Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Good morning, everyone! We have Dr. Adam set up and ready to go ... and questions have been coming in this morning!

Dr. Adam:
Good morning everyone, this is Dr. Adam

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
It's a turtle party!

Comment:
Good morning Amanda and Dr. Adam. Dr. Adam what has been your most interesting case so far?

Dr. Adam:
Hmm that’s a good question as I’ve been here since back in August 2011 now so there’s been quite a few! One case that particularly springs to mind is the Nelson County black bear cub who presented with a non functional eye. We were very lucky to have one of the Virginia Tech Ophthalmologists come up to assist us with the case and to remove the eye. Histology results showed us that the eye appeared to have suffered some kind of trauma, possibly while the bear was still very tiny and hadn’t yet opened his eyes. It’s great to be able to see a case right through like this and we’re all really hopefully in a few months that the bear may be released.

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
http://www.wildlifecenter.org/wp/2012/02/nelson-county-black-bear/

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
And of course you guys are seeing that bear right now -- he was the one rubbing his back on the wall just a second ago!

Comment:
There's that cute little bear cub (s) now.

Comment:
Amanda, this is too hard, bear cubbies to see while trying to listen to Dr Adam. All three are very cute!!

Comment:
Just popped in for a sec and am seeing the cubs for the first time! How thrilling is this!

Comment:
Hello, Dr. Adam! What type of turtle is your avatar?

[Image of a turtle]

Dr. Adam:
Hi Linda, my avatar is a female Eastern Box Turtle — she was rescued on March 24 after she was found with a leg injury in Albemarle County, Virginia. Rescuers took the injured turtle from the side of the road and immediately brought her to the Wildlife Center of Virginia. Radiographs were taken to get a better picture of the wounded leg and to check for additional injuries – other than a few superficial wounds to the turtle’s shell, the leg injury was the only significant finding.

The turtle’s wounds were flushed and antibiotics and pain medications were started. The following day, the turtle was taken to surgery to amputate the injured limb. Surgery went well (some of you may have seen it as it was the same day as one of our Open Houses!) although the box turtle will need several months to completely heal. Even though the turtle’s left forelimb has been removed turtles cope fine in the wild with just three legs and so with no complications, the turtle should be ready for release in late May or early June.

Comment: From Katie @WCV
Dr. Adam what was/is your favorite patient?

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Katie! Aren't you supposed to be having a day off?

Comment:
You all are always at work. . .even when you're not!!

Comment:
I doubt the favorite is the skunk with its head in the glass jar!

Comment:
Dr. Adam probably likes NX the best!!
Comment:
Re: Katie - who wants to miss these special appearances?!!! lol

Comment:
The skunk is Katie's favorite patient

Dr. Adam:
Hey Katie, yikes that’s a very tricky one. As you know, I seem to change my favorite patient on an almost daily basis! So today I’m going to go with the infant groundhog who was admitted this weekend. He’s terribly cute and as some of you know I’m a big fan of guinea pigs…he’s about as close as North American wildlife gets!

Comment:
Dr. Adam, what patients are you working with now?

Dr. Adam:
Well we have about 120 patients right now…from golden eagles to tiny baby box turtles. We are also really starting to fill up with the babies!

Comment:
Dr. Adam, what are your plans when your time at WCV is over?

Comment:
Good Morning Amanda and Dr. Adam. A Question for the good doctor: Have you decided your ultimate career goal? In that what your specialty will be?

Comment:
Good morning. When do you return to England, and have you finalized plans for your ongoing work/studies after you leave WCV?

Comment:
Hi Dr. Adam, we're going to miss you when you leave WCV. :-(( What are your plans for the near future?

Comment:
Dr. Adam, What is your nest quest and will you stay in the wildlife field? Wish you the very best for your future.

Comment:
For Dr. Adam, We will miss you when you leave! I guess you're going back home after this. Will you work there, or go on to another country? Going to miss that smile and the beautiful cakes! Thank you for your dedication to animals!

Dr. Adam:
So my main plan for after the wildlife center internship was to try to get a residency position in a zoo collection. At the end of last year I was very lucky to be offered the residency at the
Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago. Sadly though it wasn’t meant to be as I’ve had some very major issues with getting a visa (for those that don’t know, I’m from England) and so had to let the position go. Unfortunately the majority of other US zoos were also in the same position regarding visas. So instead, I applied a few months ago to do a masters course in wild animal health which is run back in London by the Royal Veterinary College and London zoo….and as it happens, I’ve just found out I’ve been accepted for the course!

Dr. Adam:
The course teaches wildlife and zoo animal medicine whilst doing practical training with the vets at London zoo. As you can imagine I’ll be very excited to get started there when I finish here.

Comment:
Congrats!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
But not TOO excited ...

Comment:
Sorry that you won't be at Lincoln Park Zoo.....it's a wonderful zoo!!!

Dr. Adam:
Well no Amanda, I'll also be very sad to leave here...and I'm sure I won't have such an awesome office mate either.

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
:)

Comment:
awwww sniff

Congowings:
Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Come on Congo, you need to be in our photo too!

