

A close-up photograph of a black leopard with striking yellow eyes, looking directly at the camera through a field of green grass and foliage. The leopard's face is the central focus, with its dark fur contrasting sharply with the bright green background and its luminous eyes.

# The Wildcat Sanctuary UPROAR!

AUGUST 2020 | ISSUE 25

Shazam, leopard



The Wildcat Sanctuary  
**UPROAR!**  
AUGUST 2020 | ISSUE 25

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THE WILDCAT SANCTUARY

**Mission:** Provide natural sanctuary to wild cats in need and inspire change to end the captive wildlife crisis.

**Vision:** Help create a world where wild animal sanctuaries are no longer needed.

The Wildcat Sanctuary is a tax-exempt charity under the IRS code section 501c3, our federal tax ID number is 22-3857401.



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Callie, tiger





# *From the Founder*



## Learning to expect the unexpected

**N**ever in my wildest dreams did I think I'd be writing to you with the world in the state it's in today. The global pandemic has changed our lives forever. And the riots in our home state, from the unjust death of a person in police custody, is rippling around the world.

If that isn't enough to make your heart heavy, then add the sensationalism and media frenzy over the Netflix series *Tiger King*. That docuseries propelled many dealers and breeders into pop culture and the mainstream. It's hard to know even where to start.

## My heart hurts

So many people are affected, and the heaviness has touched us all in some way. Whether it be the loss of a job, or worst of all the loss of a life, it cannot help but weigh on us all.

As we focus on the impact of humankind, let us not forget the impact on the animals and the environment. They need our kindness in this new world as well.

Your future is going to look different. Ours is, too. But I hope we use this time to take to heart these hard lessons and build a brighter future for all.

## The impact on us

We've had to postpone our volunteer and AmeriCorps programs for several months. Together, they make up 4097 donated hours we've lost!

Sadly, grantors and even the government doesn't look at this loss as a decrease in staff, like laying off employees. And many are funding only emergency appeals.

We understand other sanctuaries and rescues may need emergency help. But we're being denied since we're not currently in an "emergency" situation. Instead, we're working hard to remain sustainable and not end up in an emergency situation. It almost feels like we're being penalized for ensuring the cats and our organization were prepared for a crisis.

In order to limit the impact to our bottom line, our fundraising to support the cats has had to change as well. We've cancelled outreach and fundraising events, instead moving them to virtual experiences. We're trying to stay nimble and change so the cats continue to receive great care and the forever home they need.



Aurora, caracal

Now more than ever, we know that planning for the “new” future is critical.

