

A close-up photograph of a tiger cub, Indy, looking down at the water. The cub has orange fur with black stripes and is positioned at the edge of a body of water. The background is blurred, showing green grass and a wooden fence.

The Wildcat Sanctuary UPROAR!

SEPTEMBER 2023 | ISSUE 35

Indy, tiger

The Wildcat Sanctuary UPROAR!

SEPTEMBER 2023 | ISSUE 35

Tammy Thies
Founder & Executive Director

Julie Hanan
Contributor

Carissa L. Winter
Graphic Designer

Photography by Judson Tharin, Olivia
Kemp, staff, interns and volunteers.



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.



The Wildcat Sanctuary
PO Box 314 • Sandstone, MN 55072
320-245-6871

Follow us on:



Copyright © The Wildcat Sanctuary. All Rights Reserved.

2 September 2023

Baby Jenga Blue, bobcat



WildcatSanctuary.org

From the Founder

The future for cats in crisis



As we grow older, time moves faster. It's thought that, because we have more memories to compare as we get older versus as a child, the more familiar we become with day-to-day life experiences. That's why time seems to go much faster.

This is true in my personal life, but even more so in sanctuary life. Rescue after rescue, phone call after phone call, the stories have a familiar thread. The people I talk to all seek a connection with wildlife to feed their human ego.

Not all are "Tiger King" egos where it's for fame or fortune. Some are about owning a serval or savannah to feed a deeper need of the human ego. It can be as simple as the need to feel special and think that connecting to a wild animal will bring deeper meaning to their lives.

But in the end, it's all about feeding the human ego—whether through good intentions or those that are exploitive.

That's why the last 25 years seem like a moment in time. Each act of neglect is familiar. Each rescue is familiar. Each reason for surrender is familiar.

Until we change how we feed the human ego, the captive wildlife crisis will continue. That's why the work you help us do is so extremely important!

After the Big Cat Public Safety Act

I appreciate that, in my lifetime, we have a federal law outlawing private ownership and cub petting of big cats. But now the real work begins.

Recent calls with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service underscored just how much our expertise and sanctuary are needed moving forward.

There's currently no government funding for the new law. Pick-up, transport, medical care, temporary and permanent housing will all fall on sanctuary shoulders, like ours.

That's why we feel blessed to have all of YOU!

Time will move even faster when we receive the first call to help a big cat that's been seized. The expectation is there will be many big cats in need of sanctuary in the near future.



Winona, tiger

Most of these cats will enter our Witness Protection Program pending conclusion of their custody case—all at our own expense.

We're looking into building a specialized area just to accommodate more big cats and we'll keep you posted as this project progresses. In the meantime, your general gift helps us ensure we can say "yes" when authorities call on us to help the next big cat in need.



Indy, tiger

Cubs in Crisis

Time knows no bounds. Across the U.S., Mexico and as far away as Ukraine, there's been an increase in captive cubs held by individuals and groups associated with drugs, racketeering, money laundering and more.

Captive born tiger cubs are the latest victims of wildlife trafficking. In the past year alone, we've welcomed numerous trafficked cubs at the Sanctuary. We've been able to introduce you to some while others are still in our Witness Protection Program.

These cases are so sensitive that we won't even be able to share their backstory once they become permanent residents of our sanctuary.

The few cubs who find their way to accredited

sanctuaries are the lucky ones. Your support allows us to save them and provide them with lifetime care—a 20 year or more commitment.



Jewel, F1 Bengal

Small Cat Crisis

Small exotic and hybrid cats are all the rage on social media, made especially popular by influencers and A-List celebrities.

Whether it be an African serval, caracal, Savannah or Bengal cat, their stunning beauty and high prices have caused overbreeding and impulse purchases.

After the novelty has worn off, they're often cast aside due to unwanted behaviors. We're one of the few sanctuaries in the country that can accommodate these cats.

Finding sanctuaries that have space for bobcats and servals is almost impossible right now. Since we're one of the only ones that provides sanctuary for smaller hybrids, we're at capacity.

This is why we need your support to help reinvent Hybrid Haven in 2024. You can help us continue to be a leader in solving the small cat crisis.

We'll share our plans with you soon. In the meantime, we welcome founding members for this important project that will provide displaced hybrids sanctuary for a lifetime.



