

The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park (Joe Schreibvogel)

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The Garold Wayne Interactive Zoological Park, also known as “G.W. Exotic” or the “G.W. Zoo,” was opened by Joseph Schreibvogel in the late 1990s. Early on, it began breeding tigers in order to have a constant supply of tiger cubs available to bring in money through photo opportunities in which people pay to hold and be photographed with the cubs. Since tiger cubs quickly grow to their adult size, which can be as much as 700 pounds, cubs can be used for photo ops only during their first few months of life, and they must be taken from their mother soon after birth in order to habituate them to humans by bottle-feeding. As the cubs grow larger, they are no longer able to earn the amount of money they did as newborns, so new homes must be found for them. This cycle repeats itself throughout the year, exacerbating the U.S. tiger crisis: far too many tigers and not enough responsible facilities to take them. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has repeatedly cited Schreibvogel for failing to comply with the minimum requirements of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA), including for failing to provide basic necessities such as drinking water and incurring many violations for filthy, wet, unsafe, and dilapidated animal enclosures as well as dangerous animal handling practices. In 2006, the USDA ordered G.W. Exotic to pay a \$25,000 fine and suspended its license to settle numerous past violations. In 2010, the USDA opened an investigation into the deaths of 23 tiger cubs at the facility, and in 2013, the USDA began investigating the deaths of two tiger cubs born at the facility. These investigations are currently ongoing. Contact PETA for documentation.

November 16, 2015: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to provide tiger cubs with a safe nursery area. Electrical outlets didn’t have covers, exposing bare, live electrical wires, and two single-pane windows were low enough that the cubs could potentially break them and escape. The facility was also cited for failing to store cardboard boxes of meat properly. They were sitting on the floor of the walk-in refrigerator and were thawing.

August 5, 2015: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to provide a 19-day-old tiger cub with a secondary heating or cooling method for climate control while being exhibited at the Mississippi Valley Fair in Iowa. The inspector stated, “Animals this young in the absence of their parents are not able to adequately thermoregulate and exposure to temperatures which may be comfortable for adults may still be detrimental to the health of young cubs. Exposure to an excessive number of people and other animals at this young age poses a disease risk to the cub.”

July 23, 2015: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to clean food receptacles in three pens holding wolfdogs (they contained a foamy, soupy substance with numerous floating insects and remnants of vegetation, and there was a buildup of debris on the sides), failing to provide primates with adequate sheltered housing (there wasn’t an adequate way to cool the sheltered building used to hold chimpanzees and lemurs), failing to control pests (numerous flies were seen in the buildings used to contain primates), and failing to maintain the fencing around the enclosure holding pigs and deer (it was leaning sharply in the back).

March 25, 2015: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to maintain indoor enclosures in the medical building that held primates (three large elevated resting platforms were in poor condition), failing to have an effective rodent-control program (rodent droppings were seen in the building holding primates and on resting surfaces for chimpanzees and the hamadryas baboon and among and adjacent to their feed and water), failing to store hay off the floor, storing feed in scratched and dirty buckets that weren’t fit to store food, failing to dispose of an extremely decomposed rat who was in a bin that contained rats intended for use as reptile food, failing to supply a shade structure for a singly housed tiger named Batista, and failing to feed tigers, who were kept in two enclosures, in a proper manner. Raw meat was sitting on top of the shade structures, “evidently from employees attempting to feed the animals by throwing meat over the fencing” rather than through the metal feed chutes.

August 20, 2014: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to have proper drainage for food and waste in a drainage ditch along one exterior side of the primate medical building. It was also cited for failing to provide a spider monkey named Ricky, two primates (Ruthie and Lucy), and tigers with safe housing. Ricky’s outdoor housing had a metal roof surface with an area of rust that created a hole with sharp edges. There was a large wasp nest inside roof supports directly over a perch area in Ruthie and Lucy’s housing. The lower hinge side of the gate on the tigers’ holding pen had rusted through. G.W. Exotic was also cited for

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failing to provide three grizzly bears with drinking water. They were all panting and didn't have water receptacles in their enclosure. Finally, the facility was cited for failing to keep the premises sanitary. The floor of one tiger enclosure contained rancid meat, and at least one piece was covered with maggots. Old meat was trapped in the feed chute of a tiger enclosure, and a large piece of meat was draped over the fence in another tiger enclosure. Numerous ants and rancid meat were found on the pipe supports and in the feed chute in the larger tiger arena enclosure.

