Greeting Friends!

My, my, where does the time go! Seems like it was just summer, and here we are already in October! I am sure all of you are glad to see those hot days turn into beautiful fall weather. The cats have all been more active since it has gotten cooler also! As always things are busy around here. If you have been following us on Facebook, you have seen all of the changes that are going on. Considering there are only five of us here full time, it is amazing to look back and see how much has been accomplished already. Here are just a few things that have happened since July.

Meet Tina:

You may have met Tina on Facebook already, but just in case you haven’t, Tina came from the Gladys Porter Zoo in Texas in August. She seemed nervous at first but quickly adjusted to her new home. Tina is such a sweet little girl who had a long 12 years on this planet already. She was owned by a private individual along with another tiger named Ike (get it, Ike and Tina). The gentleman would go in the cage with Ike and Tina and brush their coats. One unfortunate day when he went in, his little grandson ran in after him, and just as a cat will chase a mouse, Ike accidently killed the little boy.

Soon after that they both where sent to live at a ranch in Texas and from there they ended up going to the zoo.

Ike passed away a few years ago and poor Tina was left by herself. The Gladys Porter Zoo is close to the Mexican border, and many animals that get confiscated by USDA end up there. This makes it difficult for the zoo to help with the Species Survival Program. Since they have limited space they are always in need for trustworthy, loving homes to place
any surplus animals. Zoos have to be very vigilant when placing animals, for anything that may go wrong will reflect badly on them. Because of our reputation, we have been recognized for our efforts and entrusted with the care of their animals. This status of trust does not come lightly from the Species Survival Plan. We have been truly honored to be chosen to have animals donated to us for this mission.

Merlin graduated to a bigger enclosure in August. At first he just walked around the entire perimeter and then finally settled down and made it his new home.

He seems very happy don’t you think! T.J. still doesn’t care for him so to prevent any unnecessary stress we put up a nice fence to keep T.J. happy.

This past summer we have had many of our wonderful interns return and have met many new ones. Michael Miller studying for his bachelor’s in Biology at the City College of New York, came back to continue his studies. Haley Hoffman and Emily Buck, both Wildlife Management interns from the University of Missouri, were here continuing their studies. Niles Halper studying to become a veterinarian also from the University of Missouri came and has helped whenever he could. Lauren Toivonen, a Wildlife Biologist graduate from Missouri State came back from her studies abroad to expand her knowledge with us. Brooke McWherter, also a Missouri State Wildlife Biology intern, came back and stayed with us until she left for South Africa to continue her education. Robyn Littleton, from Missouri University of Science and Technology who interned with us in the past, drove from her job in Kansas City this summer to help out. Courtney Dunn makes the three hour trip every two weeks to intern with us from Arkansas, Sonia Lucas just finished her internship with us and is off to the Dickerson
Park Zoo. She will be missed, but promises to come back as soon as possible. Puja Puttagunta, studying in Budapest to be a veterinarian, is here interning as I write this letter. Noelia Haro, a student at Ozarks Technical Community College, who plans to be a veterinarian, takes the time from her busy schedule of school and a full time job, to come once a week, even if it is just for a few hours to intern. Jayson McCann, one of our youngest interns, who aspires to be a veterinarian one day, comes every other weekend and does whatever he can to help out. Can’t forget our little Wisconsinite, Paige Spude, who came and helped out this summer also and wants to come back and intern with us.

Not only are our interns great, but we have some of the best volunteers. Steve Wieczor, a retired gentleman who is absolutely wonderful! Steve not only gives some of the most fun tours we have ever seen, but on his own time has painted our front gate and created little fun facts for visitors to read while they are on tour. You must experience a Steve tour when you come. We are also working on getting Steve’s Tiger Tales that he writes weekly on our website.

Marci Manna, a psychologist during the week and a go getter for us on the weekends, is busy working on much needed grants to help us grow during her spare time. Susan, a local friend, not only keeps us healthy with all the organic food and supplements she brings but also helps take care of the plants and supplies us with many good connections.
Candy and Randy Chesnut are new friends of the NTS and have donated enrichment items for Banshee, Midnight and Tina. The help and enjoyment we get from spending time with our interns, volunteers and friends is priceless. We appreciate every one of them and we look forward to meeting more!

We had a very special visitor this summer, T.J.’s surgeon who helped save his life two years ago. Dr. Tony Mann DVM, Director of Small Animal Emergency and Critical Care Services and Small Animal Surgery/Neurology Instructional Leader from the University of Missouri came out with his lovely wife to visit T.J. and meet all his siblings. We had an enjoyable day with the both of them.

Keith Kinkade, not only is the founder of this wonderful establishment but is also our main construction worker. Keith has been busy building enclosures and night houses for the big kids. Here is the beginning of a new enclosure that he is working on. This will be where Merlin gets moved to when the two new female white tigers from the Lowery Park Zoo in Tampa come. We are expecting them to arrive in late November.
Since we have started featuring a Cat of the Month, we have had very good response so far. Mariah who was featured last month got adopted by the Johnson Family in Lees Summit, MO and from the Davis/Kelleher Family in Rogersville, MO.

Mariah

This month we are featuring Mariah’s sister Sierra. Already she has been adopted by the Lucas Family in Austin, Texas and we hope many more people will adopt this sweet tiger in October.

Sierra

When you adopt, you help us tremendously with the cost of keeping the cats happy. You provide funds for enclosures, (fencing is not cheap and we need more of it), fuel to pick up food, veterinary care and other necessary expenses. Ever since the IBP plant in Montgomery City shut down, we have been without donated beef and pork. Because we have no choice, we have been buying beef and pork, which as you can imagine is not cheap. Even our chicken supply is dwindling. This is our biggest concern right now especially with more cats coming. Almost all the places we have contacted for donations recycle their food into pet food. With the price of corn and the recent droughts, surplus food has become extremely scarce. If anyone out there has or knows of any connections in the beef, pork, or chicken industry, please let us know. We are in desperate need. With winter coming the cats tend to eat more and it is making us very nervous. This is the first time we have ever had to ask for help with food and we wouldn’t unless it was absolutely necessary.

We are getting ready for our official Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting this month which should be exciting! The Ribbon Cutting is the 14th and the Grand Opening will be held on the 15th and 16th of this month. We expect the next few months to be just as busy. We hope to see you all for the Grand Opening and don’t forget to tell your friends!

To send donations or to adopt you can go to our website www.nationaltigersanctuary.org and click on the Donate or Adopt button. Or you can send a check to National Tiger Sanctuary 518 State Hwy BB. All donations are tax deductible.

Thank you all, for without your help and constant support, this would not be possible.