



# The WolfWood Wayfarer

**Winter 2017**

**WolfWood Refuge**

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***Welcome to our twenty-fifth newsletter***

## **A Forever Home**

This year has been a roller-coaster ride for all of us at WolfWood. We have experienced great loss this year, and yet we have had our most successful year ever, with record attendance at our outreach programs and tours. We have received more donations than ever before and spent more on vet care than any other year. We have gotten awards and accolades for our work and struggled with the pace and changes of our ever growing and evolving facility

Throughout it all I am asked the same question over and over: “How do you do it?” Most often this is connected to the death of one of the wolves. My answer is always the same: The other side of great pain is great love. You cannot have one without the other. To live with the wolves, to be in their presence, to love and be loved by them, and to witness on a daily basis the miraculous impact they have on the lives of the people who connect with them, that is worth the price of grief and the sorrow of loss. I can do it because I know that we have given them the best life we possibly can, no matter the cost in medical care, time and energy, or emotional investment. I can do it because when they come to WolfWood we promise them a forever home. They live with us their whole lives and deserve to finish out those lives with dignity. They deserve to be missed and to be held in the hearts of those who cared about them.

“How do you do it?” I can do it because I am surrounded and supported by a group of people who are as committed to the vision of WolfWood as I am. The volunteers and donors of the refuge give all they can to make sure that this is a safe place where we can all be happy and healthy and live our best lives. My human pack takes care of each other just like they do the animals. Every single person at Wolfwood has been helped and cared for by someone else. Just like the wolves, those who are strong at the moment take the lead and then are able to fall back when they need to and someone else breaks the trail.

How do I do it? I have a forever home and a forever family of wolves and people with whom it is my joy and privilege to share the ride. I can do it because I am surrounded with daily expressions of love. May you all have the kind of love in your life this season and throughout the year which allows you to fully experience the ups and downs that make up a fully lived life.

***LOVE TO ALL OF YOU THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AND ALWAYS  
FROM THE WOLFWOOD PACK OF PEOPLE AND ANIMALS!***

## OUR SIXTH ANNUAL ART AUCTION

Our Art Auction was the most successful WolfWood fundraiser ever. It was the result of a whole lot of hard work and unprecedented generosity. The proceeds will help support the animals throughout the winter.



*Kelly Black's featured painting*



*Having fun!*



*Lacey Black provided excellent music*



*Our enthusiastic auctioneers*

Please accept our deepest appreciation for supporting the Wolfwood Refuge 6th Annual Art Auction. The support and generosity from: UltraSteam, Durango Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, CJ Sand and Gravel, BP Corporate, Animas Brewing, Baked, Brew, Carver's Brewing Company, Creative Color, Cuckoo's Chicken House, Durango Chef, El Moro, Four Leaves Winery, Fired Up Pizza, Fox Fire Farms, Home Slice Pizza, Ignacio Floral, Irish Embassy, Ken and Sue's, Lacey Black, La Plata Humane Society, Liquor World, Los Amigos Del Sur, May Palace, Mutu's Italian Kitchen, Neil Agency Auctioneers, Olde Tymers, The Palace, Serious Texas Bar-B-Q, Star Liquors, Upper East Side Liquors, Wildcat Canyon Liquors, Farmer's Fresh, Purgatory, Curt Brown, Jasmine Photography, and all of the artists and silent auction donors. This year we raised more money than in the previous year. In fact, we raised more money than ever in our history!

### **Animal Advocate of the Year**

To my surprise and great honor, I was chosen to be the La Plata County Humane Society's Animal Advocate of the Year. It is a humbling and wonderful feeling to receive recognition for doing the work I love.

I am forever grateful for the people who surround me and support me in my vision of what animal advocacy looks like in the real world. The hard work and dedication they exhibit every day is inspiring. It keeps me on track and motivated to keep WolfWood moving forward.

I want to thank La Plata County Humane Society for the privilege of working with them all these years. Their support and our mutual collaboration has been invaluable in helping the animals of La Plata County I want to also especially thank Darla Lange, not only for nominating me and orchestrating my special night, but also for her tireless efforts and behalf of myself and the animals.

For the last 25 years it has been my joy to rescue, care for, learn from and love without end, the many wolves and other canines that have called WolfWood home. Our mission statement states we believe "that quality of life is an inherent right of all creatures." Thank you for the chance to live a quality life.



