



A 501(c)3 Organization

# CAT TALES

## The Exotic Feline Rescue Center

A National Leader in Exotic Cat Rescue and Care

JUNE 2009

### EFRC Aids Multi-Organizational Rescue of 16 Exotic Felines

We were one of three organizations involved in the rescue of 14 tigers and two cougars from Great Cats of Indiana near Monticello, Indiana. All 16 of the cats removed from Great Cats were born at the facility.

On April 10th we removed five tigers and two cougars. The cougars were sent to Minnesota and the next day eight more tigers were loaded and went to Tennessee. Of the five tigers we rescued, three moved here immediately to an enclosure built just for them while the other two tigers moved temporarily to a facility near Indianapolis due to space and funding limitations. Their new space is nearing completion and they will be moved here soon.

After returning with the tigers we were made aware of a badly injured cougar housed in the back of a barn. After consulting with USDA officials and Great Cats we immediately returned to take the injured animal. Unfortunately, during a surgical procedure later in the week the cougar suffered from greater complications and died during surgery—a great loss for everyone who had hoped to give him a better life.

The three rescued tigers, Kachina, Clementine and Samara are now enjoying their new lives. Within a few minutes of being placed in their new habitat, they had been on the climbing tower, jumped into the water tank and rolled in the tall foliage. The construction materials for these new habitats were purchased with funds from the Tony Stewart Foundation.



*The new home of Kachina, Clementine and Samara.*

### Movie Premiere: The Tiger Next Door

As early as 2000 animals began arriving here whose origin was Flat Rock, Indiana. In 2002 we took in two tigers after a drug raid where there were over 20 tigers involved. Several of these rescues are documented in our previous *Cat Tales Newsletters*: Tahoe (tiger, 2000), Patti and Tony (tigers, winter 2002), four leopards and three tigers, including Max (winter 2005), Sumara and Sumira (tigers, April 2008).

This story of commercial exploitation will make its U.S. premier in a documentary film called *The Tiger Next Door*. We are prominently featured in this film and much of the footage was shot here. It will screen for one night only:

*Indianapolis International Film Festival*

*Monday, July 20, 2009, 7:00 pm*

*Toby Theater, Indianapolis Museum of Art*

*4000 Michigan Road, Indianapolis, IN*

Advance tickets are available at: [www.indyfilmfest.org](http://www.indyfilmfest.org)

Watch a trailer of the film at: [www.thetigernextdoor.com/trailer](http://www.thetigernextdoor.com/trailer)

There will be a reception following the premier with the EFRC staff and the filmmaker, Camilla Calamandrei. Watch our website for details.



Max came to the EFRC from Flat Rock, Indiana

## Rescue Update: Greene County Cats are Thriving at the EFRC



Kiera

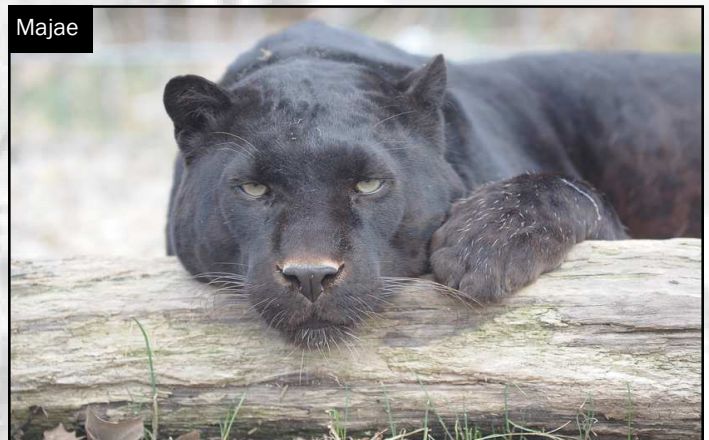
The four exotic cats at the EFRC from last fall's rescue from a deplorable situation in Greene County, Indiana, have all made a terrific transition to their new lives at the EFRC.

