

March/April 2008



VALLEY OF THE KINGS SANCTUARY & RETREAT

The Dug Mark

Sanctuary News

Welcome March and April, two months closer to summer! This has been a brutal winter for everyone but we have all made it through and are not looking forward to the spring rains. Flooding is our greatest concern for the moment and it is everywhere. We've had record amounts of snowfall with little melting and everything is now defrosting all at once. We are praying Spring will not follow suit, as with Winter, and bring strong storms with record rainfall. The volunteers have been scrambling to create small water troughs through enclosures to keep things dry as best they can. Standing water is a serious problem! When it freezes during the night it can be treacherous the next day, especially for hoofed stock.

We have had many large and small animals come to us with broken legs throughout the winter, from local residents. Other than locking stock in barns all winter, there are no means of protecting them and many fall prey to the elements.

Many Thanks to each and every person who made it possible for us to keep the animals warm, dry, safe and well fed this winter. We could not survive without our dedicated members and we thank you all from the bottom of our hearts.

We receive no State or Federal funding of any kind and the Sanctuary depends on your open hearts and

love for those creatures in our care. The cost of maintaining our animals is astronomical and prices keep rising month to month with rising fuel costs and the shrinking dollar. It can at times be extremely difficult to make it through each month and not be in the red, but the love of the animals keeps us all going.

To make a difference where it is needed and to educate all who pass through our gates is why we are here. Welcome Spring!

Love and Extra Big Hugs,
Jill, Jim and Animal Friends



Exotics In Captivity

Are animals better off in captivity than in the wild like their relatives? We wish every one of our enclosures was empty, but that would only be if we lived in a "perfect world". Some day we may live in a perfect world and we hope to live to see that special day. If an animal is born in the wild, it should remain in the wild unless some type of intervention is needed, an orphaned, abandoned baby or a mother killed. Intervention should take place, if at all possible, rather than see biologists stand by and do nothing but document that baby's death on the Discovery Channel. Being in the wild is beautiful and at times a cruel harsh life, but one to which adult animals are accustomed.

Being born in the wild and being born in captivity are two different things. Once born in captivity, animals are our complete responsibility. They did not have a voice or choice and humans decided who and when they would be born, either through planning or stupidity. Once an animal is born in captivity, they do not learn to fear humans from their parents nor learn necessary skills to hunt prey. They are usually made completely defenseless by being de-clawed, some defanged and 99% are bottle fed. They are imprinted on humans from the moment they are born.

Each year we receive many letters asking "Why can't we return those in our care back into the wild?". If you took a captive exotic and set it free it would first be terrified of the open space. Death would likely come slow through starva-

tion, a vehicle accident or poaching. Habitats diminish daily for those who reside in the wild, and in wildlife preserves, poaching is the number one cause of death. You see, these animals are worth nothing alive, but dead they are worth thousands upon thousands of dollars for their various parts. If we are to live on this planet in harmony with wildlife, they need our honor, respect and protection for their very existence. Captive animals do not fear humans or our machines, they do not question where their processed food comes from because they never ever had to kill to survive. They were born to live their days out in captivity. Many will live to see 20-30 plus years, unlike those in the wild, where most would only live to 10 or 12 years of age. We care for them, they are loved, fed and pampered.

True sanctuaries pick up the pieces of those brought into captivity. Abandoned, abused and unwanted, or the product of changing events in a former owner's life that eventually affect a beloved animal. We have seen and heard it all. Picking up the pieces and putting animals' lives back together is beyond anything one could ever describe. To have an incoming animal frightened, dangerous and unpredictable, then to be able to turn that animal around in a few short months to be loving, happy and well adjusted is such a blessing. To give an animal a second chance at life and know in your heart you did the right thing makes it all worthwhile.

We have had big cats come in

with bones sticking out the ends of their toes from botched de-clawing and animals that were living skeletons from neglect and abuse. They have been restored by our veterinarians and volunteers with months of TLC. To see how happy they are now and released from years of misery gives our hearts — and yours — a huge smile. The animals are grateful for a second chance when they thought no one cared. Grateful for human friends that they were designed to love at birth but were denied those rights as well as the right to be born into the wild.

We humans have taken so very much from all the living creatures on this planet. Good sanctuaries try to make it right. The animals deserve the very best and nothing less; it is our responsibility to give that to them and we always will for as long as sanctuaries like ours need to be in existence.

The printing of this newsletter was donated by the good folks at

Vance Printing

Beloit, Wisconsin

608-362-2049

In loving memory of

Dennis Vance



Are you looking for a way to help the sanctuary financially, but don't know how? VOTK now accepts PayPal!