April 16, 2014: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to provide a black bear named Crybaby with adequate veterinary care. A 4- to 8-inch-long laceration was discovered on his lower back on April 2. The attending veterinarian sutured the wound, but it split open on April 5. Someone at G.W. Exotic re-sutured it. The veterinarian didn't re-evaluate the wound during this time. When the sutures split open a second time, on April 14, the veterinarian was called in for a second time, and Crybaby was euthanized on April 15.

March 10, 2014: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for insufficient veterinary care. At least four juvenile black bears had repeated episodes of scratching and significant hair loss and hadn't received any treatment for two months. G.W. Exotic was also cited for failing to maintain enclosures. A solitary snow monkey's enclosure had an area of rust that had created a hole with sharp edges, and an enclosure containing two tigers had an exposed screw point and a missing plank on a walkway, both of which could injure the animals.

October 5, 2013: A zoo employee's arm was severely mauled by a tiger after she put her hand in the enclosure. She was airlifted to a hospital, where her arm was able to be reattached.

June 11, 2013: The USDA noted on an inspection report that it was reviewing an incident that involved the transportation of two tiger cubs and their subsequent death on or around May 10, 2013.

March 20, 2013: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for inadequate facilities. A gate and a fence for an enclosure containing four wolves were beginning to lean and sag, leaving a small gap between the two. A large chunk of stone had broken off the roof of the shelter in a female tiger's pen. And two connected lion enclosures didn't have adequate shade.

March 3, 2013: Schreibvogel was ordered to pay nearly \$1 million in damages and costs to settle a trademark-infringement lawsuit brought against him by Big Cat Rescue, a sanctuary in Florida. Schreibvogel admitted that he modeled his "Big Cat Rescue Entertainment" logo after the sanctuary's

design but didn't realize that would be an infringement on the organization's intellectual property. The judge ordered Schreibvogel to pay Big Cat Rescue nearly \$1 million in damages and costs. Nearly six weeks later, Schreibvogel filed for bankruptcy, claiming an inability to pay.

May 23, 2012: In a news release from the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) regarding the passage of the Dangerous Wild Animal Act in Ohio, it was noted that Schreibvogel had heavily lobbied against the bill and "made absurd claims that Terry Thompson was murdered by animal advocates in order to advance legislation restricting exotic pets." (Terry Thompson was the Zanesville, Ohio, exotic-animal owner who, in October 2011, released dozens of animals, including tigers, lions, bears, and wolves before killing himself. Forty-nine animals were gunned down as a result.)

May 21, 2012: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for improper handling of animals. The report stated that the inspection focused on the handling of tiger cubs at the facilities and that the handling techniques were currently under review.

May 18, 2012: The *Daily Mail* published details about the HSUS investigation of G.W. Exotic. The investigator witnessed or heard reports of numerous dangerous encounters between tigers and members of the public (some with a nearly full-grown tiger), including at least six cases in which visitors were bitten or scratched. When Schreibvogel was asked to comment about the HSUS statement that G.W. Exotic was a ticking time bomb, he responded, "It is a ticking time bomb – if somebody thinks they're going to walk in here and take my animals away, it's going to be a small Waco." *The Oklahoman* stated that the HSUS reported that at least five tigers died the previous summer under questionable circumstances, that a hawk was placed in a trash bin while still alive, and that children were allowed in enclosures with unrestrained wolves.

December 18, 2011: The Associated Press reported that a Grand Rapids, Michigan, mall closed Schreibvogel's tiger cub exhibit after receiving complaints and learning of a planned protest.

December 1, 2011: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for improperly handling an animal, after a 3-month-old tiger cub on a leash was able to jump on a small child, knocking the child down and causing a scratch during an exhibition.

