

NATIONAL TIGER SANCTUARY NEWSLETTER

December, 2012

NTS Announces Habitat Renovation and Expansion Campaign

by Rob Patrick, General Manager



NTS has outlined the following two-phase business plan that addresses the immediate needs of the facility as well as the long-range plan for future growth. Most importantly, the plan enables NTS to achieve those goals consistent with the NTS mission statement.

Phase 1: (Currently underway and projected to be completed by mid-December). This phase involves the remodel of the existing home into an all-weather education center. This allows for a better educational experience for the public in addition to serving as the headquarters and visitor center for NTS. Thanks to the generous contributions of our visitors and private donors, the majority of this project has been funded.

Phase 2: (see above) Encompasses expansion and renovations to the existing habitats to address current needs and set forth a plan for future growth as animals are added. See the above rendering (Phase 2) for the specific goals and objectives of the project.

How you can help NTS accomplish this endeavor

At this time we are initiating a capital campaign for the Phase 2 project and asking for your assistance through donations and capital contributions to fund this endeavor. Call or come by the new visitor center for more information and to discuss opportunities associated with this program. Rob Patrick (General Manager) is heading up this campaign and will be happy to discuss the merits of this project and answer any questions you may have.

Check with your accountant or financial advisor as to the advantages of making your contribution/donations in 2012 (under the current tax laws) versus later years when those advantages may not be in effect.

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There are a few ways you can help assist in this endeavor:

1. **Corporate/Private Habitat Sponsorships** - Individuals or companies wishing to make a donation can sponsor a specific habitat and have their name prominently displayed on the habitat itself. There are various levels of participation and our staff would be happy to provide that information to you.
2. **Donation Programs** - General donations can be made either at our facility or online through the NTS website.

As a non-profit organization, we depend entirely upon the revenue generated from the NTS facility and the dollars raised through our various charitable programs (donations, adoptions, capital campaigns, etc.). These funds provide the necessary continuing care for these animals and also foster the broad-ranging educational programs. We depend on the interest of people who care. By helping NTS, you **are** making an impact and helping the environment. We encourage you to participate in one of these programs and become an active partner with NTS in continuing its mission of education through preservation.



Did you know? The deck structure the giftshop currently sits on is the original deck structure from our Bloomsdale location. Volunteers and staff members took apart and repieced all the wood boards during our big move to Branson.

Left: Building of the entry way to the new visitor's center (below).



New Faces and Stripes at NTS by Courtney Dunn

We would like everyone to give a warm welcome to **Toby and Willie** – our two newest additions to the NTS family! On May 21st, these two tigers arrived from Texas with the assistance of our founders (Judy and Keith), NTS friend Jerry Spude, and our staff veterinarian, Dr. Marcy. Both came from a very loving home.

Over the past few months, Toby and Willie have been getting used to their new surroundings in enclosures outside of the normal tour route. A few tour groups a week have been taken to visit them – slowly acclimating them to their new way of life.

While this has been going on, our staff have been busy building two new spacious enclosures for the boys. Both have been adjusting great and will soon be on the normal tour route.



Fun Fact: Golden Tabbys are genetically the same as orange tigers except they have an additional recessive gene which modifies the original. If two copies of this gene are inherited, a cub is born with a lighter coat.

One unique characteristic of Toby is he is very blonde in coloration – unlike the bright orange fur normally associated with tigers. Toby almost fits into the Golden Tabby classification of tigers. This coloration is very similar to the white gene which gives Madison and the other white tigers their unique coloration.

Willie seems to be the most cautious out of the two and is known to carefully approach newcomers. After he meets someone, however, he is known to give a few chuffs of approval before going back to lounging on top of his spacious den.

Both Toby and Willie are fortunate to have very loving previous owners. The couple recently visited NTS on Labor Day– much to the delight of these two wonderful tigers.

Within the upcoming months, check back on our **Facebook** page for updates on the release of these two cats into their new homes. Photos by Donna Roice and Abbie Knudsen.

Meet Dr. Marcy Diehl

We are pleased to announce our new staff veterinarian - Dr. Marcy Diehl. Dr. Marcy is a 2005 graduate of the University of Missouri College of Veterinary Medicine. She has been volunteering here at NTS for about a year now while managing her own veterinary clinic – Little Paws. Even though she may be our staff veterinarian, visitors can often find her working right alongside staff, interns, and volunteers cleaning enclosures or doing other “not so glamorous” work. Having another helping hand always makes things go much smoother!

Besides assisting in daily husbandry tasks, Dr. Marcy has also assisted in a few of our relocations – including the rehoming of Toby and Willie from Texas. She is also active in planning out our new internship program. Now on staff part time, we are thrilled to have her at our sanctuary several times a week. This is an invaluable resource for us as well as all of the cats.

Enrichment – Pumpkin Smashing Style by Abbie Kay, Staff Biologist

Part of NTS’s mission is to provide stress free, lifelong homes to big cats. Just like your cats and dogs at home, toys provide mental and physical stimulation that contribute to their happiness. Although we can’t use Frisbees or stuffed mice like our pets enjoy, we have found some creative enrichment activities for the tigers. In previous years the tigers have been given pumpkins to play with around Halloween, but it seemed they didn’t like the taste of this unusual fruit. This year I came up with a creative modification to suit their tastes, which has become known as the meat-o-lantern. After hollowing out the pumpkins, we filled them with meat and gave them to the tigers to enjoy. Some rolled the pumpkins to extract the meat and others tore them to pieces! Check out the pictures and video of this year’s pumpkin enrichment on our Facebook page!



Left: Tigger inspects his new toy – a Meat-o-Lantern – given to him as part of our fall enrichment project.

A Year of Change and Triumph

New tigers, new buildings, new faces...this past year has brought many changes to our little facility. We could not be any prouder of all the great work our dedicated staff, volunteers, and supporters have done in just a few months. Seeing as how the new year is quickly approaching, we would like to share some of these accomplishments with all of you which your support has made possible.

Four more cats have become part of our family - Toby and Willie as well as Tigger and Jaycee all of which will soon have large habitats to roam.

A new preceptorship program has been started with the Mizzou Veterinary School allowing veterinary students in their final years to gain exotic animal medicine experience with us and our cats. This not only introduces them to a growing field but also provides them with a first-hand look at the normal behavior and husbandry of these animals.

We have a new veterinarian on staff who is also spear-heading this new program. Her presence has already proven to be a great asset!

Endeavors started at our facility have led to aid for tigers in the wild. This research was started in the

spring of 2012 under Courtney Dunn (a former intern) and has continued on as Masters-thesis level research for her. It seeks to understand the unique vocalizations of each cat in hopes of helping wild populations survive for generations to come.

A new visitor's center will be completed in the next few weeks. It not only provides a warm retreat during the winter but also a cool place to hang out in the summer. Included in the building will be a new area for watching our educational films and increased viewing area of our educational props - ranging from big cat population maps to toys which used to belong to our cats. Look for an all new experience at NTS in the new year!

Thank you all for making this possible - either through tours of our facility, private donations, cat adoptions, or sharing the word. With all of you, we continue to exist and further our mission of providing a world worth living in for our children and for the animals we share it with.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

I Want To Help!



Mail to: 518 State Highway BB
Saddlebrooke, MO 65630

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

- \$25 \$100
 \$50 Other \$ _____
- Phase II Capital Campaign Contribution \$ _____
- Adoption \$100 Cat Name: _____
- Corporate Sponsorship \$ _____
- Memberships
- Individual \$50
 - Family \$90
 - Grandparent \$90

Name: _____

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Credit Card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

CVC Code: _____