PayPal is a **secure** internet-based way to send and receive money. All you need is an email address and a credit card. Anyone can use PayPal to buy gift shop items, buy or renew memberships, or donate money to the sanctuary.

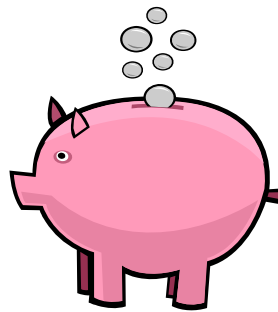
To use PayPal, simply log onto **www.paypal.com**. You will have to set up your own personal PayPal account (it's free), then click on "send money". Enter our email address **info@votk.org** for general contributions to VOTK or to donate to our **special moving and construction fund**. Enter the amount you wish to send. You can pay either with a credit card or checking account.

The sanctuary will then get an email, informing them of your donation. It's a quick and easy way to make a difference to the sanctuary, even if you can't make it up to see us every weekend!!



If you write us a check for a donation, please note on the check whether it is for our moving fund or for general fund.

HELP US TO GIVE THE ANIMALS ALL THEY DESERVE AND MORE BY CREATING A SAFE HAVEN AND TRUE SANCTUARY FOR ALL ETERNITY.



The Sanctuary can now accept Visa, MasterCard and American Express. We take major credit cards at the gift shop, over the phone for donations or membership, and at all fund raisers. We are thrilled this service is now available to our members and prospective members.

- ☐ Master Card
- ☐ Visa
- ☐ American Express
- ☐ Discover

Card Number:

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Expiration Date

Signature

Name (printed)

Address

City/State/Zip

Donate your used vehicles

We are looking for two and four wheel drive trucks, dump trucks, trailers (Gooseneck or pull behind), cars, boats, campers, all terrain vehicles, farm and lawn tractors any size to be



donated to the Sanctuary to use or raise funds to help the animals. If we receive enough vehicles, we will have an auction day. All vehicles donated are tax deductible to the fullest extent. We ask that they be in good shape and road worthy.

Any make, model or year. We have volunteers that can pick them up. Please ask your friends, family and relatives; this fundraising idea has a huge potential.

Contact Mary Bashford at 773-631-3142 or the Sanctuary at 262-736-9386.

In Memory of Togar: 8/18/1984 to 2/16/2008

It is with great sadness that I report the loss of our beloved old lion, Togar, who quietly passed away in his sleep the night of February 16th, 2008. Togar was loved by many and had a very distinct roar like none other. It is with a heavy heart as I write this because Togar was my absolute favorite lion. He was a pure-bred black-maned Atlas Lion, which at present are virtually extinct. The small number of Atlas lions that are

tigers. Togar could not be used because of a fractured hip he sustained when becoming tangled in fencing at a holding area where he was on display. He was a very stout and fat baby lion with a very outgoing personality. He cuddled with me each night and would suck on my thumb. When he fell asleep he would wake and root for my thumb and then fall fast asleep once more. This went on all night long, each and every night!



He was house broken and would run to the door when he needed to go outside. Togar was such a delight to raise, his energy was very sweet but yet, always so proud and full of life. He carried himself with assurance and very aware of all that was around him. We miss him more than any words I could ever bring forth on paper and my heart is heavy with sadness with

his passing.

left in the world primarily reside in captivity and few if any can be found in the wild.

Togar's original family of seventeen pride members were harvested for their skins by a man in Neshkora, Wisconsin. He was on probation for poaching 200 black bears from the wild back in the 80's for skins and gall bladders.

Unfortunately, when exotics are born into captivity, lions, tigers, bears etc.. you can do whatever you want with them regardless if they are an endangered species or not. They are considered endangered only in the wild not in captivity.

Togar had been at the Sanctuary since he was four months old. He came from an exhibit that traveled the country, where you could get your picture taken with baby lions and

Togar and his original mate, Simber, lived together for 19 years. During their time together we tried to introduce a lioness named Sabrina, from Arkansas, that was part of the 'Ten Pen'. They did not accept Sabrina at all. Togar and Simber were more laid back in personality and we tried for several weeks. They also had a crippled young lioness named Jundra in with them that was severely stunted by her previous owner. Simber loved little Jundra and treated her like her own cub. One day there was a disagreement between Jundra and Sabrina. It was very interesting to watch Togar and Simber place themselves in front of little Jundra to protect her and fend off Sabrina. We took Sabrina out of the enclosure that afternoon and placed her alone. She had mental issues that would not allow her to be placed with another lion.

