

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

The following is a partial list of incidents involving captive big cats in the United States since 1990. These incidents have resulted in the deaths of over 130 big cats and 25 humans as well as the injury of more than 280 humans. Contact PETA for documentation.

December 30, 2018/Burlington, North Carolina: A 22-year-old intern working at the Conservators Center was reportedly killed by a lion named Matthai while cleaning an enclosure. The animal had managed to escape the area to which he had been confined and entered the same space as the intern, before killing her. Sheriff's deputies apparently shot and killed him in order to retrieve the intern's body.

May 16, 2017/Abilene, Texas: Estrella, a jaguar at the Abilene Zoo, escaped from an enclosure and was found atop an enclosure holding spider monkeys. She reached inside and seriously injured a monkey, who then needed to be euthanized. Estrella was tranquilized by a dart gun and put in a holding pen.

January 15, 2017/Sumpter Township, Michigan: Police were looking into reports of a large feline in the area. A resident claimed to have spotted the cat on three occasions and managed to videotape the animal. An exotic-animal expert reviewed the video and determined that the cat was possibly a cougar who had probably been kept illegally and escaped.

December 13, 2016/Miami, Florida: A tiger at Zoo Miami bit off the tip of a zookeeper's

finger when the keeper broke protocol and fed the animal through the bars of the enclosure.

October 25, 2016/Pensacola, Florida: Tiger trainer Vicenta Pages was attacked by a tiger during a performance at the Pensacola Interstate Fair in front of dozens of elementary school students. She was bitten, clawed, and dragged by the tiger and sustained substantial injuries to her leg, according to news reports. She was taken to a local hospital for treatment.

October 1, 2016/Spearfish, South Dakota: A tiger at Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary escaped through an open gate and bit the facility's founder several times. Local law-enforcement officers shot and killed the animal.

June 16, 2016/Cave Junction, Oregon: A zookeeper at Great Cats World Park was attacked by a tiger after a gate was left unlocked to the tiger's den.

June 7, 2016/Salt Lake City, Utah: A leopard climbed a fence and escaped from an enclosure at the Hogle Zoo during peak visiting hours. The facility went on lockdown and isolated guests until the leopard was tranquilized and taken to the zoo's hospital.

April 21, 2016/Houston, Texas: A tiger was found wandering the streets in a suburb of Houston. The animal was being kept as a "pet" and escaped while being moved during a flood.

April 15, 2016/West Palm Beach, Florida: A zookeeper died after being attacked by a tiger at the Palm Beach Zoo. She had been preparing for her routine "Tiger Talk" behind the scenes in an enclosure where the tigers ate and slept.

November 1, 2015/Omaha, Nebraska: A woman sustained a severe hand injury after

breaking into Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo & Aquarium to pet a tiger.

September 13, 2015/Charlestown, Indiana: According to a USDA inspection report, members of the public, including an 8- or 9-year-old girl, were bitten in at least two different incidents during "Tiger Playtime"—during which four 16-week-old tiger cubs weighing 35 to 40 pounds were allowed to interact with approximately 40 to 50 members of the public at Wildlife in Need, Inc.

September 6, 2015/Indianapolis, Indiana: A cheetah named Pounce was discovered lying in a landscaped area between the exhibit barrier and guests at the Indianapolis Zoo, prompting a zoo-wide lockdown. An hour and a half later, the zoo tweeted that the cheetahs were back in holding cells and that staff and guests were safe.

September 3, 2015/Hemet, California: A 3-month-old declawed tiger cub was found wandering the streets of a neighborhood and was turned in to the Ramona Humane Society. The 25-pound cub, who was later named Himmel, was transferred to and provided a permanent home at the sanctuary Lions, Tigers & Bears. Himmel was believed to have been someone's "pet."

August 17, 2015/Detroit, Michigan: A tiger got loose in the Packard Automotive Plant during a photo shoot. The tiger, along with two wolves and a bobcat, came from Bozeman-based Animals of Montana. After the tiger got into a stairwell, attempts were made to scare the animal out with a weed whacker. The trainers were eventually able to get him or her back into a cage. Although the photographer had permission for the two-day shoot at the plant, he hadn't mentioned that he was bringing the animals.

May 1, 2015/Flint, Michigan: According to a USDA inspection report, a 50-pound

cougar being exhibited by The Creature Conservancy became agitated and leaped off a platform in the direction of the general public. The handlers were able to restrain him with leads attached to two collars on his neck, but he remained agitated and attempted to strike the handlers. The report stated that the cougar was too large, fast, and unpredictable to be exhibited to the public in this manner.

April 30, 2015/Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: A Sumatran tiger escaped from a primary enclosure at the Oklahoma City Zoo and was loose for 20 minutes. After being spotted in an enclosed space between two exhibits, she was tranquilized.

April 15, 2015/Seattle, Washington: A 6-month-old lion cub escaped from an enclosure at the Woodland Park Zoo after a keeper left the door open. He was loose in a service area for about an hour before being recaptured.

October 22, 2014/Gentry, Arkansas: A visitor to the Wild Wilderness Drive-Through Safari was either bitten or scratched by an uncontrolled 12-week-old lion cub during a park-allowed public interaction. The person later sought medical attention for the injury.

October 10, 2014/Little Rock, Arkansas: A 3-year-old child fell into a jaguar exhibit at the Little Rock Zoo. Two jaguars attacked the child, and fire extinguishers were used to keep the jaguars back as the boy was retrieved. He was taken to the hospital and listed in critical condition with a depressed skull fracture, an extensive scalp laceration, and puncture wounds. He was released from the hospital a week later.

October 9, 2014/St. Paul, Minnesota: A 23-year-old man was clawed by a cougar after climbing a guardrail at the Como Park Zoo.

October 6, 2014/Jupiter, Florida: A construction worker who was working at a large-cat breeding facility lost his thumb after he stuck his hand in a cage containing a tiger and the animal mauled it. The tiger belongs to Mario Tabraue, owner of Zoological Wildlife Foundation in Miami.

August 23, 2014/Dallas, Texas: A zookeeper at the Dallas Zoo was attacked by a lioness after failing to secure the door to an enclosure. He was hospitalized with a puncture wound to his back as well as scratches.

August 19, 2014/Charlestown, Indiana: During a U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) inspection of Wildlife in Need, the inspector observed several incidents that took place during "Tiger Playtime," when approximately 30 members of the public sit in an enclosed area and are allowed to interact freely with two tiger cubs. An attendee was pawed and mouthed in the face, one child was bitten on the top of his thigh, another child was grabbed from behind and both sides of the head and ears were mouthed by a cub, and the inspector was bitten on the back, resulting in broken skin and bleeding.

July 26, 2014/Baldwin Township, Michigan: A caged lion at Sunrise Side Nature Trail and Exotic Park bit part of a visitor's finger off when she attempted to pet the animal.

April 8, 2014/Jackson, New Jersey: A few students were nipped by a couple of 3-month-old lion cubs while they were visiting Six Flags Great Adventure as part of an internship.

January 17, 2014/Charlestown, Indiana: According to a USDA inspection report, during an inspection of Wildlife in Need, Inc., the licensee admitted that people had been scratched and nipped by tiger cubs

during "Tiger Baby Playtime." The inspector noted that the cubs were "too large, too strong and aggressive" and that the licensee must stop using them for direct-contact exhibitions. The animals used in the event were approximately 15 to 16 weeks old.

January 3, 2014/Spring Hill, Florida: Savannah, a 7-year-old lioness, escaped from an enclosure at the Survival Outreach Sanctuary. She was recaptured on the facility's grounds and relocated to a new cage.

December 22, 2013/San Diego, California: A female tiger was killed at the San Diego Zoo during a mating attempt. The male tiger grabbed her by the neck, severely injuring her spinal cord and causing damage to her respiratory system, killing her instantly.

December 14, 2013/Hattiesburg, Mississippi: A jaguar escaped from a holding area at the Hattiesburg Zoo after staffers failed to close and lock the gate properly after cleaning the exhibit. The animal was sedated with a tranquilizer dart and returned to the holding area within about 50 minutes.

December 8, 2013/Montgomery, Alabama: A tiger escaped from the enclosure that she was being held in at the Montgomery Zoo by swimming through an underwater break in the fencing into a neighboring exhibit. She had been out of the enclosure for about 30 minutes when she was shot with a tranquilizer dart and returned to night quarters until the fence could be repaired.

December 2, 2013/Duluth, Minnesota: A zookeeper's finger was bitten while feeding the Siberian tigers at the Lake Superior Zoo. The finger remained attached but was seriously mangled.

November 9, 2013/Sherwood, Oregon:

The head keeper at WildCat Haven Sanctuary was killed by a cougar inside the enclosure that the animal was housed in. The 36-year-old keeper was apparently the only person at the sanctuary at the time of the attack.

October 5, 2013/Wynnewood, Oklahoma:

A tiger severely mauled the arm of an employee at The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park after she put her hand in the enclosure. She was airlifted to a hospital, where the limb was able to be reattached.

June 21, 2013/Clay County, Indiana:

A worker at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center was attacked by a tiger while cleaning out the cage. She was admitted to a hospital's intensive care unit and listed in critical condition. Indiana Occupational Safety and Health Administration investigators fined the center \$69,000 for safety violations.

June 20, 2013/Charlestown, Indiana:

A woman and her boyfriend, concerned for their domestic cats' safety after other small animals had been attacked in their neighborhood, shot what they thought was a bobcat. The animal was later identified as an approximately 9-month-old leopard, whom authorities suspected came from Wildlife in Need.

April 21, 2013/Salina, Kansas:

A woman came face to face with a tiger in a women's bathroom after the animal escaped from trainers at the Isis Shrine circus. The tiger was recaptured and returned to a cage.

March 6, 2013/Dunlap, California:

A volunteer intern was attacked and killed by a 550-pound, 4-year-old lion named Cous Cous, who broke the intern's neck with a paw swipe and then mauled her body. It was believed that Cous Cous escaped his

cage by using his paw to lift a partially open door. Sheriff's deputies shot and killed him.

February 28, 2013/Litchfield Park, Arizona:

The USDA cited Wildlife World Zoo for allowing a 3-month-old tiger cub to run throughout a local television studio. The inspector noted that the cub was seen biting the clothing of an offstage handler while the lead handler was seen with scratches and bite marks on his arms. The host of the television program was also seen pulling at the tail of the tiger.

February 2013/Troutman, North Carolina:

A man was bitten on the nose by a 40-pound white tiger cub when he was allowed direct contact with the animal at Zootastic Park of Lake Norman. Apparently, the man was lying on the floor face to face with the cub when the incident happened.

January 2012/Calhan, Colorado:

According to the owner of Serenity Springs Wildlife Center, a trespasser scaled a 10-foot fence lined with barbed wire and cut a hole in the fence surrounding a tiger enclosure, allowing three tigers to escape and wander around the compound. Later that month, a couple was seen inside the compound sticking their hands inside the cougar cage, trying to pet the animal. After being confronted by workers, the couple jumped back over the 10-foot fence and drove off.

June 6, 2012/Brooksville, Florida:

A cougar escaped from the Gard Zoo and killed a neighbor's "pet" beagle.

December 1, 2011/Wynnewood, Oklahoma:

According to a USDA inspection report, a 3-month-old tiger cub, who was being exhibited on a leash at The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park, jumped on a small child and knocked him down. The child was scratched as a result.

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November 27, 2011/Cincinnati, Ohio: An employee of G.W. Exotic Animal Foundation was scratched during an exhibit in which people were allowed to take pictures with tiger cubs at a mall. The employee said, "There was blood everywhere. ... It was just a total, total mess."

