

April 2007



Dear Everybody,

Incredible! **Hammer Simwinga**, our protégé, who for the past decade has developed the village work that we established in Zambia, has won the **Goldman Environmental Prize**, one of the most prestigious awards in the world. Only one person is chosen from each continent, and Hammer has won for Africa! The *National Geographic Society* honored Hammer in 2005, and now the

Goldmans are as well. This is a great compliment to Hammer and our continuing work with him. This month Hammer and his wife Queen fly to London, San Francisco and Washington DC for ceremonies and media events. *PBS* and *Sundance Channel* will be airing a documentary on the six Goldman winners – including Hammer – throughout the coming year (schedule not yet available) entitled *Global Focus III, The New Environmentalists*. For more info, visit www.goldmanprize.org.

And there is more! Hammer and his organization have also been honored with an Associate Award from UK based **Whitley Fund for Nature** who strive to 'source and fund dynamic conservation leaders' in work that is practical, based on science and that offers a long lasting impact that benefits both human and wildlife populations: www.whitleyfund.org.

The real winners are the wildlife communities that are saved by including them as a vital dynamic of their ecosystems - a renewable resource that must be protected along side human communities - so that one can benefit the other. Bemba Chiefs Kopa and Mpumba get it -

asking the Owens Foundation to expand our North Luangwa model into their areas, which include the vast *Bangweulu Swamps* and neighboring *Lavushi Manda National Park* in north central Zambia.

To accomplish these critical goals we need additional funding. Hammer has already expanded our original work from 14 villages to 65 so that thousands more villagers and wild animals now have better lives but there are so many more than need help. Elephant poaching is on the rise again in some areas, but the elephants in North Luangwa are still safe. We are thankful to all of you for the support that made this possible and for your continued support, and we are very grateful to the Goldmans and the Whitley Fund for Nature for awarding these prestigious prizes to Hammer and his 'team'.

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Half a world away, in North America, I was splitting kindling for a campfire in the wilderness when I heard a train whistling from a distant track. I listened again with my hands cupped to my ears and the faint howl of wolves sounded from far away. Suddenly, two other wolves answered from very nearby, their sonorous sonata soaring across the valley, as if coming from the heart of the mountain itself,

wrapping us in a velvet cloak of wild-sound. These wolves chorused for almost half an hour, and we were at once grateful to them for singing and relieved that there are enough left in the area to do so. But I also found myself whispering under my breath: "Sssshhhh! That's enough! Do you want the whole world to know you're here?" One of the last packs that sang was shot for ... merely being a wolf. And as the US Fish and Wildlife service is about to down-list the Western Gray Wolf to a lesser protected species, Idaho's Governor Otter



is already planning hunting and "control" programs to reduce the state's wolf population from about 750 to 150. There really are no words to describe the muddle of emotions that surfaced in us as we listened. How can one feel grateful, elated, sad, angry, and frightened for the wolves all at once? A wolf will have to sing for you before you can fully understand - and no one should live and die without hearing this at least once. It truly is "The Call of The Wild." A few minutes after they quit calling we saw a black male wolf and a gray-tan female saunter out onto the meadow. They spent the next thirty minutes diving into the snow for mice, and casually looking around, before heading off into the woods. Our hearts followed.



Back at home a few nights later the phone rang at 8:30 PM. Greg Johnson of Idaho Fish & Game asked: "Hey, you want a moose, dead or alive?" For the past two weeks a full-grown Bull Moose with a bad wound in his belly had been wandering around near the center of Sandpoint munching on people's gardens and sleeping on their lawns, often not ten feet from their doors. Fish & Game received so many calls about the moose from local citizens that they decided to immobilize him and move him out of town. So, "Heck, yes. Bring him home." I said. "If he makes it we'll add him to the Thunder Mountain herd." Because of the wound, the stress from being darted could push the moose over the edge.

At 11:00 PM Greg rolled into our driveway with the moose still groggy and lying on his side in the horse trailer (Moosbulance - argh!). We covered him with blankets, unhooked the trailer from the truck, and then as Greg headed home to bed he warned, "When you let him out tomorrow morning he might just start munching your garden." I chuckled, "He and everybody else!" referring to the deer that regularly feed just outside our doors, often watching us through our windows. "What a privilege."

The next morning "Paloose the Moose" was standing in the trailer when Delia and I crept close. I took pictures, and then opened the rear door of the trailer. After a brief look at us, he sauntered into our yard where he stood until his hangover dissipated. The next day on snowshoes I tracked him for more than a mile through the Cedar Marsh and into the wilds of our Thunder Mountain Wildlife Reserve.