Alana, lion

Sanctuaries in Crisis?

With recent news of a famous sanctuary in Florida closing, placing their 30 plus cats at another accredited sanctuary, we're seeing the sanctuary world change.

Due to the owner's health issues, another sanctuary has also downsized and placed their cats and bears elsewhere. And another is in the headlines for a pending lawsuit.

This is why The Wildcat Sanctuary's Strategic Plan is so critical. We, along with you, are here for the cats! As long as it takes.

The Wildcat Sanctuary is a forever home for the cats that cross our threshold, and that means even past my lifetime.

Your support in joining our Monthly and

Legacy Pride Programs helps us build a sustainable future for our cats. But it also provides for those yet to be saved from the captive wildlife crisis.

Time passes quickly, and every moment counts. I know the cats and I can count on you to ensure the time each of us has left leaves an impact.

Tammy Thies
Founder & Executive Director



Prada, lion



Aurora and Alana, lions



Dash, tiger



Noah, tiger



Nova, tiger



Thor, tiger





Taras, Lesya, Stefania, and Prada, lions



Simon, tiger



Shazam, leopard



Pandora, tiger



UPROAR!

Griffen, tiger



Leo, lion

Indy's Story



Indy, tiger

Indy arrived at our sanctuary in May of 2023 after her legal case concluded. At the time, she was estimated to be about 5-6 months old. Her rescue certainly received a great deal of national attention.

In January of 2023, she'd been confiscated by Phoenix undercover police after her owner had illegally listed her for sale on Facebook Marketplace for \$25,000. They found her in a dog kennel in a closet of his home and arrested him.

We decided to call her Indy since we wanted her to serve as a reminder that tigers should be wild. Bengal tigers live wild in India, so Indy seemed like a perfect fit.

Our staff made the 3,400-mile roundtrip to pick Indy up, bringing her back to her forever home here at the sanctuary.

Indy fell instantly in love with the grass in her habitat. This is the first time she's experienced the softness of grass to roll around in. Something so simple that we take for granted, but she was thrilled with the feeling of it!

Her very first day, she tossed toys around her habitat, chased floating toys in her large inground pool, jumped on rocks, clawed on logs. But the most exciting thing by far was meeting her tiger cub neighbor Nova. This was the first time she'd seen another tiger!

At this point, Nova was about twice Indy's size and age, but they engaged playfully right away. Chuffing, paw touching, chasing along the fence line, it was all part of a wonderful "getting to know you" day for the two of them.

We'll give Indy time to grow before trying any playdates with Nova, should they continue to get along.

The world just got so much bigger and full of fun for Indy. We can't wait to see how her personality blossoms as she lives the rest of her days happily at the sanctuary.



Indy, tiger



Indy, tiger



Indy, tiger



Indy and Nova, tigers

New Residents



Tigers Noah & Elizabeth

Noah and Elizabeth were initially part of our Witness Protection program. They'd arrived at our sanctuary early in 2023.

Though we don't know exactly the date they were born, we know they're at least 10+ years old, based on an old news story we found. But, considering the level of Noah's arthritis, we assume he's older than that.

Noah and Elizabeth were released by the Department of Agriculture and their former owner to live permanently with us. Our team drove to pick them up for their journey back to our sanctuary.

Noah is a gentle giant. He's a sweet playful soul with a soft chuff. He's most recognizable by his wide head and forearms. His paws are enormous!

Noah hasn't met a toy he doesn't like. In the winter, he loved rolling around in the snow making snow angels. And now, in the summer, playing with toys in his splash pool is his favorite pastime.

At first, Elizabeth was hesitant of other tigers, but she quickly became confident and loves her life here with Noah.

We were told Elizabeth was originally bred and used as a football mascot in Ohio.

For decades, Massillon's Washington High School was famous for acquiring a new tiger cub (known as "Obie") every year to be dragged out in a cage on the field, traveling with the team, subject to fans gawking over them.

This one high school was responsible for fueling the breeding, cruel and exploitative cycle of so many cubs being taken from their mothers and disposed of when they were no longer a draw.

Thankfully, Elizabeth is now safe at our sanctuary. Yet tragically, many former "Obies" weren't as lucky.

That's why seeing her live out her days, playing and happy, is the best feeling of all!