**Reminder:** If you would like to receive our newsletter by email instead of in the mail, please notify us at [wolfwood1995@hotmail.com](mailto:wolfwood1995@hotmail.com).

## Other News

As you can tell, it has been a very interesting, busy and diverse year at WolfWood Refuge. There is not room in the newsletter to recognize and tell you about it all. Here are a few of highlights. We had a beautiful wedding in July. Instead of birthday presents Mattius Ekola asked that the money be donated to WolfWood. Coleman Bader graduated from high school. Elizabeth joined us as a caretaker. Most of our tours have been full to capacity with people on a waiting list, and our 2018 schedule is already filling up. Please know that as always, we are so grateful for all of you that contribute to the refuge in so many ways and are with us through thick and thin!



*Trinity was the flower wolf*



*The visitor center is in full use*



*Volunteers working hard*



*For wolf kisses!*



*Kadyn introduces a visitor to wolf loving*



*Oakley is a rock star!*

## MEET OUR WOLVES

In each of our newsletters we feature some of our wolves

### VALKYRIE



Valkyrie came to us in June. She is 3 years old and had already had 5 litters of puppies by the time she arrived. She was kept on a chain and severely abused by her owners who kept her as a breeding machine.

She came to the attention of friends of one of our volunteers. They thought euthanasia was a better option than the life she was leading. They finally convinced the owners to release her to the Aztec Shelter with the ultimate goal of getting her to WolfWood.

Valkyrie was very sick, starved, and scared. She would bite without warning if anyone tried to touch her. She has made a good physical recovery, putting on weight and getting healthy. She is also slowly making an emotionally recovery. She takes hotdogs out of our hands. She lives with Rukai and keeps the old man on his toes. She is spayed now and found a safe place: WolfWood.

### TRINITY

Anyone who has ever been to the refuge or seen any of our educational programs knows Trinity. She is our premier ambassador and goes everywhere with us. She has touched, and been touched by, literally thousands of people. Trinity has been the heart and soul of our outreach work for the past nine years, tirelessly giving herself to teach and educate the public and to help support all the animals at WolfWood.

It is with the greatest sadness that we have to retire Trinity due to inoperable cancer in her sinus. She was diagnosed in July, and has been responding positively to her treatment protocol for the last 6 months. We are thankful for Dr. Lockhart-Wagner, who has worked hard to keep Trinity doing so well.

We don't know what her loss will mean for our educational programs, or what the future holds, but we do know we will cherish every moment we have with our beautiful and beloved girl.



## VOLUNTEERS

**WolfWood** has an extremely dedicated group of volunteers. Our volunteers are the heart of this organization and help take care of and save lives every day. Neither rain, nor sleet, nor snow, nor even MUD keeps them from their duties.



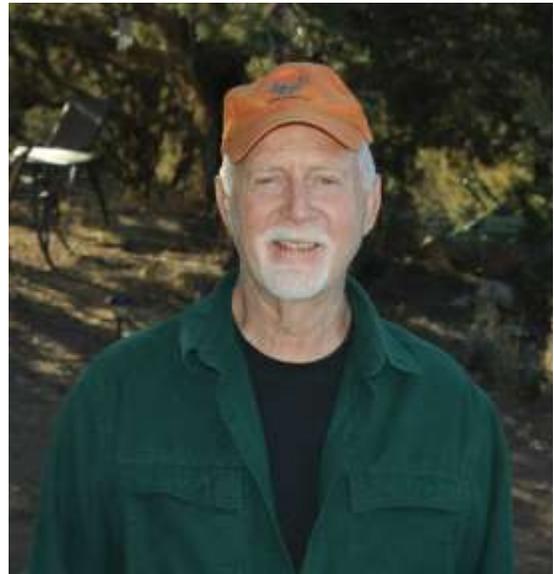
*Robert*



*Michelle*



*Paige*



*Han*

**Paige Ready:** Paige is a native of Colorado. She is a senior at Fort Lewis College with a major in Sociology and a double minor in Biology and Gender and Women’s Studies. She did her internship at WolfWood. We hope she continues her work here until she graduates in the spring.

**Han Bishop, PhD:** Han is a retired former International Sales Manager for a high-tech cooperation. He lived in the San Francisco Bay area for more than 40 years before moving to Bayfield in 2016. Han volunteers at Wolfwood on feeding days and also takes great photos of the animals. He produced and hosted the “Transforming Reality” talk show.