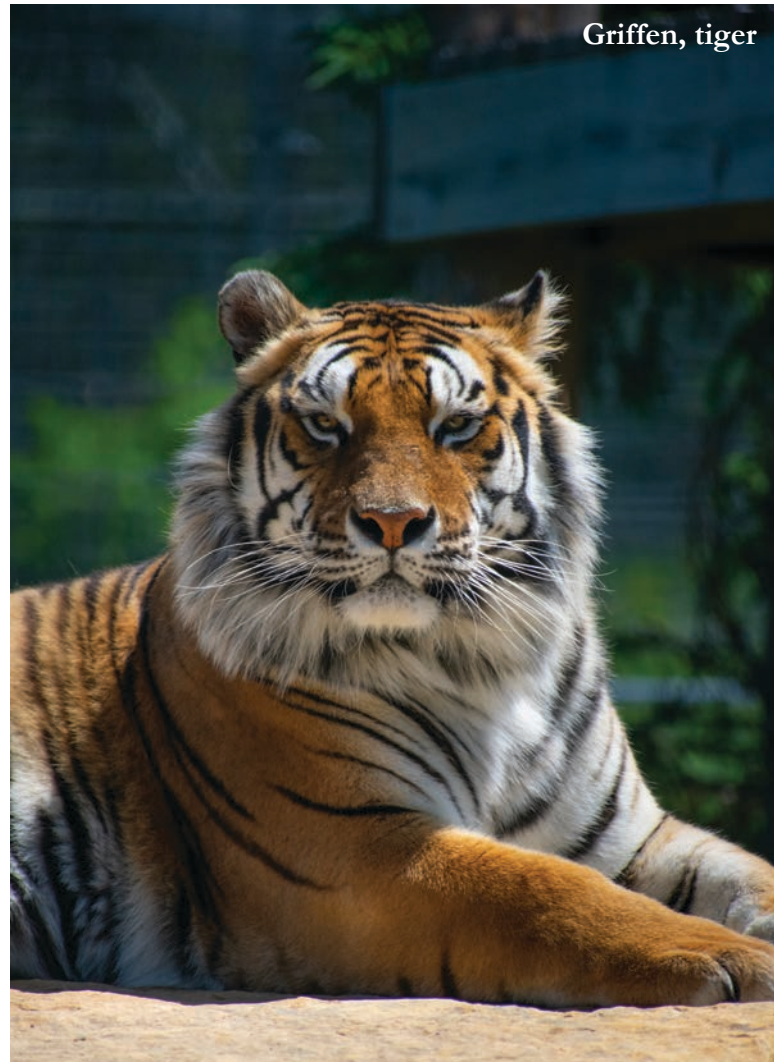
- Our interns live in a communal setting now, which is a vulnerability if someone gets sick. We need to invest in more housing options to be able to give people their own personal space, for their emotional and physical health.
- We know what has worked. Being closed to the public for the animals’ safety and now humans, investing in preparedness plans and keeping our rainy-day fund full, will continue to be a priority.
- We need to continue to set ourselves up as a self-sustaining community with access to fuel, propane, multiple food sources, etc. Much of this is in place and we continue to expand.
- Going online for education and advocacy isn’t new, but it’s something we will grow and is a big component of our new Animal Care Center.
- Onsite 24/7 veterinary services will also be critical as we’ve seen a shut down in what public vet clinics can provide.

We can plan for all of the above. But the mental toll this has taken on each and every one of us is something we can’t underestimate either. Being isolated in a rural area is great for the cats. But, in a time when people need to feel connected more than ever, it definitely takes its toll on the humans caring for the cats.

While our staff and interns were working so hard to provide uninterrupted care with new COVID protocols, it was disheartening to see the world glorifying Tiger King, along with the breeders and dealers. They were on every news outlet giving interviews, disregarding COVID closure laws and having people pack their parks for cub petting.

Bad roadside zoos, with years of animal welfare violations, exploited the issue. They put out emergency funding appeals saying they’d have to close their doors if donations didn’t come in. This was happening while I spent countless hours on the phone with the media and emailing these substandard zoos, offering a permanent home for their animals—free of charge.

In so many ways, it felt like the world could be coming to an end.



Griffen, tiger



Benson, bobcat





Simon and Jeremy, tigers



But, as I have experienced so many times throughout my life, you just need to hang on. The world is full of ups and downs. Sometimes you feel it can't get worse and then you realize, you aren't even at rock bottom yet. But the good thing about rock bottom is, there's only up. And that's where our focus is needed.

And it is beginning to happen.

## The new normal

The world came together to help their neighbors and each other during COVID. After the riots spread, compassionate people helped clean-up and stood up for justice. Even the conversation around Tiger King started changing. We began using it as a way to start discussions about the cruelty of cub petting, as well as the lack of any national law banning private possession of big cats.

Behind-the-scenes, the wheels of justice began to turn. State and federal investigations began taking place targeting dealers and breeders. We're still waiting on the outcomes, but our hope is that they rule in favor of the animals.

We continue to try and maneuver through this new world. Sometimes planning far into the future. Other times, planning just one day at a time. But we know one thing for sure, we need each and every one of you with us as we move forward.

Your support enabled us to be prepared for these unforeseen circumstances. Your kind words keep us going on the hard days. And your ongoing commitment allows us to be staged for future rescues and the future of The Wildcat Sanctuary.

Thank you just does not seem like enough. But thank you!

And when times are tough for you, please remember this sanctuary is yours, too! You helped create it, you've given second chances. And I hope that brings you happiness when you need it most.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "T Thies".

