

CHEETAH STRIDES

ISSUE NO 10
2 Q 2015

The newsletter of the Cheetah Conservation Fund

TRAP AND RELEASE

NEW PUPPY

JEWELRY

FALL TOUR



Photo by Eli Walker



Help us keep the cheetah where it belongs:

In the wild.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR



I can hardly believe we are already three-quarters of the way through our 25th anniversary year. We've been busy celebrating this milestone achievement hosting thousands of visitors eager to learn about the cheetah and working on the programs that give rise to this year's theme, Changing the World to Save the Cheetah, which encapsulates our vision and mission.

CCF has come a long way in 25 years, thanks to the hard work and dedication of our staff and of supporters like you. When I remember back to 1990, the year we founded CCF, Namibian farmers were still relying on the ways of the past and their conflict with the cheetah was taking a devastating toll. Because of indiscriminate trapping and killing, the numbers of wild cheetah were at an all-time low, half of the population of a decade earlier.

But 25 years of learning, developing and applying our strategies to mitigate this conflict and save this species have made a world of difference. Today, almost double the number of cheetah exist in Namibia, and our programs are extending over national borders and are embraced as part of the range wide strategy to save the species in the region and throughout other regions in Africa. Namibia is now widely known as "The Cheetah Capital of the World."

In these same 25 years, CCF has grown into a world-class International Conservation Research and Education Centre, with a model farm and a vast wildlife reserve. Our education programs have reached more than 400,000 young learners. We have trained hundreds of undergrad college and university students as well as Masters and PhD candidates in biology, zoology, genetics and agriculture. Farmers are learning to live with predators on their land through our Future Farmers of Africa trainings. To date, more than 4,500 rural farmers have earned certificates, and that number continues to grow exponentially as we take this training out into the community through our newest endeavor, the Greater Waterberg Landscape Initiative.

Through our efforts here in Namibia, we have developed the techniques and know-how to show others that humans and cheetahs can live in harmony if habitat, wildlife and livestock are all managed properly. I really hope to see you on my U.S. Fall Tour so I can update you in person about our programs and share the success we have been experiencing, in large part thanks to you.

If you are not located in or near one of the cities I will visit, there is still time for you to come see us in Namibia in 2015 or next year! If you witness CCF firsthand, you can better inform your friends and family about what we do, and encourage them to volunteer or intern, too. We need to raise an army of conservationists and scale up our efforts to create a permanent place for cheetahs on Earth!

Please help us mark our 25th anniversary by continuing to support our mission to save the cheetah. Visit our web site, www.cheetah.org, to find out more ways you can help. I look forward to seeing you soon.

With much gratitude,

Dr. Laurie Marker
Founder and Executive Director

Get Ready for International Cheetah Day!
December 4th is fast approaching, so how will you celebrate ICD 2015?

Otjiwarongo designated as the "Cheetah Capital of the World," due in large part to CCF's presence in the community.

CCF expands its education efforts; staff visits 105 schools and gives presentations to approximately 20,000 students.



TRAPPED AND RELEASED



Three months ago CCF received a phone call from a livestock and game farmer, Mr. Rian White, in northern Namibia. He had trapped two wild cheetahs and wanted them removed from his property and relocated elsewhere, a request the organization used to receive with some regularity but much less frequency in recent times. Dr. Marker was familiar with this farm, as 10 years earlier she relocated cheetahs Mr. White's father trapped on the same land. But what happened next was not the norm and provides evidence that CCF's programs are working in so many wonderful ways. Dr. Marker explains:

After an initial phone conversation, the farmer's son, Ivan, came to CCF to discuss the options, with release back onto the family's farm being the one we were advocating. The next day CCF staff and I went to the farm to pick up the cheetahs. After working with the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) to get the proper transport permits, we brought the cheetahs back to CCF.

