



Autumn Colors on Wolf Mountain

photography by Dean Barney

HOWL CHRONICLES

The Wolf Mountain Nature Center

November 2020

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TheWolfMountainNatureCenter.org

(a non-profit 501(c)3 organization)

Founded in 2006 by Will Pryor

Head Animal Caretaker's Message...Will Pryor

Reflections from the Mountain...

As it so often happens while I write this—I find myself hunkered indoors today as the heavy rain (soon changing to snow) pounds on the metal roof of the cabin.

As people slowly re-entered the outdoor world after the initial Covid lockdown, we had to make the necessary adjustments to help folks stay safe while visiting. The first few days were awkward as all adjusted to the wearing of masks, one-way trails, limited numbers in the gift shop, and the ever-occurring disinfecting. Animals had to get used to having people other than Caretakers around again. Still, people's faces lit up like the sun breaking through the clouds after years of darkness. Humans crave nature and being outdoors—we do need to find a way to come together to do a

better job of protecting Earth and creatures large and small.

As always, much still needs to be done before the arrival of winter and my “last minute to do” list seems to continue to grow. This fall's foliage was spectacular, but too short. I love the smell of the maple leaves on the forest floor and being able to see the “standing people” (trees) better. Soon the forest will be blanketed with snow. I have a feeling the lake effect snow machine will deliver a deep covering of snow this year. Perhaps I will even find the time to get in a day or two of deer hunting. The wolves, foxes, and coyotes will absolutely love the snow however, and I believe they also find amusement in watching me stumbling around on my two legs (and sometimes bottom) as I complete my chores.

This has certainly been a year of changes, challenges, and struggles for many. It is my hope and prayer that the Creator will watch out for the ones who are not being heard—our animal brothers and sisters—the trees, birds, and all who share in the creation.

Ah ho!

Will Pryor, Founder



critter capers



If you read our last newsletter, you remember us talking about foraging behavior of the wolves within their enclosures and how naturally found foods and stimulation such as berry bushes, frogs, and even nearby stray cats all provide enrichment activities for the animals. Well, the universe has continued to bestow unusual opportunities for enrichment activities during the past few months.

While making the rounds one morning in early October, Caretaker Pam was greeted by a sad faced Tamarack.

Immediately Pam knew something was not right as Tamarack is normally a very exuberant creature. As he

approached, the reason for his lowered head and sad eyes was evident—his face and paws were covered in porcupine quills! His pack-mate Tala slowly came limping over and she too, was covered in quills! Of course, all planned activities for the day came to an abrupt halt and staff on site immediately went into triage mode as the wolves were sedated, dozens and dozens of quills removed, and wounds disinfected. Apparently the intruder had climbed into the enclosure via a nearby apple tree (which has since been cut down) and was met by some territorial wolves who decided it would be the last visit that porcupine would experience.

Though sore for many days, both wolves have recovered.

Several days later while preparing for a special photography program, Head Animal Caretaker Will noticed a funky odor emitting from some of the wolves in our main pack. Per usual, the yearling wolves of Kitan and Tehyah came bounding up for their human contact and much to Will's horror, they had been sprayed by, decimated, and scent-rolled on a very large skunk! Since its size was too large to squeeze through any part of the fence or gates, it was concluded that skunk must have been living somewhere in that 9+ acre enclosure for quite some time! Needless to say, after being rubbed on by some very odiferous wolves, Will bowed out of the remainder of the program with the public until he could shower and change his attire!



Only a few days after the skunk incident (they say bad things happen in threes, right?), Will and Pam, who live on-site, were awakened to the non-stop barking and howling of wolves. Now, sunrise howling is normal and expected, but the bark made by wolves is only done as an alarm, so an investigation pursued. While no creature was actually seen, the evidence left behind in our parking area was clear—our neighbors cows had once again broken out of their pasture and were wandering around outside of our perimeter fence lines and clearly visible to many of our wolves (who were likely drooling with anticipation!)