Tammy Thies

Founder & Executive Director



Mansa and Leo, lions





Daisy, tiger



Noah, cougar



Dimitri, tiger



Callie, tiger



Gino, lion





Tonka, tiger



Aria, Eurasian lynx and Mondovi, bobcat



Zeke, tiger



# Update on Animal Care & Education Center



Many ask how COVID and other world events have affected the ground-breaking of our new Animal Care & Education Center.

When the pandemic hit, we needed to do the most responsible thing and focus on our daily operations and animal care. As we did that, we had to plan for what the future of funding would look like, too.

Our commitment is to be stewards of your support, while ensuring sanctuary sustainability for years to come for the cats in our care. Therefore, our plan is to proceed with the project this year.

We were also blessed that over \$250,000 of restricted funds had been received from Founding







Members, an additional X pledged for the project. Since these funds were dedicated for the Animal Care Center, that's what they have to be spent on.

We also looked at the overall project and broke it into phases, knowing we may need to stop if support subsides. That way, we could start the project again as funding was secured.

As with all of our projects at the sanctuary, we pay with cash. We rarely apply for loans for construction because we never want the sanctuary land to be held as collateral. Even though we know we wouldn't default, every decision we make is to ensure the cats are safe for years to come, and that includes the land they live on.

Finally, we also looked at the need and what the future holds. Our cats need an advanced hospital and additional staffing to meet their 24/7 care. Our mission and vision are to educate future generations about the medical issues associated with keeping big cats in captivity, as well as the captive wildlife crisis. Our surgery suite viewing area and distance learning lab are critical toward this goal.

In the end, proceeding with the new Animal Care & Education Center is what is right for the cats – those in our care and those still in need.

And this is where your support can help so much. Supporting our future helps us weather crises, just like we did this year. Thank you to those who have already supported this project!





# Welcome Our New Residents



## BENGAL TYGGER

Even during a pandemic, there are still cats in need. That never seems to end. A call came in from a domestic Bengal owner who was looking to place their cat Tygger. I'd already been working with them for quite some time. They loved Tygger very much and were heartbroken, having to finally make this decision to surrender him.

Tygger had a tendency to lash out and become aggressive. He'd scratched faces, causing serious wounds, and was biting, drawing blood. Having a child in the home with a health condition made this situation even more dangerous.

They worked with their veterinarian, trying medications for Tygger. When that didn't solve the problem, they began reaching out to rescue groups.

But, with aggression issues, Tygger was deemed

unadoptable. The veterinarian suggested euthanasia as the only option.

Tygger's not the first hybrid we've taken in with this type of history. Since we know he gets along with other cats, we were hopeful having companions of his own kind, a bungalow and an outdoor habitat with lots of stimulation for him, might help curtail his aggression.

And it did!!

As a descendant of a wild Asian leopard cat, marking territory, using their mouth and claws to communicate is just part of their nature. Indie, Bonzai, and Felix didn't mind having Tygger join their bungalow group.

Now that Tygger's able to stretch his wild side, we haven't seen any aggression issues at all. It's so wonderful knowing he's happy now here at his forever home.

*Our SPONSOR-A-WILD-ONE program lets you feel a special connection to our cats—from a safe distance! As a Sponsor Parent, you'll receive the personal story of your sponsored wildcat along with photos.*





## BOBCAT ESSEY

When the phone rings, I never know what that call might bring. This time, it brought a tiny bobcat named Essey to us.

She'd been living in a cage built in the room of a house. Though she also had an outdoor area, it was on concrete. This little girl had never felt grass under her paws.

I was told she's approximately 2 years old, but she'd never seen a veterinarian before. Essey had been fed only kibble and weighed just 10-12 pounds, which is very tiny for a 2 year old bobcat. Thankfully, she hadn't been declawed.

She settled in well at the sanctuary, transitioning to the raw diet her body needs. Seeing her enjoying a natural habitat, running and stalking through the tall grass and flowers for the first time, is just about the best sight you can imagine!