Kiera (lioness, pictured at left), Oti (tiger), Tony III (tiger) and Majae (black leopard) are all thriving in their new, permanent habitats. With the benefit of a nutritionally proper diet and strong social interaction, these cats have made a storybook recovery from the dire living conditions they endured at their former home (Cat Tales, November 2008).

The EFRC's staff are reminded every day when they see how happy these once-neglected cats are that the work they do and the long hours they keep are worthwhile. The living situation these cats endured prior to coming to the EFRC were as bad as any staff member had ever seen.



Tony III and Oti



Majae

[www.exoticfelinecenter.org](http://www.exoticfelinecenter.org)

## EFRC Continues to Focus on Quality of Care in Challenging Times

Our clinic continues to be a very busy place, as a combination of emergency procedures and preventative measures have kept Dr. Fred Froderman, DVM and Dr. Troy Lowdermilk, DVM very busy.

Of the many cats who have been treated in the clinic since our last newsletter, Czar (ocelot) was by far the oldest at the age of 19. He received x-rays and a bone biopsy. We are still waiting for the results of the procedure.

The most severe case that required surgical intervention was Paco (black leopard) who was noticed to be limping in her habitat. She was immobilized for an examination and determined she was suffering from a broken leg. Paco was then transported to the University of Illinois for surgery, where a plate was installed and the road to recovery started. The cost of Paco's treatment came to \$2,200, not including the transportation expense.

Lester (lion) also recently had surgery to remove a tumor from the inside of his cheek. Lester holds a special place for many at

the EFRC, as he was the second lion to ever come to the Center when he was rescued in 1993.

The services offered in our clinic, now in its fourth year, continue to be a major asset.



Lester

## Run Through the Jungle Sets Record and Upcoming Events at the EFRC

On May 16, the EFRC hosted the 5th annual Run Through the Jungle 5K Race. Thanks to the hard work of Gary Anderson, Dr. Fred Froderman and the Wabash Valley Road Runners Association, this year's race set a record with 350 registered runners and walkers. Thank you to everyone for participating in this great event that raised nearly \$3,000 for the EFRC.

### CONSTRUCTION UPDATES

Since our last edition of *Cat Tales* we have built two new habitats, have three more under construction and remain very busy with repairs and improvements of others. We are also pleased to announce that one of our new habitats has the first-ever, concrete-lined pond for the enjoyment of our cats!

## Upcoming Special Events

### Evening Roar I & II

One of our most popular events, Evening Roar allows our guests to tour the EFRC in the evening, when the lions like to roar! Extended tours including numerous cats not normally viewed, followed by wine and appetizers make for a great evening.

Evening Roar I is Saturday, June 20

Evening Roar II is Saturday, August 15

This event is for adults only over the age of 21.

### Summer Safari

A popular family event, Summer Safari is Saturday, July 18.

### Fall Fest

A celebration of fall, enjoy tours of the EFRC with the whole family with a bonfire and hot dog roast at the end of the day! Fall Fest is Saturday, September 26.

### Membership Meeting

The EFRC Annual Membership Meeting is Saturday, October 3. Please plan to attend this interesting and informative session.

All members and supporters are welcome.



Pumpkin Party 2008

## Pumpkin Party 2009! November 7, 2009

Come and see our big cats play with and devour treat-filled, post-Halloween pumpkins!

## Youth Groups Raise \$2,500 for Cat Care

Many thanks to our creative young friends who always seem to find ways to make a difference for our cats at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center! The good work being done by so many students demonstrates that there is hope for the future of these magnificent big cats.

We would like to thank the following organizations and many other youth groups for their efforts to help the big cats!

Hutsonville High School (Hutsonville, IL) Art Club held a spaghetti supper prior to a basketball game to benefit Max (tiger).

Highland Park (Highland Park, IL) Elementary School 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes raised money by selling items and sponsoring special days for the cats.

Camargo Champs 4-H club (Douglas, IL) set up in the IGA parking lot and sold grilled pork patties.



