

APPENDIX

APPENDIX I: Biography

Jean Craighead George was born in a family of naturalists. Her father, mother, brothers, aunts and uncles were students of nature. On weekends they camped in the woods near their Washington, D.C. home, climbed trees to study owls, gathered edible plants and made fish hooks from twigs. Her first pet was a turkey vulture. In third grade she began writing and hasn't stopped yet. She has written over 100 books.

Her book, *Julie of the Wolves* won the prestigious Newbery Medal, the American Julie of the Wolves Library Association's award for the most distinguished contribution to literature for children, 1973. *My Side of the Mountain*, the story of a boy and a falcon surviving on a mountain together, was a 1960 Newbery Honor Book. She received 20 other awards.

She attended Penn State University graduating with a degree in Science and Literature. In the 1940s she was a reporter for The Washington Post and a member of the White House Press Corps. After her children were born she returned to her love of nature and brought owls, robins, mink, sea gulls, tarantulas - 173 wild animals into their home and backyard. These became characters in her books and, although always free to go, they would stay with the family until the sun changed their behavior and they migrated or went off to seek partners of their own kind.

When her children, Twig, Craig and Luke, were old enough to carry their own backpacks, they all went to the animals. They climbed mountains, canoed rivers, hiked deserts. Her children

learned about nature and Jean came home and to write books. Craig and Luke are now environmental scientists and Twig writes children's books, too.

One summer Jean learned that the wolves were friendly, lived in a well-run society and communicated with each other in wolf talk -- sound, sight, posture, scent and coloration. Excited to learn more, she took Luke and went to the Naval Arctic Research Laboratory in Barrow, Alaska, where scientists were studying this remarkable animal. She even talked to the wolves in their own language. With that, *Julie of the Wolves* was born. A little girl walking on the vast lonesome tundra outside Barrow, and a magnificent alpha male wolf, leader of a pack in Denali National Park were the inspiration for the characters in the book. Years later, after many requests from her readers, she wrote the sequels, *Julie and Julie's Wolf Pack*.

She continued to travel and return home to write. In the last decade, she added two beautiful new dimensions to her words beautiful full-color picture book art by Wendell Minor and others and music. Jean collaborated with award-winning composer, Chris Kubie to bring the sounds of nature to her words.

APPENDIX II: Synopsis

Twelve-year-old Sam Gribley is tired of city life. Determined to succeed at surviving on his own in the Catskill Mountains, Sam takes forty dollars he's earned selling magazine subscriptions along with a few other odds and ends and announces to his Dad that he's leaving New York City to run away and live in the woods.

Sam's dad indulges what he sees as a passing youthful impulse and recalls his own failed boyhood attempt to run to the sea. Mr. Gribley tells his son, "Sure, go try it. Every boy should try it." And with those words Sam is off and running.

The adventure begins with Sam's search for the Gibley land that was abandoned by his great grandfather. Determined to prove that Gibleys can live off the land, Sam must first overcome his fears of being alone with the night. Through trial and error the young boy learns about the natural world around him and keeps daily detailed notes on the successes and failures of the day, from attempting to create a fire to experimenting with a variety of plants and roots that will add flavor to his simple meals.

To learn more about his environment, Sam begins to pay attention to all the movement around him. One spring day he decides to track a mother falcon and comes upon her nest. Making a quick decision, Sam scoops out one baby bird and manages to safely carry it back to his tree.

Thus begins a loyal companionship between a boy and the faithful bird he names "Frightful." Adding Frightful to his collection of animal companions, Sam discovers he doesn't have time to feel lonely.

As the months and seasons pass, Sam finds he is capable of surviving alone in the mountains. He learns to make the tools he needs to fish and hunt; he builds a home in a tree and makes a bed from ash slats and deer hide; he learns to watch the animals and birds for signs of changes in weather patterns and learns which plants are safe to eat. As he learns these valuable skills, Sam becomes more confident in his ability to live off the land and prove to his parents that he is capable of taking care of himself.

For a while Sam can hide away from the life he knew in New York City and enjoy the peace and tranquility of nature, but his few encounters with other humans meandering in the woods threaten to take back his hard earned solitude.

Despite Sam's desire to escape the city, he can't stop civilization from finding ways to sneak into the quiet and independent life he's made for himself on his side of the mountain. After encountering an elderly woman picking berries, a lost hiker and a meditating musician, Sam discovers he is the center of a major media report about the wild boy living in the mountains. He also learns that after a year of surviving on his own in the woods, he still craves human interaction and misses his family.

So what happens to Sam? Does he continue to survive in the woods on his own? Does he return to city life in order to be with the family he's starting to desperately miss? To Sam's

astonishment, his parents make a life-altering decision to follow Sam into the woods, reclaim the Gribley land and embark on a new and simplified life together as a family