

Clarice

TRIBUTE

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Clarice was an extraordinary girl who lived an extraordinary life. I have had to write several tributes to wolves over the years, but I've never written one quite like this. In fact, I wouldn't quite call this a tribute; rather, it's a celebration of the life that was Clarice. She came to live at Wolf Haven in 2003. Clarice was not getting along with another female wolf that she was living with at the time at Woodland Park Zoo. The caretakers felt it would be better to remove Clarice from the situation, as she was receiving the brunt of the aggression. At the time, we had a lone male, Marius, so Clarice came to

live with him at Wolf Haven.

Clarice became the sweet and gentle soul living "up on the hill." The 'hill' at Wolf Haven refers to the back part of our sanctuary that is more secluded and private (and yes, on a small hill), off of the public tour route.

Clarice had some setbacks in her life, as we all have of course. She outlived three different companions at Wolf Haven: Marius, Peyote, and Myta Sr. Clarice proved to be a stoic, independent girl – an inner strength kept hidden by her gentle personality. Around 2008, she suffered what our veterinarian believed to be a stroke, but Clarice bounced back strong. She was a little more unsteady on her feet after that, but she never let it slow her down.

By the time she was 18 Clarice was clearly in the twilight of her life. What was special about Clarice was her vigor and spunk at that age. In most cases, wolves living to such an age usually have health issues, but Clarice seemed, at least outwardly,

to have no issues at all. Clarice continued to awe us in her 'senior feats', that is, things she would do at 18 that we never saw such an elderly wolf do before. Never before had we seen an 18 year old roll around in various scents and smells. And just days before she passed away, Clarice was eating a deer leg: front feet on the leg for leverage to rip at her all-time favorite food with the energy of someone ten years younger.

Clarice got to live every day of her life, and I think that is what makes me smile when I think back about her.

When I reach the twilight of my life, I can only hope to be as active as Clarice was. To be surrounded by friends. And like Clarice, when it is my time to bid farewell to this physical world I hope I can pass away peacefully into the night, ready for my next adventure.

So I wish for us all not to mourn for Clarice, but to rather celebrate her life. A life that was extraordinary.



CLARICE, JULIE LAWRENCE PHOTO.