November 28, 2011: *Inside Edition* released its findings after visiting a tiger exhibit run by Schreibvogel at Northgate Mall in Cincinnati, Ohio. It noted that it cost \$55 for shoppers to play with tiger cubs in a pen and have a picture taken with a cub.

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The 8-week-old cub that the reporter petted and posed with barely moved and was obviously sick. When the employee at the exhibit was asked about the sick cub, she replied, "I don't know. Maybe he's just tired or stressed." Another cub appeared distressed while posing for pictures and was missing a patch of fur.

November 13, 2011: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to transport two tigers safely. They were being transported in the same trailer with two 4-wheelers without proper precautions to ensure that the gas from the vehicles wouldn't harm them.

September 13, 2011: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to give adequate veterinary care to a baboon who had lost significant weight and appeared to be in a constant estrus cycle and a New Guinea singing dog who appeared grossly underweight and had a poor hair coat. Neither animal had been properly evaluated by a veterinarian to determine the cause of the problems and institute appropriate treatment.

June 15, 2010: The USDA opened an investigation into the deaths of 23 tiger cubs. (See June 2, 2010.)

June 2, 2010: An AllVoices.com article reported that 23 tiger cubs died over a seven-month period at G.W. Exotic. According to the article, Schreiber Vogel claimed that they died as a result of being fed a tainted kitten formula. The Food and Drug Administration tested samples that the park provided it and determined that no salmonella or *Cronobacter sakazakii* was detected in them.

January 1, 2008: G.W. Exotic ran an ad in the Animal Finders' Guide, a trade publication for exotic-animal breeders and dealers, offering to give away free 10- to 12-week-old tiger cubs, yearlings, and adults, noting that they had all been bottle-raised from day one.

June 1, 2008: G.W. Exotic ran an ad in the Animal Finders' Guide offering to sell two 9-week-old black bear cubs for \$500 each. The ad also mentioned that baby tiger cubs would be ready to go in the middle or at the end of June at 11 weeks of age.

June 1, 2007: G.W. Exotic ran an ad in the Animal Finders' Guide giving away free 12-week-old tigers and 7-month-old lions.

April 20, 2007: The Glenwood Springs Mall in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, canceled a planned Schreiber Vogel exotic-animal show because "there were far too many red flags regarding animal abuse and public safety."

April 11, 2007: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for

failing to keep separate records for animals being boarded at the zoo by other individuals.

February 7, 2007: The Lake Jackson, Texas, City Council voted against allowing Schreiber Vogel to bring his "Mystical Magic of the Endangered" animal show to the Brazos Mall on the grounds that it was "a risk to the city and the citizens."

January 21, 2007: A 10-month-old lion cub was quarantined after scratching a mall patron at the Sunset Mall in San Angelo, Texas. The cub was being used in a Schreiber Vogel presentation called "Mystical Magic of the Endangered" during which spectators were allowed to interact with and pet the animals.

February 15, 2006: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to have a required 8-foot fence around the new cat compound that housed 37 large cats and failing to enclose deer completely with a 6-foot fence.

January 26, 2006: The USDA assessed a \$25,000 civil penalty and suspended G.W. Exotic's AWA license for two weeks for numerous AWA violations, including failing to construct indoor and outdoor housing facilities that are structurally sound and in good repair to protect animals from injury and to contain them, failing to remove excreta from primary enclosures, failing to utilize a sufficient number of adequately trained employees, failing to keep premises clean, failing to ensure that water receptacles were clean and sanitary, and failing to maintain a written program of disease control and prevention, euthanasia, and adequate veterinary care.

December 14, 2004: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for having an insufficient barrier—the barrier for three baby cats was leaning in toward the enclosure and failed to prevent the public from reaching the enclosure. It was also cited for failing to have a completed enrichment plan for primates, failing to provide bobcats and mountain lions with sufficient housing, and failing to have adequate shelter for a wolf whose uninsulated metal shelter was open in the back, making it impossible for the animal to maintain his body heat.

