



Photo by Julie Palmquist

# A tribute to Little John

Saying good-bye to Wolf Haven's self-appointed guardian

*Linda Lewis, Wolf Haven Volunteer*

It is with a very heavy heart that I must inform you that "Little John" has passed away. As you may know, Little John was quite old, and recently had been having some health challenges. Little John was euthanized on March 8, 2004 at the age of 15 years.

My friend Little John was majestic - intelligent, playful, tolerant and kind. He was a strikingly beautiful wolf with a gorgeous coat of various shades of gray, white, brown and tan with the most intense and expressive golden eyes.

I first met him and his sisters, Kiowa, Cris and Morning Star, when they were six years old. Wolf Haven staff and volunteers lovingly refer to them as the "Oops Litter" because they were born at Wolf Haven in 1988 to Noah and Princess Lily pad. Wolf Haven tries very hard not to have puppies, as they would be forced to stay within fences all of their lives, but Noah and Lily pad managed to get around all the precautions taken at that time and produced four "surprise" pups. They were so incredible, and each had their own special personality. Little John resembled his handsome father, but had his mother's loving yet dominant alpha nature.

Little John lived with his sister, Kiowa, all of his life, and they were the very best of friends. It was such a treat to watch them play in the summers. They would race each other around the perimeter of their enclosure - a sight to take your breath away - and when they came to their big galvanized tub of water, they would take turns landing in it with their front feet, splashing and spraying until the water was nearly gone. Then, they would take off again in a happy game of



Above left: Wolf Haven office manager, Kari Taylor, begins Little John's memorial ceremony by smudging his burial site with smoke from a sage wand. Above: Wolf Haven file photo of Little John.

tag. Pretty soon they would be looking at you as if saying, "Hey! We need more water over here!" and they would get their tub filled again. Little John was a loving companion to Kiowa and I know she will really miss his presence.

I also remember when a young man who helped raise the "Oops Litter" came to visit. It had been over four years since they had seen each other, but Little John recognized him from the moment he walked in the sanctuary gate. I was leading a tour at the time, and we were approaching Little John and Kiowa's enclosure. I was astonished to see Little John leaping, flat-footed, almost to the top of the fence in his excitement at seeing his old friend. I had never known a wolf could jump so high! It was an amazing sight - pure happiness.

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growing and becoming richer in the sense that:

- The Wolf Haven wolves have wonderful enrichment toys and a beautiful environment;
- The Wolf Haven sanctuary has a magnificent (donated) two-tiered rock water feature that the 5 new pups and Mom and Dad enjoy every single day in their enclosure;
- We have a steady source of Volunteers who teach all visitors to the wolf sanctuary;
- We are a model for partnerships in order to spread our mission; and
- We lead the way in responsible management that enables an enriched life for the wolves every single day.

**#2: The Incoming Director, Susan Sergiojan, comes to us with:**

- A Bachelor of Science degree in Wildlife-Fisheries Resources
- A Juris Doctor degree with an emphasis in Environmental Law
- A successful career as a Deputy District Attorney specializing in career criminals, and aggressively prosecuting animal cruelty and fish and game cases;
- A wealth of experience in leading non-profit organizations; and
- A lifelong passion for wolves and environmental and conservation issues.

As she reviews Wolf Haven's short- and long-term goals, she would welcome your suggestions on how you think we should refine our priorities in order to accomplish

our mission and better serve our members and supporters. You may reach her at [director@wolfhaven.org](mailto:director@wolfhaven.org).

At the time of my leaving, I envision a world where the status of animals in the wild is equal to the status of humans. I firmly believe that you and the Staff and Volunteers of Wolf Haven International will play a key role in moving us toward my vision. It is an honor and a privilege to have been associated with you.

Sincerely,  
Liz Dalton, Executive Director



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February afternoon. No longer are her ears pinned back in fear, or her tail tucked so far between her legs that it touches her belly. The frantic, vacant stare has been replaced with one of keen awareness and shrewd intelligence. She has much to overcome, but I am confident that she will find her way. Sometimes I walk into the sanctuary and I happen to catch a glimpse of Jessie sound asleep, basking in the warm spring sunshine, a million miles away from her former life, and it gives me pause. We have invested so much time and effort and emotion ensuring that we do right by this animal and it is in these moments that we are rewarded. Please know that these moments would not exist were it not for your steadfast and generous

support. How fortunate are we to know that we have had a direct hand in dramatically changing (for the better) the course of an animal's life. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you.

**Please note:** Jessie James is now available for 'adoption.' For information, please call (360) 264-4695 x2 or visit [www.wolfhaven.org](http://www.wolfhaven.org).

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I thank Little John for his strength, joy of living, inquisitiveness and patience. He was a very special soul and a wonderful teacher. Though he will be sadly missed, I know he will now be running free and happy with his sister Morning Star and saving a place in the pack for his sisters Kiowa and Cris. Sometimes "mistakes" are special blessings in disguise.



## Coming up

**Howl-Ins** Starting June 12

**Overnite Camp** Starting June

**Day Camp** Starting July

Don't miss out on our great summer programs! Call (360) 264-4695 or visit [www.wolfhaven.org](http://www.wolfhaven.org) for information.



**WOLF HAVEN INTERNATIONAL**  
"Working for wolf conservation since 1982"  
3111 Offut Lake Rd.  
Tenino, Washington USA 98589  
[www.wolfhaven.org](http://www.wolfhaven.org)

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