

Alpha Female leads pack in Wolf Ramble

□ She has the highest tail in the pack—a mark of her distinction

CHRISTINA HOLDER
Editor in Chief

In Chicago, they painted cows. In Kentucky, they took paintbrushes to horses. In Raleigh, they favor the wolves.

Over 100 fiberglass wolves will eventually be placed around Raleigh as part of the Raleigh Red Wolf Ramble, a fundraiser sponsored by the City of Raleigh Arts Commission to raise money for community charities and support for the public arts.

The red wolf (*Canis rufus*) was chosen for its roots to the North Carolina area.

"A lot of people think it [the wolf] is about NC State," said Lisa Pearce who helped to design the wolf for the Meredith campus. "The red wolf happens to be on the extinct list and is indigenous to our area."

The red wolf sculpture in mid-howl outside the main gate guard house on campus, is evidence that Meredith College wants in, too.

Dr. Allen Page, head of the religion department, contacted the art department with the idea of purchasing a wolf. The art department took the idea to President Maureen Hartford who used \$1,000 from a discretionary fund she receives through the Jesse Ball duPont Foundation to purchase the wolf.

For \$1,000, a sponsor could purchase an undecorated wolf. The sponsor then had to recruit a team of artists who could spend up to \$1,000 dollars on supplies, which would be reimbursed by the sponsor.

The remaining \$1,000 for the Meredith wolf was donated by the art department, according to Hartford.

Assistant professor of art Lisa Pearce, adjunct instructor Mary Ann Scherr and senior Laura Avery collaborated on the project and sculpted the wolf in only one week.

Pearce said that when she first received the wolf it "looked like a fiberglass pig" because it did not have any of the defining features of a wolf.

However, Pearce used plasters to give the Meredith wolf more canine features.

"It didn't look aggressive enough," she said.

So Pearce took a set of plastic Dracula teeth that Scherr had brought into the studio as a possible prop for the wolf and glued the teeth individually into the wolf's mouth.

Pearce, Scherr and Avery each had different ideas for how the wolf should look in its final form.

Pearce's original idea was to "have the whole thing in mosaic," with the wolf's body covered in tiny colored tiles.

Another idea was to cut a hole in the belly of the wolf and replace the opening with a light and a cutout covering of the cursive Meredith *M*—seen on the back gates of the campus—so that at night "you

would see the *M* illuminating on the ground," said Pearce.

The women also tossed around ideas of making the wolf in all-gold and giving her high-heeled footwear. They also debated whether she should be whimsical or more serious and what she should represent at her core.

Finally the three women decided on the design: The

day after the two other women left the studio.

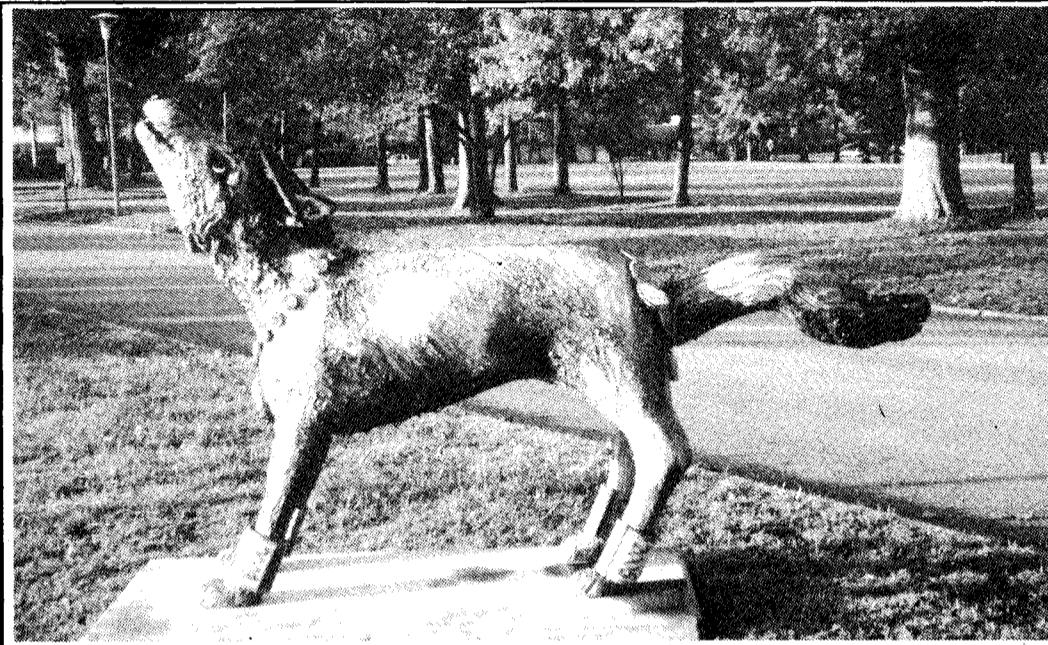
"Atomically, I knew I wanted the tail up," said Pearce. "I wanted ours to be different."

With a closer look at the Alpha Female, a viewer will notice the intricate detail.

Scherr designed a medallion which hangs from the Alpha Female's neck—a replica of the medallion the College present-

the three women wanted to place her closer to Hillsborough Street so people driving by could see the finished product.

However, many of the wolves around Raleigh, which have been on display since September, have already been vandalized, giving the group reason to push for a spot in front of the guard house.



The Alpha Female, positioned in mid-howl in front of the main entrance guard house, is possible prop special among the wolf species. Her tail is the highest, marking her rank.

STAFF PHOTO BY CHRISTINA HOLDER

Wolves around Raleigh are placed by artists weekly. Sponsors can purchase an individual wolf or a "den," which includes a group of four or more wolves.

The wolves will be on display through New Year's Eve 2001. Afterward they will be auctioned off.

Of the proceeds from the auction, half goes to a non-profit organization of the sponsor's choice and half goes to a fund for a

Raleigh public art project in the future.

In the past, art projects similar to the Red Wolf Ramble have grossed millions of dollars as it did in Chicago, where the event raised \$3.5 million recruiting artists to design cows.

Meredith wolf was going to be an Alpha Female.

Alpha Females have their "tails the highest," according to Pearce. "It shows their ranking."

However, the height of the tail of Meredith's Alpha Female came as a "happy accident" according to Pearce who said the three women had not planned on making the tail higher at first.

Pearce later thought of the idea and sawed the tail off with a reciprocating knife and repositioned it in a higher place one

ed to Hartford when she became President in 1999.

Avery worked on the purple cuffs curling around the ankles of the Alpha Female. On each of the four cuffs are the years of the classes represented at Meredith, one class for each cuff.

The women also used plaster of varying colors to add textured fur to the body of the wolf, an act they found symbolic since a palette of colors often represents diversity.

Pearce said that once the Alpha Female was complete,

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Honor Council may assign sanctions for academic dishonesty, the Honor Council does not decide whether or not a student passes or fails the course.

The professor makes that decision.

Rawl reminds students that if they are aware of some honor

code violation, they are obligated to report the violation.

"I want to remind people that they should have the utmost respect for the honor code. These rules are for the benefit of the community," she said.

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