The following day, Rian, Ivan, the two cheetahs and two workers who run the farm made the trek to CCF from their home in Grootfontein, an area nearly five hours to the north bordering on Mangetti National Park. Obed, the MET warden from the regional office, who coincidentally had been a natural resource intern at CCF while studying at the Polytechnic of Namibia, also made the journey to assist. As with all wild cheetahs, CCF staff did a work-up on the cats, sampling them for blood, tissue and collecting and banking sperm (both were males, brothers from the same litter). Everyone watched as this was

being done with great interest, especially Ivan, who studied conservation while a graduate student in South Africa before he returned home to help run the family farm.

While we were working on the cheetahs, I explained what we were doing and asked them to assist when needed. I told them about CCF's programs and range-wide strategies that enable farmers and predators like the cheetah to peacefully coexist in the same geographic area. I also explained that other cheetahs would soon occupy his land if these two males were removed. With this information, Rian, with some additional convincing by Ivan and Obed, agreed to release the brothers back onto his land, but with a satellite radio tracking-collar on one of them and our promise of regular monitoring reports. He realized it would be better for him if he knew the cheetahs on his land and where they were, rather than dealing with unknown predators.

Now we send the White family and MET a map of where the cheetahs range on a weekly basis so they can keep up with them. The Whites have reported no incidents with the cheetahs since taking them back. Healthy and living as nature intended on open grasslands, the once-trapped cheetah brothers are thriving.

We are very pleased that Rian accepted our suggestions and believe both he and his family are happy with the outcome. By helping usher in the modern era of predator-friendly farming techniques in Namibia, the Whites are setting a terrific example for other farmers, and the data we collect from the collared cat will help us continue to develop strategies to protect the cheetah in its natural habitat.



top photo: Released cheetah workup
bottom photo: Dr. Laurie Marker with Rian White and Obed Rukoro

CCF begins production of Bushblok and becomes certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

CCF publishes five scientific papers encompassing spatial distribution of cheetahs in Namibia, swing gates as a non-lethal predator exclusion technique and habitat suitability.

2005



2006



Q&A

WITH DR. MARKER:
Tracking Cheetahs, Then and Now

Q: When did you begin tracking cheetahs, and how did you do it?

A: We began tracking cheetahs in 1992. In the early days, we used what are known as VHF collars. We would have to fly over the savanna to find the collared cheetahs. Twice a week we went in a small plane, flown by our famous French pilot, Jack Imbert. We could track cheetahs for about three to four hours at a time, usually early in the morning before the wind got started, then we would have to land and refuel.

Q: How many cheetahs have you tracked during your 25 years in Namibia?

A: We have released more than 600 cheetahs back into the wild, and all these cheetahs have been given a transponder (under the skin), as well as an ear tag. We have radio collared nearly 80 cheetahs.

Q: What is the most important thing you've learned?

A: Our research found that cheetahs cover huge home ranges, about 800 square miles. This was a very important chapter in my doctoral thesis and the first research that described how cheetahs live on farmlands. This knowledge inspired us to develop our non-lethal predator control methods, as well as the programs that help develop livelihoods for rural people living alongside cheetahs.

Q: How is tracking cheetahs different today?

A: Now we use satellite collars and the data comes to us (most of the time) on our computers. Once we get the download each morning, we go out and track the cheetah on foot if it is in an area where we have access. We go to kill sites and collect the remains of what the cheetah's killed. It is expensive, as satellite collars are \$5,000 each, but the cost of flying was also very high.

LONE SURVIVOR: And his name is... Hercules!



Back in late July, one of CCF's Livestock Guarding Dogs, Isha, was due to deliver a litter of puppies. But after sitting up with her all night long, Dr. Marker and the CCF veterinary staff knew something was wrong. At 5:30 a.m., CCF General Manager Dr. Bruce Brewer, CCF veterinarian Dr. Andrew Di Salvo, vet nurse Grace Warner, Dr. Marker, and her assistant, Teresia Robitschko, loaded Isha into a CCF vehicle and made the 45-minute drive to Otjiwarongo. The town's vet was on standby, waiting to receive them at her clinic.

