



**I remember Lumi's last night** very well. I was outside and I heard him let out this odd yelp that didn't sound like Lumi, nor any dog. Lumi had a tendency of letting out unique vocalizations periodically throughout the day, due to his being deaf (or having "selective hearing"). I paid little attention, thinking it was just Lumi. Shortly after, I heard him let out a "Yelp!" This time I went over to him to see what was going on.

**DANIEL CURRY**  
Animal Care Specialist

I found Lumi in the corner of his shelter panting like crazy and smiling as he often was found after patrolling the parameter of his enclosure. *This* was different though... I knew Lumi fairly well and could tell this was going to be his last night as I knew him. My friend was in the process of dying.

I weighed the possibility of taking him to the emergency vet. I didn't want Lumi's last memories to be of strange people doing tests on him in strange places, and I knew the outcome would be the same here as in a hospital. So Lumi and I made the decision to stay together... just the two of us in that little shelter. All I could hear was his labored breathing echoing through the hollow the shelter created and all I could smell was his hot

dog breath. It was a beautiful night and Lumi and I could see the moon, so bright it cast light onto his dark handsome face. He kept looking up at me and smiling. It took a lot for me not to cry, but I didn't want to taint Lumi's last few moments with tears of sadness. Instead, we sat there and looked into each others eyes while we recapped what little of life we lived together. He would put his head on my leg and I would pet his giant dark mane. What struck me most was the way his eye's lit up by the white light of the moon and his smile that was as big as life. He seemed happy to have lived this long and to have one of his many friends there to see him off. I was honored to be the one who was given the choice to be with him during his last few moments.

Suddenly, he took his head off my leg and started pushing my thigh away with his muzzle. He wanted to go the last part of his journey by himself. I didn't understand why, maybe it was because he didn't want to be remembered like this, but the message was as clear as the moon: Lumi wanted to pass alone. I started to cry and he just pushed harder, so I reluctantly left. It was so hard for me to think of my little buddy outside dying by himself with nothing that I or anyone else could do about it. Lumi touched a lot of hearts in his time here at Wolf Haven. He helped a lot of people open up and I will remember him in the way that he wanted me to: Smiling. 🐾

# Lumi

## A tribute

## Why wolves howl

**MEGAN MOSKWA**  
Education Director

**"When are the wolves going to howl?"** This is the question most frequently asked of Wolf Haven tour guides, but staff and volunteers have no control over the wolves' song. We are not the maestro of an orchestra, conducting their masterpiece. They sing to their own beat. High-pitched noises such as trains and sirens are more likely to set our gang off in song.

*Do they howl at every train that passes through or every fire truck that races by? No. Do they howl at the moon? No.* This common myth probably developed because wolves are more likely to howl when active near dusk and dawn. The full moon adds a bit of mystery to this common occurrence.

A wolf's howl continues to remain a mystery. There has been much research into what these amazing creatures are saying, but as humans we can never know for sure. The howl is just one of

many vocalizations the wolf uses together with moans, whines, squeaks, yelps, squeals, screams, barks, growls, woofs, and yawns. It is the howling however that intrigues us with its mournful tone and resonant message. There are four common theories as to why wolves howl: for social bonding; for locating one another; for territorial or spatial reasons; and of course, mating.

The saying goes the pack that howls together, stays together but whether or not howling actually strengthens bonds among pack individuals remains unknown. This theory was most likely developed because wolves are more prone to howl before or after vigorous activities such as a hunt and because wolves are such social beings. It is known that pack members will howl to locate one another. Packs are more likely to howl when there are pups near or when there's a fresh kill because they want to protect that area. Last and certainly not least, howling may display a wolf's eagerness to find a mate... "Come hither" Arooo! 🐾

# FYI