATED & SUTURED

It has long been rumored that Shere Khan, Big Cat Rescue's largest tiger, weighs 800 lbs. His weight had been estimated based on the known weights of several other tigers at the sanctuary, however, he had never been officially weighed. Well after years of speculation we finally had the chance to find out for sure, but the circumstances were not the most desirable. Shere Khan had a small cut his back foot that, although only a few inches long, required stitches.

Big Cat Rescuers sedated the massive tiger so that his cut could be sutured and a lump underneath his tongue, that had been spotted by his keepers,



could be removed and sent to the lab for testing. While the tiger was sound asleep a team of 8 staff members and volunteers hoisted him up onto two scales (one alone could not do the job). Shere Khan weighed in at a staggering 700 lbs.! Although he most likely weighs closer to 725-750 lbs. (He was so large that his body did not fit completely on the scales and his paws, tail and part of his head were still making contact with the ground which would lower the reading.) The procedure went smoothly. Shere Khan spent the night in the hospital before returning to his enclosure.

Since Shere Khan had to stay indoors overnight, Big Cat Rescuers took advantage of the situation to move Shere Khan and China Doll into a neighboring 3-acre enclosure and move that enclosure's single inhabitant, another tiger named Nikita, into their 1-acre enclosure.

The plan was simple enough. Keepers would lure China Doll into a transport cage and then shift Nikita through a tunnel from his enclosure into theirs. Well, just after China Doll was loaded into the transport cage a storm rolled in and it began to pour, making Nikita less than willing to participate. After some enthusiastic coaxing and a few meaty bribes he complied and shifted. All worked out in the end; Nikita was checking out all of the different smells in his new place, China Doll playfully galloped around her wide open space, and soaked keepers watched with satisfaction. The next morning the storm had passed and Shere Khan was reunited with China Doll.

At left: Dr. Peak and assistant perform Cookie's dental work Above: Dr Wynn sutures Shere Khan's foot with the assistance of Jeff Kremer, Dr. Boorstein checks vitals, Jamie Veronica and Jennifer Flatt monitor anesthesia



BIG CAT GENOME PROJECT

Big Cat Rescue was recently contacted by Brian Davis, a geneticist in the laboratory of Dr. William Murphy at Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine. He said, "Our goal is to use existing genetic tools and recent advancements in large-scale genomic technology to characterize multiple aspects related to captive animal populations. For instance, it is of great interest to us to accurately examine the genomes of tigers to develop easy-to-use assays to determine the subspecies of tiger, or the percentage of each subspecies contributing to a generic tiger's genome. With the recent events in Ohio, we are redoubling our efforts to develop these tools as efficiently and effectively as possible." He said they could use cheek swabs, hair bulbs, whisker pulls, blood draws and biopsy tissues. They are especially interested in tigers, ligers, other hybrids and any animals who have been inbred to produce white coats. Our cats, both living and dead, can still help scientists save the endangered cats. We sent samples from Simba, Freckles and Zabu and Brian responded, "I want

to let you know that Simba's genome (along with Freckles and Zabu) has been extracted and banked. They are in cold storage at -80C and was wonderfully intact. We very much appreciate all your help with this tiger genome project. We can't do the work we are doing without help from awesome contributors like you! Keep in mind, we are just starting with the tiger and will be doing similar work on all exotic felines in the future based on our methods development in the tiger."

