

Cat Tales

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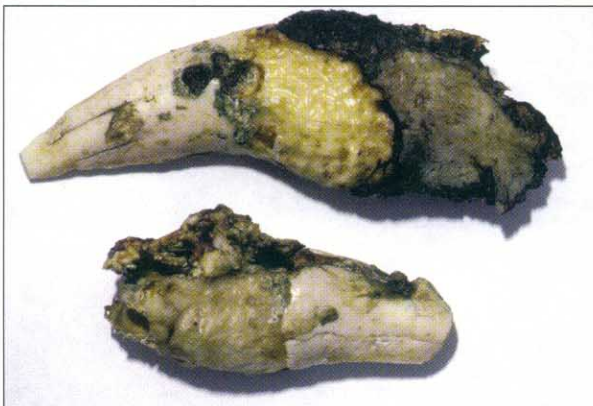
DRUG CATS

Shortly after police raided a meth lab we were contacted by USDA officials and asked if we could take in two tigers. While the USDA officials were closed mouthed about the reasons, CNN headlined, "drug zoo in Indiana..." and an Associated Press story told of drugs, stolen guns, tigers, leopards, wolves, and bears.

When we arrived we were greeted by five USDA officials from three states. As we walked around we saw an amazingly substandard facility. There were big cats in tiny filthy cages (some sick and suffering), dirty water or no water, no food or refrigeration, dead rats and pigeons, dried mud, no straw, 11 1/2 gauge chain link and no perimeter fence.

In an attempt to help, we took 200 pounds of chicken. The food was ignored and left on the driveway in the summer heat while barn cats picked at it and the big cats remained hungry. Later USDA officials confirmed that the chicken was still there when they left.

This is where we met Patti and Tony, the two tigers we were to take. It was very



Patti's removed canine teeth

apparent upon seeing Patti that she needed immediate medical attention. We called the University of Illinois Veterinary School and made an emergency appointment for the next day.



Patti

We left for the University at 5:30 A.M. and by 8:00 she was anesthetized and being evaluated by Dr. Manfra, Professor of Surgery and Dentistry. The examination revealed eight missing teeth, two terribly infected canine teeth and three others that had been broken, a two inch draining tract and osteomyelitis from the massive infection. Dr. Manfra told us the one canine tooth had to have been injured and decaying since she was about one or two years old. Her previous owner had confirmed that she had the drainage since he got her ten years ago concluding that Patti has been in pain for years. During the six hours of surgery, two canine teeth, one incisor, and numerous fragments of rotted teeth were removed. As the final stitches were being placed Patti developed a cardiac arrthemia and went into arrest. Thanks to immediate attention from Dr. Benson, Professor of Anesthesiology, and his team she was revived and her condition stabilized. Everyone was relieved when she was awake and able to head for her new home.

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While Patti was recovering we added a two deck climbing tower and made other improvements to their enclosure. Dr. Froderman came to our facility and examined, vaccinated, and neutered Tony.

With both cats improving they were introduced to their new area. Patti has recovered well from surgery. She appears to be pain free and is a long way from the frail 265 pounds she was two months ago. Tony too is doing quite well. We hope to be able to build them a permanent enclosure next summer.

Tony is the father of Tahoe, a tiger we rescued from northern Indiana in December 2000.

As this goes to press, the rest of the animals are still at the same place their fate undetermined.



Patti during surgery

Lovers Reunited

Cody and Samantha were mates who had lived together in Pennsylvania. They were separated by hundreds of miles when in August 2000 the USDA stepped in and seized animals from the most abusive situation we have ever encountered. Samantha came to us along with 17 other cats. Cody went to another rescue facility in Pennsylvania.

When Samantha was recently moved into a larger cage it became possible for us to consider taking Cody. Over the last two years we had talked frequently with the other facility and had been asked if we could take him.

On October 30 we set out to get Cody hoping they would remember each other. Once we arrived in Pennsylvania Cody seemed reluctant to come. After checking out the travel cage and with encouragement from Dr. Shepherd he loaded without any problems. He was totally relaxed during the eight hour drive home chuffing frequently when we talked to him.

The next morning we unloaded Cody and moved the travel cage next to Samantha's enclosure where they obviously knew each other. Their behavior was so friendly that we decided to put Cody right in. Minutes later they were getting reacquainted – smiles and chuffs.

Samantha's enclosure is located between Jafar (tiger) and the Munchkins (four tigers and three lions also from Pennsylvania). We were concerned about possible hostility upon moving another adult male tiger into this area. We are happy to report that we have seen no aggression between the two males. Cody acts as if he has lived here his whole life, as do his neighbors. He and Jafar seem quite comfortable and the Munchkins greeted him with curiosity and friendliness. Cody is the father of two of the Munchkins, Isabella and Rolo. Samantha is the mother of the other two Munchkin tigers Sabrina and Tabitha.

Visit our website for a complete story of Samantha and the other Pittsburgh cats in our December 2000 newsletter.



Cody and Samantha



Since Last Time

NEW ARRIVALS:

- Patti and Tony (tigers) - September 5, 2002
- Cody (tiger) – October 30, 2002

MEDICAL PROCEDURES:

- Tucker (lion) evaluation of lesion on gum
- Patti (tiger) complete evaluation and 6 hours of dental surgery
- Tony (tiger) complete evaluation and neuter
- India (tiger) eye examination
- Henry and Sampson (tigers) neuters
- Ginger and Jenny (tigers) spays

ENCLOSURES:

- Majae (serval) has moved into her outdoor enclosure.
- Pesha (cougar) has had her temporary area enlarged while she patiently waits on a permanent area.
- Tres and friends (tigers) have a new permanent area under construction.

WE NEED YOUR HELP

2001 was a difficult year for everyone – especially animal charities that depend upon the public for support. Many Americans gave money normally allocated for this to the 911 disaster fund. The plunging stock market took its toll on everyone's money and confidence. We are no exception. Donations for operating funds dropped \$30,000 from the previous year. While we borrowed money to finish projects already underway new projects have not been started and new cats have not been offered a home. With 130 cats our needs continue to grow. Food, veterinary care, labor, and the need for new permanent enclosures continues.

We have four adult cats that need spayed or neutered immediately to prevent births. We have had a drastic increase in the number of animals needing a home. We need your financial support more than ever – please help.

Bad News

India, the white tiger, was examined at the University of Illinois after she started walking into trees. The examination showed she suffers from retinal deterioration. Nothing can be done for this condition and she will gradually go blind. This is probably a genetic condition although it can also be caused by poor nutrition as an infant. We may be forced to build her a new cage with a less challenging environment (fewer trees and underbrush) and make other adaptations for her as we have Charlie. We want to insure that she can live out her life in comfort.

THANK YOU

We want to thank everyone who has given time, material, and money to help care for these deserving cats. Without your help it would not be possible.

*We Wish you a wonderful Holiday Season
and a
Happy New Year.*

DIRECTIONS:

FROM I-70:

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

FROM BLOOMINGTON:

Take State Road 46 west about 35 miles. Three miles past Bowling Green turn right onto 200 E. Go 1/2 mile and turn right onto Ashboro Road.

We want to assure all of our supporters that we do not share our mailing list including membership/sponsorship information with any other organizations.