November 9, 2011/Seattle, Washington: A lion got out of a den at the Woodland Park Zoo, but the animal didn't get far before being tranquilized in a service building.

October 19, 2011/Zanesville, Ohio: Eighteen tigers, 17 lions, and three mountain lions were shot and killed by police after they were let loose from Muskingum County Animal Farm by owner Terry Thompson, who then shot and killed himself.

October 16, 2011/Odessa, Texas: A 4-year-old boy was mauled by his aunt's "pet" mountain lion.

September 21, 2012/Bronx, New York: A 25-year-old man at the Bronx Zoo jumped out of the monorail into the exhibit housing the tigers and was badly mauled by one of them.

August 11, 2011/Halifax Township, Pennsylvania: An employee of Lake Tobias Wildlife Park was bitten after sticking her hand inside a cage to pet a tiger.

July 21, 2011/Warsaw, New York: Three tigers owned by Natalie Cainan and generally used for circuses escaped from a transport enclosure, and two crossed a barrier fence and bit a horse in the next trailer. The tigers were loose for approximately 30 minutes before being contained again.

July 17, 2011/Manchester, Iowa: An adult tiger attacked Tom Sellner, the owner of the Cricket Hollow Zoo, while Sellner was

feeding the animal at his facility. Sellner was flown to an Iowa City hospital after sustaining lacerations to his head and torso.

May 6, 2011/Wichita, Kansas: A 7-year-old boy on a field trip with Linwood Elementary School was mauled by an Amur leopard when the child climbed over a guardrail at the Sedgwick County Zoo. According to a witness, the leopard remained inside the cage but had his "claws into the little boy's face, and [was] gnawing his neck." A man reportedly had to kick the cat in the head to get the cat to release the boy, who was later taken to a hospital with face and neck injuries.

May 2011/West Palm Beach, Florida: A maintenance worker at the Palm Beach Zoo was treated at a hospital for cuts and bruises to his back that he received from a tiger after he fell against a mesh cage holding the animal in a restricted area of the zoo.

October 22, 2010/Rock Springs, Wisconsin: A volunteer at Wisconsin Big Cat Rescue and Educational Center required medical care for his arm after a tiger grabbed the volunteer's clothing and pulled his arm into the cage.

November 27, 2010/Readstown, Wisconsin: The USDA cited the licensees of Kickapoo Bobcat & Lynx, exotic-animal breeders, for failing to demonstrate adequate experience and knowledge of a wild animal when a volunteer was scratched on the face by a bobcat while trying to place water in the enclosure.

November 19, 2010/San Antonio, Texas: A cougar escaped from the Wild Animal Orphanage while cages were being moved. Law enforcement officers searched for the animal for eight hours, during which time the cougar attacked and nearly killed a puppy. Area schools were put on alert, and recess

was canceled at the elementary school. The cougar was ultimately tranquilized and recaptured.

October 22, 2010/Rock Springs, Wisconsin: A volunteer at Wisconsin Big Cat Rescue and Educational Center was severely bitten by an adult tiger who grabbed the man's arm and pulled it into the cage while the man was providing the big cat with water. Other volunteers helped the victim extract his arm from the cage, and the man was flown by helicopter to a hospital, where he underwent surgery on his hand and arm.

October 2, 2010/Idaville, Indiana: Two 900- to 1,000-pound tigers escaped from a cage at a private menagerie called Great Cats of Indiana. The tigers pushed out the corner post of a cage, which was held together with approximately 10 16-penny nails. The tigers were reportedly acting aggressively and were shot by the facility's owner. One tiger was killed after being shot four times in the head and twice in the body with a .223 rifle and twice in body with a 12-gauge shotgun. The other sustained a wound to the abdomen from a 12-gauge shotgun. The tigers were loose for at least 13 hours before they were shot.

September 5, 2010/Essex County, New Jersey: A leopard escaped from an enclosure at the Turtle Back Zoo and hid behind a retaining wall in a zoo service building. Visitors were moved to safe areas and the zoo was closed for approximately 45 minutes while the leopard was sedated and recaptured.

September 1, 2010/Las Vegas, Nevada: Numerous visitors looked on as an adult male lion attacked a trainer at the MGM Grand lion habitat. The victim was treated at a hospital and received stitches for a bite on the leg.

August 28, 2010/Miami, Florida: While chasing an escaped gibbon, a 500-pound tiger jumped over a 12-foot fence and escaped from an enclosure at Jungle Island. At one point, the tiger came face-to-face with a 2-year-old toddler. More than 100 park visitors were ushered into a dark barn for protection. Four people were hurt during the chaos and were treated for minor injuries. A fifth person was transported to a hospital after having a panic attack.

April 23, 2010/Rockwell, North Carolina: A 100-pound tiger broke through plastic glass while being loaded onto a trailer at Tiger World, an unaccredited zoo. For several moments, the escaped tiger was on a leash but not under the control of a handler. The tiger passed 20 to 30 feet directly in front of two families with young children, all of whom ran and hid behind a cash-register area. The USDA later ordered Tiger World to pay a \$2,571 penalty for this incident.

April 15, 2010/Beltrami County, Minnesota: Two 100-pound adolescent African lions bumped open a gate and escaped from an enclosure at Paul Bunyan's Animal Land. The two lions were found wrestling with a dog in the front yard of a home in a residential neighborhood approximately two blocks away.

April 2010/Brown County, Ohio: A cougar who had been purchased as a "pet" at a flea market escaped and remained on the loose a month later.

February 19, 2010/Wellington, Florida: A jaguar at the Panther Ridge Conservation Center grabbed a woman's hand and tore off her thumb when the woman wrapped her fingers around a part of an enclosure. This was at least the third dangerous incident at the facility in the past five years. (See March 29, 2008/Wellington, Florida, and February 26, 2005/Wellington, Florida.)

October 10, 2009/Cleveland, Ohio: An adult clouded leopard escaped from an enclosure at the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo when a wire in the cage broke. The leopard was tranquilized and recaptured.

July 30, 2009/Las Vegas, Nevada: A 400-pound tiger belonging to the Fercos Brothers magic act escaped while being walked on a leash outside the owners' gated property. The tiger ran after a rabbit, causing Tony Fercos to fall and drop the leash. Police responded to reports from local residents about a tiger wandering the streets, and the animal was found in a resident's backyard. The owners cornered the tiger and returned him to a cage.

May 25, 2009/Columbiana County, Ohio: A 10-year-old girl was attacked by a "pet" cougar while visiting the home of Chris Joseph, a family friend who owned several African lions and cougars. A young male cougar grabbed and released the child's arm at least three times when she put her hand and arm into a cage containing two of these large predators. In order to release the girl from the cat's jaws, the friend had to remove a fan that was in front of an opening and crawl into the cage with the animals. The girl was rushed to a local hospital and then airlifted to Children's Hospital in Pittsburgh. A USDA inspector cited owner Matt Joseph for two direct noncompliances in relation to this incident and warned that because the gate to the barrier fence, which is also the perimeter fence, was unlocked, "[a]nyone could access these animals when the owners are not at home."

May 24, 2009/Great Bend, Kansas: A 150-pound cougar escaped from an enclosure at the Great Bend Zoo when a zookeeper left a door open. Zoo visitors were evacuated and the cougar was shot and killed by police because the animal became aggressive and tranquilizer darts were not readily available.

May 24, 2009/Memphis, Tennessee: A zookeeper at the Memphis Zoo was bitten by a 3-year-old tiger who escaped into a corridor through unlocked doors. The keeper was taken to a hospital for a bite to his leg. The tiger was sedated and returned to a cage.

May 2, 2009/Osceola County, Florida: A pregnant cougar owned by Jungle Adventure Park escaped and ran into nearby woods when she was being moved from one cage to another. Officials from the fish and wildlife commission and the Osceola County Sheriff's Office searched unsuccessfully for the cougar.

April 24, 2009/Calhan, Colorado: A tiger bit a volunteer on the arm while the man was cleaning cages at Serenity Springs Wildlife Center. The volunteer was taken by ambulance to a hospital.

April 17, 2009/Jacksonville, Florida: A jaguar at the Jacksonville Zoo escaped from an enclosure through a hole in the fence. The hole may have been made by a groundskeeper. The jaguar was captured in a net and returned to the enclosure.

February 21, 2009/Oakley, Kansas: One of three lions in the private menagerie of Jeffrey Harsh attacked a man who put his arm into the cage. Harsh reportedly beat the lion with a steel pipe so that she would release the man. The victim sustained deep lacerations to both arms and was taken to a hospital in Denver for surgery.

February 11, 2009/Omaha, Nebraska: A veterinarian at the Henry Doorly Zoo was bitten by a tiger while performing a routine medical examination of the animal. The 200-pound anesthetized tiger bit the veterinarian's right forearm three times, and the veterinarian was taken to the hospital in serious condition.

February 2, 2009/Troy, Alabama: A child was clawed by a leopard at the McClelland Critters zoo when the owner of the facility took visitors behind the barrier that separates the animals from the public.

January 18, 2009/Thurmont, Maryland: An animal-care worker at Catoctin Wildlife Preserve and Zoo was attacked by one or possibly two jaguars after she failed to secure the area in which they were enclosed before working in an adjacent area. Both jaguars entered the area, and the nearly 200-pound male jaguar and possibly also the female jaguar attacked the woman. A fire extinguisher was sprayed at the male jaguar to fend him off. Emergency medical technicians responded to the incident, and the victim was taken to the Maryland Shock Trauma Center. She spent 10 days in the hospital for injuries to her face and upper body. Both jaguars were placed in quarantine for one month.

January 18, 2009/Ingram, Texas: A 330-pound "pet" tiger owned by Anke Leitner escaped from an enclosure and was discovered in the residential backyard of a 79-year-old woman. The tiger was shot with a tranquilizer dart and recaptured.

January 8, 2009/Salem, Oregon: During a USDA inspection, exhibitor James Wise was demonstrating to the inspector how he gave an adult male tiger a pill. When Wise turned around, the tiger lunged at him, bit his forearm, and pushed him into a fence. Wise hit the tiger on the face until he released his grip long enough for Wise to escape the enclosure.

December 12, 2008/Las Vegas, Nevada: Numerous visitors looked on as a lion attacked and bit a trainer on the leg during a feeding at the MGM Grand lion habitat. Another trainer intervened by hitting the lion on the nose. The victim sustained injuries requiring stitches.

December 9, 2008/Albion, Indiana: A 350- to 400-pound Bengal tiger escaped from an enclosure at the Black Pine Animal Park when a keeper accidentally left a door open. The tiger was seen running on a local firefighter's farm. Park employees, sheriff's deputies, firefighters, conservation officers, and local and state police were called in, and thermal imaging equipment was used to aid in the search, which lasted nearly seven hours. Two tranquilizer darts had no effect on the tiger, who eventually returned to the park on her own and was coaxed into a cage.

November 29, 2008/Jacksonville, Florida: Two bobcats at the Jacksonville Zoo escaped from an enclosure and into the zookeepers' work area when a keeper left the enclosure door open. One of the bobcats was able to escape onto zoo grounds through another door that had been left open to the outside. The zoo was placed on lockdown and visitors were required to stay inside shops and restaurants. After nearly an hour, the bobcat was tranquilized and recaptured.

November 29, 2008/Pocahontas County, West Virginia: A 250- to 300-pound "pet" Bengal tiger escaped from an exotic-animal farm owned by David Cassell after squeezing through a hole in chain-link cage fencing. When employees at a local ski resort saw the animal's footprints, county and state officials were notified. The tiger was tracked into the Monongahela National Forest, where Cassell ultimately shot and killed her.