Comment:
Good for you, sorry the job at Lincoln Park Zoo did not work out, it is such a fun zoo. I would have loved having you nearby!

Comment:
It's so ridiculous that you weren't able to get your visa for the Lincoln Park Zoo residency...but the masters course in wild animal health sounds great!

Comment:
Congratulations on your acceptance! They are getting a fine doctor. You will be missed around here.

Comment:
Ques for Dr Adam.: What are you looking forward to in your last few months @ WCV? Also, what do you think about the female cubbies leg in terms of long term results?

Dr. Adam:
I think the main thing I am looking forward too during these last few months is seeing the seasonal change in caseload that we get at the center. Baby season has just begun and during the next few weeks we’ll start to get in the fawns and lots of other babies like the opossums and small birds. It’s really interesting how the mix of species changes week by week.

Comment:
Dr. Adam, what was the worst case you have had to work on, either from the result, the actual work to do, the unpleasantness (like with Katie), or something else that bothered you?
Dr. Adam:
Well I think Katie would probably choose the notorious “skunk incident” but I was luckily well away from the stinky end so escaped that being an unpleasant case for me! I think one of the most disappointing cases was the red tailed hawk 11-2361 that some of you may remember from our webcam. The hawk was presented with a fracture to one of the coracoids (one of the bones which supports the shoulder). These types of injuries can heal very well and so we were all hopefully that he was be released but sadly some weeks after the initial trauma he started to develop a wing droop and radiographs showed he had changes developing in his elbow. Ultimately the wing deteriorated so much that we had to make the very hard decision to euthanize him. It’s always disappointing for everyone when we lose a patient like that, but ultimately we have to remember our ultimately goal is to get our patient s back into the wild and sadly that was just no longer going to be possible with his case.

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:

Comment:
Do you -- or another vet -- check out every patient that comes in? How does that process work?

Dr. Adam:
Absolutely! So the clinics are divided pretty evenly between myself and Dr. Miranda. When a new patient arrives, the receptionist takes them back to our “waiting room” which is a nice warm quiet little room where they can calm down from their initial stress of being caught and put in a box and driven to the center. Often, the first people to look at the new patients are one of our veterinary students (who come from all over the world to gain experience in wildlife medicine). They perform their examination and triage. The students will then present their case to either myself or Dr. Miranda and tell us how they think the case should be treated. At this point Miranda or I perform our examination and decide exactly what the plan is going to be. It’s really important to us that the students take a big role in working up new cases and although there are exceptions (like very critical or high stress cases) we try to make sure their role is just like that of a fully qualified vet so that they can really learn to manage these cases properly on their own.

Comment:
Dr. Adam should become a serious writer and his responses are very wonderfully l o n g. (joking and laughing)

Dr. Adam:
Sorry Trish, I'll type faster!

Comment:
Dr. Adam forgot to answer the part of my question that asked about the cubbies leg. Can he do that?
Dr. Adam:
At the moment we are all really hopeful that the cub’s leg will heal sufficiently well on its own and that surgery will not be required. For those of you that don’t know, the Charlottesville bear cub presented with a very nasty fracture of one of the hind legs. The fracture was old and had already started to heal, despite the alignment not being very good. The difficult decision we had was whether to leave the injury to continue healing or to re-break the bone and attempt to set it again. We decided we would just monitor the situation and thus far the cub is doing really well!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
http://www.wildlifecenter.org/wp/2012/03/cville-black-bear-yearling/

Dr. Adam:
I know you guys all love the webcam but from our point of view its also been fantastic in this case to be able to monitor the cub’s progress without having to be up near the pen. It’s so important with bears that we are as “hands off” as possible to avoid the animals getting habituated to humans and associating us with food….which has the danger of creating problem bears in the future.

Comment:
Hello Dr. Adam!! Have you learned any "unique" surgical, treatment, etc techniques you've learned at the WCV that you hadn't seen prior to coming here? Thanks!

Comment:
FOR DR. ADAM. Our 19 special needs kids would like to know which wildlife you have operated on and which you think proved the most medically challenging and why. Thank you for your time!

Dr. Adam:
I think the main surgical challenge I’ve had since coming to the center would be avian orthopedic surgery in general. Prior to coming here I had a lot of experience in surgery on reptiles and pet birds, but that's very different from what is required in animals which have to be released back in to the wild. Raptors particularly have to have absolutely perfect flight when they go back out there in order to be able to hunt and survive. So the surgical techniques we use have to get perfect results and that’s been a great challenge and a lot of new learning for me.

Comment:
Hi Dr. Adam--will you be baking any more cakes before you leave WCV and, if so, can we see the pictures?

Comment:
I can make this animal related related in some way shape or form.....But I really just wanted to ask if you can bake my Birthday cake for me?
Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Ha! I think Dr. Adam should bake a few more cakes before he leaves ...

Dr. Adam:
Hey Lydia and Debbie, well I’m pretty pushed for time with baby season at the moment but I’ll certainly try and make a few more cakes before I go. I know Katie’s birthday is coming up soon, so I’ll see what I can do. Any suggestions of what animal to make?

