



Dancing Turtle

Arctic/Alaskan wolf who turns 13 this spring

HOWL CHRONICLES

The Wolf Mountain Nature Center

February 2021

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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...

With several feet of fresh snow on the ground and the full wolf moon woman sending her energy to all creatures, it is in the chorus of wolves and coyotes that the spirits of Earth are active. We have had a number of lake effect snows of late.

As a kid (and still now) I loved snow globes. I could sit for many moments imagining that I was inside of the snow globe with the flakes falling gently all around me. Well, this winter, the snow flakes have created a real-life visual snow globe right outside my windows here at Wolf Mountain Nature Center.

However, the days are indeed getting longer and the sun just a little higher in the sky, giving hope and thanks to the Creator for

continuing the natural seasonal cycles. As I always do, I am pondering and planning for the spring and summer improvements, additions, and animal habitat enrichments.

Among our intended changes is the addition of several foxes; hopefully we will be acquiring more Arctic foxes and a couple of gray foxes. We lost both Yukon and Yana (Arctic foxes) this past year due to old age (read more on page four.) Yukon and Yana were outstanding ambassadors for Arctic animals in general and the effects of climate change on the environment and its habitants and we wish to continue their legacy of captivating and educating visitors about this incredible species.

Today as I look out over the large enclosure, I see the North Pack

members interacting with some ravens over a recent road-kill deer that was brought in. Just the other day, a mature bald eagle flew over our cabin and circled the wolf areas looking for scraps of meat. I have noticed that unlike the ravens and hawks, the eagles do not land inside wolf enclosures.

So, it is a new year, a new season, and there is renewed hope that people, animals, and Earth can heal and learn to respect one another. Listen to the wind...listen to what the forest has to say...

Ah ho! Walk in balance on Mother Earth,

Will Pryor
Founder



critter capers



As winter with its snows and cold temperatures has finally descended upon Wolf Mountain, the animals have grown their thick, plush, and warm winter furs. Our tour guides frequently get asked the question of “what do you do with the animals in the winter.” This is the season in which these creatures built for the cold tundra and frigid Arctic climates thrive! Unlike humans, the wolves do not pack up their gear and head to the warm, tropical sunny beaches of Florida to ride out the brutal winter.

Some of you may have seen our Facebook video early in the season, where Head Animal Caretaker, Will, discussed some of the basic wolf physiology and



adaptions that allow them to easily survive outdoors in the cold. For those who missed it, here is a quick review:

Wolves have two layers of distinct fur, each with a specific purpose. The outer layer, or guard hairs, are hollow and coarse; they act like a rain coat or windbreaker. This is the layer that allows the animal to stay dry from rain, snow, and ice; it also helps to buffer some of the severe chill from blustery winds. This outer layer of fur is what determines the coloring of the individual wolf. The undercoat of fur is super soft, akin to the fleece lining of your winter jacket. The primary purpose of this layer is to act like a blanket of warmth and helps to retain body heat.



Much like your dog or cat, when cold, wolves will curl up to reduce the amount of the body’s surface area exposed to the weather conditions. Many will wrap their large fluffy tails around them to add an extra layer of warmth and protection. Of course, sleeping with the pack in dens insulated with snow and ice affords comfort and protection.

Wolf paws are heavily padded and webbed to act like snowshoes for ease of movement across deep snows; the padding also functions as a barrier from extreme cold (think mittens or boots)! Sharp claws assist with a more secure footing on slippery ice.

Wolf paws are heavily padded and webbed to act like

Wolves also have expandable bellies which allow them to “overeat” and process food more slowly. Since it may be days or even weeks between kills for meals, this slower digestion process sustains the wolf for a longer period of time—very helpful when winter food supplies may be scarce!



Winter with the Wolves



Kitan & Tehyah work together to open their gift



Cypress got caught peeking!



Tamarack cannot wait to open his gift!!

December 13th was our annual winter solstice celebration. Though definitely lacking in the white winter precipitation, the mild weather allowed visitors and the critters to enjoy a wonderful day!



At 12 years old, Tala has lots of experience opening presents!



Sakari investigates her bright box



Even the Arctic Foxes enjoyed special gifts of a smaller size!



Yukon Cornelius

June 15, 2009 – December 23, 2020



Yukon passed the rainbow bridge to be with his mate, Yana, who passed away in August of this year. Both died of old age in their sleep at 11+ years old—quite remarkable for a fox whose life expectancy in the wild is roughly three years! Yukon & Yana came to Wolf Mountain Nature Center at only a month old and lived in their habitat with natural dens, a rock pond, and blackberry bushes for snacking. During special events, the two entertained visitors by “squawking” at each other and ripping into boxes, digging into melons & pumpkins, and chasing mice. These two original foxes at the Center opened the doors for folks to learn not only about arctic foxes, but also about the effects of melting polar ice caps. Yukon & Yana will be missed by all.



Quilt Raffle!



Size: 88"x98"

Drawing on January 31, 2021



Size: 70"x92"

Drawing on February 28, 2021



enlarged
designs/colors



As January through March is our super slow season (due to intense winter weather up here on the hill), we are always discussing creative and unique ways to continue to raise funds to cover animal care expenses—after all—the critters still have to eat! Since winter makes us think of cold temperatures and the desire to stay toasty warm, we thought that giving people the chance to win a cozy quilt would be just the solution!

Made by Educator & Animal Caretaker Pam, the quilts are constructed from pre-washed 100% cotton fabrics and are completely washable so you can actually use them!

Virtual raffle tickets are \$5 each, but for every multiple of five tickets you order, we will throw in an extra ticket, making it six chances for the price of five! Read above to see drawing dates and quilt sizes.

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 virtual raffle tickets!

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

Beef, venison, & chicken (store bought)
Non-latex gloves (lg and XL)
Metal rakes/shovels
Metal "pooper-scoopers"
Walleye scoop net
Old fire hoses

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)
Hand sanitizer
AA batteries
Brown paper lunch bags
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

2021 Special Programs

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!

April 24 6pm – dark
May 29 6pm – dark
June 26 7pm – dark
July 10 7pm – dark
July 24 7pm – dark
August 7 7pm – dark
August 21 7pm – dark
September 18 5pm – dark
October 16 4pm - 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.

Admission is \$8.00 per person (5 and under are free)

Please Note:

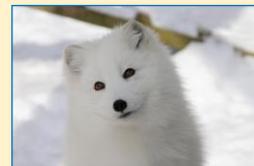
Due to Covid-19 and ever-changing mandates & regulations, any or all of our planned events/activities may be abruptly cancelled or postponed. We apologize in advance if this happens, but it is out of our control. Certainly, we will abide by rules passed down and want everyone to stay as safe as possible. 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 accept your money as a donation to be used for animal care expenses.

We appreciate your understanding.

Arctic Fox Photography (requires pre-registration)

Every Sunday in February & March
\$50 fee

A short fox presentation & safety review followed by a 45-minute photography session inside our main Arctic Fox enclosure. Bring your own camera and dress for the current outdoor weather. Participants must be at least 16 years old; register via website.



Wolf Photography

(requires pre-registration)

February 13 & March 13
10am - 12 noon \$75 fee

A short presentation followed by a 75-minute photography session at our raised platforms. Bring your own camera and dress for the current outdoor weather.

Register via website.

