

Wildlife
Rehabilitation
Clinic
Nature's Halfway House

Nature's Halfway House Journal

'God's Dog' by Rosilee Trotta

For centuries the Navajo tribe has referred to the coyote as God's dog. Their admiration for this agile, intelligent animal is even greater than for the highly respected wolf. Perhaps the Navajo tribe understands something that many of us do not.

The coyote is a survivor. The species has existed for over 2,000,000 years. It has survived the Ice Age, the Stone Age, famine, predators, and, now, humans. It essentially survives by not being seen. Though curious by nature, the coyote understands that it must not draw attention to itself. It hunts primarily at dusk and at night. The howling coyote so representative of the West is not a factor in Missouri, for the eastern coyote does not howl. It has learned that noise making has dire results.

Coyotes resemble small German Shepherds in appearance. Adults range from 18 to 48 pounds, though they tend toward the smaller weight. Coyote pups are as irresistible as any puppy, making it extremely difficult for caretakers at the clinic not to cuddle them. An iron will is required because coyote pups tame as easily as dogs. And if they become tame, they cannot be released back into the wild. These adaptable creatures are omni-

vores, meaning they eat both animals and plants. Their primary diet is rabbits and rodents but they will eat fruit, berries, insects, frogs, fish and birds. They seem to have a special love for watermelons. Coyote pups first

learn to hunt by stalking grasshoppers and other insects. Like humans, coyotes generally live in families, though some are solo. Both parents care for the young. Their dens are often restructured habitats of other animals, such as fox or woodchucks. They prefer to live in brushy country, along the edge of timber, and in open farmlands.

Coyotes are often blamed unjustly for killing livestock and small domestic animals. Intelligent as they are, coyotes may have difficulty distinguishing the difference between animals owned by humans and those they normally hunt. Responsible ownership will, however, ensure a pet's safety.

Cats or small dogs should always have their person with

them when outdoors. Coyotes are valuable members of the wildlife community who eat rats, mice, and insects. They kill old, sick or injured animals and act as scavengers to clean up woods and fields. They are crucial to balance in the ecosystem. And they have an owner that I, personally, do not want to irritate!



Pat yourselves on the back...

I recently saw a rendition of "Man of La Mancha" and it reminded me of our purpose at Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic. Not that we are constantly thrusting at windmills like Don Quixote but that we have a vision that keeps us motivated and moving in the right direction.

Since we opened our doors at our new location in June of 1998 we have cared for more than 400 injured and orphaned animals. Some were found along roadways, some in forests, and some, perhaps, in your own backyards. Nearly ninety percent have been returned to their natural habitat. Pat yourselves on the back! You are responsible for their recovery.

For without you, our dedicated volunteer staff would not have the medical supplies to treat the injuries. Without you, we could not buy the hundreds of pounds of puppy chow, fruits, vegetables and nuts needed to nourish weak and damaged bodies. Without you, we could not even pay our rent or utility bills.

Wildlife Re-not-for-profit tell you that we trouble main- we have a vi- will be able to salary (she only a day, 7 days a small!) We time secretary of paper work. some of our We'd even like luncheon for our terrific volunteers who spend endless hours caring for our little charges.



Right now, though, every cent we get goes to the animals. They will always be the first and most important recipients. That's how it should be. But we have a vision. One that will enable us to serve even more animals. It does not involve windmills. It's not an "impossible dream". Your help is making it happen!

Rosilee Trotta, Chairperson, WRC

"We should be teaching our children the value of living things and our effect on the ecology. Children taught to care for pets and to respect nature mature in life with a healthy respect for all living things."

Bobbi Baker, Director, WRC

Between You , Me And A Horsefly

Personally - As a raccoon I'd rather live in the deep woods. Fresh water, nuts and berries to my delight; occasional meat is a highlight. To cope in the city and the 'burbs, fruit trees, trash cans and dumpsters I do disturb. Trees to climb and make a nest are few and far between at best. Attics, fireplaces to name a few make do to raise my family, one or two.



