

Member Profile

Axel had a tendency to display some anxiety toward unfamiliar surroundings. A new person or an unexpected noise would trigger retreat. The process of socializing wolf pups requires the staff to provide distractions that change pups' focus from obsession with an unfamiliar stimulus to adapting to sights and sounds in the exhibit.

As part of the data collection process, caregivers recorded every behavioral event they witnessed. Initially, Axel's favorite activities were taking balsam fir branches from the enclosure walls and dragging his stuffed moose around the enclosure, but having matured a bit, he has become more engaged in rank-order and predatory behaviors, including stand-overs, T-1 tail postures, stalking and pouncing on his littermate.

Even before the pups arrived in Ely, we noticed that Grayson was more attuned into his surroundings and was influenced by even the slightest changes—including new caretakers. He often watched and waited as activities went on around him, showing a little more shyness than Axel.

He seemed to sit back and observe before acting, and given Axel's personality, there was plenty for Grayson to observe! Grayson was the first to howl in response to the adult wolves, and overall, he did far more howling to the adult wolves—and particularly to our retired wolf, Grizzer. Further, Grayson howled not only when he was awake; he displayed the unique behavior of howling in his sleep. He was the first to dig around in his environment to find new things like branches, pine cones and rocks, and the first to hide his food (caching).

To learn more about the 2016 pups and their transition into the Exhibit Pack, check out www.wolf.org for our Wolf Logs, You Tube channel and webcams, as well as our monthly Wolf Care webinars and individual adoption kits. ■

Anika Hahn: Philanthropist at 13

By David Kline

Seventh grader Anika Hahn grew up in a family with a multi-generational culture of giving back to the community—so it was no surprise to her mother that Anika chose to celebrate her Bat Mitzvah by inviting friends and family to make gifts in her honor to the International Wolf Center.

After speaking with Wolf Curator Lori Schmidt, Anika decided to designate her gifts to projects that would directly benefit the wolves. Plans were made to add more resting rocks and shade trees near the front of the exhibit pack's 1.25-acre enclosure. Adding these flat-topped rocks near the new shade trees and other rocks just below the surface in the pond will allow the ambassador wolves to stay cool while remaining more easily visible from the observation windows. In addition, a new ultra-violet pond filter will keep the pond free of algae, and an outdoor mister will provide additional comfort on the warmest days.

Anika first became fascinated with wolves as a third grader during a family visit to the International Wolf Center in Ely, Minnesota. She returned home and began reading and researching everything she could find about wolves. Anika even donated her birthday gifts that year toward the educational efforts at the International Wolf Center. Her mother notes that Anika grew up in a nature-loving family; a Samoyed, Labrador retrievers and a German short-haired pointer all familiarized Anika with canines.

The outdoors holds a special place in Anika's heart. She enjoys hiking, boating and swimming, and archery—that is when she can squeeze them in between



Kelly Godfrey



Anika designed this thank you note to send to each of the 83 people who made a gift to the International Wolf Center in honor of her Bat Mitzvah celebration.

reading, dog walking, violin practice, tap and jazz dancing, friends and the occasional peek at the wolf cams on wolf.org!

Wolves aren't the only animals Anika loves learning about. White-tailed deer and sea animals like manatees, turtles and jellyfish have inspired her young mind, too. Exploring career options is still in the early stages for Anika, but being an environmental attorney is currently the front runner.

We thank Anika for her philanthropic leadership, for her generosity to the International Wolf Center, and for the wonderful example she is setting for other young adults in caring for the earth and its inhabitants. ■