

Windsong - the last of a great family

*"Now, as the wind blows, I feel your
presence near, and even hear a faint distant
howl, singing a song, that I have once
heard... from a dear friend, and a
magnificent wolf - Windsong"*

From the poem "Windsong"
by Kristina Kelly, age 12

By Judy Loeven, Animal Care Staff

On Sunday, August 23, Windsong died at the grand old age of seventeen. She was the oldest and the last of Blackfoot's children (Wolf Haven's first resident), and with her passing comes the end of an era in Wolf Haven's history.

Windsong was an extremely sweet lady but also one with a wicked sense of humor. She loved the company of her caregivers and especially enjoyed playing games with (and tricks on) us. She usually preferred that we hide her

meals and treats around her enclosure so she could "hunt them down" later on. When she tired of this game, she turned to "stealing" her treats out of our buckets when she thought we weren't looking!

Having outlived her younger mate, Jeremiah, by well over a year, Windsong was still going strong at the beginning of the summer. At her advanced age, however, her body was giving out. She'd suffered from arthritis for a long time, but we now noticed that the muscles of her right hip were becoming atrophied.

Still, she appeared to enjoy life. Company was still - and always - very welcome. Just being in or near her enclosure seemed to satisfy her need for social interaction. Eventually though, she could barely raise herself from a resting position and would fall after taking only a few steps. On the 23rd, we knew that it was time to end her suffering - and so, I think, did she. Our veterinarian gave her a sedative so that when the end came, it was quick, painless and peaceful.

I miss her big mischievous grin a lot and feel an emptiness every morning as I care for the young wolves near her empty enclosure. Though her body now lies next to Jeremiah's, no doubt she is still running, playing games and laughing somewhere!

