



Wolf Trap Animal Rescue Internship

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Wolf Trap Animal Rescue- 8300 Merrifield Ave
Fairfax, VA 22031



Introduction

Wolf Trap Animal Rescue is one of the few veterinarian-led animal rescues and began operation in 2015 under the supervision of Dr. Amber Burton. Having access to immediate health care in a veterinary-led animal rescue is especially advantageous in the event of animals becoming sick with viruses such as parvovirus. The organization's primary focus is to rescue puppies and kittens from Mississippi that would otherwise be euthanized in the shelter due to overpopulation. The puppies and kittens go into foster care for three weeks, and during this time, they quarantine to ensure their health and begin socializing and training with foster families. Prior to adoption, the animals get spayed or neutered to prevent the possibility of any future litters that would ultimately contribute to the overpopulation problem.

I volunteered 15-20 hours each week from June 13th to August 25th. During my internship, I participated in the following activities:

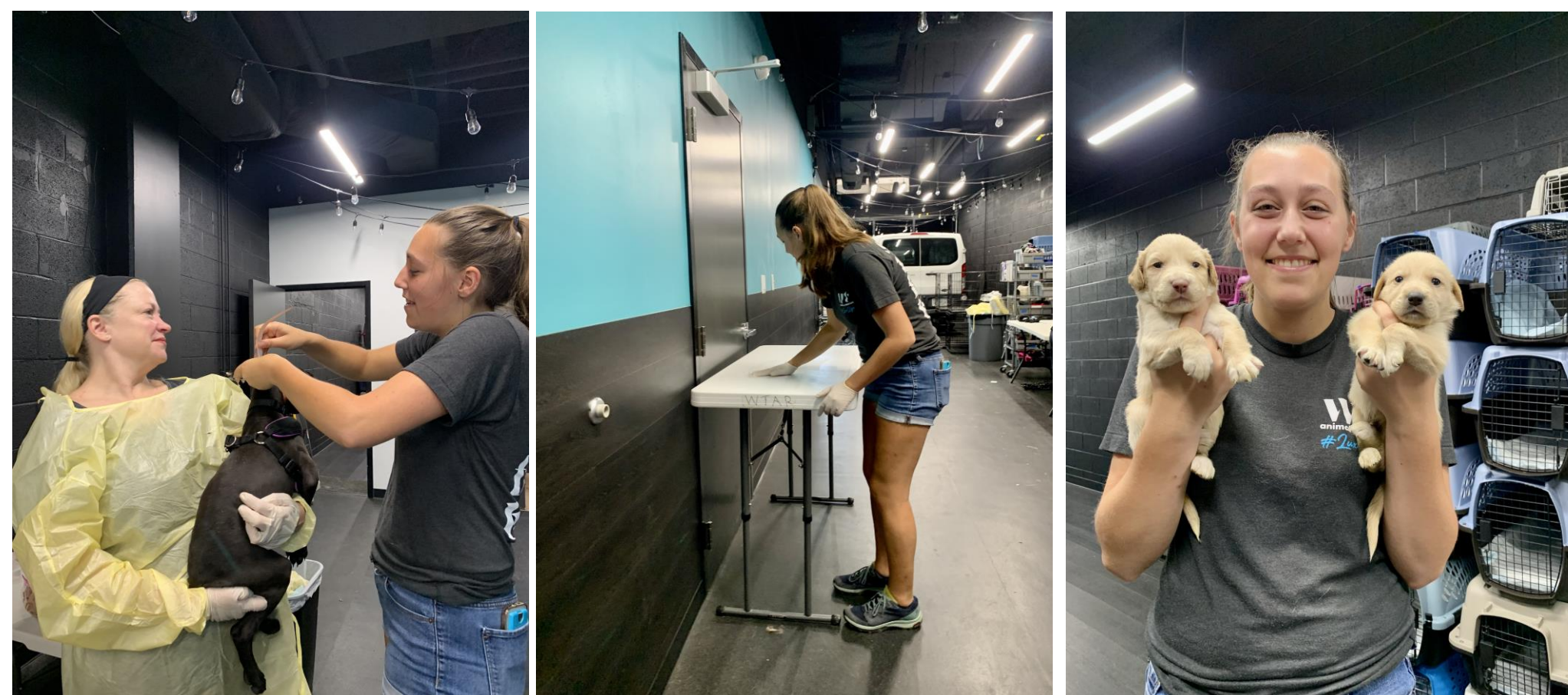
- Intake
- Spay and neuter surgery days
- Adoption events
- Puppy therapy events

Intake

Every week to every two weeks, 30-50 puppies and kittens arrive at the rescue facility from Mississippi. Before entering foster care, they get fitted for a collar and harness, receive preventatives, get their nails trimmed, get parvo-tested, get up-to-date on vaccines, and get checked by the veterinarian.