November 16, 2008/Luray, Virginia: A 16-year-old employee at the Luray Zoo was attacked by an adult tiger as she attempted to pet the animal while giving a tour to a group of visitors. The tiger reportedly pulled the girl's arm into the cage, causing severe injuries to her left hand and arm. The girl's finger had to be amputated.

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November 15, 2008/Dade County, Florida: A 16-year-old girl was mauled by a 150-pound cougar at the private menagerie of Alan Rigerman. The animal pinned the girl to the ground and clenched his jaws around her head. A neighbor freed the girl by punching and kicking at the cougar. The victim underwent extensive surgery to repair a large gash in the back of her neck.

October 30, 2008/Atlanta, Georgia: One of two 1-year-old cheetahs who were being transported in the cargo hold of a plane from Wildlife Safari Park in Winston, Oregon, to the Memphis Zoo in Tennessee escaped from a travel crate. An airline baggage worker in Atlanta opened the plane's cargo door and found the cheetah running loose amid the luggage. The plane was moved into a closed airport hangar, and both cheetahs were tranquilized and taken to the Atlanta zoo for a few days before continuing their trip to Memphis.

October 30, 2008/Colorado Springs, Colorado: Tigers being exhibited by Serenity Springs Wildlife Center at a party were given insufficient distance and/or barriers from the public, allowing one the opportunity to scratch a person walking past the enclosure that the tigers were being kept in.

October 29, 2008/Broken Arrow, Oklahoma: A volunteer was attacked by a 1,000-pound liger (a cross between a lion and a tiger) while feeding the animal at Safari's Wildlife Sanctuary. The man sustained puncture wounds to his neck and upper back as well as trauma to his vertebrae. He was flown by medical helicopter to a hospital and died the next day from his injuries. A group of 40 elementary schoolchildren was walking by the cage when the incident occurred.

September 18, 2008/Mentone, Alabama: A cougar escaped from a cage at Lookout

Mountain Wild Animal Park and attacked a black leopard's foot through the fence of an enclosure. The cougar was shot and killed in order to get him to release his hold on the leopard's paw.

August 19, 2008/Washoe County, Nevada: Two black leopards were found on the roof of a private home after they apparently jumped a 12-foot fence while the owners were out of town. Authorities tranquilized both leopards, and they were taken to the local animal shelter.

August 19, 2008/West Palm Beach, Florida: An adult lion and an adult tiger escaped from a cage overnight at McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary. Three schools in the area were on lockdown while officers from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office searched for the animals, who were both located the next day, tranquilized, and returned to cages.

August 5, 2008/Richmond, Illinois: During a rehearsal for a circus performance, a tiger at the Hawthorn Corporation circus training facility attacked a man, knocking him to the ground, face down, and grabbing him by the neck. The man sustained deep puncture wounds and several scratches to his upper body, neck, and knee. Others present during the attack hit the animal with wooden poles in order to get him to release the victim. Paramedics transported the man to the hospital, where he stayed for five or six days. It was the second time the man had been attacked by a tiger at the facility.

August 4, 2008/Branson, Missouri: A 16-year-old worker at Predator World was left a quadriplegic after he was attacked by three tigers when he went into the enclosure to photograph the animals for a visitor. One of the tigers jumped on the victim and knocked him to the ground before the two other animals joined the attack and dragged him

to a water pool. Staff members used a fire extinguisher to deter the cats and pulled the teen from the cage. He was airlifted to the hospital and listed in critical condition with severe trauma to his neck and airway as well as a serious laceration on his leg.

August 3, 2008/Warren County, Missouri:

A volunteer at the Wesa-A-Geh-Ya exotic-animal farm was attacked by an 800-pound tiger while cleaning cages. The man was standing on top of a cage when a tiger scaled the 12- to 14-foot chain-link fence and grabbed him. The victim's leg had much of the skin stripped off down to the bare bone, and he was flown by air ambulance to the hospital, where he underwent two surgeries to amputate his lower leg. The facility owners, who initially tried to cover up the incident by claiming that the victim had been attacked by a pit bull, shot and wounded the tiger during the attack and then later shot and killed him.

July 14, 2008/El Paso County, Colorado:

El Paso County Sheriff's deputies searched for an African lion who was spotted running loose by two witnesses, one of whom saw the lion chase several dogs through a field. Photographs confirmed that the animal was indeed an African lion, and the Sheriff's Office concluded that the animal was likely an escaped "pet."

May 24, 2008/South Bend, Indiana:

A keeper at the Potawatomi Zoo was attacked by a leopard while cleaning an off-exhibit holding area. She was taken to a hospital by ambulance to be treated for her injuries.

May 24, 2008/Detroit, Michigan:

A keeper at the Detroit Zoo was attacked by a lion while transferring the animals inside for the evening. He fended the animal off with pepper spray and was treated at a nearby hospital, where he received stitches for his injuries.

May 19, 2008/Neosho, Missouri: A black leopard approached a woman hanging laundry in her yard and then clawed at the door to her home when she retreated inside. The cat then charged a sheriff's deputy who arrived on the scene, ran past him, and turned around and charged again before being killed by several shots from the deputy's rifle and Glock handgun. Authorities speculated that the cat was a "pet" who had escaped or been abandoned.

May 11, 2008/Toledo, Ohio:

A keeper at the Toledo Zoo sustained three lacerations to his chest after a 5-year-old tiger reached through a double mesh barrier and clawed him. He was treated at a nearby hospital.

May 5, 2008/Miami, Florida:

Mark McCarthy, owner of McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary, was bitten by an adult tiger during a photo shoot for a music video. The tiger began to choke and became panicked when a chain tightened around her neck and body. McCarthy sustained bone-deep puncture wounds to his calf while attempting to free the chain, which ultimately had to be cut to be removed. He was treated by paramedics at the scene.

March 29, 2008/Wellington, Florida:

The owner of Panther Ridge Conservation Center was attacked by two cheetahs while conducting an exhibition inside the cage during a fundraising event. She was pinned down by the cheetahs, who then bit and clawed at her for 10 minutes before she could be removed from the cage and airlifted to a hospital. She sustained 40 puncture wounds to her back, arms, and legs.

March 24, 2008/Las Vegas, Nevada:

A panther who was likely being kept as a "pet" attacked a dog in the backyard of a home in a residential area. Police attempted to shoot the panther, but the animal escaped.

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February 21, 2008/Honolulu, Hawaii: A 245-pound tiger escaped from an enclosure at the Honolulu Zoo when a zookeeper failed to secure two gates in the exhibit. During the 20 to 25 minutes that he was on the loose, the tiger walked past a volunteer and into an open area of the zoo, where nothing but a 4-foot fence separated him from the wider public areas of the zoo, including a playground.

February 10, 2008/West Palm Beach, Florida: A Palm Beach Zoo employee was bitten by a tiger during a training session. The worker was taken to a local hospital for treatment.

February 9, 2008/Davenport, Florida: A volunteer was clawed by a tiger while cleaning a cage at Horseshoe Creek Wildlife Foundation. The woman sustained minor injuries when the tiger swiped at her leg.

February 2008/West Palm Beach, Florida: A zookeeper at the Palm Beach Zoo had her finger nipped by Mata, a 3-year-old tiger, while she was training the animal. The keeper was taken to the emergency room and held overnight so that a hand surgeon could fix her finger.

January 20, 2008/Cedar Creek, Texas: A volunteer at the Capital of Texas Zoo was bitten by a cougar when she reached into the pen to pet the animal. The cougar gripped her arm and the girl sustained a broken thumb and bites that required stitches. She was the second person to be bitten by this animal. (See 2007/Cedar Creek, Texas.)

January 10, 2008/San Francisco, California: A 90-pound snow leopard at the San Francisco Zoo nearly escaped after he chewed or tore through a steel mesh wall that separated the feeding cage from a zookeeper service area. The animal created

a hole large enough to get his leg and head through.

December 27, 2007/Manitowoc, Wisconsin: Two cougars escaped from the Lincoln Park Zoo when the fencing of the cage was cut by vandals. The animals were on the loose for approximately two hours before being located, tranquilized, and returned to the cage.

December 25, 2007/San Francisco, California: A 300-pound tiger escaped from an enclosure at the San Francisco Zoo, which was surrounded by a 20-foot-wide moat and a 12½-foot-high wall. She attacked three visitors, quickly killing a teenager and following the other two male victims—a teenager and an adult—for 300 yards before mauling them. The two survivors sustained deep bites and claw cuts on their heads, necks, arms, and hands, and both underwent surgery for their wounds. The tiger was shot and killed by police. This was the same tiger who ripped the flesh off a zookeeper's arm approximately one year before (see December 22, 2006/San Francisco, California).

December 3, 2007/Acton, California: A 4-year-old male tiger mauled a caretaker who was cleaning an enclosure at the Shambala Preserve. The man sustained multiple bite wounds and was airlifted to a hospital, where he was listed in critical condition.

November 19, 2007/Pike County, Ohio: A 550-pound "pet" lion belonging to Terry Brumfield escaped from a cage and onto a nearby highway, where he chased and attacked passing cars. The State Highway Patrol and the Pike County Sheriff's Department responded to the call. Brumfield ultimately lured the lion back to the cage.

November 19, 2007/Saint Louis, Missouri: A portion of the Saint Louis Zoo

was evacuated when a 1-year-old cheetah scaled a wall at least 10 feet high and got into an area intended to separate animals from people and was loose for nearly half an hour. The incident marked the third time since 2000 that a cheetah has escaped at this zoo.

November 14, 2007/New Hampton, Iowa:

A "pet" tiger escaped from a cage by rushing past the owner at feeding time and attacked and mauled the family's dog. When the dog ran toward cars from the local sheriff's department and the tiger followed, a deputy sheriff shot and killed the tiger through a partially opened window of his vehicle.

October 1, 2007/Pahrump, Nevada:

A cougar escaped from a holding pen at Running Wild animal compound and attacked a volunteer who entered the enclosure with a bucket of meat. The woman was knocked to the ground by the cougar and bitten on the neck, back, hands, and arms. The cougar stopped the attack when emergency sirens approached the facility.

July 14, 2007/San Antonio, Texas: A keeper who forgot to close a gate was attacked by a 250-pound tiger at the San Antonio Zoo. The tiger knocked the man down, dragged him, and bit him on the head several times before the keeper managed to escape by spraying the animal with pepper spray. The keeper was airlifted to the hospital with serious injuries to his head, neck, and arm.

July 6, 2007/Marion County, Arkansas: A man was injured by one of his 5½-year-old "pet" cougars as he was cleaning the cage. The male cougar knocked the man to the ground and bit him on the back of the neck, head, and leg. He was taken to the hospital and treated for his injuries.

February 24, 2007/Denver, Colorado: A keeper at the Denver Zoo was attacked and bitten on the neck by a 140-pound jaguar in a service hallway adjacent to the enclosure for the animals. The woman sustained extensive internal injuries and died at the hospital of a broken neck. The jaguar was shot and killed during the incident.

January 21, 2007/San Angelo, Texas: A woman sought hospital treatment after she was bitten by a 10-week-old African lion cub exhibited by G.W. Exotic Animal Foundation at a mall where patrons were allowed to pet and interact with the lion.

January 5, 2007/Center Point, Indiana: An 80-pound cougar scaled a 14-foot fence and escaped from an enclosure at the Exotic Feline Rescue Center. More than two months later, she was still on the loose.