Coco, F1 savannah



Coco, F1 savannah

Savannah Cats Coco & Cine

This summer, we welcomed 5-year-old F1 Savannah cats Coco and Cine to our sanctuary.

Hybrid requests happen daily and our program was full with a waiting list. But we had agreed months earlier to take in these two and wanted to stay true to our commitment to Coco and Cine.

Coco, the female, is definitely in charge and likes to have her own space. She's quick to hiss and stomp when Cine gets too close. She isn't timid at all, just prefers to be queen of her castle.

Cine is fun-loving and playful. He really likes to show off for his caretakers and is quite social.



Cine, F1 savannah



Cine, F1 savannah



Emorhy, domestic cat

Domestic Cat Emorhy

Emorhy was a stray kitten who appeared on the road to our sanctuary. She was malnourished, not spayed, had ear mites and patches of fur falling out.

Stray cats have found their way on their own to our sanctuary, too. And they've all happened to be gray and white, just like Emorhy! Many were spayed and neutered by The Wildcat Sanctuary, vetted and then adopted out to appropriate homes. A few also made it clear they were at our sanctuary to stay.

Once she recuperated, she had playdates with the office cats and Kiara the dog. Thankfully, all went well and even Mr. Oreoh decided little Emorhy would make a good addition to the office cat staff – and she certainly has!



Fargo, F1 bengal

F1 Bengal Cat Fargo

We were contacted from a Fargo, North Dakota shelter asking if we could help a feral F1 Bengal that came into their care. They said they had no other placement resources for a half wild, feral cat.

Fargo, as we named him, is an underweight, 1.5-year-old, neutered male, who had already been rehomed at least twice. His last owners abandoned him outside and moved out of the state.

This poor boy is understandably extremely frightened and upset. As full as our hybrid program was, we work hard to make room for the F1 hybrids who deserve the chance to.

You can help our new residents by becoming a sponsor parent!
Sign up online at
WilcatSanctuary.org
or call us at 320-245-6871.



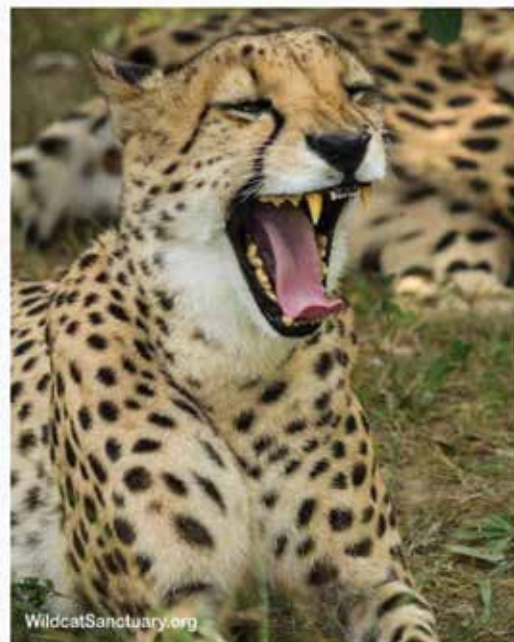
Erin, cheetah

Erin is a 10-year-old cheetah who recently retired from an AZA accredited zoo and the SSP (Species Survival Program). We offered Erin placement due to many factors, including being a neighbor to our geriatric cheetah brothers, Kitu and Lavani.

We hope the brothers will be just as excited about their new neighbor as we are.

We've been told Erin is very sassy and independent. We can't wait to get to know her further and we hope you feel the same!

Stay Informed



Don't miss out!

Get important rescue & cat news
first by signing up for our
newsletter today!

Sign up at [WildcatSanctuary.org](https://www.wildcatsanctuary.org)

Argentina Tigers



In January, I was shocked to receive an email asking if we could help two tigers from Argentina. As I read on, I learned that these two tigers were still living at the Mendoza Zoo. You may recall, that's where lions Chupino and Saltena came from.

The zoo has been trying to find placement for these tigers since 2016, without success. My heart sank remembering these two female tigers were on the original rescue list when we began helping cats from Argentina.

Until now, I had no idea they never found a home. Dating back years, I have correspondence where they requested placement with other sanctuaries, national and international groups.

But they never found a facility that could accommodate the tigers, nor one willing to go through the long and expensive process to transport them.

I said yes immediately!

