



A 501(c)3 Organization

CAT TALES



The Exotic Feline Rescue Center

A National Leader in Exotic Cat Rescue and Care

December 2012

Jenny's Rare Condition Improving

On the morning of September 11, 2012, the keepers at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center noticed Jenny, a female tiger, was acutely down in her hind end and was unable to move her rear limbs or tail. After consultation with the referring veterinarian Jenny was brought to the University of Illinois Veterinary Teaching Hospital for a further diagnostic work-up.

At the time of her arrival to the hospital, Jenny was unable to walk but remained bright and alert and would move her tail slightly when stimulated. During this visit Jenny was anesthetized and an MRI was performed. Upon analysis of the MRI images, a diagnosis of fibrocartilaginous embolic myelopathy (FCEM) was made. This is a condition that has been reported many times in domestic cats, but only twice in exotic felids (1 Sumatran tiger and 1 African lion). FCEM occurs when fibrocartilaginous material from a spinal disc occludes the spinal blood vessels, causing necrosis (breakdown) of portions of the spinal cord.



Jenny

There is no direct treatment for FCEM, and recovery is based on time and appropriate nursing care. Jenny has been receiving exceptional care at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center where staff and volunteers have been ensuring she receives her medications daily, adequate bedding, regular turning, skin care to prevent pressure sores and urine scalding, as well as adequate nutrition.

Since returning from the hospital at the University of Illinois, Jenny has been slowly gaining function back in her hind legs and is now able to stand up and take a few steps on her own! This type of recovery is quite remarkable in Jenny's case and has never been reported before in any other exotic felid with FCEM. The clinicians at the University of Illinois Zoo Medicine Service are very encouraged by Jenny's progress and we hope she continues to show improvements. She is a very special and loved tiger and we feel privileged to have had the opportunity to work so closely with Jenny and the team at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center.

(This article was written by Dr. Jennifer Flower, DVM, Resident in Zoological Medicine and Surgery, Illinois Zoologic and Aquatic Animal Residency Program, University of Illinois, Shedd Aquarium & Brookfield Zoo)

See "Timeline for Jenny" on page 5

Swedish Scientist Visits EFRC



Elainie and Bob

In August, we enjoyed hosting a visitor from Lund University in Sweden. Elainie Alenkaer Madsen has been studying contagious yawning in animals to determine whether there is an empathetic connection. She recently published a study that found dogs will yawn contagiously with humans. Contagious yawning is not only an indication of sleepiness but can be used as a measure of empathy.

With humans, research has shown that you are more likely to share a yawn with someone you are emotionally close to, and Madsen, originally from Denmark, is interested in determining whether that is also true with other species, and found the range of cats

and the groupings at the EFRC offered a perfect environment.

“Testing the cougars, tigers and lions at EFRC makes for a beautifully simple test,” she explained. “Cougars are solitary animals, so if contagious yawning only applies to group living animals, cougars shouldn’t show any evidence of contagious yawning. Tigers are semi-social, so this hypothesis would predict some contagious yawning in tigers. Lions on the other hand, live in close-knit social groups, and so we predicted that they would show very clear evidence of contagious yawning.”

Madsen and her research partner are preparing to publish the results of the study in an academic journal in early 2013, and while she has not finished analyzing the data, she offered some early observations. After days with the cats, Madsen said that as predicted the cougars showed no contagious yawning, and the tigers showed clear evidence, but she was surprised to see that the lions did not – at least with her. She eventually discovered they were more likely to yawn with a familiar EFRC staff member, someone who was not an “outsider.”

According to Madsen, tigers and lions might actually be helped by contagious yawning in the wild. It isn’t just a show of empathy – studies have shown that yawning increases focus.

“Probably this is one of the adaptive reasons why we yawn when we are bored,” she said. “So when it comes to group-living animals, contagious yawning makes sense, because a group that yawns together, stays alert together. Yawning is advantageous because that first animal to yawn acts as a sort of reminder to the other animals to stay alert. Especially if that first animal to yawn has detected something that it is worth staying alert for.”

Madsen said she “fell utterly in love with the place, the people, and a fair few of the cats” during her time at the EFRC. We enjoyed having her at the center, though we were all strangely tired during that week.

2013 EFRC SPECIAL EVENTS!

January 19	Charity Auction
April 13	Spring Fling
May 11	5K Run
June 15	Evening Roar I adults only
July 13	Summer Safari
August 10	Evening Roar II adults only
September 21	Fall Fest
November 2	Pumpkin Party
December	Winter Wonderland

Eight New Cats Come from Pennsylvania

The center continues to grow, welcoming eight cats at the end of the summer. In August we traveled to Pennsylvania to rescue three tigers, three lions, a serval, and a bobcat. These cats, who now have permanent homes at the center, had a history with us even before their arrival, as some of their friends have been here for a while.