2007/Cedar Creek, Texas: A volunteer at the Capital of Texas Zoo was bitten by a cougar when she reached into the pen to pet the animal.

December 22, 2006/San Francisco, California: A keeper at the San Francisco Zoo was attacked by a 350-pound tiger who reached through the bars of the cage and grabbed the woman. The keeper sustained deep lacerations to her arms, which required surgery and may have resulted in the loss of one arm. A zoo visitor who witnessed the attack described what she saw: "The right arm was in the tiger's mouth The left arm was just being held there (in the claws) and the right arm was being eaten. She was screaming and flailing away." The tiger released the woman when other zookeepers jabbed the tiger in the head with a pole.

December 22, 2006/Washington, D.C.: A clouded leopard at the National Zoo escaped a cage through a hole in the fence and ventured onto zoo grounds. Visitors

were evacuated while zoo employees surrounded the cat with nets and tranquilizer guns, sedated her, and returned her to the cage.

November 24, 2006/Evansville, Indiana:

Animal trainer Wade Burck was clawed by a tiger during a performance of the Hadi Shrine circus. Burck received hospital treatment, including stitches, for wounds to his left forearm and leg.

November 18, 2006/Coral Gables, Florida:

A 4-year-old girl was mauled by a 62-pound cougar at a children's birthday party. The cat took the child's head into her mouth, inflicting severe cuts to the girl's eyelid, cheek, and ear, and requiring surgical reattachment of part of her severed ear. The cougar had been provided by Wild Animal World and was killed to be tested for rabies. The proprietor of Wild Animal World had been cited at least twice previously for similar attacks.

November 14, 2006/Gulf Breeze, Florida:

Two 150-pound cougars escaped through a hole in the fence of the pen and were loose for nearly three hours at The Zoo. The facility was closed and visitors were moved to secured areas while a search, aided by a sheriff's office helicopter using infrared cameras, was conducted for the cougars. Both were ultimately tranquilized and returned to the cage.

November 13, 2006/Gulf Breeze, Florida:

A keeper at The Zoo was bitten by a leopard and sustained wounds on her hand.

October 16, 2006/Copley Township, Ohio:

A veterinarian with the USDA was attacked by a tiger during an inspection at the L&L Exotic Animal Farm. The tiger reached outside the cage, grabbed the woman's arm, pulled her toward the cage, and got her arm into her mouth. She was

treated at the hospital for scratches and bruising.

October 16, 2006/Fleetwood, North Carolina:

A woman who attempted to pet a leopard at the New River Zoo was bitten on the arm and wrist, sustaining injuries that required surgery. The woman alleged that the owner of the zoo had encouraged her to pet the animal. The leopard was euthanized.

October 6, 2006/Hesperia, California:

A 500-pound tiger escaped from a cage at the Cinema Safari Zoo when zoo workers failed to lock the cage during cleaning. Because the zoo did not have the proper equipment on hand to tranquilize a tiger, the animal was on the loose for hours, during which time he attacked a donkey, biting the animal's neck and a leg. When the proper equipment was obtained, the tiger was tranquilized and returned to the cage.

September 12, 2006/Balm, Florida:

Lancelot Kollmann, owner of an animal business called Sir Lance A Lot, was attacked by a 250-pound tiger while cleaning a cage. His lower lip was split in two, requiring 25 stitches, and the side of one arm, which was sliced down to the bone, required five stitches and a drainage shunt.

August 22, 2006/Tampa, Florida:

Enshala, a 180-pound Sumatran tiger at the Lowry Park Zoo, escaped an enclosure 15 minutes before closing time and was loose for 50 minutes when an unlocked latch allowed her access to an empty exhibit that was under renovation. Zoo visitors were moved to safety in the zoo's restaurants or sent home as a 10-person weapons team assembled. Enshala became agitated when she was shot with a tranquilizer dart, causing her to lurch at a zoo veterinarian as well as a 7-foot wall separating her from public areas. She was ultimately killed by zoo president

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

Lex Salisbury, who shot her four times with a 12-gauge shotgun.

July 18, 2006/Ballston Spa, New York: A 4-year-old boy was clawed by an adult tiger displayed by the Ashville Game Farm and Exotic Zoo at the Saratoga County Fair. The child was sitting next to a cage while having his photo taken with a baby kangaroo when the tiger reached out and clawed him. The boy was treated at the hospital and received 14 stitches for a 1-inch gash on his head.

June 16, 2006/Kaufman County, Texas: A part-time employee at Zoo Dynamics, an animal facility owned by Marcus Cook, was chased and mauled by a 300-pound tiger who climbed out of an uncovered enclosure. The tiger grabbed the man and threw him down, ripped off his ear, and left severe claw marks all over his body. The man spent the weekend in intensive care and received some 2,000 stitches. The employee in charge took the victim to the hospital without notifying local authorities that a tiger was still loose on the premises and recaptured the animal upon his return.

May 2006/Kingman, Arizona: A woman was attacked by two tigers at Jonathan Kraft's Keepers of the Wild animal sanctuary and required surgery for her injuries.

April 6, 2006/Pine County, Minnesota: Cynthia Gamble, owner of Center for Endangered Cats, was killed by an adult male tiger when she entered the cage. She died of crushing injuries to her throat and blood loss. The 400-pound tiger bit off her right foot and portions of both arms.

February 24, 2006/San Antonio, Texas: A cheetah at the San Antonio Zoo escaped from an enclosure by climbing over an approximately 10-foot-high fence into a tree and then jumping to the ground. She was

loose for 20 minutes before being tranquilized and returned to the cage.

February 15, 2006/Birmingham, Alabama: An employee at the Birmingham Zoo was attacked by an adult lion while feeding the animals and moving them to the outdoor exhibit. The woman was taken to the hospital with bites on her scalp, right arm, and abdomen.

January 30, 2006/Fort Wayne, Indiana: A tiger escaped an enclosure at the Fort Wayne Zoological Society when a keeper failed to close a gate separating the enclosure from an aisle where the keeper was working. The keeper escaped to an unoccupied area and the tiger was tranquilized and returned to the enclosure.

January 10, 2006/Center Hill, Florida: A cougar slipped through an unsecured door and escaped from an enclosure at the Savage Kingdom breeding facility. As the cougar headed for an open field, an employee attempted to lasso him and was bitten on the lower leg. Other employees got ropes around the cougar's neck and the animal strangled to death as he struggled to resist the ropes.

November 16, 2005/Greenwich, New York: An adult tiger escaped from the Ashville Game Farm and Exotic Zoo by pushing through a section of fence across the top of a cage and jumping out. She was on the loose for approximately five hours before being found in a resident's yard several miles from the zoo, tranquilized, and returned to the cage.

October 6, 2005/Duluth, Minnesota: Two zookeepers were bitten by a tiger at the Lake Superior Zoo while they were moving the animal back to a cage following surgery. The anesthetized tiger bit down on one employee's arm, holding the bite for approximately 30 seconds and causing

puncture wounds that required the man to be hospitalized. A second zookeeper sustained cuts to his hands and fingers as he helped other employees who used a broomstick and their hands to pry the tiger's mouth open.

September 28, 2005/Lewis County, Washington: A 5-year-old boy was tackled by one of his grandfather's "pet" tigers. The tiger scratched the boy's leg and gave him a puncture wound on his foot.

August 18, 2005/Mound Valley, Kansas: A 17-year-old girl was killed by a 300-pound tiger while having her picture taken with the animal at the Lost Creek Animal Sanctuary. During the photo session, the tiger, who was being held on a chain, lunged at the girl. The handler was unable to restrain the animal, and the tiger clamped his jaws on the girl's neck. She was severely bitten and her neck was broken. The tiger was killed.

July 8, 2005/Peoria, Illinois: A Frisco Bros. Petting Zoo employee was injured when a 2-year-old tiger grabbed his hand with her front claws as he was removing a feeding tray from an enclosure. The man was taken to the emergency room, and the tiger was quarantined by animal control for 30 days.

July 2005/McHenry County, Illinois: Craig Perry, of Perry's Wilderness Ranch and Zoo, was mauled by a tiger at the Hawthorn Corporation's circus-training facility. One of 14 tigers circled Perry during a photo shoot and then attacked his left leg. Perry required immediate surgery and sustained nerve damage.

June 22, 2005/Little Falls, Minnesota: A 10-year-old boy was attacked by a lion and a tiger while visiting a private collection of "pet" exotic cats kept at an auto dealership owned by Chuck Mock. When Mock opened a cage to go inside, a tiger pushed through the door and attacked the boy. As Mock

pulled the tiger off, a lion came out and bit the boy, dragging him 24 to 30 feet. The boy sustained numerous facial fractures and his spinal cord was severed, leaving him a quadriplegic. The lion and tiger were killed.

June 11, 2005/Lima, Ohio: Bradley Craft was attacked by his "pet" cougar. Craft grabbed the cougar's tail to prevent the cat from attacking his mother and the cat turned on him, biting him in the leg.

June 11, 2005/Underwood, Minnesota: A full grown African lion escaped from a cage at the Arcangel Wildlife Farm and wandered through neighbors' yards for approximately two hours before being shot and killed by a sheriff's deputy.

May 14, 2005/Kennewick, Washington: A cougar was found roaming around inside the service room of an auto repair shop. The animal was immobilized and transported to a rehabber and was ultimately moved to a facility in Oregon.

March 6, 2005/Underwood, Minnesota: A 16-year-old girl was petting a tiger through the bars of a cage at the Arcangel Wildlife Farm when the tiger bit her finger and clawed her hand. The wound required a dozen stitches and three operations to treat an acute infection. The girl also underwent rabies shots.

February 26, 2005/Wellington, Florida: A 500-pound Bengal tiger escaped from a cage at Panther Ridge Sanctuary by pushing past a woman who was feeding him and who hadn't latched the cage properly. More than 20 sheriff's deputies and state wildlife officers armed with rifles were positioned inside and outside the perimeter fence of the facility as the tiger wandered the grounds for more than two hours. Two tranquilizer darts were required to sedate the tiger so that he could be recaptured.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

February 23, 2005/Pahrump, Nevada: A “pet” leopard at Karl Mitchell’s facility bit off the tip of a woman’s finger.

February 23, 2005/Simi Valley, California: A tiger who had been roaming loose for at least eight days was shot and killed by authorities near a residential area.

February 12, 2005/Oldsmar, Florida: A woman was bitten on the hand by a tiger cub used by Zoo Dynamics for photo ops at an automobile dealership.

February 11, 2005/Cut and Shoot, Texas: A worker at Wildlife Extravaganza was hospitalized for several days after her arm was pulled through the feeding hole by a leopard as she prepared to feed the cat.

January 26, 2005/Sioux Falls, South Dakota: A man was given rabies shots and received stitches to his finger after he was bitten by a tiger at the Great Plains Zoo as he reached through a fence into the cage.

January 20, 2005/Baraboo, Wisconsin: An 8-year-old girl was bitten on the chest by an 80-pound, 7-month-old lion cub at Creature Features Pet Store. The girl had to undergo rabies shots.

January 18, 2005/Arkansas: A 400-pound “pet” tiger was abandoned in the mountains of north central Arkansas along the Buffalo River. The tiger trekked 60 miles over the next four days, returning to his owner’s home and was then taken to a refuge.

January 8, 2005/Cleveland County, North Carolina: Two 6-month-old injured tiger cubs, weighing approximately 80 to 100 pounds each, were abandoned and found wandering on the side of a road.

