

TRIBUTES

Daniel Curry, Animal Care Specialist

Kiowa (1998 -2005)

On May 3, 1988 Wolf Haven International had an unexpected gift... a litter of 4 pups consisting of one brother and three sisters: Little John, Cris, Morning Star and Kiowa. Though unexpected, they were welcomed with open arms and dubbed the "Oops Litter."

Little John and Kiowa formed an instant bond with each other that could not be broken. They would play frantically with each other, slamming into one another and playing tag; rolling in new found scents that their keepers would plant in their enclosure; or just jumping in unison impatiently awaiting their morning snacks. You couldn't ask for two better companions. Yet on June 8, 2004 Little John passed away and Kiowa mourned her brother's death until July of 2004 when a young male named Peyote was brought into her life. Kiowa immediately formed a new unbreakable bond with Peyote. He seemed to bring Kiowa a great deal of comfort and enthusiasm, as she again found her youth with him. In turn, he seemed to find a mate that he could love and protect. The two would play tag – a game Kiowa carried over from her life with Little John. Peyote took to this game very quickly, as Kiowa would casually walk by and quickly nudge him and then run to another part of their enclosure awaiting a good chase. Peyote would then romp after her and this boisterous play would continue throughout the day.

Toward the end of her days, Kiowa's health began to gradually fade but her spirit stayed strong. She would have small seizures periodically, as her muscles

weakened and her energy started to wane. Instead of frolicking throughout her enclosure with Peyote, she would now be seen basking in the steady streams of sunlight.

With the sun caressing her body she would look at you with her stunning sea green eyes... a look that would warm you to the soul but at the same time break your heart.

On the night of July 24, 2005 Kiowa's body was afflicted with one final seizure that brought her body to the ground. Her strong spirit and will to live forced Kiowa back to her feet to try and fight this condition, yet even though Kiowa was one of the strongest wolves in our sanctuary, she could not fight off advanced renal failure. The next morning, the attending Veterinarian came out to Kiowa's enclosure and after looking at her only for a moment, he concurred with animal care staff's decision to end Kiowa's suffering. As Kiowa looked up through those sea green eyes, she saw her devoted mate, Peyote, and the people who loved and cared for her throughout her long beautiful life.

Kiowa will live on in the hearts of all who knew her. The memory of her will never fade, and to all who read this obituary I hope that it lets you glimpse the beauty of Kiowa and all wolves that walk this planet with us. You will always be remembered and loved, dear friend Kiowa, and I am honored to have known you.



Kiowa: May 3, 1998 -July 25, 2005.

Stormy: April 18, 1995 -June 24, 2005.

Photos by Julie Lawrence.