Honoring the Spirit of the Wolf



Sakari dives right in!



Tashina obviously wants something other than eggs!



Okwaho isn't quite sure about this foreign orange sphere.

October 11th was our 14th annual festival. Greatly scaled back due to Covid restrictions, we purposely did not advertise as we did not want to draw large crowds, yet we were shocked by how many supporters still came out to help and to visit. Folks did a great job wearing masks, following social distancing protocols, and respecting the safety of others. Pumpkins were filled with treats for the animals to enjoy and five visitors got to enter a wolf enclosure (with the wolves locked out) to deliver the pumpkins! The Sled Dogs of Smokey Hill brought several eight-month-old husky pups to demonstrate their exposure to sled pulling. Gilligan's Ice Cream was on hand to quiet rumbling tummies! Hopefully next year we can resume our normal celebration with all activities!!



Lucky visitors got to deliver pumpkins!



Tala loves enjoying her pumpkin atop her platform!

Honoring the Spirit of the Wolf



Will's & Pam's two husky pups "hitched up" for the very first time! Glacier (red pup in left photo) wanted to visit with everyone while Polar (white pup in right photo) just wanted to take a nap!



Coyote Kaliska has a face-to-face stare down with her pumpkin before she makes her move!



Cypress is clearly overjoyed with the contents of his pumpkin!



THANK YOU TO...



Joleane Robinson and her crew for hosting a motorcycle bike rally on October 10th to raise funds for Wolf Mountain! She visited us one day, fell in love with the Center and our mission, then put together a bike ride with over 50 participants! After a tour and auction, she presented the Center with a very generous donation!



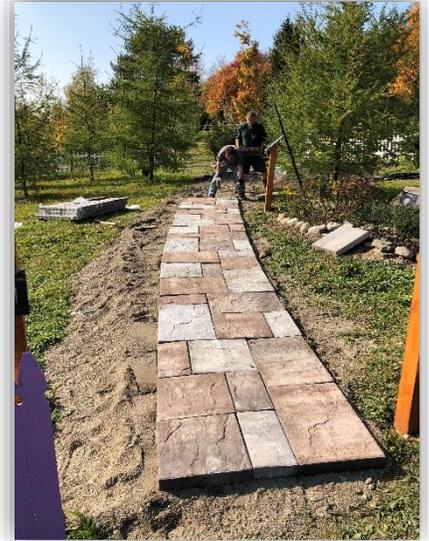
Andy Lago of Gilligan's Island in Sherburne for selecting Wolf Mountain Nature Center for their October 14th fundraiser! More than 250 customers visited the restaurant within a four-hour time period which netted the Center 20% of sales! Stop in to support them sometime—they have fabulous burgers & ice cream!



MORE THANK YOUS TO...



Don Martin for stumbling upon a stone/paver company going out of business and willing to give a huge price cut on several pallets of pavers for a walkway for Zoey's Memorial Garden! Don made a great deal, picked up the super heavy load, delivered it with his friend, spread the sand base, and then laid the pavers! Once winter and spring frosts have passed, finishing touches will wrap up the project.



Skip Bassett for making major renovations to our steep and bumpy driveway! Visitors know our driveway often resembled a testing ground for off-road vehicles. While not entirely completed, the improvements with new drainage and gravel have already made a noticeable difference with a smoother, wider, and no longer flooded driveway. It was even easy to navigate after our first snowfall!



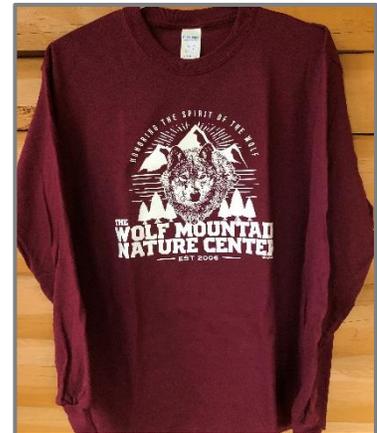
Have you checked out our on-line gift shop?



