

2017 ANNUAL REPORT



**International Wolf Center**



# 2017 OVERVIEW

## OUR 1,000,000TH VISITOR ARRIVED IN 2017!

The year of 2017 set landmarks for the International Wolf Center in more ways than one, but perhaps one month stood out among the others. March was a milestone month for the Center, as Ely staff reported that its 1,000,000th visitor attended the What's for Dinner program on March 25. The community helped celebrate the event on Earth Day in April.

The Center made a \$1.2 million proposal to the LCCMR to fund the design and construction of an innovative wolf Discovery Center to replace its 35-year-old Wolves and Humans exhibit. The Center's Board allocated \$100,000 in matching funds for the grant and sent out requests-for-proposal to museum design studios.

The 2017 temporary exhibit by Heidi Pinkerton featured one-year old wolf pups Axel and Grayson and research by Dave Mech on wild arctic wolves on Ellesmere Island. Heidi also received the year's Who Speaks for Wolf award.

With plans for the event underway, international speakers were invited to participate in the Center's 2018 Wolves in a Changing World symposium set for Oct. 11-14, 2018 at the Minneapolis Marriot Northwest in Minneapolis.

An expanded billboard program funded with a grant from the IRRRB and a match by the Center was partly responsible for an uptick in attendance at the Center.

As educational efforts increased, webinars began featuring prominent wolf biologists, including Rolf Peterson who spoke during Wolf Awareness Week in October on "What Does it Mean to Have Wolves on Isle Royale?"

With grant funds for the Centers Wolves at our Door program due to run out, the Board decided to fund the program through 2018. The successful program has brought wolf education programs to more than 49,000 classroom students from 2014 to Dec. 31, 2017.

With the help of the Center's donors, members and volunteers, board members and staff made innovative strides for the future. In the new year we will look forward to work on an exciting new Discovery Center exhibit and an international symposium. Thank you for your support, which makes possible our essential educational work to support the survival of populations.

*Nancy Jo Subbs*



**ABOVE:**  
Heidi Pinkerton, right, with International Wolf Center co-founder Nancy Gibson. Pinkerton received the Who Speaks For Wolf award.

**RIGHT:**  
Misi Stine delivers a Wolves at Our Door program at Afton State Park in August 2017.



# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

The International Wolf Center has been welcoming visitors to its Ely Interpretive Center since opening in July, 1993. During its first few years, attendance numbers were very high as people came to see the new facility. But by the late 1990's, attendance began to decline. Recent efforts to increase promotion and offer new exhibits each year have had a positive effect on bringing more people to Ely and through the Center's doors. Between 2015-2018, the Center saw 15,790 more visitors than it saw between 2011-2014.

International Wolf Center supporter John Virr was honored in May during the Howl at the Moon Gala with the Leader of the Pack award from the Center. Virr and his late wife, Donna, have supported the Center for many years.

In July, the Center honored Heidi Pinkerton with the "Who Speaks for Wolf" award for her tireless work supporting the Center over the years. "Heidi's passion for wolves, wild places and education was a perfect fit for the Center," executive director Rob Schultz said. "She enthusiastically shares her wildlife experiences through social media, popular photography classes and her travels. You can often find Heidi in front of the wolf window patiently answering the visitors' myriad questions about the wolves, while her eyes are focused on her camera capturing their behavior. She readily promotes all aspects of the Center with her photos, classes, promotions and presentations."

More great news came in the summer of 2017 when the Center learned it had been awarded yet another 4-star rating from Charity Navigator, their highest award.

The Wolves At Our Door presentations continued across Minnesota. More than 15,000 students had presentations in their classrooms about wolves. Educators from the International Wolf Center conducted the presentations, which teach the truth about wolves. The engaging and unbiased programs help students and their families better understand the complicated issues that surround wolves.



# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

## PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 38,974 Visited the organization's Interpretive Center in Ely, Minnesota
- 2,083 Participated in group visits and single- and multi-day programs
- 683 Students participated in live Minnesota WolfLink interactive videoconferences
- 2,682 Students participated in live WolfLink global interactive videoconferences
- 1,722 Students used Wolf discovery kits in their classrooms across the country
- 1,766 Experienced the popular What's for Dinner? program
- 79,269 Fans followed us on Facebook.
- 607,811 Unique visitors reached wolf.org, up from 601,255 in 2016.