We're working on playdates with other bobcats so Essey can have companions to spend her days with. We'll keep you posted how her new friendships develop.



## EURASIAN LYNX BEAUTY

I didn't expect we'd be welcoming another 'medium' cat so soon after taking in privately-owned bobcat Essey. But when I talked to an owner having problems with her young Eurasian lynx, I knew it was the right thing to do.

Beauty is only 11-months-old. They'd purchased her from a breeder in Florida to have as a household pet. Then brought Beauty to their home out-of-state.

At first, things went okay. But the owner said that as Beauty grew, she started treating her small children as prey – stalking and even grabbing them.

She didn't blame Beauty, she knew she was only doing what came naturally. But with another baby on the way, she reached out to reputable sanctuaries to re-home Beauty.

She knew this would be the best option for her family, and for Beauty. She was open and shared the details about purchasing Beauty, along with photos, and let me know she had concerns that Beauty may have ringworm.

She couldn't find a vet to care for Beauty, so was happy to hear Beauty would receive an intake exam and medical care here at the sanctuary.

Our trained volunteers drove 20 hours round-trip to ensure Beauty could get to our sanctuary quickly. Once she arrived, and even after such a long journey, our caretakers found her to be "unbelievably adorable and certainly curious of her new surroundings."

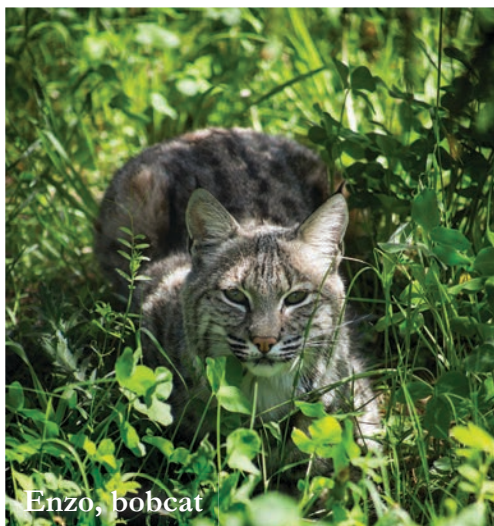
It was so nice to see her relaxed enough to cozy into her hammock for a much-deserved cat nap!

**For more info, go to:**  
<https://www.wildcatsanctuary.org/sponsor-a-wild-one/>



# Living Wild at Heart

**Y**our support has given so many a second chance. From kittens to adults, from shy cats to outgoing cats, here are a few of our more recent rescues who've settled in and are loving their new life here at the sanctuary!



Enzo, bobcat



Tygger, Asian leopard cat



Quincy, cougar







Felix, Bengal cat



Tacoma, cougar



Rainier, cougar



Sky and Selene, bobcats



# What's Ahead for Summer



Enzo, bobcat



Enzo, bobcat



Enzo, bobcat



Enzo, bobcat

## Summer Fun

This summer, some of our small cats will be getting some big, new habitats! We believe they deserve just as much space to run and climb as the big cats.

- 3 bungalow yards will be torn down and replaced with larger and taller habitats, providing them more vertical and dynamic space.
- New platforms and skywalks will be added for them to explore.

No summer is complete without making the lives better for each and every resident!

- Tigress Sabrina will receive new landscaping, complete with a new fence wall, a hill to lay on, and boulders to stalk behind.
- Callie's current habitat in Wild Woodlands will receive excavation for better drainage, a hill for her to survey the sanctuary, boulders and even a new multi-layered platform system.
- Many of the bobcats, cougars and leopards received new teeter totter enrichment. It was fun to watch them try to figure out how this worked.
- Indoor rooms in Cougar Cove and Wild Woodlands will also be painted a new light color so when the cats are indoors, they still have the brightness they prefer.

## Moves, Mergers and More

We're always looking for ways to make the cats' lives better, whether that means a new companion or a more customized space.





**Hal and Chili, servals**

Ava and the Peppers moved to Wildcat Pines and love the jungle gym in their new grassy habitat.



