



Death of a Yankee

By Judy Loeven, Animal Care Staff

There were originally seven wolves which came to us in 1983 from the University of Connecticut. On September 4, the fifth of that Yankee clan, Nero, died of heart failure.

Most people never got a chance to see Nero because, being very shy of strangers, he lived off the public tour route. He was a large, very strong wolf, with an incredibly thick gray and reddish coat.

Nero personified the stoic side of the wolf. Although he was not very sociable with humans, Nero was devoted to his sister and companion, Sybil. He may have ruled her with an "iron paw," but he was also heavily dependent on her. In his latter years, when he became almost completely blind and deaf, Sybil would stand watch and let him know if anyone approached. As Nero became enfeebled with age, Sybil also became his protector and threatened anyone who would dare venture into their enclosure - even though the goal of that person was to help him.

Nero's passing was thankfully swift. One day, he was still getting around and had an appetite for his favorite foods, and the next he was unable to rise and died within hours - even before the veterinarian could come.

Sybil mourns the loss of the companion she has had since they were in the womb together - and so do we. We remember and honor his endurance and his strength of character.