



NIPAHWI, A TWO YEAR OLD ALASKAN TUNDRA WOLF

The Wolf Mountain Nature Center

A new season, new ideas, new projects!

After a long, gray winter we are very much looking forward to the warmth and sunshine of spring! Melting snow reveals all the hidden projects emerging and tasks to be done. Snow plows dig up lawns, frost heaves shift wooden fencing, high winds bring down tree branches, and freezing temperatures cause water hoses to burst. While none are dangerous, Mother Nature has definitely insured that volunteer staff will be busy with projects with the arrival of milder weather!

One of our special projects for 2017 for which we are super excited is the construction of a new "retirement community" for some of our older wolves! Wolves in the wild average a life span of 4-8 years (assuming mankind hasn't somehow interfered). However, due to regular feeding, veterinary care, and a lack of potential dangerous competition of packs, wolves in captivity average a life of up to 16 years! Although we have five wolves under the age of two, the center currently has six other animals who have achieved "senior citizen" status: Hunter will be 14 this spring; Nakoa & Natani will be 11; and Tashina, Tala, & Dancing Turtle each turn 9. Several of these older wolves simply cannot keep up with the exuberance of the younger pack members and for everyone's comfort, need to move to a quieter, slower environment. Initial clearing of fence lines and installation of anchoring posts began late last fall; we are

planning on jumping right back into this new enclosure as soon as weather improves.

Other projects in the planning stages include a "Please Touch" table for kids where our younger visitors will have the opportunity to handle and investigate various ecological items. Usually parents are telling their little ones "Don't touch that!" so we decided to create a table where it's not only okay to touch and pick up things, but it is encouraged! After all, kids (and adults!) learn best when they can feel, experience, and explore! Items on the table will change from time to time and will include such things as pine cones, snake skins, turtle shells, bird nests, fox fur, deer jaws, and more cool stuff!

Beginning this season we will also have self-guided tours. Visitors can pick up a map of the center at our welcome/admissions cabin, then follow the trail and numbered stations as they meander from enclosure to enclosure. Various informational kiosks will be positioned along the way with interesting facts and photos. Of course, our friendly, knowledgeable staff will still be around to provide more information and answer any questions visitors may have.

All in all, we are excited to begin the 2017 season at The Wolf Mountain Nature Center! Hope to see everyone soon!



Hunter (above), Natani (middle), and Nakoa (below) are some of the center's older wolves.



Arctic Fox Photo Sessions

At the center we are always creating new programs to help educate the public and also as a way to raise funds to continue our work of providing quality care for the animals. New this late winter was our Arctic Fox Photography Program. On Sundays February -March, participants attended an hour long classroom presentation about foxes including their physiology, behaviors, and role in the earth's ecosystem. Afterwards, everyone headed up to visit our six Arctic foxes inside their enclosures for an hour long photography session. Visitors discovered how entertaining and personable these little cold weather creatures are! Several folks had the foxes come right up to them and brush along their legs—an exciting experience that left everyone feeling elated about the opportunity to see these beautiful critters up close.

(photo credits: John Hancock)



New solar batteries arrive!

Did you know our nature center is 100% off-grid? We generate ALL of our own power to run lighting, classroom presentations, and our cash register using solar panels. In addition, our caretakers' cabin relies on both solar and wind power. As the electrons in the sun's energy hit the solar panels, they become excited and move quicker, thus creating electricity. The batteries then store this electrical energy to be used at a later time. Typically the batteries have a life expectancy of eight years; ours were 13+ years old and clearly losing life rapidly. Thanks to a successful GoFundMe campaign and numerous private donations, we were able to secure new batteries, and with the help of Nick and his staff from Downstream Construction in Boonville, these batteries were installed in early March!

National Volunteer Week

April 23 - 29

Animal Caretakers



George



Dave



Pam



Will



Courtney

Our center is operated entirely by unpaid volunteer staff, in fact our volunteers donated over 3000+ hours of service last year alone! Our animal caretakers put in literally hundreds of hours annually feeding, cleaning up after, performing basic veterinary care, and socializing with the wolves, coyotes, & foxes! As National Volunteer Week approaches, please join us in recognizing our invaluable volunteers! While we have identified several of our "regulars" here, we also have many more who help out and are just as important!! If you would like to join our team, please visit our website for more information.

Volunteers



Meghan



Andrea



John



Dean



Howie



Amanda



Kamren



Lea



Laura



Skyler

FAQ's:

We frequently get asked the same questions repeatedly so we have decided to put our responses in writing. Here are some of the more common questions & answers...

Where do you get your wolves?

All of our wolves are legally obtained either from other wolf facilities, born here at the center, or acquired as a rescue animal. We DO NOT support removal of wolves from the wild to be placed into captivity unless it is part of a reintroduction program for an endangered species.

What do you do with the wolves in the winter?

Although humans may find winter cold and uncomfortable, wolves love the lower temperatures! In the wild, wolves stay outside in sometimes very harsh conditions; the same is true with the wolves here. By law, we must provide them with shelter, but in the wild, wolves make dens or hunker down under trees and in snowbanks. Wolves are built for the extreme cold and thrive in winter conditions.



Are the wolves tame?

NO! Our wolves are socialized, not tame. They have been exposed to human caretakers from only a few days old thus creating bonds of acceptance and trust between human and wolf. We allow our wolves to retain as many wild traits as possible while "permitting" staff to enter into wolf territories safely.

Who gets to go in with the wolves?

ONLY licensed, trained staff may enter wolf enclosures after first securing permission from the Head Animal Curator. Prior to any visit, staff must first observe, understand, and respect current wolf behaviors and dynamics. Sometimes wolves simply do not want company!