It seems a lifetime ago that I reviewed the initial list of big cats in need of sanctuary from Argentina. With your support, we said yes to all the lions on the list and began the long permitting process of



Chupino, lion



Saltena, lion



bringing them to The Wildcat Sanctuary.

Kimba, Sofi, Gino, Chupino and Saltena arrived in 2018. Leo and Mansa arrived early in 2019. Mendoza Zoo had been closed for several years and its conditions were under scrutiny before reopening as an Ecopark.

We'd decided to help the lions since the legal permitting process was much shorter than for tigers. But we never imagined a home wouldn't be found for these two tigers.

In February, we began the extensive process to provide these two beautiful ladies a much-deserved retirement home. But the process can take 10-12 months for permitting.

Our veterinary team has been consulting with vets in Argentina to ensure translocation is best for these tigresses, given their age and health status. We continue to stay in contact and assess their needs up until the day of transport, which could be early in 2024.

The United States ensures tigers are only

imported to help conserve species in the wild. That's why our sanctuary must demonstrate we either support wild tiger conservation by breeding (as part of the species survival program) or by donating to ongoing important work being done on the ground to preserve the species.

A wonderful supporter of ours has helped us make a 3-year donation to The Wildlife Protection Society of India to preserve and protect India's wild tiger populations. The donation was given via the Fund for the Tiger.

We feel honored not only to rescue these senior tigresses that deserve sanctuary, but also honored knowing their rescue will have a direct and positive impact on tigers in the wild.

We'll keep you posted on their journey home. Patience is a virtue during important international rescues like these.

Thank you to all who donated to our Cats in Crisis Campaign to help tigers like Lucy and Violeta, as well as for specialized equipment and a much-needed transport trailer.

We'll keep you updated as we plan their long journey to their forever home here with us.

Tigress Lucy is now 15 years old. She arrived in Mendoza in 2011 after an exchange of animals between the Mendoza Zoo and another zoo.

Tigress Violeta is 17 years old. She was seized by the Directorate of Natural Resources after verifying the illegal possession of the animal by a citizen. Violeta doesn't have claws and has an apparent dislocation in one of her hind limbs. However, her mobility is normal.

*Gifts of \$50+ received
3/8-7/19/2023*

In Honor & In Memory

In Honor

In honor of Benjamin Glocke's 42nd birthday
Karen Glocke

In honor of Laurie Heath Richards' birthday
Sue Deffendall, Craig Berntson

In honor of Cathy Penna
Barbara Hensler and Patrick Heffernan

In honor of Constance and Denice's Anniversary
Roberta Theodoran

In honor of Cora Stangl's birthday!
Mary Schannach

In honor of Corrine and Denny Daily
Jamie and Tamara Thingelstad

In honor of Craig Miller's birthday and the arrival of the Ukrainian cats
Paul Moss

In honor of Denny and Corinne Daily's 30th Anniversary
Maria Bernardy

In honor of Logan and Ava Leslie's birthdays
Ron and Lois Dixon

In honor of Kimberlily's birthday
Rebecca Planer

In honor of Judy E's birthday
Rebecca Planer

In honor of my mom, Lynn Krapf. Happy Mother's Day!
Meghan Bonnie

In honor of all the beautiful cats at TWS and Tammy who made all this possible by starting TWS!
Karen Frasure

In honor of Copper
Kathleen Jackson

In honor of Judson Tharin and his talent for bringing the story of the work of the Sanctuary to us in pictures and video.
Judson McNeil

In honor of Marley and in memory of Pixie and Lucy
Pete and Jodi Roth

In honor of my great niece Shay Marie
Deborah Sandford

In honor of my friend Linda's 70th birthday!
Janice O'Leary

In honor of Prada and all the Ukraine lion cubs
Cynthia Barstad

In honor of the witness protection cats that we hope one day we will get to meet.
Karen Goad

In honor of volunteer Becky Wilkens
Sandra Wilkens

In honor of Indy's arrival
Ellen Simmons

In honor of Jessa and Nick's wedding day
Carol Hendricks

In honor of Caretaker Katrina's birthday
Uncle Tim Neis, Kristin Jamison

In honor of Miss Coco
Karen Stalter

In honor of my birthday, Gino's present
Connie Rawa

In honor of my dad who never thought he liked cats
Chris Johnston

In honor of my dad, Noah
Karen Stalter

In honor of my daughter Darcy Rowe Franklin for her 51st Birthday
Michell & Arlie Johnson