Not long ago we watched as two wolves, a male and female, drifted in the fog along a Creek, disappearing and reappearing like a morning mist along the mountain's face, just at the edge of being there, or not - a reflection of their state of being on Earth, and that of too many other species. What can we do? For starters, inform ourselves - especially on the issue of global warming which together with human overpopulation are the most profound threats facing people and wildlife. Contact your Congressmen (see below) and share your views. Also, contact the US Fish and Wildlife Service at NRMGraywolf@fws.gov - **before May 9th** - to comment on "down-listing" wolves that will allow more to be "managed" by killing them. And, last and certainly not least - we must wisely use our right to vote. Make your voice heard. It is powerful.

After three decades of *Endangered Species Act* protection, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has announced it is removing the Yellowstone grizzly bear population from its status as "threatened" on the U.S. list of threatened and endangered species. This move is incredibly premature. There are only five remnant populations of grizzlies left in the lower 48 and they are not stable even with the current level of protection. Please express your support for continued protection of grizzly bears to your representatives.

WRITE - The Office of the Clerk of the US House of Representatives/US Capitol -- Room H154 · Washington, DC 20515 – PH: 202-225-7000 --- or ---
EMAIL for info www.clerkweb.houses.gov or email directly through the following link:
www.house.gov/writerep

SURVIVOR UPDATE:

Many of you will remember our old friend, *Survivor* – the elephant with a hole in his right ear – the first elephant to come into our camp in North Luangwa after a decade of intense poaching. He became a symbol of our struggle to save the entire elephant population of North Luangwa – by helping the local people. We thought you would enjoy an update on this amazing creature. He continues to live free in North Park, coming to Marula Puku Research Camp and making himself at 'home'. Here is a recent photograph shared with us by Lucille Labuscagne. *Survivor* is becoming quite the Bull elephant. Thank you for giving him a chance and for continuing to help protect him.



Delia and I are on the verge of securing two more key wildlife habitat properties in the Northwest. Without quality habitat, wolves and grizzlies cannot survive. Thanks to those very special people who have helped with this. It is a time consuming, tedious process but so very worth it in the end.

None of these stories of wolves, moose, grizzlies and elephants would be possible without your help. We know you receive countless requests for support – **but we need you now more than ever**. Thank you for whatever you can do. We vow to make your donations make a difference now and in the future.

As for me, after my horse riding accident in the mountains last August, I am stronger and straighter daily. It has been a long, painful "winter of discontent" with many setbacks. But I have begun working Montana, my kinder-gentler horse, in the coral getting him ready for me in my saddle – by the time the snow is out of the High Country. I can't thank enough all of you who have sent me your kind expressions of support. You made it possible for me to square my shoulders at the world today.

Here's hoping you have a howl of a good day!

Cheers,

Mark and Delia

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HOW TO HELP

SUPPORT A CONTINUED BAN ON TRADE IN IVORY: The United Nation's *Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species* (CITES) meets again this June to vote on whether to allow the sale of ivory. Elephants continue to die in large numbers for the sake or ornamentation. Please contact the *US Fish and Wildlife Service* or your home country CITES representative, and the CITES Secretariat and ask for a complete ban on the trade in ivory. Without a market, poachers will not be encouraged to kill elephants. Even the **hope** of a market spurs expanded poaching. This complete ban is critically important to the survival of elephants in the wild in Africa and Asia. Your advocacy is important.

CONTACT:

- **CITES Secretariat:** 15, Chemin des Anemones -- Case Postale 456, CH-1219 -- Chatelaine – Geneva, Switzerland. PHONE: 4122-979-9139-40, FAX: 4122-797-3417, EMAIL: cites@unep.ch
- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** -- 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 432 -- Arlington, Virginia 22203

Touch the future by including the Owens Foundation in your Estate Planning.

- **Will, Living Trust or other plan:** Name the OFWC as a recipient of a fixed amount or a % of your estate.
- **Annuity or Life Insurance Policy:** Designated OFWC
- **Retirement Plans:** Designate OFWC as a beneficiary of all or a percent of your Retirement Plan.

Some companies match employee & retiree donations to 501(c (3) nonprofits such as the Owens Foundation. Multiply your giving and empower conservation.

Let us know of anyone who shares our love of people, wild places and wildlife. We never share our database with anyone.

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