My tasks included:

- Giving each puppy Heartgard and Nexgard
- Taking photos for each puppy and kitten profile
- Collecting fecal samples
- Trimming nails
- Fitting harnesses and collars
- Putting name tags on animals and preparing travel crates
- Making sure that volunteers were following protocols
- Disinfecting dirty crates and tables
- Vacuuming



Putting name tag on

Disinfecting table

Two puppies who arrived on transport



Litter of puppies arriving on the transport van



Puppy profile picture

Spay and Neuter Surgery Days

All animals will get spayed or neutered prior to being adopted. During the second week of the foster period, they are dropped off at the facility early in the morning and are picked up by their foster a couple of hours later. Additionally, there are public surgery days where anybody can have their pet spayed or neutered at a low cost.

My tasks included:

- Getting weights
- Restraining during the injection of telazol
- Preparing the surgical site
- Holding the oxygen mask and monitoring breathing
- Disinfecting the surgical instruments and preparing surgical packs
- Performing a post physical exam and entering information into the computer
- Trimming nails
- Collecting fecal samples
- Vacuuming



Restraining



Clipping nails after surgery



Disinfecting surgical instruments

Adoption Events

Fosters and pre-approved adopters meet at PetSmart where the adopters will complete a contract, and the pet receives their last veterinary check-up with the rescue. Supplies are returned by the fosters and cleaned before being loaded up on the van to go back to the facility.

My tasks included:

- Preparing PetSmart contracts on iPads for adopters to fill out
- Answering questions
- Cleaning returned crates and organizing supplies
- Directing adopters and fosters that are in line



Family adopting a puppy



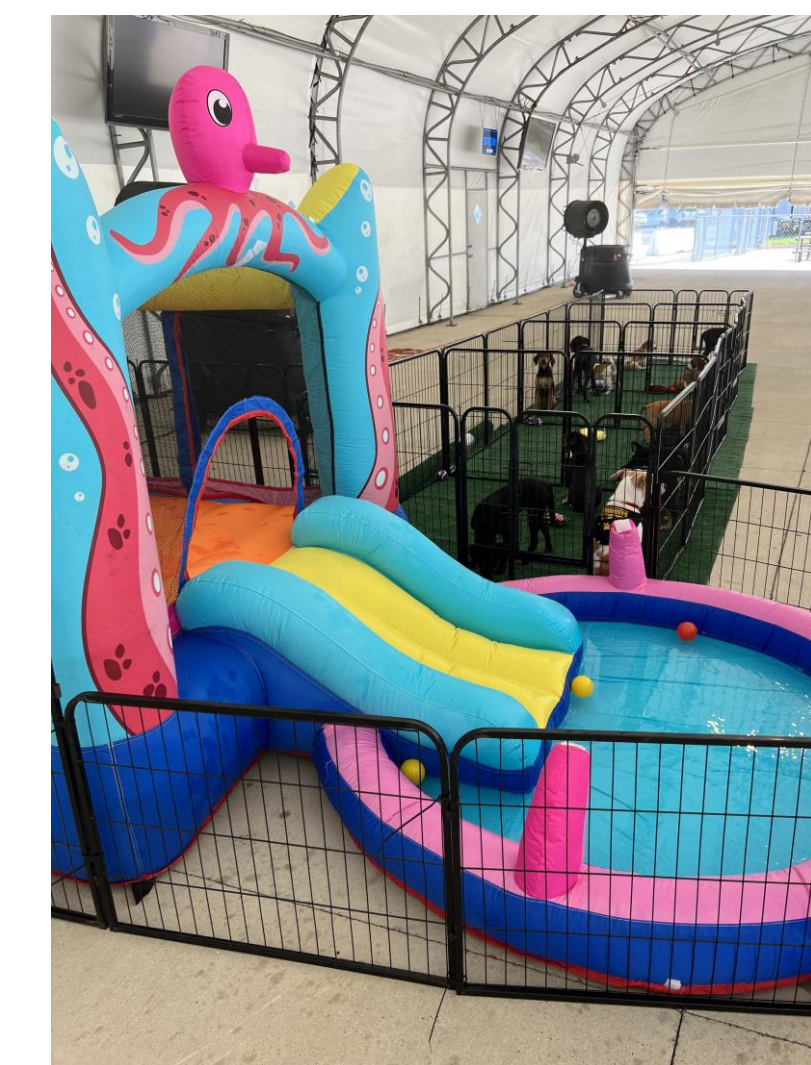
Donated puppy smoothie bowls from a local juice bar

