



August 3, 2023

Jim Klein, President
Carver County Fair Board
501 W. 3rd St.
Waconia, MN 55387

Sent via email to: info@carvercountyfair.com

Dear Mr. Klein:

We've been hearing concerns from our supporters about the Tiger Encounter show, which is scheduled to appear next month at the Carver County Fair. We urge you to cancel this show and establish a policy against allowing dangerous wild animal displays at future fairs.

The display of wild and exotic animals—many of which are dangerous species—is at odds with the purpose of state and county fairs, which are intended to highlight and promote agriculture and agricultural activities. Exotic animal displays present a public safety risk, are detrimental to animal welfare, distract from educational efforts about the importance of agriculture, and undermine legitimate conservation efforts. Instead of providing entertainment, many of these exhibits attract unwanted controversy.

Wild animals such as tigers, bears, and primates are easily stressed by unfamiliar surroundings, loud noises, and crowds of people. Physical abuse is typically used to train and handle wild animals who perform tricks or are allowed contact with the public. Animals used in such displays are subjected to lengthy travel and confinement in cramped cages and poorly ventilated trailers. Wild animals can also transmit viral, bacterial, fungal, and parasitic infections to people, behave unpredictably, and have sharp teeth and claws that can inflict serious injury.

Tiger Encounter operates under the license of Joe Frisco's Wonderful World of Animals. The tiger act caused controversy for the Kandiyohi County Fair in Minnesota when the fair posted photos on its Facebook page of Frisco's apparently grossly overweight tigers performing circus tricks, sparking concerns about the tigers' welfare.¹ Obesity can cause damage to internal organs, contribute to arthritis and other painful joint conditions, and cause heart disease and other problems.² Frisco claimed the photos were old and the tigers were pregnant at the time or had recently been pregnant. In 2016, Santa's Enchanted Forest in Florida announced it would no longer feature Frisco's controversial tiger act in its seasonal display.³

The public outcry about the Tiger Encounter show is justified. Caring people no longer want to see magnificent wild animals relegated to a life of extreme confinement, denied all that is natural to them, and displayed as carnival sideshows. Again, we urge you to cancel this act and establish a policy that

prohibits dangerous wild animal displays at future fairs.

Thank you for giving this matter your consideration. If you have any questions we are happy to be a resource for you now or in the future.

Sincerely,

Zack Eichten
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The Humane Society of the United States
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¹ Hannah Jones, "Cat lovers concerned tigers coming to Minnesota are too fat," *City Pages*, April 23, 2018.

² Jay Pratte, B.S., M.A., "Big-Cat Report: Ringling Bros. Circus (Red Unit)," visit on June 4, 2016.

³ Jonathan Kendall, "Santa's Enchanted Forest Ends Tiger Shows," *New Times*, November 3, 2016.