

# Wild Kids



Mary O'Callaghan with her parents at the International Wolf Center in Ely, Minnesota.

## Birthday Girl Raises Money for Wolves

### Vocabulary

**Behavior:** How an animal reacts or acts under specific conditions.

**Habitat:** A species' natural environment. Habitats provide the food, water, shelter and space an animal or plant needs to survive. Forests, deserts, and lakes are a few examples of habitats.

**Wildlife:** Animals that are not tamed or domesticated. Wildlife can range in size from microscopic organisms to animals as large as whales.

It's not every day that a 10-year-old foregoes birthday presents, raises money to support wolves and convinces her parents to travel more than 2,000 miles to deliver the donation in person.

Last summer that's exactly what Mary O'Callaghan and her parents did. Mary became interested in wolves in second grade and found the International Wolf Center online. "I bought a bunch of things from the Wolf Den store," Mary recalled. "My parents got me a membership and a cool necklace."

For her birthday this year, Mary asked for a wolf-themed party at an ice skating rink—complete with party guests eating ice cream and cake without utensils. "Like the wolves would do," explained Mary. In lieu of gifts, the birthday girl invited her 15 guests to contribute money to support the Center.

"I raised over \$200 and my parents were nice about it and doubled the amount," she said.

Then Mary convinced her parents

that they should drive from their home in California to Minnesota to deliver the money she raised.

"I just said I really wanted to go," Mary said. "They surprised me and said we would go there." So in August, the O'Callaghan family headed east to spend a week in Ely.

"It was really fun. We saw all the wolves having a snack of a deer leg. I liked it when Luna and Denali were playing tug of war with it," said Mary. "Boltz and Denali were chasing Aidan for his food. I had watched them on the Web cams, but it was cool to see them in real life. That was the first time I've seen a live wolf act naturally in its habitat."

Someday Mary hopes to be a wolf expert herself. "When I grow up I want to be a naturalist and study them. I want to be an intern [at the Center] someday," she said.

The Center is grateful to Mary for her generosity and enthusiasm and to her parents for supporting her interests and encouraging her philanthropic spirit. Thank you!

Spring brings new discoveries and changes for wolves. The melting snow and ice reveal winter's buried caches, such as bones. These caches often spark investigative behavior. As the spring pup season nears, the active, sometimes aggressive, behavior of the winter mating season quiets down. Not only does wolf behavior change by springtime, but wolves' bodies also get ready for summer. In April and May wolves shed their thick undercoat, leaving behind a single layer of fur. This coat is comprised of guard hairs, which repel water. By summer wolves look much thinner than they did in winter. How do you get ready for spring and summer?





Denali is the largest member of the International Wolf Center's Exhibit Pack. Many visitors mistakenly assume Denali is the dominant member of the pack due to his size. Denali weighs approximately 138 pounds (63 kilograms) and is taller than his brother Aidan. Despite Denali's larger size, he remains submissive to Aidan in rank order. Denali has a playful nature. He often runs and plays with Boltz and Luna, the yearling members of the Exhibit Pack. ■



International Wolf Center

Denali



## Make-a-Word

How many words can you make from the following terms?

Try making two-, three-, and four-letter words using the letters found in each term below. If that's too easy, see if you can make a five-letter word from each term. Some of these terms have been used in previous issues of *International Wolf*. Can you remember them?

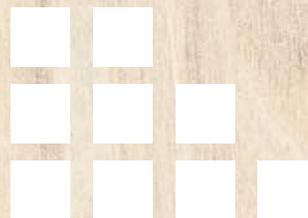
Example: Habitat

a	t			
h	i	t		
t	h	a	t	

Behavior



Carnivore



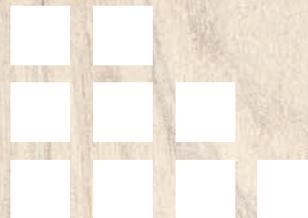
CHALLENGE: FIND A FIVE-LETTER WORD FOR EACH PUZZLE!



Dominance



Predator



CHALLENGE: FIND A FIVE-LETTER WORD FOR EACH PUZZLE!