In honor of Peter Deimel
Martha Connolly

In honor of Puma and ChiChi, two rescued sisters
Nancy Gronseth

In honor of Ramsey
Denise Donovan

In honor of saving Winona
Thomas Heagney

In honor of my friend Cindy
Cecilia Claudio

In honor of The Reich Family
Daniel and Myndal Silver

In honor of the wedding of Ksenia Vlasov and Daniel Shassian. Mazel Tov!
Jason Barnett

In honor of my mom, Charlene, moving back to Minnesota. Also, in honor of Marley.
Pete and Jodi Roth

In honor of Violeta and Lucy, for all cats in crisis
Cynthia Barstad

In honor of my cat Sabrina
Peter Young

In honor of Nui and Coco who watch over "The Gang."
Dore Dokos-Loewenthal

In honor of Teri Kuzoff—the girl with stars in her eyes who watches the stars in the skies.
Dore and her kitties

In honor of 5 beautiful Cliffe smiles and 4 gorgeous kitties.
Dore and her kitties

In Memory

In memory of my lovely pet bunny, Blackberry, who was with me 10 years, whom I will miss forever.
Vidisha Vachharajani

In memory of all our sweet cats.
Ray and Diane Penwarden

In memory of Annette DiBiase, my beloved partner of 30 years
Ellen Richardson

In memory of Ashton Chateau and Clifton De Jesus
Myra Chateau

In memory of Bonaventure
George and Elizabeth Naylor

In memory of Catherine Crossan-Vork
Ruth Vork

In memory of Charles and Kay Clausning
Miriam Bisbing

In memory of Charlie
George and Elizabeth Naylor

In memory of Daisy, Copper, River, Panda and Suzie
Nancy Bolin

In memory of Deloris Flowers
Rebecca Bushey

In memory of Duane Kindel
Kathleen Lilley In memory of my

Uncle-Dr Curtis L Meinert

Dawn Kaping

In memory of Hillary, our 19 yr old who just crossed the Rainbow bridge

Grant and Laura Parcells

In memory of Patricia Baker

Jennifer Martinuzzi

In memory of my daughter Holly who loved TWS

Penny Maki

In memory of all the kitties the sanctuary has lost this year

Linda Meyer

In memory of Kieke

Debra Krook

In memory of Kim Meline, a long time TWS supporter

Joel Meline

In memory of mom and dad

Karen Snyder

In memory of my 19 year old Bengal, Jazzmyn

Belinda Kenyon

In memory of my beloved dog Westly

Karen Heere

In memory of my cats who have passed on, TC, Beaches, Cinder & Kaylee

Marilyn Jensen

In memory of my favorite mother, Margaret A. Champ who left this world 12/3/2004 and broke my heart. Her love/respect of cats was one of her greatest attributes.

Lisa Champ Paluck

In memory of my friend Heather's cat, Shadow, who was her little cling on kitty, so he did his name proud. He is sorely missed.

Cindy Kosen

In memory of my sweet cat Chessie

Laura Morey

In memory of my sweet kitty, Otis, who went to the Rainbow Bridge

Cindy Kosen

In memory of of Sally, Celeste, and Mighty Mo

George and Elizabeth Naylor

In memory of Salteña and Stelter

Judith and Gary Brauch

In memory of Sarafina, in honor of Sweetie

Joan Eichelberg

In memory of Wally. May your little corner of heaven have many pine trees

Anne and Joel Anderson

In memory of Jeff Meredith

Janet Bay

In memory of Joanne Haug

Roberta Haswell, Robin Stern

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

Barbara Stillman

In memory of Kimba

Bonnie Woodward, Cynthia Barstad, Sharon Bovie, Ron and Lois Dixon, Albert and Gunn Honican, James Howard, Jennifer Howard, Sumi Jordan, Heatherjoy Klein, Dale and Lauren Kramer, Kelly Lattanzi, Marjorie Lulay, Sharon Osgood, Bonnie Reiland, April Staebler, Sheri and Chris Vitullo, Karen DeBlois, Sande Immediato, Nancy Bolin

In memory of Lucas and Rusty my dear cats who passed in February 2023

Ellen Richardson

In memory of Michelle Bezek's cat Baby.

