

Media Contact

Gigi Theberge (619) 208-2091, gigi@culturaledge.net

Bobbi Brink (619) 659-8078 x 2, c: (619) 884-2053

**Wild-Born Bear Famous for Repeated Visits to LA
Neighborhood Celebrates 7th Birthday
at Lions Tigers & Bears**

*Watch Meatball the Bear Open His Birthday Presents and Learn
How to Help Keep Wildlife Wild During Special Visit Tomorrow*

ALPINE, CA (August 22, 2019) - Meatball the bear - who got his name after breaking into a homeowner's garage and snacking on a bag of Costco meatballs - is celebrating his 7th rescue birthday at Lions Tigers & Bears sanctuary tomorrow.

This wild born CA black bear made national news in 2012 for repeatedly visiting the La Cañada Flintridge area near Glendale in Los Angeles. Also known as the "Glendale bear" and "Glenbearian," Meatball was caught scavenging for food in trash cans, breaking into garages and even swimming in a homeowner's pool.

Meatball had become "habituated," meaning he was no longer afraid to enter populated areas. Though CA Fish & Wildlife officials captured Meatball and tried relocating the wild bear, he continued to return to the LA area neighborhood looking for food.

What: Meatball the rescued bear's birthday
When: **Friday, August 23, 2019 during 10 a.m. visit**
Where: Lions Tigers & Bears - 24402 Martin Way, Alpine, CA 91901
Tickets: \$26 - \$46 [Reservations required](#) FREE to [Members](#)
Proceeds support life-saving care for rescued animals

Habituation is a problem for wildlife and a threat to public safety, and bears like Meatball often face euthanasia. Fortunately for Meatball, the compassionate decision was made to relocate this celebrated bear and officials contacted Lions Tigers & Bears to secure a permanent sanctuary refuge for him.

Seven years later, Meatball is loving life at the nonprofit exotic animal sanctuary and education center! He gets many visitors from his old "stomping grounds" who come to wish him well, and he was even the star of his very own Rose Bowl Parade Float in 2014. Lions Tigers & Bears will celebrate Meatball's birthday this Friday with special enrichment, including a birthday "cake" filled with Meatball's favorite foods Friday.

Visitors will see Meatball and all the rescued animals up close during this special guided educational visit and proceeds from visits support rescued and lifesaving care for rescued animals. This visit is free for members, \$26 to \$46 for non-members. Reservations are required.

[Donations](#) in honor of Meatball's birthday are sought to help build Meatball a new den and to support Meatball's life-long care at the non-profit sanctuary. It costs over \$10,000 per year for basic care of a bear like Meatball.

Located in Alpine, California on the edge of the Cleveland National Forest, the sanctuary is home to over 60 animals representing 19 different species, including African lions, tigers, American black bears, Himalayan black bears, grizzly bears, mountain lions, leopards, African servals, bobcats and dozens of rescued ranch animals.

A visit to Lions Tigers & Bears is informative and inspirational. Bears once confined in concrete pits, lions previously prodded to perform tricks, and baby tigers torn from their mothers to be drugged, chained and posed for photo ops - all now have lifelong refuge and care. Rescued from squalid conditions, these animals enjoy expansive habitats with green grass, refreshing ponds, nutritionally-appropriate diets, veterinary care, behavioral enrichment, and clean air, under sunny blue skies. Proceeds from sanctuary visits and events support lifesaving rescues and lifelong care for rescued animals. Reservations required for all visits.

ABOUT LIONS TIGERS & BEARS

Lions Tigers & Bears is a federally and state licensed 501(c)(3) nonprofit rescue facility dedicated to providing a safe haven to abused and abandoned exotic animals while inspiring an educational forum to end the exotic animal trade. Lions Tigers & Bears is a NO KILL, NO BREED and NO SELL facility that allows the animals in its care the opportunity to live out their lives with dignity in a caring and safe environment. Lions Tigers & Bears is one of the few sanctuaries in the United States with the highest level of accreditation from the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries and the American Sanctuary Association.