Czar, a 19 year-old ocelot

### NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR FALL 2009 INTERNSHIPS

The EFRC is now accepting applications for its internship program, beginning in the fall of 2009.

Visit our website and click on the "education" link for more information.

## Behavior Study at EFRC Nears the End of Year Two



Lauren

Anyone who has owned a cat is familiar with their rubbing behavior. They rub their foreheads, cheeks and the side of their bodies on objects, other cats and even people. For years, this behavior has been thought to be a way to mark territory, but little published research has measured the behavior or looked at the situations in which this behavior arises. Many suspect rubbing is used to deposit certain biochemicals or pheromones on objects, but that too remains uncertain.

In an effort to study rubbing behavior in several species of cats and determine if a pheromone is being deposited during rubbing, Dr. Susan Linville at the Center for the Integrative Study of Animal Behavior along with Dr. Helena Sioni at the Pheromone Institute, Indiana University have been conducting a research project at the EFRC for the last two years, working with lions, tigers, cougars and leopards.

Observations suggest that rubbing is used in two different contexts. Head butting (rubbing the forehead) is seen almost exclusively occurring between individuals. Dr. Linville suspects this is a social greeting rather than a territory marking behavior. Cheek rubbing (rubbing the side of the face and mouth) occurs mainly on objects,

and appears to be a territory marking behavior. Social rubbing behavior was documented with Serengeti Lions, but this behavior has never been recorded in Tigers, Leopard or Cougars. Dr. Sioni has identified several unique pheromones from samples collected at the EFRC. This summer, there are plans to test these compounds with tigers to see if they illicit a response.

### MEET SAM



Sam (lion, age 14), pictured above, is a new arrival at the EFRC.

## Clouded Leopards, EFRC and the Smithsonian Institution

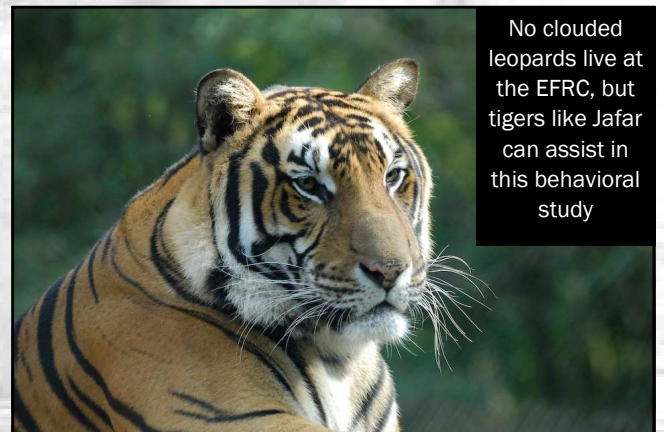
Clouded leopards are one of the most elusive and little-known felids in Southeast Asia. Their cloud-like spots are unique and sadly attractive to poachers, making their population status difficult to determine and are usually found at a low density. Megan Baker, a former EFRC keeper, is working with the Smithsonian Institution and Exotic Feline Rescue Center in attempt to understand these rare felids.

Megan's research focuses on clouded leopard interactions with larger felids. In Southeast Asia, the clouded leopard is the third largest felid, second to the tiger (*Panthera tigris*) and the leopard (*Panthera pardus*).

In captivity, when clouded leopards are housed near larger felids, the species' reproduction decreases and stress levels increase. In the wild, these three species can co-inhabit protected areas. As pro-

tected areas become isolated islands of forest, due to deforestation, all animal species are forced to live in smaller and closer habitats. Previous studies have focused on tiger and leopard interactions, finding that there is competitive exclusion between these two species. This study is looking at how competitive exclusion influences clouded leopard populations.

At the Exotic Feline Rescue Center, Megan is working with select tigers and leopards to observe their reaction to the introduction of clouded leopard feces near their enclosure. These observations will give scientists a glimpse into the



No clouded leopards live at the EFRC, but tigers like Jafar can assist in this behavioral study

competitive interactions which could be taking place in the wild. This information will be applied to a field project in Thailand to observe the interactions of clouded leopards and leopards in the wild.