December 24, 2004/Suffolk County, New York: An 8-year-old boy was attacked by his father’s “pet” leopard. The boy was

scratched on the chest and bitten on the neck, and he required medical treatment.

December 5, 2004/Laredo, Texas: A circus worker was rushed to the hospital after she was badly bitten on the hand by a caged tiger at Great Circus of China.

November 20, 2004/St. Augustine, Florida: A 350-pound tiger, displayed by The Catty Shack Ranch at the St. Johns County Fair, attacked his handler and a 14-year-old boy as he was being walked on a leash to a cage. Police used stun guns to stop the attack. The handler sustained puncture wounds to his head and the boy was knocked down and scratched.

November 20, 2004/Branson West, Missouri: An 18-year-old volunteer at Predator World spent the night in the hospital after being bitten on the arm by an 80-pound black leopard as he stood next to the cage.

November 6, 2004/Gentry, Arkansas: A visitor was taken to the hospital after a tiger pulled the flesh off her finger at the Wild Wilderness Drive Thru Safari when she placed her hand in the cage.

October 30, 2004/Salisbury, Maryland: A visitor to the Salisbury Zoo had part of his finger torn off when he approached a cage containing a jaguar.

September 9, 2004/Chicago, Illinois: A keeper at Lincoln Park Zoo was seriously injured with multiple bite wounds and lacerations after being attacked by a lion in the outdoor exhibit. The incident forced an evacuation of the zoo.

September 8, 2004/Trenton, Maine: An employee was seriously injured, with wounds to his face and arm, by a leopard at the Acadia Zoological Park.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

July 31, 2004/New York, New York: A 450-pound white tiger belonging to Adriatic Animal Attractions bolted from the New Cole Bros. Circus while being transferred from one cage to another near the Forest Park band shell in Queens. Dozens of police officers with machine guns and tranquilizer darts pursued the tiger for 30 minutes as he prowled for a mile through a park crowded with picnickers, scattering screaming people and causing two traffic accidents. He was recaptured by the trainer. Two women filed a \$60 million lawsuit after suffering spinal fractures and other injuries in the multicar pileup on the Jackie Robinson Parkway.

July 26, 2004/Shepherdsville, Kentucky: A 2-year-old, declawed “pet” snow leopard escaped from a cage, broke through a wire gate, and ran into thick woods behind the owner’s house.

July 14, 2004/Little Falls, Minnesota: A 22-year-old woman was bitten by an African lion when she stuck her hand into a cage while visiting a private collection of “pet” exotic cats kept at an auto dealership owned by Chuck Mock. The woman sustained a severe laceration to her middle finger and cuts on two other fingers.

July 14, 2004/Detroit Lakes, Minnesota: A worker with the Arcangel Wildlife Farm was bitten by a tiger who was on display at a local festival. The leashed tiger lunged at the man and bit him on the arm when the man attempted to move him.

July 12, 2004/Loxahatchee, Florida: Deputy sheriffs and state game officials launched an extensive search for a 600-pound “pet” tiger who escaped from Steve Sipek’s private menagerie. Residents were escorted to and from their homes while the tiger was on the loose. The tiger was shot and killed the next day when he lunged at a wildlife officer.

June 2, 2004/Landover Hills, Maryland: A tiger belonging to exhibitor Mitchel Kalmanson escaped from the UniverSoul Circus after fighting with another tiger and attacked an elephant, biting her on the hip. During the escape, there were several elementary schools attending the performance, and children were walking under the tent in the area where the tiger escaped.

May 28, 2004/Chillicothe, Ohio: A woman was hospitalized after she was bitten on the arm by her father’s “pet” lion when she reached into the cage to pet him. The lion was shot and killed.

April 16, 2004/Indio Hills, California: After a tiger used in the movie industry escaped from his compound, the California Department of Fish and Game and the Riverside County Sheriff’s Department launched a search. The tiger was later captured.

March 13, 2004/Massena, New York: A 4-year-old girl was mauled by her grandmother’s “pet” cougar. The 160-pound cougar apparently reached through the cage and grabbed the girl. She was hospitalized with cuts and bruises on her head and an eye injury.

March 11, 2004/Reno, Nevada: A volunteer needed more than 15 stitches after a declawed leopard at the Sierra Safari Zoo bit her as she reached into the pen for a food bowl.

February 12, 2004/Hardin County, Illinois: A 52-year-old man with a private menagerie of exotic cats and wolves bled to death after he was mauled by a declawed African lion as he changed the bedding in the cage. During the autopsy, a coroner found that the man had sustained numerous puncture wounds and a broken neck. The

lion was discovered running loose on the property and was shot and killed by police.

February 9, 2004/Plaquemine, Louisiana:

A woman was attacked by a declawed “pet” leopard she kept in a makeshift 10-foot by 10-foot cage behind her house trailer. The leopard bit her on the head, nearly tearing off her ear and ripping the flesh from her scalp. Sheriff’s deputies and one of the woman’s relatives shot the leopard four times, killing him.

January 31, 2004/Fort Wayne, Indiana:

A 4-year-old, 140-pound “pet” cougar escaped from a car during a traffic accident and was shot and killed by police when he lunged at an emergency worker.

January 24, 2004/Lowgap, North

Carolina: A tiger attacked and bit a 14-year-old girl on the cheek and neck as she was taking photos of four caged “pet” tigers. She was hospitalized in guarded condition. All four tigers were killed on the site.

2003–04¹/Montana: A black leopard being used in a photo shoot by Animals of Montana at an offsite location escaped after being sprayed with an unknown substance by the trainer. The leopard went through a “hot wire” and was later recaptured in a barn.

December 14, 2003/Millers Creek, North

Carolina: A 10-year-old boy was killed by his uncle’s 400-pound “pet” tiger as he shoveled snow near the cage. The tiger reached under the fence, dragged the boy into the cage, and inflicted at least eight puncture wounds to his head, neck, and chest. The boy’s uncle shot and killed the tiger.

December 12, 2003/Marion County,

Kansas: A sheriff killed a second tiger at Chris McDonald’s private menagerie when the animal became aggressive following the killing of his companion. (See December 9, 2003/Marion County, Kansas.)

December 9, 2003/Marion County,

Kansas: A tiger was shot and killed after escaping from Chris McDonald’s private menagerie and killing two dogs and a wolf.

November 11, 2003/Palm Desert,

California: A zoo employee and a zoo visitor at the Living Desert Zoo and Gardens were bitten by a cheetah who was being walked on a leash through the park. The zoo visitor was holding a 2-year-old child on her lap when the cheetah attacked her, biting her calf and thigh. The child was treated for a head injury after she fell onto cement.

November 8, 2003/Frisco, Texas:

A 4-month-old, 50-pound declawed tiger cub was abandoned and captured by police after a motorist spotted the animal roaming on the side of the road.

November 7, 2003/Rockwell, North

Carolina: Steve Macaluso, owner of a private menagerie called Charlotte Metro Zoo, was bitten on the neck by a leopard. Zoo volunteers and employees reported that Macaluso needed dozens of stitches.

October 6, 2003/Golden Valley, Arizona:

An employee at Keepers of the Wild Zoo was bitten and dragged by a 450-pound tiger as she tried to pet him. She was hospitalized for five days with four puncture wounds on her leg.

October 3, 2003/Las Vegas, Nevada:

While walking a tiger across the stage on a

¹The date was obtained from a USDA memo regarding an interview on June 12, 2013, pertaining to escapes at the Animals of Montana facility in Bozeman, Montana.

leash, Roy Horn of the Siegfried & Roy casino act was mauled and critically injured by a tiger during a show. The tiger bit Horn on the right arm, then lunged at him, bit him on the neck, and dragged him across the stage in front of more than 1,500 horrified tourists. Horn sustained bite wounds and massive blood loss. The 7-year-old tiger had been performing in the show since he was 6 months old.

October 3, 2003/New York, New York: Police, along with animal control officers and Bronx Zoo employees, confiscated a 500-pound “pet” tiger belonging to Antoine Yates from a Harlem apartment. Yates was later arrested at a Philadelphia hospital where he had fled for treatment of a deep bite wound to his right leg. At various times, eight children had lived in the apartment where the tiger was kept.

August 21, 2003/Whetstone Township, Ohio: A chained 180-pound “pet” cougar snapped a collar, escaped, and attacked a neighbor’s dog, causing more than 100 lacerations.

August 14, 2003/St. Louis, Missouri: A cheetah at the St. Louis Zoo escaped from an enclosure by going through a 12-foot wide moat and over a 12-foot high wall. The animal walked among visitors before being recaptured.

July 3, 2003/La Crosse, Wisconsin: A tiger mauled circus trainer Bruno Blaszak in front of 400 people during his show at a festival. The tiger charged at Blaszak, knocked him down, and clawed him. His right leg required 30 to 40 stitches.

June 30, 2003/Calhan, Colorado: Two tigers severely mauled an employee of Big Cats of Serenity Springs as he entered the cage. The employee was knocked down by one tiger and sustained a mangled leg and

scalp injuries. As a result, the tigers were beaten with shovels and later killed.

June 23, 2003/Crossett, Arkansas: A firefighter visiting the Crossett Zoo sustained a deep laceration and lost part of his thumb when he was bitten by a tiger.

June 14, 2003/Dodge City, Kansas: An adult tiger who was being exhibited by G.W. Exotic Animal Foundation swiped at a young boy, tearing his pants. The tiger was being used for photo ops with the public at the Village Square Mall.

June 2003/Mead, Washington: A Korean actor filed a negligence lawsuit against Cat Tales Zoological Park, a roadside zoo and exotic-animal training center, after she was mauled by a white tiger during filming of a story about two of the facility’s tigers. She sustained a cut on her forearm.

May 28, 2003/Nampa, Idaho: At a roadside zoo called For the Birds, where visitors are allowed to pet tigers, a toddler was jumped on and licked by a 170-pound tiger. Other zoo visitors and employees have been jumped on and bitten by tigers.

April 6, 2003/San Antonio, Texas: A lion from Wild Animal Orphanage escaped and roamed through a northwest area neighborhood for several hours. An employee required hospital treatment for a fractured pelvic bone and bruised rib when the lion charged and knocked her down as she attempted to shoot the animal with a tranquilizer dart. The lion was shot and killed by four police officers armed with handguns and shotguns.

April 2, 2003/Adair, Oklahoma: Several tigers belonging to the International Wildlife Center of Texas and boarded at Safari Joe’s Rock Creek Exotic Animal Park attacked and killed a handler. One tiger grabbed her arm and pulled her into the cage as she was

giving them water, and other tigers in the cage pounced on her. Another worker beat the tigers with a shovel to break up the attack and to retrieve the woman's body and her severed arm. The tigers were displayed at fairs and used in photo ops with the public.

March 31, 2003/Hennepin, Illinois: A man was mauled to death by two tigers he kept in a backyard menagerie when he attempted to move the two animals into another enclosure. Police shot and killed both tigers in order to retrieve the body. This was the second incident at the Second Nature Exotic Cats Sanctuary. (See May 26, 2002/Hennepin, Illinois.)

March 23, 2003/Sacramento, California: A keeper at the Sacramento Zoo was hospitalized and treated for puncture wounds to his neck, right shoulder, and left leg after he was attacked by a 325-pound tiger while he was preparing to feed the animal. Another worker beat the tiger on the head with a shovel to stop the attack.

March 22, 2003/Red Wing, Minnesota: A 5-month-old, 40-pound tiger cub at Grant Oly's Tiger Zone grabbed and bit a pregnant woman on the wrist, causing a puncture wound, and bit a 16-year-old girl. Police searching Oly's premises found guns, ammunition, and marijuana.