**Rainier and Quincy, cougars**

Cougar kittens Rainier, Tacoma and Quincy moved down to their new free-roaming habitat in Cougar Cove.



**Tao, bobcat**

Bobcat Tao will be moving to a free-roaming habitat in Cougar Cove in the near future.



**Mansa and Leo, lions**

Lions Leo and Mansa moved to the larger shared habitat space in Roar Ridge.



**Daisy, tiger**

Tigress Daisy moved back to Wild Woodlands, with her large inground splash pool, and Callie moved to Ekaterina's old habitat for more peace and quiet as she gets older.



**Thor, Maximillion, Savannahs**

Savannah Cats Thor and Maximillion became close friends and moved in together.



**Shanti, lion**

That enabled Queen Shanti Deva to move down next to Chupino—making both of them happy.



**Bell, African serval**

For cats who are scared or need special support settling in, our caretakers implement socialization plans.

- The 3 Wild received extra time with caretakers being neutral and offering positive reinforcement.
- Ava and the Peppers (especially Bell) receive extra treats for shifting for cleaning.
- Books are read aloud to those cats who crave the extra attention.

It's never status quo here at the Sanctuary! We're always looking for ways to make our cats happier each and every day.



# In Honor & In Memory

*Gifts through Month XX, 2020*

## In Honor

**In honor of AJ Muheim's 30th birthday. Miss you!**

Bonnie Muheim and Danika Jensen

**In honor of Dani Mattessich. Helping animals is her bliss.**

Sally Thornton

**In honor of Barb Rein**

Darlene Dahle

**In honor of Carol Baur**

Carol and George Baur

**In honor of Cleo and Shalico, Canada Lynx**

Cindy Kosen

**In honor of Constance Perenyi**

Walter Yurkevich

**In honor of David Cliffe family**

Dore Dokos-Loewenthal

**In honor of Kelly Holmberg in celebration of Admin Day. Thank you for all you do!**

Gina and Denise

**In honor of my grandson Garrin F.**

**Avaloz on his 18th birthday**

Karen Avaloz

**In honor of Gayle Marchiniak's**

**Birthday**

Jean Groeneveld

**In honor of beautiful Mother for Mother's Day (early)! Elsie Comstock!!**

Laura Arleth

**In honor of Jane Case**

American Family Insurance and Douglas Case

**In honor of Margaret Mell**

Wendy Mell

**In honor of Monica on our anniversary.**

David Becker

**In honor of my Caesar, who at 19 1/2 is still going strong and is the king over Cleo who is 6**

Lynne Alfieri

**In honor of all our dear furry friends we've had the pleasure of knowing and loving**

Phyllis Andrus

**In honor of my Mother Roberta**

**Badger-Cain's 80th Birthday**

Anna Shook

**In honor of our sweet boy Tygger**

Jodie Dean

**In honor of Roz Annen's birthday**

Carol Johnson and Susan Howard

**In honor of Sarah Humphries**

The Brunswick Foundation

**In honor of Shanti and Shazam**

Renee Galen

**In honor of Sue Green's Birthday**

Alyse McCathran

**In honor of our 47th Anniversary!**

Suzanne and Paul Gorte

**In honor of Teri Kuzoff (Sally will provide more info before next Uproar)**

Dore Dokos-Loewenthal

**In honor of John Wright's birthday. Happy Birthday!**

Alicia Wright

**In honor of all the cats, especially for Saltena, my she RIP**

Shelley Myers

**In honor of William Jones**

James and Sally Beckner

## In Memory

**In memory of Bonnie**

George and Elizabeth Naylor

**In memory of Bug**

Beth Hansen

**In memory of Burton**

Virginia and Joseph Leary, Jennifer McCabe, Joan Oprian, Laurie Richards, and Everit Terhune