The cats had been living at a sanctuary near Pittsburgh after being saved from an abusive situation. When that sanctuary began making preparations to close its doors, we agreed to provide homes for the remaining cats.



Mr. Bigglesworth



Blackie

Last spring, we added three cats from that group, including two who are now familiar to visitors: Blackie, a black leopard, and Munchie, a cougar, can be seen by the public on tours. Raja, a white tiger, was also rescued at that time. Of the eight August additions, the serval, Mr. Bigglesworth, can be seen on tours, while others are enjoying brand-new enclosures in a private area of the facility. Construction is a never-ending venture at the EFRC, as seen below.

Did you know it takes 175 bales of straw to give all our cats fresh straw, once?



6th Annual Saving the Big Cats Charity Auction - January 19, 2013

The 6th annual Saving the Big Cats Charity Auction to benefit the Exotic Feline Rescue Center will be held on Saturday, January 19, 2013 from 3:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at The Robert Irsay Pavilion in Carmel, Indiana.

Last year more than 300 big cat enthusiasts came out for a great day that raised more than \$42,000 for the EFRC. This year our goal is \$45,000 which will be used to assist with future rescues, building new enriched habitats, veterinary care and the day-to-day operation of the center.

Tickets are \$75 for a reserved seat at a table. \$50 for general admission. \$600 for a Friends & Family table of 8 seats. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information please visit our website.

Special Events Highlight a Busy Fall



Pumpkin Party 2012



Rescue Ride 2012



Pumpkin Party 2012



Evening Roar 2012

This summer and fall the EFRC hosted many wonderful special events. We thank all of our friends who came out for two Evening Roars and the large groups of family and friends who made both Fall Fest and Pumpkin Party such terrific days. As we witnessed again, nothing gets our cats talking like the sound of over 100 motorcycles rumbling down Ashboro Road for Rescue Ride!

Thank you to all our organizers, sponsors, staff and volunteers for pitching in and making these events truly successful.



Pumpkin Party 2012

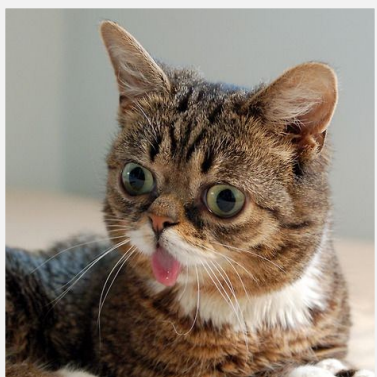


Fall Fest 2012

A special thank you to our friends at Beasley's Orchard in Danville, Indiana for donating nearly 150 pumpkins for Pumpkin Party!

Bring Your Family Out for Winter Wonderland @ the EFRC!
Saturday, December 15, 2012 - 3:00 pm

Internet Sensation "Lil Bub" Shares Her Good Fortune



At just 3 pounds, 15 ounces, Lil Bub, the runt of a feral litter of cats in Bloomington, Indiana, has become a darling of animal lovers all over the world. Affected with dwarfism and a genetic disorder that has kept her bones from growing properly, Bub has no teeth and an underdeveloped jaw, leaving her tongue perpetually sticking out, her trademark feature.

Bub and her owner, Mike Bridavsky, use her celebrity and revenue generated from her website to support her veterinary expenses and a variety of animal-welfare causes, including the EFRC. We say a big thank you to Lil Bub and wish her the very best!

Peter Emily Returns and Veterinary Updates

In September the Peter Emily Foundation made its fourth trip to the EFRC to do dental work on our cats. As in previous visits the University of Illinois (U of I) Veterinary School Anesthesia Department headed by Dr. Clark-Price had to provide the anesthesia, including the two large animal anesthesia machines. The large animal machines are necessary when longer surgeries are needed. During the past three visits they have provided two large animal anesthesia machines for the weekend so that two teams could be working at one time on the cats. In doing so the U of I became short on large animal machines for two days.



On their fourth visit U of I could only provide one machine. It is because of the need for not only dental work but other veterinary surgeries that we needed to purchase a large animal anesthesia machine for the clinic. This was done and it arrived a few days before the September visit.

SUMMARY OF VISITS BY PEIVDF

March 2011	September 2011	March 2012	September 2012
6 cats treated	6 cats treated	7 cats treated	7 cats treated
13 root canals	13 root canals	17 root canals	23 root canals
16 extractions	12 extractions	1 extraction	17 extractions

Veterinary expenses through November (not including the new anesthesia machine) have come to \$43,084.01. Our new anesthesia machine was purchased for \$5,619.00. This year to date we have treated 67 different cats through 93 veterinary visits. Total veterinary cost through November has been \$48,703.01. This amount would be higher if not for some of the medical supply donations from other organizations.