February 4, 2003/Jacksonville, Florida: A 450-pound tiger, belonging to exhibitor Mitchel Kalmanson, escaped from the UniverSoul Circus while the cage was being cleaned. The tiger climbed over a car, jumped over a fence, headed down an alley, frightened employees at a nearby

restaurant, and was recaptured 10 minutes later.

January 24, 2003/Albert Lea, Minnesota: A malnourished tiger cub was seized from a home in a residential neighborhood after school officials learned that scratches and bite marks on a fifth-grade boy were caused by his father's "pet" tiger.

January 8, 2003/Laurens, South Carolina: A 200-pound "pet" cougar was recaptured in a residential neighborhood after he had escaped from a pen 5 miles away and roamed freely for three days.

2003/Olmsted Falls, Ohio: A tiger at Burnette's Pet Farm bit a worker in the jugular vein. Cuyahoga County Board of Health Deputy Director Dave Covell said, "We didn't even know they had a tiger."

2002–03²/Bozeman, Montana: A person cleaning the enclosure holding a mountain lion chose not to lock the animal in a den box. The person sustained a laceration to the head and lip and was taken to a hospital.

December 15, 2002/Leesburg, Virginia: Animal control was called to help recapture an 80-pound tiger who escaped from a petting zoo and was on top of a car in a parking lot.

December 2002/Malibu Hills, California: Television star Elisha Cuthbert was treated at a hospital for deep puncture wounds to the hand after she was bitten by a cougar while shooting a scene for the TV show *24*.

October 21, 2002/Dothan, Alabama: The owner of 77 Zoological Park, George Koll, was attacked by one of his 500-pound lions

²The date was obtained from a USDA memo regarding an interview on June 12, 2013, pertaining to escapes at the Animals of Montana facility in Bozeman, Montana.

after he stumbled and fell while entering a cage for a magazine photo op. The lion pounced, dragging him across the cage. Koll was admitted to a medical center in critical condition.

November 4, 2002/Red Wing, Minnesota:

A teenager reported to authorities that tigers at Grant Oly's Tiger Zone had bitten him and two adults.

October 28, 2002/Las Vegas, Nevada:

Neighbors became frightened and alerted animal control when they spotted two tiger cubs running loose on a neighbor's rooftop. The cubs had escaped from the homeowner's private menagerie.

October 17, 2002/Southport, Florida:

A 500-pound African lion pounced on, dragged, and mauled his owner at a roadside zoo called 77 Zoological Park as the owner stepped into the cage to pose for a picture. The lion ripped a hole in his throat, pulled his right eye out of its socket, severed tendons in his neck and chest, tore his skin, and bit through his flesh to the bone. The man spent weeks in the hospital and was in critical condition for 11 days.

October 11, 2002/Jackson, New Jersey:

The 70-year-old husband of "tiger lady" Joan Byron-Marasek was suddenly attacked by a tiger at her controversial preserve as he was feeding the tigers. He sustained head injuries, and his arm was nearly severed.

October 4, 2002/Leona, Texas:

A man was severely mauled by a 400-pound tiger at the Perrydise Exotic Animal Ranch when he stuck his arm in the feeding opening of the cage to touch the animal, resulting in amputation of his arm just above the elbow.

September 28, 2002/Bloomington,

Illinois: A 400-pound tiger was shot and killed by police after he escaped from a

trailer at a truck stop and hid in bushes near a residential area for nine hours. Local police spent \$9,000 attempting to recapture the tiger. This same tiger mauled a 7-year-old girl earlier in the year. (See May 26, 2002.)

September 22, 2002/Quitman, Arkansas:

Four African lions, believed to have escaped from a nearby exotic-animal farm, were shot and killed after running loose for several days, terrifying residents.

September 20, 2002/Scotts Valley,

California: A declawed 150-pound tiger, who was being walked on a leash by Zoo to You at a school assembly with 150 children at the Baymonte Christian School, suddenly lunged at a 6-year-old boy and grabbed the child by the head with her jaws. The boy was wrestled away from the tiger by the principal and airlifted to a medical center where he received 55 stitches for two cuts to his scalp. A psychologist gave counseling to the terrified children who witnessed the attack.

July 25, 2002/Tacoma, Washington: A 4-year-old male clouded leopard jumped on and scratched both arms of a handler at the Point Defiance Zoo during a behind-the-scenes tour at the zoo. A small group of children was nearby. The woman had to call for help to get the 43-pound cat under control and her wounds were treated at a hospital. The same animal had scratched another handler's leg 18 days previously. (See July 7, 2002/Tacoma, Washington.)

July 7, 2002/Tacoma, Washington: A clouded leopard scratched the legs of a handler at the Point Defiance Zoo.

July 2002/Nampa, Idaho: A tiger being used in an exhibition injured a 12-year-old child's finger at For the Birds.

June 17, 2002/Red Wing, Minnesota: A tiger at Grant Oly's Tiger Zone bit a teenager on the arm, causing a puncture wound that required stitches.

May 26, 2002/Hennepin, Illinois: A 7-year-old girl was bitten by a tiger at a private menagerie as she attempted to pet the animal. The girl required 110 stitches and three months of therapy.

May 12, 2002/Tampa, Florida: A 350-pound African lion at Busch Gardens ripped off the arm of a zookeeper who was standing next to the cage while giving a private tour to her family. The attack occurred shortly after the zookeeper had fed the lion pieces of meat during training exercises. The zookeeper filed a lawsuit seeking in excess of \$15,000 in damages.

April 28, 2002/Pickens County, South Carolina: According to the Post & Courier, a "pet" tiger was quarantined for biting an 8-year-old boy in the leg after the tiger had been given a bath. The tiger was normally kept in a metal cage in the backyard.

March 10, 2002/Red Wing, Minnesota: A tiger at Grant Oly's Tiger Zone bit off a portion of a 14-year-old boy's finger.

March 9, 2002/Wynnewood, Oklahoma: A cougar suddenly bit Joe Schreibvogel, director of the G.W. Exotic Animal Park, during feeding. The cougar reached out from the cage, grabbed Schreibvogel's sleeve, and began gnawing on his hand, nearly severing his thumb and finger. The man received stitches on his wrist, thumb, palm, and across the entire base of his index finger.

March 2, 2002/Strafford, Missouri: Two adult lions escaped from a cage at Exotic Animal Paradise after an employee failed to secure the enclosure. One of the lions was shot with three tranquilizer darts, failed to recover from the sedation, and subsequently died.

February 15, 2002/Pahrump, Nevada: Animal exhibitor Karl Mitchell shot and killed one of his tigers after the animal became frightened and escaped his control while being moved to a new residence.

February 3, 2002/Loxahatchee, Florida: A woman was hospitalized in critical condition with a skull fracture after she was attacked and bitten by a 750-pound declawed tiger. The woman had been painting in preparation for a photo shoot at Steve Sipek's private animal compound.

February 1, 2002/Tampa, Florida: A leashed tiger lurched toward a young boy during a Busch Gardens "animal encounter" during which animals are taken into the park to interact with the public.

January 24, 2002/Gentry, Arkansas: Two animal handlers at Wild Wilderness Drive Thru Safari were attacked while transferring cougars between cages. One handler received multiple bites on an arm and leg, and the other was bitten in the face.

2001–02³/Bozeman, Montana: Two lions held at the Animals of Montana facility escaped from an enclosure that was being cleaned, because the gate wasn't properly latched. One of the lions was fatally shot near the end of the driveway. Mountain lion hounds and a helicopter were called in to

³The date was obtained from a USDA memo regarding an interview on June 12, 2013, pertaining to escapes at the Animals of Montana facility in Bozeman, Montana.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

search for the other lion, who was shot and killed west of the facility.

December 29, 2001/Leona, Texas: A 6-year-old boy was taken to the emergency room after being attacked by a tiger at the Perrydise Exotic Animal Ranch. The child sustained severe lacerations to his face and hand when a tiger reached through the cage and clawed him as he was photographing the animal.

December 8, 2001/Broward County, Florida: During a photo session, a 7-year-old boy was bitten on the head by an unattended leopard.

November 2, 2001/Pahrump, Nevada: A man was severely injured by a tiger while visiting a private residence. The man was bitten on the arm when he was allowed to feed the animals and required more than \$160,000 in medical care, including reconstructive surgery. A lawsuit was filed against tiger owner Annette Grabowski and her companion, Paul Mason, for negligence and against Nye County for failure to take action despite a previous biting incident.

November 14, 2001/Detroit, Michigan: Local residents found a tiger who had been beaten to death and dumped in a field.

October 10, 2001/Lee County, Texas: A 3-year-old boy was killed by one of three of a relative's "pet" tigers as he was about to have his picture taken with the animals. The 250-pound tiger snatched the boy from the arms of an adult, clamped down on his leg, and dragged him around the enclosure, causing head injuries. The tiger was beaten on the head until he released the boy's foot.

July 31, 2001/Center Hill, Florida: A 500-pound tiger mauled and killed a man making cage repairs at a roadside zoo called Savage Kingdom. The man had sustained a fatal bite to his neck and severe injuries to

his head, arm, and ribs. The tiger was later shot and killed by zoo workers.

July 27, 2001/Racine, Minnesota: A 2-year-old, 400-pound white Siberian tiger was euthanized for rabies tests after he bit a 7-year-old girl. The tiger had escaped from a cage at a roadside zoo called B.E.A.R.C.A.T. Hollow and attacked the girl, inflicting two puncture wounds that became infected. The tiger was stuffed and mounted.

June 25, 2001/Nashville, Tennessee: The Nashville Zoo was evacuated after officials found a cheetah wandering outside of a pen. The cheetah was shot with a tranquilizer dart and recaptured.

April 29, 2001/Oskaloosa, Kansas: A Jefferson County sheriff's lieutenant shot and killed an escaped tiger as the tiger crouched in an attack position. The 600-pound tiger ran loose for an hour after fleeing while being unloaded at a traveling zoo called, "Gatekeepers Wildlife Sanctuary." The animal had twice tried to attack a veterinarian when he was shot with a tranquilizer dart.

April 27, 2001/Oakwood, Ohio: The Sheriff's Office warned residents to keep their children and companion animals indoors after receiving a report that an escaped lion had been sighted.

April 7, 2001/Van Buren County, Arkansas: Three tigers escaped from cages while being moved by court order from a Faulkner County subdivision, where they had been kept in violation of a local ordinance. The tigers were found three hours later, and one died after being tranquilized. After the escape, the sheriff of Van Buren County stated that he did not want the tigers in his county either.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

April 2001/Omaha, Nebraska: Animal handler Brian Franzen required stitches after he was clawed by a tiger during a performance at the Tangier Shrine circus.

March 27, 2001/Morgan County, Missouri: An African lion at Ozark Nature Center escaped from a cage while animals were being loaded for transport. Terrified residents spent the next four days escorting children and keeping companion animals indoors while dozens of police officers and conservation agents searched for the animal. The lion was found napping near a road and recaptured.

March 25, 2001/Las Vegas, Nevada: A tiger with Safari Wildlife attacked and killed a handler. The tiger put his paw on the man's back, pushed him down, and bit his throat. The handler died within minutes from loss of blood. The tiger was used for photo ops with the public and had also appeared in numerous motion pictures and advertisements. He was being groomed for a promotional advertisement when the attack occurred. Another handler was hospitalized with injuries to his knees and puncture wounds.

March 20, 2001/Olmsted Falls, Ohio: A worker spreading gravel in a tiger enclosure at Burnette Farm was mauled and critically injured by a 500-pound tiger. The worker underwent surgery for bite wounds to his neck.