**Michelle and Robert Oppenheimer:** Michelle and Robert are both retired from work in the federal government. They have retired in Durango and are active in many volunteer projects including Purgatory and Music in the Mountains. Fortunately for us they have brought their diverse talents and enthusiasm to WolfWood Refuge.

**Upcoming Events:** Our schedule is filling up. Here are two event dates that are set:

**Purgatory:** March 14<sup>th</sup>    **Lake City:** August 12th

## KIDS AND CANINES

We are proud to announce that WolfWood's outreach program is bigger than ever. After rescuing animals in need, education of young people and the public in general is our main priority, and we are definitely accomplishing that goal. We will see over 60 different organizations this year. All of these programs are provided free of charge and everyone is welcome. The ambassador wolves and volunteers are getting ready for our busy time of year. We believe we are making a difference by dispelling myth and misinformation about these special animals

The number and diversity of the people whose lives the wolves touch is ever growing. Thanks to the support of our donors and volunteers, and the patience and love of the animals, we continue to educate and enlighten, connecting people and animals at WolfWood.



*A record crowd at Hermit Park*



*Pagosa Presentation*



*Trinity and Jeanette strut their stuff*

## OUTREACH PROGRAMS

These are some the organizations that WolfWood has been involved with this season: Sky Ute Money Booth, MYAC, StoneAge, Purgatory Zuke's Mutt Stutt, Three Springs, Vantiv, Wolfe Brewery, Aztec Boys and Girls Club, The Bridge Group, Bayfield Family Center, Hermit Park, Five Branches, LPCHS, Durango Day Camp, Lake City, Ft. Lewis Collage, Four Leaves Winery, La Plata County Sheriff, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Bayfield Library, Big Picture High School, Old Broads, Southern Ute Tribe.

**IN LOVING MEMORY**



*ROWEN*



*SIREN AND TRUCKER*



*MOJO*



*TIKKA*



*SAWYER*

**Rowen:** Rowen came to us a year after Trinity and Akayla. He was their brother. His owner died and the family did not want to care for him. He was a very large, shy animal but once he got to know you, he was loving and affectionate. Breeders like to breed big animals and consequently all three of the sibling have had orthopedic issues. Rowen had extensive knee surgery, which he recovered from very well. He was nine when he unexpectedly passed away, most probably from a heart attack. His gentle nature and handsome presence are missed by all who had the privilege of being his friend.

**Trucker:** Trucker was one of our very oldest animals. He came to us from Ute Animal Control in 2007. LaVonne named him Trucker because he never stopped moving. He would run in figure eights until he bled. If you stood in his path he would just run into you. It took several months to modify Truckers condition and even more time to correct it, but finally he settled down and no longer continued his neurotic and self-destructive behavior. He lived a long and happy life, always had a pen-mate and died finally at peace.

**Mojo:** Mojo came to us as a runaway from the LPHS. He was a premier escape artist, often jumping into his neighbor's pen to see what was going on. He lived his life mostly with Aspen and Avalanche, and the two girls kept him busy. He loved Joel and that affection transferred to almost anyone as he got older. He was over 14 when he died. He is mourned by us all, but especially by Aspen, who sang her grief in the night.

**Tika:** Tika was also an older member of the WolfWood family. She came to us in 2007 from the Farmington Shelter. Even though Tika was a smaller animal, she was feared and beaten before she came to us. She barked a lot and didn't want another animal in her enclosure. She also did not like to be touched by people. As she grew older and realized she was safe, she began to like her neighbors, especially Finn, and would often lay next to him on the fence line. Elizabeth spent a lot of time with her, and became Tika's favorite, allowing Elizabeth to touch her and pulling on her first human friend's hair. Tika is an example of our policy that all animals deserve unconditional love, and that makes all the difference.

**Sawyer:** Sawyer and his siblings came to us in 2006 from the Ute Reservation. They were not wolf/dogs and so we found homes for all of them, except Sawyer. We tried to place him in three different homes, but he made it very clear he only wanted to live at WolfWood. That was the only place he was happy. He lived with Red Dog for many years and when Red Dog died, Sawyer again showed us his stubborn streak by refusing to let anyone else live with him. His enclosure was surrounded on all sides by other animals and he loved to tease them by lying right on the fence line and eating the biggest bone he could find. He lived and died on his own terms in the place he had chosen to call home.

*“Wolf..... teach me to know*