A few years before Simber's passing, Togar needed surgery for a blocked bowel. He had a mega colon and had suffered with it for years. It took Dr. Rudawski over five hours to relieve Togar's blocked bowel and we didn't know for more than three weeks if he was going to survive. Simber on the other hand didn't pine or hover over Togar trying to make him feel better. Instead she paid more interest in the three brothers, living in the enclosure across the aisle, letting them know she was "available" by doing her best Mae West impression! Togar did recover after many weeks of TLC from us and around the 3 week mark we woke to Togar's beautiful roars in the middle of the night and knew he was going to be all right. He had to have chicken livers each week the remainder of his life to keep his bowels moving properly.

A few years later Simber needed emergency surgery when she had a hot pyo (an infection in her uterus). The surgery went very well and was uneventful, however she had to recover away from Togar. Togar lay as close to the fence by Simber as he possibly could and would not leave her side. When we went in to give her antibiotics or change her bedding and dressings, he would call to her in a worried voice and pace until we left her alone. When we were able to reunite them, Togar fawned over her and was so happy to be back with his mate.

Simber died of kidney failure during the winter of 2002. Her final days were spent under blankets in our dining room in an effort to save our beloved lioness but it was not meant to be. Simber was 19 years old when she passed from this world and to honor her passing we took her body to Togar so he would understand why she was not coming back. Togar frantically pawed from the other side

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)

of the fence and cried loudly for his beloved Simber. He then laid down and quietly observed her lifeless body, softly calling for her with a sad soulful voice. He looked at us with searching eyes asking us to bring his beloved Simber back.

Togar wasn't the same after Simber's passing and we immediately paired him with Showka, a lioness who came in with the ten pen boys on a seizure from Arkansas. She was an elderly lioness that was ousted by her daughters, due to old age, and had been living alone for a few years. Showka and Togar lived together for two years until Showka died in 2004 from old age issues.

Kali, Togar's last mate, was from Florida and was a perfect match for Togar. She reminded us of Simber and has that special kindness about her. Kali kept Togar on his toes and has a tail fetish. How she loved the tuft on the end of his tail and would spend hours trying to catch it and have fun at Togar's expense. They curled up with each other, groomed one another and as Togar's body started to fail would bring him his dinner.

Kali has taken Togar's passing in stride and accepted his death immediately. We will attempt to pair her with Samson as soon as the weather permits, as they both now live alone. We will divide Kali's enclosure to allow them to get used to one another.

We tried to pair Samson with the girls next to the ten pen but they are too aggressive for him and he has been living a lonely bachelor life waiting for the right lady. He and Kali's personality should mesh nicely and both are still young with many healthy years ahead of them.

After Togar's passing, I heard both his and Simber's roars for several nights in a row. I

Emergency Transport Van needed

The Sanctuary is in need of a newer or new cargo van, one ton for emergency transport of animals to and from our Veterinarians. Must be dependable with low miles. Being stuck in the middle of nowhere with a tiger on board is not something we wish to experience, so it must be extremely dependable! The van we now have is old, needs to be retired and has in excess of 150,000 miles on it.



knew Togar was comforting me from the other side by letting me know he and his beloved Simber were together and young once more and I shouldn't grieve. But grief through acceptance of what once was is the human way and I will always have a piece of my heart entwined with Togar and Simber for all eternity. They are missed so very much and loved beyond any words I could ever express. We were blessed to have known and loved them and also by all who were fortunate enough to meet them through the years. Our lives continue with all those who have gone beyond, walking side by side with us until the day we can be together once again. Draw a circle not a heart around those you love because a heart can break and a circle goes on forever. As our love for one another is an all encompassing circle that lasts for all eternity. No boundaries, no borders, all one, two and four legged, connected and all live as one within our majestic universe.



Letter from a Member:

*Dear Valley of the Kings,
As a relatively new member, I
was there this past Saturday for a
tour. It became obvious that there
was a passing away of one of
your large cats when I arrived. I
understood you love those ani-
mals in need with a very positive
and humane environment and
are to be highly commended for
this. Thank you for this opportu-
nity to assist with your
cause.*

Special Thanks to all who helped
with the **Great Lakes Pet Show**
on February 2nd. We raised
\$604.73.

Extra Thanks too to **George and
Felicia Gettler, Dave Powell,
Donna Bradham, Kathy Mc
Cargo and Sharon and Larry
Moen**

NOTE: iGive.com \$50,000 Sur-
fathon for a good cause. Surf
Online Stores. Tell Your
Friends. Win \$1,000 for Your Fa-
vorite Cause! They are giving
away \$1000 donations to 5 causes
every month through July 2008.