## University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine Undertakes Major Study at EFRC

Several veterinarians led by Dr. Stuart Clark-Price from the University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine will be conducting a research project at the EFRC this summer and fall. The project has several goals in mind. One of the main goals is to evaluate different methods of immobilization and anesthesia of tigers so that future protocols can be designed that optimize the tiger's safety.

Over the course of several months, many of the tigers at the EFRC will be immobilized for routine care. During these periods, the researchers will collect blood samples and physiologic parameters to analyze the tiger's responses to the drugs that are administered to immobilize them. This data will be used to determine the best way to use these drugs in the future.

Additionally, a team of veterinary ophthalmologists will be on hand to look at the tiger's eyes. Routine measurement of the eyes, including the pressure of the eye and

tear production, will be performed to determine what is normal for tiger's eyes. This information will be used as a basis around the world for treatments on tigers with eye diseases and help optimize therapy. Dental examinations will also occur and be overseen by a veterinary dentist. This will be done to determine what the current conditions of the tigers' teeth are and which of the tigers are in need of future dental care. Other information including normal blood values and anti-body levels of different diseases will also be determined to improve care of these tigers and tigers around the world for years to come.

Accompanying the veterinarians from the University of Illinois will be several veterinary students. These students will receive credit for this experience while they learn how to work with exotic animals. These selected students will be getting an extraordinary experience that few people get to have in their lifetimes. Overall, this project will en-

able veterinarians to improve the treatment that these amazing animals will receive now and in the future. The University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine would like to extend our thanks to the Exotic Feline Rescue Center.

### A DIFFERENT VIEW OF THE EFRC

The three preceding articles represent a different view of what goes on at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center.

Most all of our friends know that every day of the year, rain or shine, cold or hot, our staff and volunteers are hard at work taking care of our big cats and their habitats. What most people do not know is that today more goes on at the EFRC than just the important day-to-day cat care.

The behavioral and scientific studies that are chronicled in these three stories are an evolutionary aspect of what goes on at the EFRC to improve both the understanding of big cat behavior and health. They are important in many ways to the future of big cat care.

We are thankful to the dedicated professionals who are conducting these studies at the EFRC.

We hope you take pride in knowing that groundbreaking work in the field of felid behavior and health is happening at the Center with such respected organizations as the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, The Center for Integrated Study of Animal Behavior and the Smithsonian Institution.

The outcomes of these studies will provide a better foundation for understanding certain felid behavior and provide a vast amount of veterinary knowledge that will benefit not only our big cats, but big cats from all around the world.



Tucker and Tao exhibit the type of behavior critical to the multi-year study being conducted by Dr. Susan Linville (story on previous page)



We were recently featured in an episode of Animal Planet's show Animal Witness, which documented Operation Snowplow (Cat Tales, summer 2006). The show chronicles the federal raid that closed down a horrendous exotic cat operation in Chicago where numerous cats were slaughtered for their meat and fur.

The surviving cats of Operation Snowplow now live at the EFRC.

## A Night at the Rescue Center!

The ultimate gift for the big cat lover in your family! Make your summer reservation to spend the night in our onsite overnight guest quarters.