Timeline for Jenny (continued from p. 1)

September 11: Keepers discover that Jenny is not moving her hind legs and tail. We immediately call Dr. Froderman who arrives within minutes. Jenny is immobilized and a complete physical conducted. Preliminary treatment begins, and she is housed in the clinic area in two of our travel cages.

September 12-16: Jenny makes minimal progress, but remains unable to move hind legs and tail. In consultation with Dr. Froderman we decide to take her to the University of Illinois for further evaluation.

September 20: On the day of her appointment at U of I, Jenny moves her tail for the first time. During the appointment, an MRI reveals fibrocartilaginous embolic myelopathy, only the second time the condition has been reported in a tiger.

September 28: Jenny stands for the first time. She is still very weak and is unable to fully extend her hind legs.

October: Jenny continues to improve slowly but surely with dedicated medical, nutritional, and therapeutic care provided by keepers as instructed by the U of I experts. Regular standing is now interspersed with attempts to walk, and although the hind legs remain weak, there is marked progress, and she is moved out of the clinic and into an enclosure.

November: Jenny walks daily. Her strength and coordination are returning, and we hope to see her on top of her box soon! She is doing so well today, we believe, because of the close attention and quick response of our dedicated keeper staff and our primary care veterinarian, Dr. Froderman.

The Perfect Holiday Gifts for the Cat Lover on Your List!



Check out our website for your holiday shopping! Apparel, books, calendars, magnets, key rings and much, much more!

www.exoticfelinecenter.org/gift



A GREAT GIFT FOR YOUR CAT LOVER!



Stay the night at the EFRC! Take advantage of this unique opportunity to spend the evening among lions, tigers and seven other exotic cat species!

The room includes touring the center both days of your stay and accompanying the keepers to restricted areas not open to the general public. The room has a private entrance, bathroom with shower and tub, queen size bed, microwave, refrigerator, satellite television and a coffee pot with coffee and tea provided.

The cost of this special adventure is \$175 for two adults (no children or pets allowed) per evening and advance reservations are required.

Annual Membership Levels

Pride Membership - \$10,000

Name Bearing Plaque & overnight

Lion Membership - \$5,000

8 passes & overnight

White Tiger Membership - \$2,500

8 passes & t-shirt or hat

Tiger Membership - \$1,000

6 passes & t-shirt or hat

Leopard Membership - \$500

6 passes

Cougar Membership - \$250

4 passes

Lynx Membership - \$150

2 passes

____ This is a gift only, as I do not wish to receive any of the above items.

EFRC 2012 Gift and Merchandise Form

Thank you for your support of the Exotic Feline Rescue Center. Your commitment to the ongoing care of our cats will help to provide them with the best possible life.

The EFRC is a 501c(3) organization and all gifts are tax deductible to the full extent of the law and annual limitations. Please consult with your tax advisor.

If you are supporting the EFRC with a membership please specify the level:

_____ Membership.

If you are adopting or sponsoring a cat please note the species or the specific name of the cat you prefer: cat name: _____ ; species: _____.

My gift to the EFRC is: \$ _____

Adopt a Cat - \$1,500

8 x 10 color photo of your cat, certificate of adoption, 10 passes, newsletter

Sponsor a Cat - \$50

5 x 7 photo of your cat, certificate of sponsorship, 1 pass, newsletter

WE ACCEPT VISA, MASTERCARD & DISCOVER FOR ONLINE ORDERS AND ANNUAL GIFTS!

WWW.EXOTICFELINERESCUECENTER.ORG

Available Merchandise (please visit our website for a more complete list of available items or to order online)

SHORT SLEEVE T-SHIRT **SIZE** _____ (from child's small to XXXL) _____ **@ \$22.00** _____

Tiger (gray _____ orange _____) Bobcat (light green) _____

Lion (black) _____ Spotted Leopard (black) _____ Cougar (cedar red _____ sage green _____)

LONG SLEEVE T-SHIRT \$27.00 SWEATSHIRTS \$33.00 – Please phone or email to check on availability of long sleeve t-shirts and hoodies

HATS _____ **@ \$17.00** _____

Lion (green) _____ Cougar (black) _____ Tiger (tan & black) _____ White tiger (denim) _____ Paw Print (orange) _____ Black Leopard (gold) _____

2013 CALENDAR _____ **@ \$17.00** _____

Car Magnets: _____ Paw print _____ Ribbon with several cats _____ **@ \$6.00** _____

Books The Ridge, by Michael Koryta _____ **hardback @ \$27.00** _____ **paperback @ \$16.00** _____

Saving The Big Cats: The Exotic Feline Rescue Center _____ **@ \$40.00** _____

Video New EFRC 26 Minute Documentary _____ **@ \$15.00** _____

Total gift and merchandise enclosed: \$ _____

Name: _____ email: _____

Address: _____

_____ phone: _____

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