Upon arrival, the vet immediately performed an emergency Cesarean section on Isha, the first in the history of CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Program. The procedure was just in time to save two of Isha's four puppies. One puppy was stuck in the birth canal, but being a strong-willed fighter, he managed to make it out alive. Another littermate survived the surgery, but unfortunately two others did not.

The two puppies that survived the C-section went back to CCF with Isha. At first both seemed to be doing fine. But a week later, the one taken from the uterus was so weak he passed away after several days of intensive medical care. That left just one strong-willed puppy remaining. The good news is both he and his mother are now doing fine!

When he grows up, this little survivor will most likely be a Livestock Guarding Dog Ambassador. He will have the chance to go out with our community outreach team, teaching communities how to take care of their livestock and helping inform them about our Livestock Guarding Dog Program that reduces livestock losses and saves cheetahs lives. The puppy

Dr. Marker initiates cheetah reproductive, genetic and gastritis studies with Smithsonian Institution and National Cancer Institute researchers. CCF launches Livestock Guarding Dog Program with 10 puppies from the U.S. and holds first cheetah workshop for Namibian vets.

Chewbaaka, CCF's first Ambassador Cheetah, arrives as a 10-day-old orphan. First of the livestock guarding dogs bred at CCF are placed with local farmers.

1994



1995



may even travel to these communities with Dr. Di Salvo, our new veterinarian who was part of the team that helped save his life.

NAME THE PUPPY E-CONTEST

CCF asked for your help in naming this tough little guy. By collecting votes via email for names put forth by CCF staff, supporters like you chose the name of our lone survivor.

The suggestions were Karabash, Pasha, Birki, Olan, Hercules, Cuneyt, Bir, Yuklu, and Dave. Most fittingly, the winning name by a landslide belonged to the strongest man in Greek mythology, Hercules or Herkül in the Turkish spelling (both are pronounced the same).



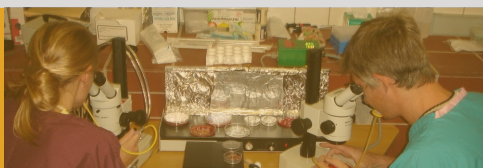
Hercules is also the name of a full-sized dachshund that was himself a legend and beloved member of CCF supporter Doug Knight's family. Committed to helping sponsor a CCF dog every year, Doug hopes to travel to Namibia next year to meet the new Hercules in honor of his old pal.

NEW PUPPY WAGON

In recognition of CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Program being founded upon two of Turkey's rare dog breeds, the Anatolian shepherd and the Kangal, the Turkish International Cooperation Development Agency (TIKA) is donating a new 4x4 double-cab truck to CCF. The vehicle will be used to deliver puppies and check on adult dogs already placed on farms. TIKA President Serdar Çam will travel to CCF in mid-October to officially hand over the keys.

A collaborative partnership between CCF, Smithsonian Institution and UC California at Davis researchers produces the first in vitro cheetah embryos developed to the blastocyst stage.

2007



NEW INTERNATIONAL PATRON



Welcome, Hon. Professor Peter Katjavivi!

CCF has a new International Patron of a very distinguished background in higher education and international service. Honorable Professor Peter Katjavivi, is presently the Speaker of the National Assembly in Namibia. A longtime familiar face of the Namibian government, he was also a member of the country's Constituent Assembly and a signatory to Namibia's Independence Constitution.

Prior his current role, Hon. Professor Katjavivi served the Namibian government as the Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Germany from 2006 to 2008, and before that he was the Ambassador to the Kingdom of Belgium, The Netherlands, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg and the European Union.

Hon. Professor Katjavivi was also a Special Advisor on Higher Education to the Government of Namibia from 1990 to 1992, before becoming the Founding Vice-Chancellor of the University of Namibia from 1992 through 2003.

CCF is very excited to welcome the Hon. Professor Katjavivi to the international CCF family and looks forward to doing many wonderful things together.

To sponsor a Livestock Guarding Dog visit www.cheetah.org and view 'Sponsor a Dog' under 'Donate'.