In Memory of beloved friend and member **Don Edwards.**

The Sanctuary lost a very loved
man who dedicated his free time
to help those in our care for many
years. Don worked on our elec-
tricity and helped with odd jobs
around the Sanctuary. He was
very knowledgeable, had an infec-
tious laugh and loved life. When
Jim and I were married on Valen-
tines Day at the Sanctuary 1997,
Don walked me up the path and

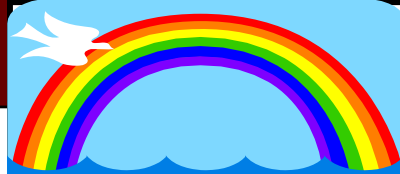
stood in for my father. Don was
such a bright and beautiful shining
star in all our lives and was so
loved. His memory will live on
and we were blessed to have
known and love him.

In memory of Marley

On March 11th we had to put
Marley, our big black Percheron,
to sleep due to an infection in
both his rear legs. It is common in
horses that have feathering on
their legs and not easy to diagnose.
We also discovered Marley was in
his 30's, not 23 years old like his
owner told us. Marley had the
infection when he came; no one
picked up on it, not the horse
shoer or the attending veterinarian
that treated him for a cut on his
rear leg prior to his diagnoses. It
was not treatable so we let him go.
It was very sad for us but now we
are focusing all our attention on
Justice and making arrangements
to have his cataract surgery at the
University of Madison in April.
We will keep you updated.



Sand Needed! Lots of it!



In Memory of ...

In loving memory of our be-
loved father, **Donald George
Edwards: 3/31/28 - 1/13/08.**
Thank you for making one of my
father's dreams possible with
aiding wildlife.

Regards,
Deb Edwards

In Memory of **Kelsey Kane**,
beloved Golden Retriever of
Karen, John, Maddy and Wes.



Lay back and relax.
I can handle
your legal needs

Tel 847.691.1665
Fax 847.991.9962

Joseph Crimmins
Attorney at Law

182 S. Stonington Drive
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VALLEY OF THE KINGS SANCTUARY

Yes I want to give a VOTK membership to a very special friend.

I am enclosing \$ _____ for:

- _____ 6-month Membership(s) @ \$60 each
- _____ 6-month Family Membership(s) \$75
- _____ 1-year Membership(s) @ \$120 each
- _____ 1-year Family Membership(s) \$150
- _____ 6-month Senior Membership(s) @ \$30 each
- _____ 1-year Senior Membership(s) @ \$60 each
- _____ Please send a gift card to announce my gift.



I am enclosing a tax-deductible donation of \$ _____ for _____

Gift to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Gift from:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Please mail this form, along with your check, to:

VALLEY OF THE KINGS SANCTUARY W7593 Townhall Road Sharon, WI 53585-9728

☐

Please check here if you require a receipt

EVENTS COMING UP!

May 17th, the Diablos Lobos Motorcycle Club, Delavan, WI, will hold their annual fund raiser for VOTK. Contact Rick Hewiler at breeze.11200@yahoo.com for more information.

May 18th the House of Harley-Davidson, Milwaukee, WI H.O.G. Chapter, will be hosting the 2nd Annual Arlan Strehlow ("*The Guy with the Horns*") Ride to benefit the animals at VOTK. For information contact Jayne at 414-426-8685.

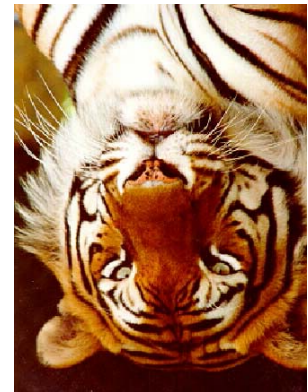
Starting in June there will be a campfire for members the last Saturday of each month through October. Dress for the elements, bring lawn chairs, blankets and a dish to pass. We hope there will be a great turn out this year! Remember, all children must have adult supervision at all times.

**Sanctuary Visiting Hours:
Saturdays and Sundays 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

Tours only at 2:00 and 4:00 Saturdays and Sundays. Workdays are every Saturday from 10:30 a.m. till 5:00 p.m. If you want to help make a difference in the lives of the animals, please consider joining our Construction Crew. For information regarding construction projects or general volunteering opportunities, please contact the Sanctuary at 262-736-9386

**Sanctuary is closed on holidays. We are not open to the public.
Members must have valid membership card.
(Sorry, we cannot accept new memberships at the gate.)**

We're on the web!
www.votk.org



***Dedicated to the rescue and refuge of abused,
abandoned, injured and retired exotic animals.***

W7593 Townhall Road
Sharon, Wisconsin 53585-9728
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED
Phone: 262-736-9386
Fax: 262-736-2020
Email: info@votk.org

**VALLEY OF THE KINGS SANCTUARY
& RETREAT**

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