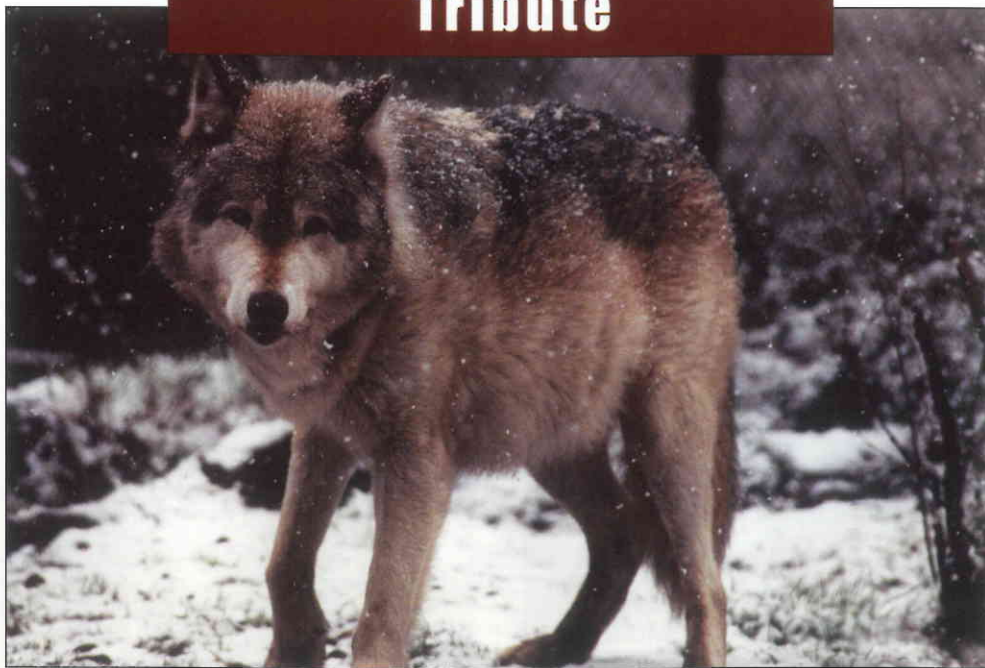


Tribute



Napanee

Photo by Julie Palmquist

Napanee *Capitola McWhorter, Volunteer*

We all know that our wolves will pass on long before we do, but it never is easy when one actually does. Napanee, one of our longtime residents, passed away unexpectedly on Monday June 28, 2004. Napanee had developed an infection that did not respond to antibiotics or steroids. We had sedated him and taken him to our vet for treatment, and he passed away while under anesthesia. It's always a risky thing to sedate older animals, but we were forced to do it in the hopes of saving him from the infection. Unfortunately, it was just too much for him. As many of you may know, wolves typically live less than 9 years in the wild. So at 15 years of age, his body could only take so much.

Napanee came to Wolf Haven in 1993, when he was four years old, and I met him for the first time in April of 1997. He made an impression on me that will last forever, I've always thought that he was the most handsome wolf at Wolf Haven. Napanee was one of our largest wolves, and one of the things we've always loved about him was how he "showed" his meals. You could always tell when the wolves had been fed just by looking at Napanee's enormous belly. He definitely enjoyed meal times and treats! He was also one that loved to rub and roll around in the scent enrichments we give the wolves. Even as an "elderly" wolf, he would still roll around and around in things he really enjoyed. It could be Jell-O, molasses, ginger or any number of other things. What a site to see this big wolf, rolling around with his legs straight up in the air! It just made us all smile to know that he was really enjoying himself. Visitors always commented on his size and wanted to know how much he weighed. We can't know for sure, but in his prime, we estimated that he was over 110 pounds!

Napanee was also star of sorts. He was one of the wolves in our public service announcements that included Bob Barker, and were aired across the country. So not only has Napanee been an impor-

tant teacher to the visitors in our sanctuary, he's also educated people all across the country with his good looks – I actually called him the "Burt Reynolds" of Wolf Haven!

Napanee was a beautiful wolf with sweet, soulful eyes. He had shared his life here with his mate Cris the entire time, and he was a kind and caring mate for Cris. Napanee wasn't overly excited about humans, but was always so good to Cris and would occasionally "play" with staff or volunteers when he felt like it. I've always enjoyed seeing the reaction of visitors to him when he would choose to approach the fence. His big, sweet face and eyes would always endear the people to him. Each wolf here has their own distinct personality, and Napanee's quiet nature was a wonderful example of how some wolves really are – in contrast to the vicious stereotypes we see and hear all too often.

Napanee is now free – as wolves should be – and we rejoice at that. But we do grieve his absence. We also grieve for Cris who is now alone once again. Please know that our staff are spending extra time with her, and doing their very best to give her what she needs as she goes through her grieving period.

Each of us in our own way are working toward the day when there are no captive wolves – when they live and die as nature intended – until that day, you and I will continue to care for them in the very best way that we know how. Thank you so very much for your continued support of our wolves, and thank you for making their lives better.

It breaks my heart to know that I'll never see him again, but I'm so very grateful for the opportunity to have shared so many years with him. Thank you for being a part of his life too.

In Loving Memory of Napanee,
Capitola McWhorter