October 2, 2004: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for not using adequate waste trays between double-decker enclosures in a transport trailer that could prevent urine and fecal matter from dropping onto the cats in the bottom enclosures.

July 8, 2004: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to have an up-to-date program of veterinary care on hand.

May 4, 2004: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to have any identifiable park employees available while three deer were loose in the park; not having

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sealed surfaces in the lemur house, which would result in improper cleaning and sanitizing; and failing to clean enclosures properly, as there was a buildup of fecal material, dirt, and straw in bear, fox, tiger, and lion enclosures. G.W. Exotic received repeat citations for having ineffective rodent control; having a perimeter fence that didn't reach the ground; using the commissary for storage, creating hiding places for mice and roaches; storing the cats' meat in a freezer in a barn that housed a number of loose pigeons, risking the transmission of disease; having an insufficient written veterinary diet plan; lacking a suitable diet plan for bears; and not having a clear written training-requirement plan for employees.

December 18, 2003: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic again for not feeding the large cats a veterinary-approved diet—roadkill was being given to them as part of their diet. The inspector noted that roadkill is not acceptable if it had been out more than 24 hours—and even less time in the summer. It also received repeat citations for failing to have sufficient barriers for the foxes, allowing primates access to insulation in the roof, having standing water in primate housing, having a perimeter fence that didn't reach the ground, having a trash dumpster in the deer enclosure, having unsteady tinhorns in tiger enclosures, failing to repair shade structures, feeding excessive meat to tigers, failing to have sufficiently trained staff, and having inadequate rodent control.

November 3, 2003: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to give veterinary care to a camel with an injured leg. The animal was "being hoisted in a sling twice a day for two hours, however most ruminants are not slung by belly wraps, because it interferes with their digestion." There were no records to indicate whether the camel had been seen by a veterinarian. One female cougar was limping and appeared very slim, yet there were no records identifying her, that she needed care, or that a vet had looked at her. One kitten named Kenny was limping, but there was no indication that a vet had seen him. The animals' diet had not been approved by a vet. G.W. Exotic was also cited for having an incomplete inventory record, having staff who were poorly prepared to conduct an inspection, failing to have adequate housing in outdoor rabbit enclosures (rabbits were provided with two cardboard boxes and one wooden box for protection against the weather), and keeping a rabbit in an 8-inch-tall enclosure—the required height is 14 inches. The USDA also cited it for improperly handling animals. A tiger cub had a chain around his neck with a tailing chain that could get caught on anything in his enclosure. A barrier for a raccoon was of insufficient distance from the public, the barrier around foxes was insufficient to prevent children from crawling under or reaching through, and the sugar glider enclosure didn't have a barrier to prevent access by the public. It was also cited for

inappropriate housing facilities. The house for two baboons and four macaques allowed the primates to reach through to the roof insulation; the flooring in the lemur enclosure consisted of concrete blocks, making it impossible to clean and disinfect; the indoor portion of the primate house had standing water; the facility's perimeter fence didn't reach the ground; several panels of a shed used for two potbellied pigs and a donkey were bent out and loose; several sheet-metal pieces had come loose from the frame of the camel shed; nails stuck out of wooden spools in the leopard pen; the raised pen for a raccoon was tilting; nails were coming out from the bottom of a house for a female lion, making the structure weaker; blood and accumulated dirt was all over the floor of a walk-in cooler; flies literally covered the food set out for the animals to eat inside the commissary; a dumpster used for animal waste was inside a deer enclosure and attracted flies; tinhorns appeared unsteady in an enclosure housing eight tigers; shade structures were collapsing; and there was standing water with black or blue algae and mosquito larvae swimming in it. G.W. Exotic was also cited for inadequate rodent control, dirty water troughs throughout the park that contained algae and mosquito larvae, dirty bedding in all the houses, and an accumulation of feces, old food, and mud-packed straw in all the enclosures and primary houses for the large felids and bears.

April 4, 2003: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for failing to allow the inspector access to the facilities. The licensee was exhibiting in a different state and had failed to file an itinerary with this information.

