



Cat Tales

Volume 11

June 2001

MAN EATER (ALMOST)

Tigger, a 500 pound male tiger “attacked” and mauled a worker who mistakenly entered his cage. Russell Shuey, who has since recovered, was hospitalized with serious neck injuries. There was immediate pressure for the destruction of the tiger, but other members of the community implored Mr. Burnett, Tigger’s owner, to find a new home for him. When we learned of the situation we contacted Mr. Burnett and offered him our services.

With cooperation among Jim Burnett, the Cuyahoge County, Ohio, health board and the Exotic Feline Rescue Center, arrangements were made to bring Tigger to Indiana. The next day (March 21) two of our workers traveled to Ohio where Tigger was loaded into a travel cage and taken to the University of Illinois Veterinary Hospital for a complete check-up before moving to his new home. Once here Tigger was quarantined for 30 days at the request of the health department while his permanent habitat was being constructed. In late April he was given a clean bill of health and moved into his wooded habitat with climbing tower and swimming tank.



Tigger with climbing tower in the background

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SPECIAL THANK YOU

Since our last newsletter, we have welcomed several new cats to the Center. We continue to work to provide proper medical attention, permanent habitats, and a safe place for them to live. We thank all of you for your continued support to provide shelter for these abused and neglected cats. Without your help providing for them would not be possible.

By Michelle Hall

TASHA (6 YEAR OLD COUGAR)

Seized from a life-threatening situation, Tasha arrived at the EFRC badly malnourished, severely dehydrated, barely able to stand, weighing a mere 66 pounds. She was brought by Monroe County Animal Control immediately following confiscation.

The first time we met Tasha was the fall of 1999, having been seized from her negligent owner, who lived just outside the Bloomington, Indiana city limits. At that time she weighed a fairly healthy 110 pounds. We intended to provide a permanent home for her, but weeks after she arrived, Tasha was returned to her owner at the insistence of the Department of Natural Resources.

This time Tasha was so weak she was brought into the house and kept in the back bedroom where she was hand fed multiple times a day until she regained some of her strength. She was then moved outdoors to temporary housing by the butcher stand where multiple feedings continued for several weeks.

Now, a few months later, Tasha is doing much better. She is eating well, gaining weight and strength, and adapting to her new home. She is housed in a temporary enclosure waiting for a permanent habitat to be built.



Tasha upon arrival

UPDATE ON THE PITTSBURGH CATS

In our last newsletter we devoted most of our attention to the 17 cats we rescued from terrible conditions near Pittsburgh, PA in September of 2000. We are happy to report that most are doing very well. The group of 7 undersized cats (3 lions and 4 tigers) are progressing far better than we ever expected; they have tripled in size since their arrival. Isabella, the smallest of the seven, has gone from 50 to over 170 pounds. All of these cats' growth hormones appear to have returned with proper nourishment, medical attention and good care.

Isabella (tiger) has recovered from a broken leg she suffered while trying to play in partially frozen water in her swimming tank; a plate was placed in her left rear femur in mid-February. She recovered nicely and is back with her friends.

Raja (tiger) who had dental surgery in September because of a rotted baby canine tooth developed an abscess and had to have his permanent tooth extracted.

While two of the three baby tigers are progressing wonderfully, we are sad to report that the third, Sassy, died at the end of December. She had a cardiomyopathy and the best medical attention simply wasn't able to save her. Her sisters, Jody and Cuddles are growing normally, although we continue to keep an eye on the darkened patches on their teeth, the causes of which are unknown. They enjoy the company of their new group member, Nyla (see story on page 3).

DIRECTIONS:

FROM I-70:

4 1/2 miles south of I-70 Exit 23, Brazil/Linton on State Road 59 and 2 1/2 miles east of State Road 59. (Turn left at the Ashboro Methodist Church.)

FROM BLOOMINGTON:

Take State Road 46 west through Spencer, three miles past Bowling Green. Turn right onto 200 E. Then turn right onto Ashboro Road.

NYLA THE TIGER
BY
DAN HUNT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
COLUMBUS ZOO

On July 21, 2000 the Capital Area Humane Society of Columbus, Ohio contacted the Columbus Zoo asking for assistance with the confiscation of a young female tiger. She was reported to be about four months old. Zoo staff met with the Humane Officers at a warehouse which was located just minutes from downtown. There they found a well adjusted, though under weight, tiger cub.

After much discussion, we were not able to determine who the owner of this animal was. The people who had her were acting as good samaritans and acquired the tiger from a neighbor.

As far as we could piece together, this is how Nyla came to be in the Columbus, Ohio, area.

There was a nightclub owner who was working with a promoter for a weekend event at his club. This promotion apparently revolved around a tiger cub. The owner of the club probably purchased Nyla from an auction in the Midwest for several thousand dollars. He brought her back to the club and the promotion went off as planned. However, when the promoter returned to the club the following week, the cat was still there confined to a crate in the back room. After several weeks had passed, the promoter asked the owner what he was going to do with her, since he continued to see her there weekend after weekend. The owner offered to sell her to the promoter for half of what he paid for her, and the deal was struck.

The promoter then took her to his home which was located on the northwest side of the city. There he kept her in a garage for several days or longer. A neighbor who lived across the street noticed the cat and offered to take her. At this point, Nyla was given away.

From this neighborhood, Nyla was taken to the warehouse where we picked her up. So, in 4 short months, she went from breeder, to auction, to nightclub owner, to promoter, to neighbor, to warehouse owner, and finally to our care. It was not surprising that she was underweight, nor was it a surprise when she developed a cataract in her left eye, most likely due to poor nutrition.

Before we began a search for a responsible home for her, we wanted to get her back into the best physical condition that we could. She gained weight and had a successful surgery on the cataract, restoring at least some vision in her left eye.

ARRIVAL AT EFRC

Nyla arrived here in January 2001. After a brief period of adjustment she was introduced to Cuddles and Jody, two tiger cubs who came to us in September from near Pittsburgh. Although the Columbus Zoo had taken good care of Nyla and tended to her medical needs she developed an abscess from a broken right upper deciduous canine tooth requiring extraction on February 5, 2001. She has recovered nicely and enjoys her two tiger friends.



Nyla

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