Puppy Therapy Events

Many businesses have recently been using puppy therapy as an incentive to get their workers to attend in person. It is usually a two-hour event that can range anywhere from five puppies to as many as fifteen depending on the size of the event. It's a stress reliever for many and at the same time promotes the animals that are still looking for their forever homes.

My tasks included:

- Setting and cleaning up
- Monitoring the puppies
- Answering questions and giving out business cards



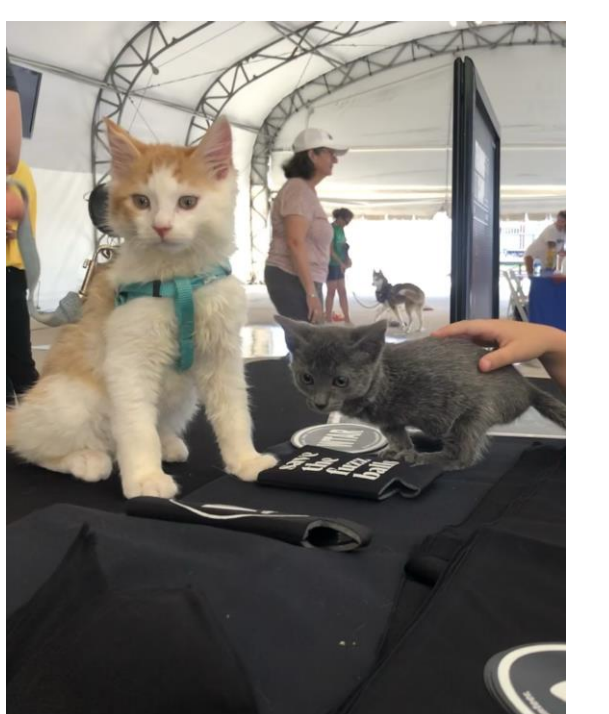
Event set-up for Washington Commanders



Event for the Washington Commanders at FedEx Field



Football player with puppy



Kittens at event for Washington Commanders

My Project

Canine parvovirus is a major health concern for puppies who are not yet fully vaccinated. For this rescue, it is particularly a concern due to the large numbers of puppies that are on each transport. Even though each puppy is parvo-tested during intake, they still might not test positive until a later time period. If any of the puppies test positive, the goal is to prevent any further infection by following all protocols that are put into place. I created a Canine Parvovirus Home Disinfecting Guide for fosters to follow in the case that they ever have a puppy that is diagnosed with parvo. Once the puppies are recovered and/or are no longer in the home anymore, decontamination is a key part in preventing any spread of the virus.

To go along with the Canine Parvovirus Home Disinfecting Guide, I also created a puppy health survey for fosters to complete after the three-week period has ended. I made notes on the general health of the puppies during intake and then looked to see if there were any health concerns during the foster period based on the survey responses. During the time of my internship, the puppies were all relatively healthy, and unfortunately, I didn't receive many responses from the survey to compare their health with what it appeared to be during intake.

Conclusion

This internship gave me many experiences and skills that can be applied in any animal-related career including restraining, performing physical exams, preparing the surgical site, and disinfecting. Although I am still uncertain of what career path to take, I now have a better idea of potential directions I might take post-graduation. There is a lot that goes into animal rescue work, and every person involved plays an important part. I learned so much about teamwork and was able to improve upon my communication, teamwork, and leadership skills throughout the whole experience.