Don't forget to consider shopping at our on-line gift store when fulfilling your holiday shopping lists! We currently have available our t-shirts, long-sleeve shirts, baseball caps, warm winter beanies, and tote bags. Visit often as we may be adding other merchandise. Prices shown include shipping costs and all orders are shipped within 72 hours.

This is another great way to show your support for the Center and for wolves, especially during the current Covid-19 restrictions. And as always, 100% of profits go directly into animal care expenses!

Visit our secure website to purchase your favorites! www.TheWolfMountainNatureCenter/giftshop.html



Wishes and Wants: As a non-profit we rely heavily on donations. Below are some of the many items that would help the center. If you can help, please contact us or simply bring the item(s) on your next visit!

Animal Care

- Red meats and Chicken (store bought)
- Non-latex gloves (lg and XL)
- Metal Rakes/Shovels
- Metal "Pooper-scoopers"
- Large Freezer (must be "garage ready")
- Walleye Scoop Net

Landscaping/Maintenance

- Picnic tables & benches
- Treated Lumber
- 8 ft high fixed-knot tensile fencing
- Perennial Plants
- Solar Lights (for pathways)
- Wheelbarrow (heavy duty)
- Solar-operated fountain

Office/Classroom

- Postage stamps
- Printer paper (all colors)
- Printer ink (hp 902XL/902)
- Hand sanitizer
- AA batteries
- 30 or 55-gallon garbage bags

Open Hours and Admission Rates

*Last admission is 30 minutes prior to closing time.

	Sundays	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fridays	Saturdays
Regular Season September 1 – June 30 (closed in January)	Open 12 – 4 pm Various animal enrichment programs; Self or Guided Tours at 12:30 and 2:00 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Summer Season July 1 – August 31	Open 12 – 4 pm Various animal enrichment programs; Self or Guided Tours at 12:30 and 2:00 pm	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Open 12 – 3 pm Various animal enrichment programs; Self-Guided Tours	Open 12 – 3 pm Various animal enrichment programs; Self-Guided Tours
Admission	Free Children 5 & under Folks 6 & up \$8.00	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	Children 5 & under Free Folks 6 & up \$8.00	Children 5 & under Free Folks 6 & up \$8.00

2020 Special Programs

Last one for the 2020 season!

Wolf Communication Program (Howl Night)

Learn the variety of methods used by wolves to communicate including scent marking, body language, and vocalizations. Understand why wolves howl and the distinct types of messages behind each howl. We finish with a pack howl!

November 7 3pm – dark

All Howl Programs are held on Saturday evenings and include tours of all wolf & coyote exhibits.

(Please note that our Arctic Fox exhibits are closed during this program.) This is a group tour/lecture—visitors are expected to remain with the group at all times.



Please Note:

Due to Covid-19 and ever-changing mandates & regulations, any or all of our planned events/activities may be abruptly cancelled or postponed. We apologize in advance if this happens, but it is out of our control. Certainly, we will abide by rules passed down and want everyone to stay as safe as possible. If you have pre-paid for an activity that is cancelled due to federal or local mandates, we will offer you one of the following options: refund, credit toward a future event, credit toward merchandise at our gift shop, or apply your money to the Center as a donation to be used for animal care expenses.

Upcoming Events

Winter with the Wolves December 13th 11am – 3 pm

A celebration of the winter snows and the holidays! Our wolves, foxes, and coyotes will receive special holiday gifts and treats. The Sled Dogs of Smokey Hill will be running their sled dogs. Our warm gift shop will be stocked and ready to help you fill your holiday shopping bags!

Admission \$8 per person
(kids 5 & under free)
Cash only at the Center please!



Visit our website as specific events approach for more details and for additional special events and programs.