



Gananda Times

"Serving the Towns of Macedon and Walworth"

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COYOTE IN WAYNE COUNTY?

The animal of lonesome western folklore has arrived in Wayne County . . . to stay!

Last Monday morning on my way down Route 31, an accident ahead caught my attention. According to Macedon police chief, **John Ellis**, the accident was the indirect result of a coyote.

It seems this hapless coyote happened, by some reports, to have been chasing a deer across Route 31 near the Mobil Chemical complex just west of the Village of Macedon. WHAM! Deer makes the crossing and coyote buys the farm. This incident, in itself, was not the cause of the auto accident. Sometime after the demise of the coyote, curious passers-by would stop and gawk at the strange remains of the dog-like creature. One onlooker would even use the occasion for a photo opportunity. Rubber-neckers and slow moving motorists precipitated an accident that resulted in one woman (who did not slow up) from ramming the back of a Cadillac and losing several front teeth.

Talk of "coy-dogs" and coyotes filled corners of Macedon and parts of Wayne County. Yes, some people had heard rumors of the animals and a few people claimed to have heard their nightly howls in the distance. Even fewer claimed to have actually caught glimpses of the elusive animal. In Wayne County? In Macedon and Walworth? Surely this must be a fluke of nature . . . an isolated incident at best. Tales of coy-dog/coyotes abounded. My fascination grew and my curiosity peaked. After hours of phone interviews and detailed research, I found that the Eastern Coyote, is quite common in Wayne County and definitely a part of our invisible everyday life.

The term "coy-dog" refers to the inter-breeding of coyotes and dogs. **John Hauber**, a biologist with the Department of Environmental Conservation, said that this term is probably a misnomer; one that people have fashioned. "I would say that this type of breeding would be extremely rare." **Robert Cooper**, associate curator of zoology at the Rochester Museum and Science Center,

agrees. Cooper says that biologically this would be indeed the exception. Many people see dog packs or wild dogs and immediately apply the blame to the coyote.

In fact, the coyote population in Wayne County, as in other parts of the state, has probably reached a saturation point. According to Cooper, one of the reasons the coyote proliferated and spread so quickly throughout New York State, is their 'adaptability' to the environment. "The coyote out of the west coast has in some cases even infiltrated suburbs and cities, rummaging through garbage cans," said Cooper. "Because of the terrain we have of wood lots and fields, it is possible for the coyote to find a lot of natural foods such as fox, mice, grapes, small rodents, rabbits and woodchucks," he added.

John Hauber concurs that the diet of the eastern coyote will range from grass to goose. "The coyote is a more opportunist animal preferring to feed on road-kills and rodents and the occasional domestic cat. Asked about their effect on local livestock, Hauber did not feel they had a major effect. According to a 1989 article in "National Wildlife" entitled *A Yankee Coat Fits the Coyote Well*, by **Richard and Joyce Wolkomir**, Vermont biologist **David Person** was quoted as saying: "If coyotes aren't killing your sheep, they're your best friends." Coyotes that stake out a farm as their territory, he says, will vigilantly drive away other coyotes, including livestock killers.

Both Cooper and Hauber agree that the eastern coyote is instinctively a solitary animal and quite leary of man.

Though local farmers and hunters have professed to seeing coyotes for a brief moment, it is usually only the tail end.

Coyotes are natural migrators and are routinely dispersing to stake out new territory. They normally mate for life. An article by **Johnathon Fisher** in "National Wildlife", entitled *The Plains Dog Moves East*, said that 'partly

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The elusive Eastern Coyote often heard but rarely seen is actually quite common in Wayne County.

Gananda Playground Committee Unveils Model, Kicks Off Fundraiser

The Gananda Playground Committee kicked off what they hope will be their most successful fundraiser to date. Food and gift selections from the Henco Fund Raising Company will be sold by school children throughout the area. No money will be collected until the products are delivered, and all the items are of the highest quality with a money back guarantee. **Joanne Wilkins** and **Bobbie Camp**, co-chairpersons of the fundraiser are hoping to raise \$10,000 from the catalog drive.

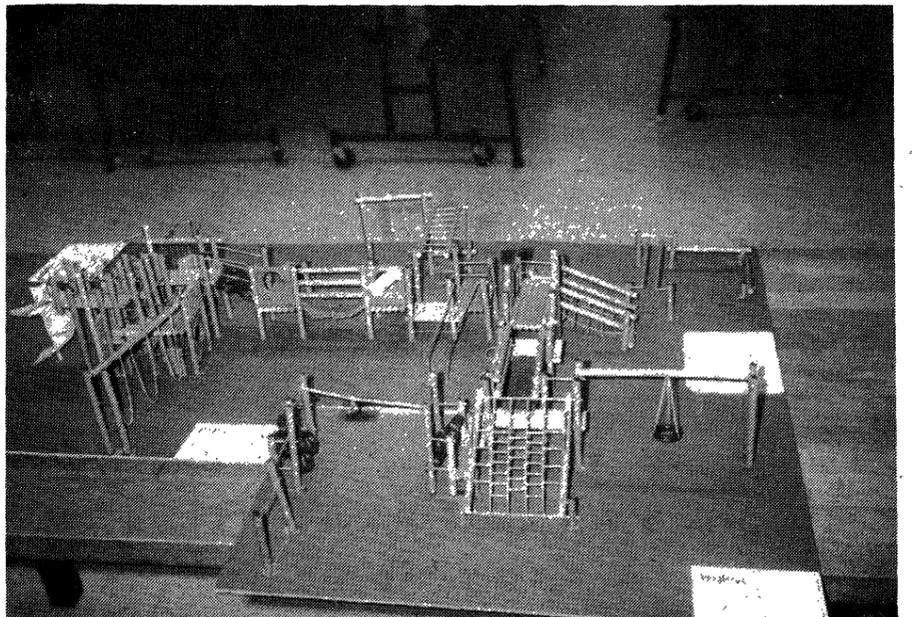
In addition to the funds raised for the playground committee, children can earn prizes based on the number of items sold and delivered.

The initial plans for the new playground were revealed this week for the children to observe. The project, with a total cost of \$50,000, will be funded by \$35,000 of state grant money in addition to local funds being raised by the playground committee. The Richard Mann School will be the location of the

handicapped-accessible playground. The architect will select a suitable placement at the school for the project. The playground itself, will be supplied by "Big Toys®", a leading manufacturer of community playgrounds, and will be done in two sections — one for the younger children and one for older children.

"**Jeff Olson**, president of Big Toys, has done a superb job of incorporating everything we need, including handicap-accessible participation," said **Bobbie Camp**. "We're anticipating that all fundraising will be completed by no later than June 1, 1990. Presently the playground committee has raised \$6,000 for the project," added **Bobbie**. The playground material carries a 12 year guarantee and will be installed by members of the community. "We'll need 50 volunteers to build the playground when the material arrives," said **Camp**.

The playground will hopefully be completely by mid summer of next year.



Shown above is a model of the proposed Gananda Neighborhood Playground which should be built sometime next year by community members with supplies from Big Toys, a leading manufacturer of playground equipment.

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P.O. Box 406
Walworth, New York 14568