

# Mission: Wolf returns to Southington

## Organizers seek volunteers to help in getting the word out

By ED HARRIS  
EDITOR

The wolves are returning to Southington as part of the annual Ambassador Wolf Program and organizers are looking for volunteers to help spread the word.

The program is run by Mission: Wolf, a group that travels all over America in the hopes that giving audiences an up-close look at the canines will gradually result in wider awareness and protection efforts.

The group looks to communicate why wolves and wolf-dog crosses do not make suitable pets and how everyone can support wild wolf recovery throughout the country.

Mission: Wolf is a non-profit educational facility and peaceful refuge for about 40 captive born gray wolves and wolf-dog crosses located in the mountains of southern Colorado. The group provides both an on-sight educational facility and a national traveling education program.

This is the fourth time that the program has stopped in Southington during an annual east coast swing.

"I believe there are three things that have allowed Southington to remain on the Mission:Wolf fall tour," said Mission Wolf volunteer Ruth Stanely. "Firstly, it was my Mom, Betty Stanley, whose love for wolves, passion for education, and tenacity over many years got them here in the first place. My family & friends continues to

work with Kent and Tracy, co-founders of Mission:Wolf, in spreading the word about wolves and their plight. Secondly, Southington is centrally located in our state, allowing more people to get the chance to come and hear what Mission:Wolf has to say, and to see live wolves, face to face...Lastly, the biggest draw for Mission:Wolf? They have had a great reception over the past three years, through attendance at the programs, the outpouring of concern for wolves and our environment, and through generous donations made to the cause."

Stanley also added that the two programs done in Southington are the only ones open to the public in the state.

Organizers are looking for volunteers to man a booth at the Apple Harvest Festival, this weekend and next (four hour shifts) and a bake sale will be held at the Southington Petco, with the time and date to be determined. To volunteer contact Stanley, a friend of Mission: Wolf at wolfcentral@yahoo.com.

The group has also established a Facebook page (search for Wolf Central) that will offer updates. The page was created specifically for the visit to Southington.

"We find social media is a great way to get the word out to everyone and to allow us to all share our experiences in one place," Stanley said.

Kent Weber and Tracy Brooks from Mission: Wolf



will present educational programs that offer the public a chance to look into the eyes of a wolf at close range. The information and presentation will focus on the return of wild wolves across the U.S.

Presenters will answer questions and provide educational material regarding the return of wild wolves and captive wolf/ wolf-dog cross ownership.

Midway through the program, live wolves will be brought into the room.

"The goal is to educate the public about the value of wolves to the ecosystem, and to explain the reasons that wolves are not meant to be pets or crossed with dogs," Stanley said. "The ultimate goal of Mission:Wolf is to go out of business because there are no more captive wolves, all wolves are free in the wild."

Mission: Wolf began coming to Southington thanks to the efforts of Betty Stanley. She met the group over a decade ago and invited them to town. The group has added



Southington to its fall schedule ever since.

Betty became a volunteer and has kept an eye on the wolf's plight.

This year's program will take place at Kennedy Middle School, Oct. 20, with two separate shows, at 6 and 8 p.m.

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children. The program is not recommended for children under 4.

Pre-sale tickets will be available at the following locations Oct. 11-18: Southington Vet Association, Darling Street, Lone Oak Farm Kennel, Old Tpke Road, Southington Peto, Queen Street, and Animal House, in Wolcott.

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