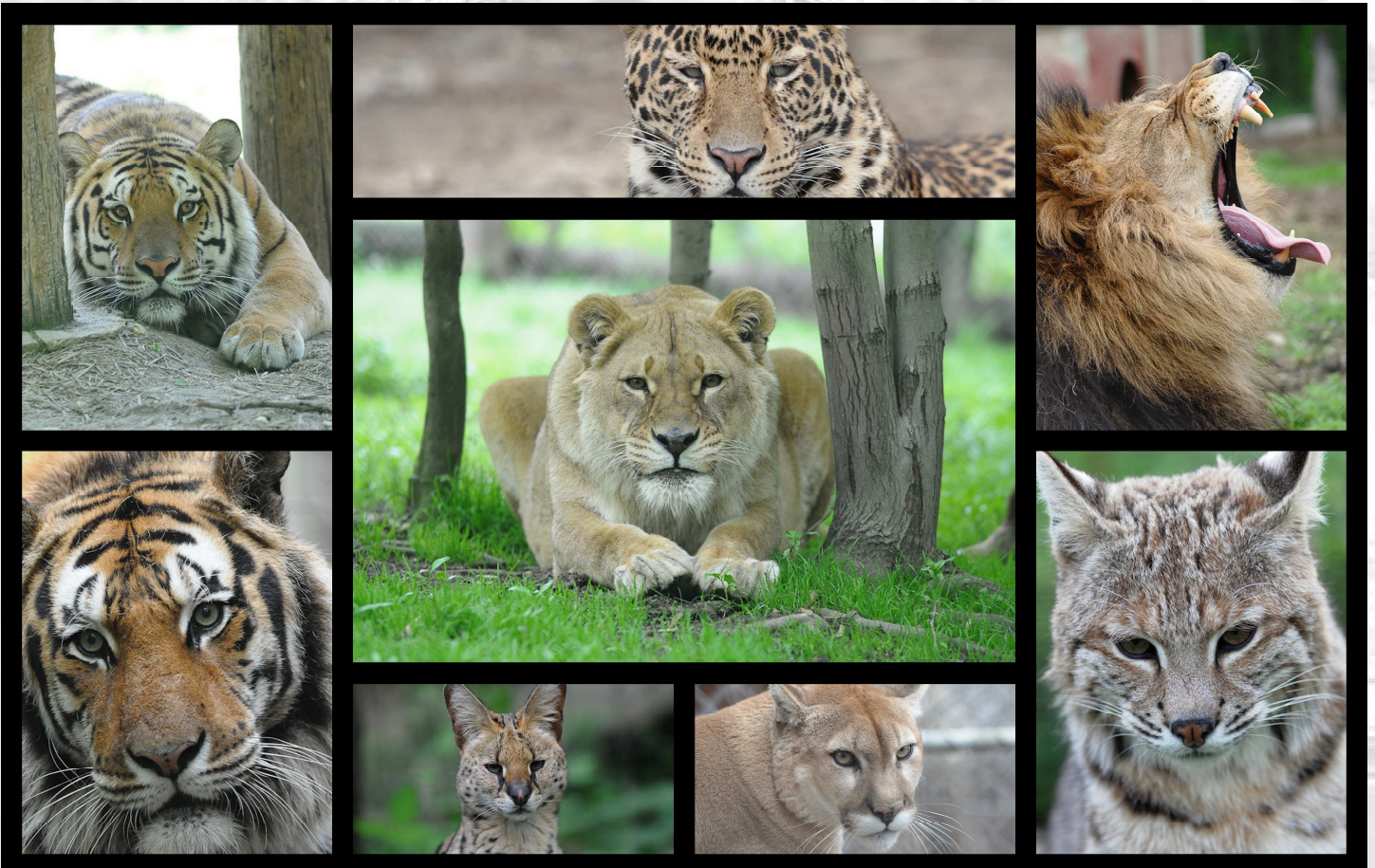
Our apartment-style facility is now available to house two adults (no children or pets for overnight stays) for an experience you'll not soon forget. Two all day passes, touring after hours when the cats are more active and access to cats that are not on the regular tour are included. The room has a private entrance, bathroom with shower and tub, queen size bed, microwave, refrigerator and coffee pot with coffee and tea provided.

Advance reservations are mandatory and the nightly rate is \$150. Call (812) 835-1130 to check availability.



Brumby (black leopard) is adjacent to the guest quarters (above), along with his habitat mate, Pauli Ann (cougar). With nearly 200 other cats nearby, you'll hear them roar after the sun goes down!

## Who Will You Support This Year at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center?



**Make Your Gift Today.**



*The Exotic Feline Rescue Center*  
*A National Leader in Exotic Cat Rescue and Care*

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The Exotic Feline Rescue Center

