



Stormy (1998 -2005)

We have lost a great friend here at Wolf Haven International. Stormy came to us from private ownership on January 30, 1999 with his two brothers: Cherokee and Sequoia. There are so many ways to describe Stormy. He was very large in stature, standing at my waist, which put him at about three and-a-half feet tall at the shoulder. His body was dark gray in coloration, his hair very long and course. He reminded me of a very old and wise wolf, yet I still had a sense of boyhood play about him. He would bound up to the



fence huffing and grunting, and then stop and wait for his morning treats to be express-delivered directly to his mouth.

Stormy's pack consisted of brothers Cherokee and Sequoia, as well as Miwok, an unrelated female from our Idaho pack. Sadly, Sequoia passed away in August of 2003 and Stormy soon stepped in as the leader of this group of rebel-rousers. He led them with great gentleness and strength. With each noble stride of his beautiful long dark gray legs you could tell he was in his prime, and ready for his turn to lead. He would hide in the shade of the tall surrounding trees and just watch his pack mates roam around the enclosure. Stormy was also very comfortable around the people on tour. He was known to enjoy rolling on his freshly scented enrichment ball while a tour would stand there enjoying his playful antics. Stormy, from what I could tell loved his life for all it was worth. This past summer though, Stormy's health took a turn¹ for the worse.

For most of his life he had a growth on his right lower eyelid, but usually these growths are benign, and as long as they do not cause the animal discomfort it is not necessary to remove them. However, last May the growth began to increase in mass, causing irritation and weeping. Under the

advice of our Veterinarian, we decided to surgically remove the growth. While surgery went off without a hitch, we were concerned about Stormy's weight. It is our practice that whenever we have an animal in hand, we do a physical exam, including blood work. He had always been one of the larger, more robust animals, but to our dismay, results revealed an extremely high red blood cell count, indicative of leukemia. The Vet's prognosis was bleak... Stormy was given four months to live.

That same day, oblivious to his dire condition, Stormy returned to his pack mates. And while this news brought all of us who knew him an overwhelming feeling of grief, Stormy was still his goofy boyish self, just happy to be at home with his buddies. It seemed as if leukemia could not bring Stormy down, perhaps giving rise to a false sense of hope to his caretakers. He remained his playful self up until his last couple of days. During the end he was very lethargic, and while he remained ever stoic, we knew that he was suffering and this was something we were obliged to put an end to. On August 24, as Stormy took his last breath he just seemed to slip away. I will always remember Stormy as the gentle leader, with his dark golden eyes staring at you echoing back life. You will be missed by all who knew you Stormy, my friend.