March 16, 2001/Witts Springs, Arkansas: A tiger escaped from a backyard menagerie by gnawing her way through the heavy steel enclosure. The tiger was loose for three days, terrorizing residents and biting a dog, who was subsequently treated for three large fang marks on each side of his neck. The tiger continued to elude capture after she was shot in the shoulder by an area resident. She was tranquilized and

recaptured after she was located in a thickly wooded area by a police helicopter.

January 26, 2001/Las Vegas, Nevada: A "pet" cougar escaped from a pen and hopped aboard a school bus. No children were on board at the time. The driver fled from the bus, and animal control workers captured the animal.

December 20, 2000/Omaha, Nebraska: A 6-month-old cougar cub pounced on the landlord of a rental home that he was checking on after the tenant was arrested for armed robbery.

October 21, 2000/Gambier, Ohio: A 10-year-old boy was knocked to the ground and bitten on the leg by a tiger at the Siberian Tiger Foundation while participating in a "close encounter" at the facility. This was the tenth incident in seven months of people being bitten or otherwise injured by tigers at the facility.

September 21, 2000/Anchorage, Alaska: Three tigers at the Alaska Zoo wandered around the grounds for a brief time after vandals broke in to the zoo and used bolt cutters to break the locks on multiple cages.

September 10, 2000/Albuquerque, New Mexico: A tiger cub bit a man during a photo op at the New Mexico State Fair.

August 26, 2000/Sioux Falls, South Dakota: A 14-year-old boy was hospitalized after being mauled by a tiger on his father's farm. The teenager was hospitalized for more than a month with bite wounds to the leg, neck, and shoulder.

August 16, 2000/Sapulpa, Oklahoma: One of two 11-month-old tigers broke loose and frightened nearby children while they were being moved between cages at Safari Joe's.

August 12, 2000/Boise, Idaho: A woman was mauled by a tiger at a fundraiser for Zoo Boise after the cat escaped from an unlocked cage. She was hospitalized in serious condition with a broken leg, puncture wounds, and a gunshot wound that she received when police fired their guns to scare the tiger away.

July 12, 2000/Chippewa Falls, Wisconsin: An employee at the Irvine Park Zoo in Wisconsin was bitten by a cougar after she tried to pet him. She was hospitalized for three days.

June 7, 2000/Bloomington, Illinois: A man was treated for a 3-inch cut and puncture wounds to his hand, inflicted by a snow leopard after he tried to pet the animal at the Miller Park Zoo. A similar incident occurred at the same zoo in September 1995 when a man sustained a 3 1/2-inch gash to his hand when he attempted to pet a leopard.

May 21, 2000/Kiowa, Colorado: A tiger tore off the arm of a volunteer at the Prairie Wind Animal Refuge after the woman stuck her hand in to the cage.

May 17, 2000/Brewster, Massachusetts: A 14-year-old girl was attacked by a tiger at a roadside zoo in Massachusetts. The girl, a part-time employee at the zoo, was feeding the cat when he bit her leg and shook her before releasing her.

March 15, 2000/Harris County, Texas: A 3-year-old boy had his arm bitten off by his uncle's "pet" tiger.

February 23, 2000/Great Bend, Kansas: A high school student was bitten on the hand and arm by a cougar after sticking her arm into a cage at the Brit Spaugh Zoo.

2000/Jacksonville, Florida: An elderly woman was bitten on the arm by a tiger cub

belonging to the Catty Shack Ranch. A trainer sustained 23 puncture wounds from a cougar and a woman sued the owner of Catty Shack Ranch after she was attacked by the same cougar.

December 4, 1999/Williamsville, Missouri: A 5-year-old boy required surgery after he was mauled by a "pet" lion kept chained in a neighbor's yard. The animal inflicted puncture wounds to the boy's throat and head. The lion was killed.

October 30, 1999/Buffalo, New York: A keeper at the Buffalo Zoo was bit and clawed by a leopard.

October 21, 1999/Evansville, Indiana: A zookeeper at the Mesker Park Zoo was mauled by a lion who severely injured his leg and arm.

June 19, 1999/Sterling, Kansas: A woman with a group of Boy Scouts visiting Safari Zoological Park was attacked by a caged tiger when she put her hand on the cage.

June 7, 1999/Yorktown, Texas: A 9-year-old girl was killed when her stepfather's "pet" tiger grabbed her by the neck and dragged her into a water trough.

March 31, 1999/Tyler, Texas: A woman's arm was nearly severed by a tiger at a compound. A volunteer at the facility, she reached in to pet the tiger, when he attacked. Doctors were unsure whether they would be able to save her arm.

March 16, 1999/Colorado Springs, Colorado: A 6-year-old boy was severely injured by a leopard at the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo after he climbed over a rope to get a closer look at the animal. Three months earlier, a woman was scratched by a tiger at the zoo after sticking her hand into a cage.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

February 27, 1999/Fort Wayne, Indiana: A tiger mauled an employee of the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo while she was cleaning the cage, causing injuries to her chest, neck and back.

January 27, 1999/Jackson Township, New Jersey: Police shot and killed a 431-pound tiger who escaped from the Tigers Only Preservation Society, only a few hundred yards from a subdivision.

January 7, 1999/Wichita, Kansas: A 5-month-old tiger cub bit the throat of a 5-year-old child. The tiger belonged to Safari Zoological Park, a roadside zoo that hauls animals around to schools, festivals, and store promotions. The tiger was killed the next day.

1999/Jacksonville, Florida: A cougar from the Catty Shack Ranch bit a 19-month-old child.

December 23, 1998: A cougar being used by Pangaea Productions for a wildlife show during a birthday party jumped on a 5-year-old girl's back and cut open her scalp from the head to the base of the neck.

November 21, 1998/Chicago, Illinois: A Ringling Bros. circus employee was seriously mauled by a tiger used in the circus when three tigers escaped from a cage in a Chicago parking lot. The tiger clawed the handler on his neck and side. This was the second attack by tigers used by Ringling in one year (see January 7, 1998).

November 18, 1998/Kaufman, Texas: A Texas man was attacked by his "pet" lion and sustained serious injuries. The adult female lion jumped him from behind.

November 15, 1998/Chatham County, North Carolina: A cougar mauled a volunteer with Carnivore Preservation Trust

causing numerous bites and deep scratches.

November 13, 1998/Newberry, Florida: The same tiger who killed his trainer on October 8, 1998, attacked and killed his owner. The tiger was shot dead.

November 8, 1998/Cut and Shoot, Texas: Two "pet" tigers escaped a backyard cage and attacked a dog and a pig before being shot dead by police after charging pursuers. In 1997, a "pet" cougar kept by the same man escaped and was never re-captured.

October 8, 1998/Newberry, Florida: A tiger attacked and killed his trainer at the Holiday's Cat Dancer facility. The tiger had been used in the operation's traveling animal show and featured in Shrine circuses. The tiger grabbed the trainer by the throat.

September 5, 1998/Tampa, Florida: A woman needed 451 stitches after a leopard latched onto her arm with his mouth, removing skin from her elbow to her wrist. The woman was a volunteer at Wildlife on Easy Street, a breeding complex.

August 22, 1998/Myakka City, Florida: A tiger bit the hand of a 14-year-old volunteer with Tiger Claw Productions. The bite stripped flesh and tendons from her hand and required two surgeries to repair.

July 31, 1998/Vallejo, California: A woman getting her photo taken at Marine World with a Bengal tiger was mauled and hospitalized with multiple cuts to her neck and throat. A trainer trying to separate them was also injured.

July 30, 1998/Minot, North Dakota: A 5-year-old boy sustained facial cuts requiring plastic surgery after being attacked by a tiger at a Bridgeport Nature Center photo booth at the state fair.

May 2, 1998/Wylie, Texas: A “pet” cougar bit a 4-year-old boy on the leg. The boy required \$5,800 in medical care.

May 1998: The same cougar who bit a handler with Pangaea Productions in March was used in a photo session with children two months later. The animal attacked an 8-year-old boy, and the handler was bitten on the hand trying to stop the attack. The child required emergency room treatment to close the wound to his thigh.

April 7, 1998/Charlotte, North Carolina: Two lions at the Charlotte Metro Zoo attacked a keeper, one biting him on the leg while the other took the man’s head in his mouth. The keeper sustained deep puncture wounds to his head and leg. He had to be airlifted to a trauma center.

April 1, 1998/West Fork, Arkansas: A tiger attacked a worker at the River Glen Feline Conservatory, biting him on the neck and leaving him in critical condition.

Spring 1998/Wichita, Kansas: A tiger scratched or bit an adult while the animal was appearing at a store’s promotional event.

March 1998: A handler with Pangaea Productions, a traveling exhibitor based in Miami, was bitten by a tiger after sticking her finger in a cage. Her finger was severed and surgically reattached.

February 10, 1998/Lincolnton, North Carolina: A leopard nearly killed his trainer after attacking her at a Royal Palace Circus performance in North Carolina. The trainer sustained injuries requiring reconstructive surgery and hospitalization for a week.

January 7, 1998/St. Petersburg, Florida: A trainer with the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus sustained severe head wounds after a tiger grabbed him by

the head and dragged him around the ring. He was hospitalized in critical condition and required extensive surgery. The trainer’s brother shot the tiger five times after the animal had been returned to the cage, killing him.

1998/Harris County, Texas: A 4-year-old girl was mauled by a Bridgeport Nature Center tiger during photo ops at a county fair. The girl required stitches and \$17,000 in plastic surgery to her leg. The girl’s family filed a lawsuit against Bridgeport.

October 22, 1997/Calabasas, California: The same jaguar who attacked a trainer on October 16, 1997, attacked another trainer who sustained bite wounds on his leg and a cut to his hand on a movie set.

October 16, 1997/Calabasas, California: A trainer on a movie set in California underwent surgery to repair a broken leg after being attacked by a jaguar. She was expected to remain hospitalized in fair condition for several days.

August 17, 1997/Marshfield, Massachusetts: A 13-year-old girl was taken to the emergency room after being bitten by a Bridgeport Nature Center tiger during a photo session in Massachusetts. The girl had to undergo painful rabies treatment. The Marshfield Animal Control Department reported “several” other bites associated with this photo booth.

June 7, 1997/Scappoose, Oregon: A woman sustained deep puncture wounds to the neck and post-traumatic stress disorder when she was attacked by a neighbor’s “pet” leopard.

May 8, 1997/Lubbock, Texas: One of five “pet” tigers mauled his owner. The man was admitted to the hospital in critical condition. The owner’s son killed the tiger.

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

May 7, 1997/Carrolltown, Pennsylvania: A tiger used in the Franzen Bros. Circus killed a trainer in front of 200 horrified schoolchildren.

May 4, 1997/Knox County, Tennessee: A liger clawed a 4-year-old boy who got too close to the cage at Joe Robinson's roadside menagerie. The child sustained long lacerations to his leg and buttock.

April 28, 1997/Oklahoma City, Oklahoma: A leopard who had escaped from a cage killed a woman at an exotic-animal "sanctuary." The leopard ran into the woods and was shot more than seven hours later after he came out and loped up a road after dark.

April 27, 1997/San Antonio, Texas: A man lost his finger when he tried to pet a tiger during a failed break-in with a friend at an exotic-animal orphanage.

March 19, 1997/Orlando, Florida: A tiger escaped from a cage and mauled a keeper at exotic-cat-breeding compound. The keeper sustained a broken thigh, a crushed knee, and severed arteries and veins in his leg. Authorities later shot and killed the tiger because they feared the animal would jump a perimeter fence and flee the compound.