WWW.WOLF.ORG

**LEFT:**  
A group of young women play on the wolf sculptures in front of the International Wolf Center in Ely.

**CENTER:**  
Boltz

**RIGHT:**  
A big group took a coach bus to visit during Blueberry/Arts Festival weekend.



# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

## EDUCATION / OUTREACH

- More than 2,680 students experienced a WolfLink virtual field trip with the education team by videoconference in Ely during 2017. These interactive presentations were seen by students in 17 states and 3 countries.
- Wolf Discovery Kits include artifacts and props for tactile learning opportunities and have been used by teachers and more than 1,700 students in 10 states.
- Our weekly What's for Dinner? program helped educate 1,766 people about the hunting and feeding behavior of wolves while these center visitors watched our ambassador wolves and asked our education team questions.
- Through our education and outreach programs, we are able to provide up-to-date science-based information about wolves to audiences all over the world.
- The International Wolf Center outreach program, Wolves at Our Door, continued its third year with funding by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, with more than 635 programs in 2017. The program reached students in grades 2-12 throughout public schools in Minnesota, as well as audiences of all ages at libraries, nature centers and state parks around the state. The Wolves At Our Door program provides science-based information about wolf biology, behavior, pack dynamics, predator/prey relationships, the loss of Minnesota habitat, and the complex issues surrounding wolf management and changes in legal status as they return to more areas of the state. Students are able to examine and study wolf and prey animal artifacts.





# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

## WOLF CARE

As we have experienced in the past, the year following a pup introduction can result in a significant display of behaviors as the pups mature to yearlings, but the year 2017 was a bit more significant than most. The 2017 maturation of pups Axel and Grayson coincided with another wolf care milestone and that was the aging of the pack leader, Aidan.

In the Wolf Care Department's history, we have had three notable pack leaders. MacKenzie retired in 2002, Shadow retired in 2010 and Aidan, psychologically retired in 2017 because of testing by Axel and Boltz. We say psychologically retired because the changing of a pack leader is not a one-time event and Aidan stayed in the pack throughout the year. This was important as he needed to let go of leadership so he could accept a change in packs and calmly renew social relationships in retirement.

So, how does a pack leader psychologically retire? It starts with the systematic testing of yearlings to all pack members. This is how young wolves learn the meaning of the body postures that say "No." Yearlings display behaviors that they learned as pups, including tail pulling, chasing, wrestling, mounting and things that may have been viewed as play behaviors as pups, but as yearlings, now have a bit more tenacity. This isn't a case of wolves being bad, rather it's likely driven by hormonal responses. Higher ranking wolves display behaviors described as ride-ups jaw sparring, grab bites and chin rests, all in an effort to set some boundaries and limitations to the yearlings, teaching them acceptable behavior for the social group. Aidan was the pack leader that adopted Luna and Boltz in 2012 and, as a 6-year old, it was clear Aidan established acceptable boundaries and led the pack during the winter of 2013-2014. Fast forward to the winter of 2017-2018, Aidan was approaching 10, and the testing behaviors of Axel and Grayson affected Aidan's confidence and ultimately resulted in a change to the Exhibit Pack leadership.

**LEFT:**  
A visitor takes a photograph of the 2017 temporary exhibit on Axel and Grayson.

**CENTER:**  
A full house watches the What's For Dinner? program.

**RIGHT:** Lori Schmidt leads a behind-the-scenes tour.



# 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

## MEMBERSHIP / DEVELOPMENT

- The Center achieved a four-star rating with Charity Navigator—the highest rating possible!
- Donors contributed an impressive \$78,000 via Give to the Wolves Day 2017. This one-day fundraising event is our biggest single donation day each year.
- We participated again in the Twin Cities bracket for a fun, online "March Madness" style fundraising tour-nament called Brackets For Good. We made it to the sweet sixteen round and raised \$19,500 for ongoing wolf education efforts.
- We held our 4th Howl at the Moon gala at Midland Hills Country Club in Roseville, Minnesota, with keynote speaker Carter Niemeyer. Over \$42,000 dollars were raised to aid ongoing wolf education work.
- The Center filled a tour bus for an Ely visit during the town's Blueberry Arts Festival in July. A special "Behind the Scenes" tour, wolf videos, trivia, programs and wolf viewing made the one-day trip memorable and fun.





