



Richard Britton and Pattycake, his 12-foot tiger

Battalion photo by Jim Crawley

## Animals and the artist

By JIM CRAWLEY

The grass and shrubs are vaguely familiar to Richard Britton. The land is flat, the trees not too far from their neighboring stream. The animals are those that he has seen and sketched in the South African veldt just months ago. But, there is a difference from the veldtland. A cyclone fence separates the land.

animals is a pathetic but often necessary attempt by man to preserve the world's dwindling wildlife population. The fence which separates the British wildlife artist from his subjects forms the outline of the Wild Animals International compound, west of Bryan.

The twelve-foot fence throws a shadow on a slumbering lion bathed in the late morning sun. Nearby, a giraffe extends its long neck above the fence's upper limit. Many of their fellow animals in zoos and wildlife compounds in Texas and throughout the United States are subjected to the confines of a cage.

A smile brightens Britton's face as he points out the several varieties of antelopes and birds which frequent the compound. Here is hope for a wildlife enthusiast like Britton. The animals, while being displayed for the public, also form a breeding stock for wildlife preserves and zoos. By breeding in captivity the numbers of wild animals in the wild won't decrease as quickly.

Years spent outdoors drawing and photographing exotic animals in the

wild have etched themselves on Britton's face. Not scars or premature age lines but an appearance of natural fulfillment. He is a man who uses what he needs and nothing more — just like the animals he paints.

Wearing a khaki shirt, a functional pair of denim jeans and worn pair of boots, he stands a solid five foot seven. His ruggedness belies his artistic ability. His is of the outdoors — lean and hearty.

Since quitting his job as a production engineer six years ago, Britton has enjoyed being an artist of life as he sees it. Spending months at a time in the field, he returns to his native England and exhibits his finished work. Next summer he plans a show in Houston.

Upon entering the compound Britton outlines his order of the day. It seems that he has this partiality toward tigers. He likes to frolic with the cats.

"I love animals and they seem to love me, so I'm not scared to be close with them," explains Britton as he strolls toward the tiger enclosure.

Pattycake, a 12 foot, (tip-of-nose to tip-of-tail) female tiger was the day's playmate for Britton.

Pattycake had snacked on a dozen pounds of prime cut the evening before, and the late morning sun and humidity made the cat sluggish.

After a few minutes of running Pattycake on a leash, her trainer hands the case-hardened chain to Britton. Like a man petting his dog, he reaches down and strokes the coarse hairs of Pattycake's neck and ears. Suddenly, the cat begins to roll. A rush by the trainer and Britton's restraining arm counter the movement. The trainer says stroking the tiger behind the ears is sexually arousing to a female tiger. Britton smiles and pats the cat on her side.

After a few photos for his collection and brochure for the upcoming Houston exhibition, he begins to wander idly through the park.

Spotting a couple of Siberian tiger kittens, Britton begins to relate a recent trip to the Victoria, Tex. zoo. With saddened eyes he tells of what he considers meager, actually brutal, conditions at the zoo. The food is poor, exercise non-existent, he says. He hopes to persuade friends to purchase some of the animals for the local wildlife compound.

Nearby, chimpanzees begin a frenzied chatter. Britton glances over his shoulder for a second, then returns to his survey of the grounds. "I've never liked the monkeys," he says. "I really don't know why, maybe they're just too much like man and that can be depressing."

## Off-campus living

# What if rent is raised

By CHRIS KLING  
Student Legal Advisor

This article is the fifth in a series focusing on the landlord-tenant relationship. Subsequent articles will cover raising rent and forums for complaints.

What can the student-tenant do when informed that the already astronomically high rent is going even higher? The answer to this important question will be discussed from the following viewpoints: 1.) a rental contract/lease signed and in effect, 2.) a rental contract/lease signed but

the termination date has passed, and 3.) no rental contract/lease was signed.

Few, if any, leases contain a clause prohibiting the landlord from increasing the rent during a student-tenant's occupancy. The agreements are simply silent on this point. But, just as the student-tenant is bound by the terms of the rental contract/lease the owner is bound in a like manner. Thus, if it provides for a monthly rental rate of \$225, then that amount cannot be increased or decreased during the

specified term without the consent of both the student-tenant and owner.

The student-tenant need not sign a new lease providing for increased rent unless he desires to do so. Student-tenant cannot be forced to agree to increased rent by threat of eviction. In collecting rent, the owner is limited to the amount specified in the rental contract/lease.