March 18, 1997/San Antonio, Texas: A tiger climbed over a 10-foot fence to escape from a wildlife animal refuge, killing an ostrich and a duck as well as injuring a llama before being tranquilized and recaptured.

March 12, 1997/Caudwell, Texas: A 13-year-old boy was attacked by a "pet" tiger and a lion kept in a cage built into the side of his grandfather's house. The boy's father said, "My boy was not mauled, he was being eaten alive."

1997/Kirbyville, Texas: A tiger bit two fingers off the left hand of Monique Woodard, owner of the Exotic Cat Refuge and Wildlife Orphanage. Doctors were able to reattach one of the fingers.

December 21, 1996/Brooklyn Park, Minnesota: Three pet-supply store workers were bitten or scratched by a 7-month-old tiger who had been brought to the store to have his picture taken. The three workers agreed to receive rabies shots.

October 8, 1996/Las Vegas, Nevada: A Las Vegas animal trainer had to undergo surgery on his feet and legs after being mauled by a tiger.

September 16, 1996/Crystal Beach, Texas: A declawed "pet" lioness died after she was shot and tranquilized by a deputy. The lioness attacked a man after a burglar had apparently set her free.

July 18, 1996/Middletown, New York: A white tiger from Hawthorn Corporation bit the hand of a carnival worker while performing at the Orange County Fair.

May 7, 1996/Midlothian, Texas: A 6-year-old girl was critically injured in an attack by a tiger, one of six big cats on a breeding farm. The girl's mother was also injured as she tried to rescue her daughter. During the investigation, it was found that these same cats had been involved in three previous documented attacks.

January 5, 1996/Vallejo, California: One trainer at Marine World Africa was seriously hurt and another received minor injuries when they were attacked by two cougars as they prepared to take the cougars for a walk.

December 26, 1995/Quinlan, Texas: A 3-year-old toddler was mauled by his family's "pet" cougar, and his 6-year-old sister

Big-Cat Incidents in the United States

sustained minor injuries in the attack. The cougar was shot and killed.

December 18, 1995/Fort Worth, Texas: A tiger at the Fort Worth Zoo leaped an 11-foot-wide moat and attacked a zookeeper. The keeper was bitten on the shoulder, arm, and hand and was off work for a few weeks.

November 23, 1995/Raleigh, North Carolina: A “pet” Bengal tiger mauled and critically injured a 3-year-old boy while his father was walking the animal on a leash. The tiger was shot and killed.

November 13, 1995/Memphis, Tennessee: Two Sumatran tigers mauled a man who entered an enclosure at the Memphis Zoo.

November 1, 1995/Washington, D.C.: House Speaker Newt Gingrich was bitten on the chin by a baby cougar he was holding. The bite drew blood but was not considered a serious injury.

October 29, 1995/Allegan, Michigan: While her 9-year-old daughter watched in horror, a woman was attacked and killed by a “pet” lion after she entered a cage at the home of a friend who collected exotic animals. The friend was severely injured when he tried to stop the attack.

September 30, 1995/Indianapolis, Indiana: A lion being used by Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus bit off the index finger of a woman who put her hand in a cage in a staging area.

September 27, 1995/Lava Hot Springs, Idaho: Nineteen lions at Ligertown Game Farm were shot and killed after escaping the complex.

September 19, 1995/Haysville, Kansas: A man shot and killed an African lion he found

pacing on his driveway after the lion had escaped from a neighbor’s pen.

September 18, 1995/Wesley, Kansas: A 2-year-old boy required hospital treatment for a severe bite on his ear from the family’s 4-month-old cougar.

September 18, 1995/Wichita, Kansas: A cougar was recaptured after escaping a week earlier.

September 1995/Bloomington, Illinois: A man sustained a 3½-inch gash to his hand when he attempted to pet a leopard at the Miller Park Zoo.

August 6, 1995/Phoenix, Arizona: A cougar at the Phoenix Zoo gashed a 5-year-old boy’s arm and scratched the side of his chest after he wandered too close to the cage. He required stitches to close the wound on his arm.

June 2, 1995/Queens, New York: A 2-year-old boy was bitten by his neighbor’s “pet” cougar when he reached through a barred window to pet the animal. The 9-month-old cougar nearly severed one of the boy’s fingers, which was reattached at the hospital.

May 28, 1995/Novi, Michigan: Seven lions and tigers toppled onto a freeway when the trailer they were in came unhitched. One tiger bolted across traffic, leading police on a four-hour chase before being shot with a tranquilizer gun.

March 5, 1995/Washington, D.C.: A woman was fatally mauled by lions after climbing into an enclosure at the National Zoo. The body was so battered and shredded so violently that her fingerprints were gone and her face was almost unrecognizable.

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December 1994/Scottsbluff, Nebraska: A zookeeper at the Riverside Zoo required surgery to repair her larynx and trachea, which had to be replaced after she was attacked by a leopard.

October 10, 1994/San Diego, California: San Diego Zoo animal trainer Joan Embery sustained two long, deep gashes on her face by a cheetah she was exhibiting on a television talk show.

September 5, 1994/Jasper, Alabama: A tiger escaped from the private menagerie of Earl and Debra Dobbins and was shot and killed by a neighbor. Another tiger on the Dobbins' property was taken to the Birmingham Zoo.

June 18, 1994/Columbia, South Carolina: A tiger at an exotic-animal farm mauled a 17-year-old worker.

June 6, 1994/Miami, Florida: A senior zookeeper with 20 years' experience was mauled and killed by a tiger at Miami Metrozoo.

April 5, 1994/Jackson, Mississippi: An 80-pound cheetah scaled an 8-foot fence and pounced on an 8-year-old boy at the Jackson Zoo. The boy was scratched and nipped before the cheetah was recaptured.

March 22, 1994/Beech Grove, Arkansas: A 150-pound declawed "pet" cougar escaped and attacked a 71-year-old neighbor, inflicting deep bite wounds to the man's shoulder and arm.

March 1994/Leon, Kansas: A "pet" 143-pound African lioness bit an 11-year-old girl.

February 1994/Leon, Kansas: An 11-year-old boy sustained a bite wound by a "pet" lion he had been told was tame.

December 12, 1993/Palm Beach, Florida: A worker at the Lion Country Safari was attacked by a lion, sustaining more than 20 puncture wounds as well as crushed ribs, collapsed lungs, and a torn scalp.

September 14, 1993/Joplin, Missouri: A circus employee lost part of her arm after an attack by a tiger on the circus's animal farm. Doctors had to amputate her arm below the elbow.

August 9, 1993/Georgetown, Ohio: A 16-year-old boy was hospitalized with facial cuts after a lion attacked him. He and his 17-year-old brother were out walking when a "pet" lion escaped from a cage and attacked them unprovoked. The older boy hit the lion several times, and then the boys fled. The lion was later shot to death by sheriff's deputies when they were unable to subdue him.

May 6, 1993/Las Vegas, Nevada: A keeper feeding a trio of lions in the backyard of a Las Vegas residence was hospitalized after one of the cats attacked her. The Circus Vargas employee sustained five gouges to her leg. During an April performance in Seoul, South Korea, another employee was bitten by a lion.

May 6, 1993/Bronx, New York: A man with a history of mental instability was mauled by two lions at the Bronx Zoo after he climbed into the cage and sat down between them as dozens of tourists and schoolchildren watched. The man was hospitalized and received stitches in his head and face.

April 17, 1993/Little Rock, Arkansas: A tiger performing with the Shrine circus at the Barton Coliseum escaped, ran into the audience, and bit a 13-year-old girl. The tiger was owned and trained by Jordan Circus.

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February 24, 1993/Norfolk, Virginia:

Graham Chipperfield, a Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus big cat trainer, was mauled by a lion while breaking up a fight between two other lions. He was hospitalized for his injuries.

February 3, 1993/Wichita, Kansas:

A keeper was hospitalized in serious condition with wounds to his face and neck after being mauled by a Bengal tiger at Tanganyika Wildlife Company. The tiger lunged through the open door of a cage and attacked when the keeper bent down to pick up something. A second keeper attempted to beat the tiger away with a shovel and then shot and killed the tiger.

November 29, 1992/Pahrump, Nevada:

A man was severely bitten by a tiger owned by animal trainer Alex Pasternak. The tiger had to be shot before he would release his grip. The injured man received 35 stitches in his arm as a result of the bite.

September 27, 1992/Reno, Nevada:

A Reno illusionist sustained puncture wounds to his leg and arm that went “down to the bone” by a tiger being used in a performance.

May 21, 1992/Muhlenberg Township, Pennsylvania:

Two tigers with Clyde Beatty–Cole Bros. Circus escaped from an unlocked cage during a performance. One roamed around the center ring, frightening more than 1,500 spectators before he was recaptured.

April 7, 1992/Iron Hill, Delaware:

One of two cougars used by a private breeder jumped 12 feet and attacked a visitor, clamping his teeth into the back of her neck and dragging her farther into the cage. The injured woman was later treated at a hospital for several puncture wounds and scratches to her head, neck, and upper back. The breeder said that he would sell

the two animals and might replace them with a cub.

March 22, 1992/Portland, Oregon:

A “pet” lion/tiger hybrid attacked an 11-year-old girl, who had to undergo surgery to repair extensive muscle damage in her arm. The animal would not let go and had to be shot and killed.

October 9, 1991/Manchester, New Hampshire:

A model was hospitalized for five days and received 50 stitches and rabies shots after being attacked by a lion during a photo session in New Hampshire. A court awarded her a judgment of \$75,000 on March 24, 1995.

September 29, 1991/Jackson County, Kansas:

A caged lion bit a man on the hand, causing puncture wounds that required stitches, after the man attempted to pet the lion at a Christmas tree farm.

September 17, 1991/Tucson, Arizona:

A caged lion cub bit the arm of a 3-year-old girl at the Reid Park Zoo.

August 17, 1991/Fresno, California:

A lion with Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus bit a man who had put his hand in the cage because he “only wanted to touch” the lion.

June 1, 1991/Anderson County, South Carolina:

A “pet” lion escaped from a chain-link enclosure in a backyard, entered a mobile home and attacked a 5-year-old girl and her grandmother. The girl required stitches to wounds on her throat and chest, and the grandmother’s hand was punctured by the lion’s teeth. The lion’s owner later shot and killed the animal.

April 18, 1991/Wilkesboro, North Carolina:

A 3-year-old girl was attacked by a leopard who had escaped while traveling with the Great American Circus. The girl

sustained large lacerations on her neck, which required stitches.

1991: A tiger grabbed Kay Rosaire, a tiger trainer and performer, and dragged her by her hip during a live performance. Her injuries required 84 stitches.

November 5, 1990/Phoenix, Arizona: A woman visiting a Phoenix resort was attacked by a tiger while his trainer was walking him on a leash. Witnesses reported that the tiger acted like a “pussycat” only moments before the attack. The woman was hospitalized with puncture wounds.

August 9, 1990/Sturgis, South Dakota: A 5-year-old girl was mauled by a leopard who was restrained by a small chain on a box in Engessor’s Endangered Species traveling act. The girl’s mother sued for \$100,000 in damages.

June 1990/Sidney, Montana: A leopard in a petting zoo bit a 7-year-old boy. The owner of the leopard said that he had no intention of stopping his shows.

May 29, 1990/San Francisco, California: A zookeeper was mauled by a leopard in front of schoolchildren at a San Francisco zoo. The keeper underwent hospital treatment for deep wounds to his head, shoulders, and arm.