Emily Robin-Abbott

In memory of Ms Shanti Deva, Forever Queen of TWS, and my Twinkle

Cathy Silva

In memory of my beautiful, beloved cat, Tiger

Michelle Bayerle

In memory of my late husband William E. Wolf

Maria Wolf

In memory of my mom, Helen L. Colby

Lisa Rousseau

In memory of my mom, Betty Jo Dunaway

Catherine Dunaway

In memory of my son Don who loved the tigers

Shirley Sinclair

In memory of my son, Ken Czupta

Donna Czupta Grabowski

In memory of Nikko

John and Yvonne Baranick, Sharon Bovie, April Bowers, Kathleen Clemens, James Howard, Sumi Jordan, Marjorie Lulay, Chuck and Jane Mathewson, Bonnie Reiland, Alex Runiewicz, Douglas Taggart, Peter Young

In memory of my best friend Max. He lives on forever in our memories and the universe.

Clinton Caulder

In memory of P-22

Larry and Rita Iverson

In memory of Pansie Miss Patches, my best friend and soul mate. Forever in my heart.

Wendy Mell

In memory of Peter Gerstel and Jean Fox

Diane Burica

In memory of Sebastian

Kathleen Jackson

In memory of Priya from her sons Dimitri, Griffin, Zeke and her sister Pandora. Also, Simone.

Patty Burns Sinclair

In memory of Sam Daml. She was my best friend and she loved supporting and hearing about TWS.

Barb Rein

In memory of Scat Fury, Dunder Vetter, Orange, and Black Bear

Julie Hockin

In memory of Sport, Duddlee, Oreo and Gabby

Judy Royal and Helen Deignan

In memory of Tato, beloved companion of Dog and Polly

Mary and Mike Berger

In memory of Tomi and Tyger, beloved tabbies of Dog and Kitty

Mary and Mike Berger

In memory of Yvonne Kelly

Marie Wilkinson

In memory of Zeke

Cynthia Barstad, Richard Benz, Sharon Bovie, Fulvia Bowerman, Judith and Gary Brauch, Scott Hendershot, James Howard, Sumi Jordan, Dale and Lauren Kramer, Kimberly Larson, Anne McKinney, Sharon Osgood, Bonnie Reiland, Christine Reinhold, Sue Rogers, Susan Sears, Carol Ann Smith, Everitt Terhune, Sheri and Chris Vitullo, George Wetzel and Lorrie Money Ty Williams, Judith and Gary Brauch, Devi Book, Verena Rose



Zeke, tiger

Zeke, we know that you will never be with us here on Earth again, but you will remain in our hearts forever as part of the Tiger Trio



Nikko, bobcat

Nikko, one of life's greatest gifts is the opportunity to grow old. We were grateful to have spent many years with you.

Cuddle Cats



Kitu and Lavani, cheetahs



Leo and Mansa, lions



Morgan and Glenn, bobcats



Ty, chausie and Ledger, savannah



Leo, savannah and Eddy, bengal



Lizzy and Phoenix, African servals



Taras, Stefania, Prada, Lesya, lions



THE WILDCAT SANCTUARY



PO Box 314 • Sandstone, MN • 55072

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE PAID
TWIN CITIES MN
PERMIT 30308

Save the Date

give TO THE MAX 
Nov. 16, 2023

GIVE TO THE MAX DAY is our biggest 24 hours of giving!

It's also the purr-fect time to give since your
GIFT WILL BE DOUBLED!

We've got an amazing day planned for you November 16th. Taking you behind the scenes, we'll be giving you a glimpse of what it's like to be part of our rescue team.

From early morning food prep and medication rounds to overnight care, you'll get to see it all as you tune into our Facebook page for live coverage that day.

You'll be able to start scheduling your donation for **GIVE TO THE MAX DAY** on November 1st so mark your calendars now. As a special incentive, every donor will be entered for a chance to win our highly coveted **CARETAKER FOR A DAY EXPERIENCE!**

There's more! For every gift of \$100 or more, you'll receive a paw print and a special thank you from one of our big cats!

Remember, when you **GIVE TO THE MAX**, you help save wild cats in need. Thank you for helping change their world for the better.



Prada and Leysa, lions