July 23, 2002: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for not having barriers between enclosures and the public in the "Critter House" and not having an attendant on duty at the display. It was also cited for feeding primates dog food along with monkey biscuits and fruit. The inspector noted that "dog food is not a generally accepted method of meeting the nutritional requirements for nonhuman primates." The USDA also cited it for having food left over from the night before, which indicated that primates may be overfed. And spoiled food could attract flies. It was also cited for not being able to prevent flies from contaminating the food. The food-prep area was located in an open stall in the barn next to the walk-in refrigerator. In an attempt to reduce the fly problem, cats were being fed frozen meat, which is not a recommended procedure. It was also cited for improperly housing a leopard whose house had been made of stacked concrete blocks and a plywood roof. More blocks had been stacked on top of the plywood to hold it down. This created the risk of the structure collapsing onto the animal. It was also cited for having insufficient housing. A pen confined three mountain lions, but there were only two houses in it, posing a possibility for fights to break out. In addition, a black bear was added to an enclosure with a trio of Siberian bears,

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creating a need for additional housing; eight young tigers were being kept in same enclosure, and the house wasn't large enough for all of them; and six young African lions were confined together with only one house for shelter. It was also cited for failing to provide two wolves with an enclosure that would alleviate undue stress—the wolves were disturbed by strangers and needed greater distance from the public or barriers for them to hide behind. It was also cited for not providing separate drinking water sources, as the barrels used to water the cats, bears, and pig were also being used as a place for the animals to cool off.

August 2, 2001: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for not having an inventory sheet on all regulated animals on the premises. It was also cited for not having documentation outlining the experience of staff members with species they are working with and documentation describing a contingency plan in the event of an escape or a catastrophic event. It was also cited for not sanitizing the primate houses on a more frequent basis (feces and food were evident in corners of house); having inadequate facilities, as the lock-out cages for cougars had an 8-inch-wide opening that could allow a cougar to stick a paw out; having insufficient perimeter fencing around an exhibit area holding dangerous animals; improperly storing food (open bags of food were being stored in uncovered containers); and failing to clean and sanitize the freezers and iceboxes (blood and frozen dirt caked the bottom of the units).

October 30, 2000: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for inadequate drainage in eight pens housing bears, tigers, and a wolf. Animals had to walk through a large amount of standing water to get to their houses, and a large amount of standing water was also noted in a large pen housing llama, goats, deer, and a duck. It was also cited for improper cleaning and sanitizing in the food-preparation area. A table where meat was chopped had old pieces of food on it.

May 11, 2000: The USDA cited G.W. Exotic for not having shift cages in two cages containing a tiger and a mountain lion. Employees could put the animals in shift cages while they cleaned the other cages and fed and watered the cats. It was also cited for failing to provide a tiger with appropriate shelter and failing to provide a llama in need of hoof trimming with adequate veterinary care. One hoof was "starting to grow back around into the foot."

February 5, 1999: According to *The Dallas Morning News*, Schreibvogel, along with other volunteers, decided to try to round up the surviving emus from a former owner in Red Oak, Texas, who couldn't afford to feed them. Schreibvogel took legal possession of the flock of more than 100 emus and planned to hold them at another facility until he was able to move

them to Oklahoma, where his family was establishing a park. The first day of the roundup involved chasing and roping the animals. A few emus were injured, and others were so stressed that they just lay in the trailers while other upset birds slashed them with their talons. Nine birds died that day, while about 60 arrived at their destination almost bare of feathers. The following day, after arguments between Schreibvogel's group and the SPCA, a decision was made to load the remainder of the emus gently, and any injured birds would be humanely euthanized on site rather than staying on the trailers. About 50 birds had been loaded and sent on their way, but several more were injured. At this point, Schreibvogel decided to shoot the remaining birds. The police and SPCA tried to dissuade him but to no avail. Schreibvogel and another member slowly approached the birds and shot them one by one. Some dropped instantly, while others flopped around, requiring several shots. A lead investigator for the SPCA finally halted the shootings after one of the men shot an emu who was running, leaving the animal wounded. Six birds were killed.