**In memory of Florence Roe**

Lynn Krapf

**In memory of Catherine Crossan-Vork**

Ruth Vork

**In memory of Chuck Hanson**

Christopher Rupp

**In memory of Dear Angus**

Love, Laura Bonnie and Steven Goldsmith

**In memory of Deb "Turtle" Wason 1952-2020**

Jeanna Hensler and Tom Holmes

**In memory of Miko**

Jim and Pam Fisher

**In memory of our mom who loved all animals big and small.**

Linda Meyer

**In memory of Greg Krapf**

Lynn Krapf and Pat and Barb

**In memory of Heather's cat Prince.**

Annette DiBiase and Ellen Richardson

**In memory of Hugh, who joined Minnie, Casey, Leftover, and Marshmallow at the Rainbow Bridge.**

Karen and Craig Spencer

**In memory of Mille, who joined Isabel at the Rainbow Bridge.**

Karen and Craig Spencer

**In memory of Mario, who joined Buckwheat at the Rainbow Bridge.**

Karen and Craig Spencer

**In memory of Dusty, who joined Beauty and Smokey at the Rainbow Bridge.**

Karen and Craig Spencer

**In memory of Bengal Raven, Cougar Max 2, and all my other boys Rocky, Benny, and Remoh**

Mia Nelson

**In memory of George Petrich, who loved and respected all animals**

Patti Petrich

**In memory of my dad**

**Kathy Higgins and Terry Verigan**

**In memory of my Little Fionn, my best friend for over 13 years. 9/4/2006 - 5/20/2020. I miss you, my little man.**

Sheri and Chris Vitullo

**In memory of our 14-year-old Manx, Austeyn, who crossed the Rainbow Bridge April 17, 2020.**

Cassandra Weldon-Faulkner

**In memory of our beloved Miles, our rescue dog that changed our hearts and our minds and our entire lives with his unconditional love and resilience.**

Kristin Miller

**In memory of our 'Handsome Boy', Bear**

Daniel and Myndal Silver

**In memory of Levi and Meme**

Barb Kull

**In memory of my Siamese cat**

Nicole Boar



**In memory of Peter Adam Schimke,**  
Minneapolis jazz pianist extraordinaire  
Ann Meisch

**In memory of Sweetsie Kittie, now reunited  
with my Daddy at Rainbow Bridge**  
Cynthia Carter

**In memory of Jo Hanson**  
Mary Thornton

**In memory of Latka, Sheba, Charlie,  
Brandy, Frosty, Corky, Tony and Pete**  
Barbara Stillman

**In memory of Leisha**  
Janice Bobrowske, Janet and Dan Davis,  
Willie Mae deGraffenried, Karen Frasure,  
Jennifer Howard, Linda Kiener, Leona Krieg,  
Kim and Joel Meline, Joan Oprian, Carol Ann  
Smith, Dale Spartz, Marsha and Henri Pache,  
and Deborah Westphal

**In memory of Makken**  
Elizabeth Warner

**In memory of much loved and missed  
babies: Cleo, Roman, Monday, Ghost,  
Tiger, Max and in honor of our sweet  
baby boy Riley.**  
Ray and Diane Penwarden

**In memory of a special wild cat resident  
who was in the "Witness Protection"  
program. We couldn't share your story,  
but that doesn't mean you didn't steal  
our hearts.**

Sharon Bovie, Janet and Dan Davis, Nancy  
Dobbs, Elizabeth Eide, AnnMarie Fischer,  
Karen Frasure, Julia Helkenn, Michael Helm,  
Jennifer Howard, Jenny Hwozdek, Laurie  
Kaufmann, Aostara Kaye, Linda Kiener, Kim  
and Joel Meline, Rene Perrance, Douglas  
Potter, Bonnie Reilund, Verena Rose,  
Veronica Sjovall, Peri Urvek, and Susan  
Warner

**In memory of my beautiful kitty Trixie**  
Susan Warner

**In memory of Ronald Phillips**  
Maureen Phillips, and Nancy and David Pinzka

**In memory of Rose Albamont**  
Albert and Marie Tarolli

**In memory of Tara**  
Kim and Joel Meline

**In memory of Tara, Gabby, Nikita**  
Kim and Joel Meline

**In memory of my mother, Doris Pire.**  
You are greatly missed!  
Jim and Debbie Matthees

**In memory of my mother Nelle  
Fankhauser, on what would have been  
her 95th birthday.**  
Debbie Mangen

**In memory of Tigger and Tabby**  
Brenda Spearman **In memory of my cat,  
Crouton, who always thought she was  
a water cat. Such a smart one, she was.**  
We loved you so.  
Tim and Dawn Perault-Amstutz