Personally - As a fox I'd rather live in the deep woods. Fresh water, nuts berries and fresh meats that Mother Nature can no longer keep. To cope in the city and 'burbs, rats, mice and rabbits I do prefer. Fruit trees in landscaped yards also yield great rewards. Rocky crevasses and earthen dens is where I prefer to have my twins. I've adjusted to raise my kits under porches or just about any old niche. To raise my family under your gaze makes me look at you, I too am amazed!



Personally - As an opossum I love the deep woods. Fresh water, clean air, wild berries, the nuts and almost anything will fair. Living with and through the dinosaur age, man has proved to be the most difficult stage. My stomach has adjusted to amazing skills so don't look so disgusted when your trash can has been busted. My family lives in my pouch so housing needs are not much. A brush pile or two is much preferred over the new sites I've had to conquer.

Personally - As a rabbit I'd rather live in the city and 'burbs. I love your grasses, flowers, garden and trees. Your sprinklers provide water I need. My most some predators you run out but dogs and must look out. Who else can nest so near with Man, pets and machines always here? Low man on the animal chain of life I reproduce day and night. Mankind has not conquered Nature. Nature has not conquered Man. There is a reason for co-existence.



all the fear- have cats I but me

Toni Nelson, Manager, WRC

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Robert Nelson, our 'resident' weather man for compiling and relaying info to coordinate our releases.

Claire for allowing us to set up our canister at their 7-11 Store on Valley Park Road and Smyr Road. We got at least \$100.00 in donations. Thanks a bunch!

Brian Reiter, DVM of the Bentley Animal Hospital, 1823 Smizer Station Road 225-4545 (shown on the cover).

Steve Flanders @ Kwik Kopy Printing 343-6231 for donating all those handouts, brochures, etc.

Two of my favorite people and friends for almost 20 years, Mike and Mary Mahen. Mary was my original teacher at the old Wildlife Rescue in Kirkwood. She has always been there for me when I need advice or help with some little creatures. And what times we had doing rescues! Mike owns Wildlife Removal Service.

Grant's Farm for hosting us and our information booth in their Tier Garten. Pictured, Tricia, Jenny Joyce, Animal Supervisor, and Jen. 500,000 visitors a year and they still made time for us. Thanks!



Beverly Steveson for her coyote photo (front page).
- By Bobbi Baker.



"I was a typical volunteer." Before working at Wildlife Rehab, my experience with wildlife came to an occasional walk in the country. One evening my husband wanted to drop off some release site paperwork at WRC and he insisted I come along. The clinic amazed me with the variety of animals: raccoon, rabbits (I call them cottontails now), squirrels, a beaver, fox, possum. I had never been so close to so many wild animals. Most incredible were

the raccoons. Their intelligence can seem human. The foxes were majestic. The Clinic needed volunteers and I started on a shift. Months later, I have learned so much about behavior and feeding habits of these animals. But I have not gotten used to how strange and almost magical it is to work with them. They live in a world separate from ours. After working with them for a while, you can see into it and sometimes it is almost like they allow you into theirs. The people here dedicate their lives to these animals, especially Bobbi Baker, who cares about people as deeply as the animals. You might find her when she is not feeding babies every four hours around the clock. Wildlife Rehab offers more than great care for the animals. They provide a service to the community and the area. There are sad times here too and not every animal gets released but WRC is way above the national average. Try a shift and see for your self. - Ann Harrison, WRC Volunteer

WHAT IT COSTS

	Average cost per month in \$	Length of Stay in months
Raccoon	35	4
Opossum	20	4
Fox	30	5
Mink	25	2
Squirrel	18	2.5

THE KIDS PAGE

with thanks to Dannica Fetters



TRUE/FALSE The possum is a cousin of the kangaroo (and its only one in Missouri). They are both Marsupial family members.



TRUE/FALSE A turtle is really a tortoise if it lives on land and its feet aren't webbed no matter what size it is.



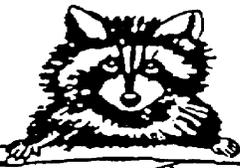
TRUE/FALSE The octopus and the skunk both try to scare their enemies away by spraying something.



TRUE/FALSE Red foxes won't cross water but gray foxes swim.



TRUE/FALSE Armadilloes live in Missouri even though there is no desert here.



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Wildlife Rehab Clinic 900 Gregory Lane 63026



Address Correction Requested



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