# 2017 BOARD & STAFF

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Tara Morrison, Outreach Director  
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Cassi Camara, Educator

Retail  
Jennifer Riley, Retail Manager  
Jackie Sundeen, Retail Manager

Wolf Care  
Lori Schmidt, Curator  
Donna Prichard, Assistant Curator  
Plus eight seasonal interns and six retail associates

## AWARDS

The International Wolf Center received a four-star rating from Charity Navigator and a Top Rated Nonprofit badge from Great Nonprofits.



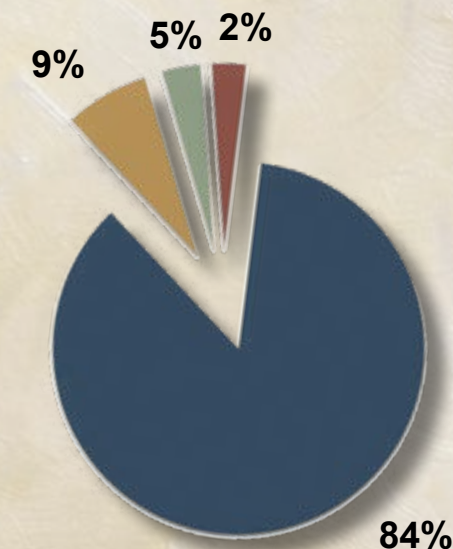
## OUR MISSION:

*The International Wolf Center advances the survival of wolf populations by teaching about wolves, their relationship to wildlands and the human role in their future.*

# 2017 FINANCIALS

A summary statement of financial position as of December 31, 2017, with comparison to 2016.

2017 Expense Distribution:



- Program
- Membership and Development
- Fundraising
- General Administration

Baker Tilly International completed an external audit of the International Wolf Center's 2017 financial statements. A copy of the full audit report is available upon request.

## ASSETS

### CURRENT ASSETS

Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 997,150	\$ 761,770
Certificates of deposit	274,451	274,451
Accounts receivable	4,027	5,277
Grants receivable	47,254	66,881
Inventory	93,208	58,860
Prepaid expenses	33,828	16,497

<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 1,429,918</b>	<b>\$ 1,183,736</b>
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PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT (net)	638,134	641,210
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### OTHER ASSETS

Deferred rent asset	15,757	10,262
Security deposits	3,617	3,617

<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 2,087,426</b>	<b>\$ 1,838,825</b>
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## LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

### CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable	25,855	17,325
Accrued payroll and payroll taxes	43,162	50,191
Accrued retirement contribution	954	2,126
Credit card payable	12,428	12,893
Deferred revenue	11,397	8,432

<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>\$ 93,796</b>	<b>\$ 90,967</b>
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### NET ASSETS

Undesignated	\$ 1,051,005	\$ 1,114,396
Board designated funds	771,978	468,083
Total unrestricted net assets	\$ 1,822,983	1,582,479
Temporarily restricted	170,647	165,379

<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>	<b>1,993,630</b>	<b>1,747,858</b>
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<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>\$2,087,426</b>	<b>\$1,838,825</b>
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# 2017 DONORS

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PHOTO:  
Luna howls  
in the  
retirement  
enclosure  
in July  
2017.



# 2017 DONORS



# 2017 DONORS

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PHOTO:  
The  
International  
Wolf Center  
again had a  
booth at the  
Minnesota  
State Fair.  
In 2017, an  
estimated  
15,000 people  
stopped at the  
booth, which  
is staffed by  
volunteers and  
employees.





# THANK YOU



## INTERPRETIVE CENTER

1396 Highway 169 Ely, MN 55731-8129  
(218) 365-4695 • Fax (218) 365-3318

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE

7100 Northland Circle North, Suite 205  
Minneapolis, MN 55428  
(763) 560-7374 • Fax 763 560-7368

The International Wolf Center  
advances the survival of wolf  
populations by teaching about  
wolves, their relationship to  
wildlands and the human role  
in their future.

*"For the strength of the wolf is the pack and the strength of the pack is the wolf." –Rudyard Kipling*