**In memory of my Cat Split who nurtured  
all the foster kittens and our souls.**  
Mary Dimond

## A THOUGHTFUL WAY TO GIVE

### *Honoring Loved Ones*



Honor a beloved pet or celebrate a friend  
or family member with a special In Honor or  
In Memory gift.

### Recognition Opportunities include:

- Your gift listed in UPROAR magazine
- An inscribed brick or bench in our  
Memorial Garden

**For information, call 320-245-6871  
or visit [bit.ly/DonateTWS](https://bit.ly/DonateTWS)**



# Gone But Not Forgotten

Adrian, our special little girl will be in our hearts forever.



Adrian, F3 bengal hybrid

*Read their full memorials, make a memorial or honorarium gift at [WildcatSanctuary.org](http://WildcatSanctuary.org).*



Burton, bengal

Adrian, our special little girl will be in our hearts forever.



Leisha, Eurasian lynx

Adrian, our special little girl will be in our hearts forever.



Nacho

Adrian, our special little girl will be in our hearts forever.

## The Best Gift of All



You can ensure your love of animals continues beyond your lifetime by including The Wildcat Sanctuary in your estate plans.

Learn more at  
[WildcatSanctuary.planmylegacy.org/](http://WildcatSanctuary.planmylegacy.org/)  
or call us at 320-245-6871



# Look What's New!

## Order your 2021 Calendars TODAY!

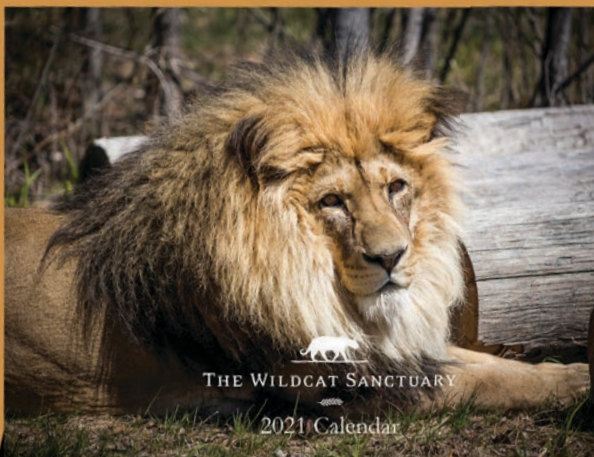
Our calendar has been a favorite of all our supporters featuring the all the cats you have come to know and love over the years. This year we are offering you two calendars! It will be tough decision and we won't be upset if you insist on needing both. Each calendar features the photography talents of our staff, interns and volunteers showcasing 12 full-page color photos of your favorite cats you've come to know and love over the years.

The hard part will be deciding which one to choose? Will it be the Big cats or the hybrid cats

Orders are taken online only at

<http://bit.ly/TWS2021calendar>

### Big Cats



### Hybrid Cats







THE WILDCAT SANCTUARY



PO Box 314 • Sandstone, MN • 55072

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## — Ways You Can Help —



*Details of all our programs can be found at [WildcatSanctuary.org](http://WildcatSanctuary.org)*

### **MONTHLY GUARDIAN**

Monthly Guardians make a small monthly gift that make a big impact on the lives of our residents. And because monthly donations are processed automatically via credit card, they help reduce costs, allowing an even greater percentage of your gift to go towards helping the animals.

### **SPONSOR-A-WILD-ONE**

Sponsor a cat of your choice for yourself or a loved one. As a sponsor parent, you will receive their personal story, photos and more.

*email: [info@wildcatsanctuary.org](mailto:info@wildcatsanctuary.org) or phone: 320-245-6871*

Caesar and Logan, tigers