*photo opposite page: Newborn puppy Hercules
photos this page: top: Dr. Marker pinning Prof. Katjavivi
left: Doug Knight's dachshund Hercules*

2008



International conservationists convene at CCF for the first training courses in community outreach and cheetah conservation biology and farmer training funded by the Howard G. Buffet Foundation's African Cheetah Initiative and The National Zoo.

GREATER WATERBERG PROJECT EXPANDS

CCF's newest endeavor, the Greater Waterberg Landscape Initiative, is gaining traction in the targeted Eastern Communal lands (also known as Hereroland), and is growing on what seems to be a daily basis. With funds provided by a grant from the 10th European Development Fund and additional support from Disney Conservation Fund, Busch Gardens, the Cheetah Species Survival Plan, and the Ohstrum Foundation, among others, CCF is taking its Future Farmers of Africa training course into this rural region and making it available to farmers who otherwise would not be able to participate. In addition, CCF is ramping up its craft workshops to train other people in the community to become artisans, who will then be qualified to take part in regional cooperative craft centers.

The newest staff member to join CCF is Dr. Andrew Di Salvo, a research veterinarian and recent graduate of Cornell University. Dr. Di Salvo is very involved with the GWL Initiative and spends several days each month in Hereroland. To establish a baseline, he is currently assessing the health of the livestock herds in the area. Dr. Di Salvo reports that many of the livestock he's examined are not very healthy because they are not receiving basic care. His findings indicate most are not being fed supplements, which are important in the arid environment, and often they are not getting vaccinations to prevent the more



photo this page: Dr. Andrew Di Salvo
photos opposite page: top: Greater Waterberg craft workshop
bottom: Kids from Valley Charter show off their cheetah buttons.

serious health issues.

Dr. Di Salvo realizes he has a lot of work to do. In the next three months he will be developing the a herd healthcare program and planning the next stages for the coming year, which will include assessments in more villages of the eastern communal area and in different regions, as well as the placement of assistants who will help enact the program, including Animal Health Extension Officers.

In cooperation with Ricky Khaxab, founder of the Peace Collection, CCF staff members are assisting with craft workshops on an increasing basis in the GWL. People are being trained to make jewelry and art, which CCF and the Peace Collection are working to find retail outlets for sales. One of the program's goals is for the artisans to generate enough income so they can buy their own materials, then sell their crafts to both tourists as well as international markets.

"The momentum of this program is really

DR. MARKER'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY NORTH AMERICAN TOUR

UPCOMING EVENTS:

Toronto, ON.

October 1st
Gala Event - Hosted by CCF
Canada

Denver, CO.

October 16th
Cheetah Fundraiser

Portland, OR.

October 4th
Big Cat. Big Party.

New York, NY.

October 20th
Explorers Club Lecture and
Dinner

Santa Rosa, CA.

October 8th
Lecture and Dinner at Safari
West

Washington, DC.

October 22nd
14th Annual DC Gala

San Francisco, CA.

October 10th
WCN Booth & Book Signing

For more info:
www.cheetah.org/events/

HUMANS FOR CHEETAHS EVENTS

Portland, OR.

October 4th
Portland Marathon

San Antonio, TX

December 6th
San Antonio Rock 'n' Roll
Marathon

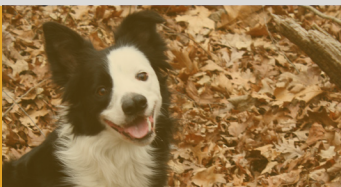
To participate or sponsor a runner:
<https://www.crowdrise.com/cheetah>

CCF acquires its first scat-sniffing dog, a Border Collie named Finn, to assist with demographic and home range research.

The Explorers Club recognizes Dr. Marker with the Lowell Thomas Award; CCF celebrates its 20th anniversary.

CCF declares Dec. 4 to be the first International Cheetah Day, now an annual event.

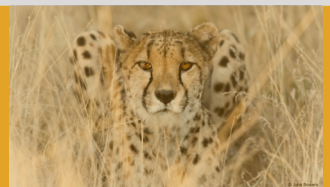
2009



2010



2011





picking up. People are responding very well to the workshops” said Ricky Khaxab. The newest product is a ‘save the cheetah’ beaded bracelet which CCF hopes to get into zoos that house cheetahs in an effort to expand the partnership between insitu and exsitu.