Generally, where a student-tenant continues to occupy premises past the termination of a specified in the rental contract/lease it is presumed legally that the continued occupancy is according to the terms and conditions of the rental contract/lease. Consequently, unless the student-tenant signs a new lease taking effect immediately upon the termination of the present lease then the monthly rental payment will remain the same.

The owner may increase the rent only with the student-tenant's consent, either oral or by signing a new lease. The typical approach is for an owner who wants to increase rent after the rental contract/lease has expired is to request the student-tenant sign a new rental contract/lease at an increased rate, threatening a 30-day termination notice will be given if it is not signed. Of course, this is a method in which to increase rent. A rental contract/lease "guarantees" a specific monthly amount only for the term stated therein. Thereafter the rent may be increased or decreased upon 30 days notice.

An oral lease agreement may be sure against increased rent, depending upon the term of occupancy. Texas, the law is such that an oral lease is valid if the term is less than one year. If the term of the oral lease exceeds one year the lease cannot be enforced by the owner or the student-tenant. The oral lease for less than one year guarantees the stipulated rent for the agreed upon length of time.

The additional contents of a lease will include those provisions agreed to by the owner and student-tenant. The agreement cannot be terminated or altered by one party alone. Both the owner and the student-tenant must agree before an oral lease agreement is terminated or altered. Thus, rent cannot be increased during the agreed upon term unless both parties consent to the increase.

Under the written rental contract/lease rent payments are guaranteed for the term stated. Under an expired rental contract/lease rent is guaranteed for at least 30 days. An oral lease in excess of one year is unenforceable, but a valid agreement and rent guaranteed for the agreed upon period.

## Smoke detector sales: booming, but confusing

United Press International

WASHINGTON — The smoke detector market is booming, and consumers are being showered with advertising claims about faster-warming times and the lifesaving advantages of one device over another.

The industry expects to sell about eight million smoke detectors this year, so to commercial establishments, but many to consumers for home use. Five years ago the industry sold only 50,000 units during one 12-month period.

Government safety experts see the sales boom as a healthy sign. Seven thousand Americans die in home fires annually. Most are killed, not by flames, but by smoke. Some experts have estimated up to 90 percent of those killed in home fires could be saved if their residences were equipped with smoke detectors.

Increased detector sales are attributed to lower prices and wide promotion.

Much advertising compares photoelectric with ionization-type devices. Both sense the presence of smoke but do it in a different way.

The photo devices use a beam of light that is interrupted when smoke particles get into it. The ionization types employ radioactive particles in a small chamber. The particles create an electric charge that can be interrupted when smoke enters.

Earlier this year, Consumers Union tested both types. It found photoelectric devices sound their alarms much faster than ionization types for a smoldering fire, one in which smoke gradually builds up as from a fire in furniture or a mattress. CU found ionization types are set off faster than photoelectric models in blazing fires.

Gillette Co. is using the differences to promote its battery-powered "Captain Kelly" photoelectric alarm.

The ads say most home fires are the smoldering variety, or at least

start that way, and that the Gillette product provides extra seconds to evacuate the house or alert occupants soon enough to put out the fire before it flames.

At a recent test by Gillette, six smoke detectors, three of each variety, were placed in a room where a smoldering fire was started with sticks on a hot plate. The three photoelectric devices went off first, the ionization types several minutes later.

At the same time, the testers readily admitted that the reverse would have occurred if they had placed a trash can full of flaming newspapers in the room.

The National Fire Prevention and Control Administration, an arm of the Commerce Department, takes no position on the controversy.

The agency says consumers should only be sure the detector they buy is approved by Underwriters Laboratories and meets the requirements of UL Standard 270.

The federal government sets no standards for smoke detectors. The UL standard requires both types to sound their alarms when a certain amount of smoke is present. It also specifies a good life expectancy.

Gillette thinks the UL rules should be made tougher, to require smoke detectors to go off earlier. That idea still is being discussed.

"Both types are well within the bounds of safety," said one official of the Commerce Department agency.

"The ideal would be a smoke detector which detects both types of fires fastest. But that would be almost impossible and would cost too much money. People didn't buy smoke detectors when they were high priced."

Meantime, federal legislation to give smoke detector purchasers a tax deduction equal to the purchase price is stalled in the House Ways and Means Committee and not expected to emerge.

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