JEWELRY FOR CHEETAHS



Making jewelry to save cheetahs has become an endeavor gaining popularity on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean. First grade teachers Kris Nakano and Jennifer Melyan of the Valley Charter Elementary School in North Hills, California, and their class of 6 and 7 year-olds raised an incredible \$1,400 for CCF through the sale of jewelry made by them and sold to other students in their school.

Explained Kris Nakano:

At Valley Charter we practice Project Based Learning. We posed the question: How can we, as conservationists, help save endangered animals? This list gave our project direction and we researched six different endangered animals: cheetahs, tigers, black

rhinos, pandas, great white sharks and polar bears. Then we talked about what different conservation efforts look like. We decided that we could raise money to send to CCF since it is a smaller organization and our money could have more of a direct impact on the lives of cheetahs. We came up with the idea to sell jewelry (since kids love shiny things) to the students at school, and our students worked to draft and refine realistic sketches of each animal we studied. We scanned these, shrank them on the computer, and printed them out. We then had a coloring party and the students colored each one by hand. We cut them out, glued them into bottle caps, and glazed them. Our students wrote presentations to give to each class at our school to promote sales, and then sold them for a week during recess.

The teachers benefitted from some additional insight into CCF, as Jennifer Melyan had received a grant from EarthWatch and visited CCF’s Field Research & Education Centre during a trip to Namibia a couple years earlier.

“My experience at CCF was truly remarkable. I shared stories with the class about what I saw, the cheetahs, Anatolian shepherds, and Namibian farmers, in an information book I wrote for the first-graders. I also put on a slideshow for the entire school,” recalled Jennifer. “Deciding to support the cheetah was a natural progression of our learning and experiences.

The 44 first grade students and other children at the school were very excited to realize that they had earned so much money for CCF. One of the teachers’ goals is to have their students see themselves as agents of change.

“It was also much more real for them because Jennifer’s experiences at CCF gave them a true picture of what this money could do. Whether that would be satellite radio collars, camera traps, money for medicine or food or the guard dog program, the students got a real sense that their money would be spent to help endangered animals.” Said Kris.

CCF is very grateful for the money raised by these students and is very proud of what they accomplished. Congratulations to Ms. Melyan and Ms. Nakano on a job well done!

Dr. Marker and CCF are featured in a 30-minute episode of ABC-TV’s Born to Explore with Richard Wiese.

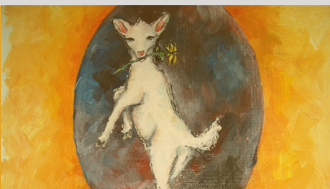
CCF opens The Dancing Goat Creamery and begins producing goat milk cheese, fudge, ice cream and soap.

Dr. Marker writes and publishes A Future for Cheetahs, a comprehensive look at the species, with photos by Suzi Eszterhas.

2012



2013



2014



Cheetah Conservation Fund
P.O. Box 2496
2210 Mt. Vernon Avenue
Alexandria, VA 22301-0496

Nonprofit Org
US Postage Paid
Capitol Heights, MD
Permit # 4168



GUESS THE CELEB: HEEEEEERE'S CHEETAH!

Just about everyone knows the human celebrity in this photo. He had a popular television show that aired tonight and most every other night of the week. But who is that celebrity cheetah in the photo with him?

The first five people that can correctly name the cheetah, Dr. Marker's first longtime cheetah companion, will win a cheetah sponsorship for a year!

Email your answers to
dr.lauriemarker@cheetah.org



CCF finished construction of its new Visitor Centre, a larger and more modern structure welcoming the more than 8,000 guests per year and replacing the former Centre lost in a fire in October 2013.

2015



Look inside for our informative timeline, from 2003 - 2015. Thank you for helping us celebrate CCF's 25th anniversary and the past 25 years of saving cheetahs in the wild.



www.cheetah.org