Comment:
WOW very beautiful!!!!

Comment:
Skunk lol

Comment:
SKUNK!!!
Comment:
For Katie? The skunk, of course.

Comment:
HA! Need you ask...a SKUNK of course!

Comment:
Skunk

Comment:
According to my notes, Katie's most favorite animal in the whole world is a tiger...that would make a great cake!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Hmmm, good note-taking!

Dr. Adam:
Hmmm it looks like skunk might win the vote though!

Comment:
Was the bear cake for Randy? :)

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
The bear cake was for our auction winner -- we sold a "cake by Dr. Adam -- you pick the critter" at the auction last fall!

Comment:
Love the bear & owl cakes!
Comment:
I would like a Mermaid cake, she is after all part fish! :)

Comment:
Katie gets a sweet smelling skunk. She already knows what the real ones smell like! PS: You are a man of hidden talents!

Comment:
Beautiful cakes Dr. Adam!

Comment:
By the looks of the cake, Dr. Adam has another career to fall back on if this vet thing doesn't work out for him!

Comment:
Whatever it is, we want pictures. Your cakes are awesome!

Comment:
Did you receive art training, or does your artistic ability just come naturally?
Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
All by Dr. Adam, of course ... it's not just cakes, he's got some good graphic design skills too!

Comment:
Dr. Adam, you did all that artwork?? We need to keep him, Amanda!

Comment:
Dr. Adam is definitely multi skilled and talented!

Dr. Adam:

Thank you for the nice comments everyone! Well the only training for making the cakes I really had was from my mum. My brother and I used to request some extremely unusual birthday cakes (like a seal sanctuary!) and she’d always manage to make them…until one day I think she decided it was time someone else made them for a change and I got the job.

Comment:
Hi DR Adam, has your experience in the US and at WCV been what you expected? What surprises have you had?

Dr. Adam:
I think the main surprise for me in starting at the center was with the kind of cases I see now. Back in the UK most of the exotic animals I treated were suffering from problems related to how they were being kept or problems associated with old age. At the wildlife centre the vast majorities of cases are suffering from trauma; such as being hit by cars or attacked by domestic animals. I guess it's kind of like going from being a general practitioner to working in an ER!

Comment:
Dr. Adam--what is the most head-banging, frustrating thing you have encountered? You know, what case or situation has caused you the most angst?
Dr. Adam:
Amanda my office mate

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
HEY!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
I'm going to move all your stuff to the shed on your next weekend ...

Comment:
*snicker* (how Amanda would treat the kid brother she never had...)

Comment:
Move him out to the bear pen Amanda!!

Comment:
Amanda, you need to steal his squirrel underwear for that comment! ;-)

Dr. Adam:
No no, I'm only joking Amanda! I think the most frustrating thing recently has been the number of cases where people have taken baby animals from the wild and attempted to keep them and rear them. Often their intentions have been entirely good and they have really wanted to help these animals, however removing an infant animal from the wild and rearing it inappropriately is incredibly damaging and sadly often results in them having to be euthanized. We really try to encourage people to phone the center for advice on what to do as soon as they see an animal they are concerned about. Often baby animals are mistakenly thought to be orphans and their parents are still coming back to feed them. Are receptionists are great at advising the public about how to approach these situations properly.

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
This hour has gone by quickly -- we should probably just have Dr. Adam answer one or two more questions before he has to get back to work!

Comment:
Dr. Adam what area in England are you from. My kin are Norwich area

Comment:
What part of the UK are you from? I ask because my best friend is from Essex ... anywhere close?

Comment:
For Dr. Adam our local high school has an exchange program with the Cottesloe School in wing, (I believe that was the town) England. My daughter spent a month there and we had 3 students from there stay with us for a month. I was just wondering if this school was near your home town.
Dr. Adam:
I am from Bristol in the south west of England and grew up in the Forest of Dean on the edge of the Wye Valley. It's a very pretty area of the country....very green!

Dr. Adam:
And also where J. K. Rowling grew up!

Comment:
Dr. Adam what made you choose animal medicine?

Dr. Adam:
Well I’ve always been interested in animals since a very young age and growing up we always had a lot of unusual pets. My parents both make wildlife films so I’m sure that has had something to do with my interest in wildlife. My brother is an entomologist, so there’s definitely an animal theme running in our family!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
And I think that about wraps things up for us today!

Comment:
Dr. Adam--please tell the truth (LOL) on this one. What is it like having Amanda as an office mate?

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Well obviously it's the most fun part of his day.

Comment:
Lydia, I think Amanda might censor that answer ;o)

Dr. Adam:
I have to say it is a lot of fun...I think we both have very similar sense of humor! Everyone in the building seems to congregate in our office...it’s definitely a fun place to be!

Amanda Nicholson, WCV:
Dr. Adam will be at the Wildlife Center until the middle of this summer -- so maybe, if we all ask very nicely, he'll come back one more time before leaving!

Dr. Adam:
Well it was great talking to you all again. I better get back to the clinic....I'm sure there are new patients waiting!

Comment:
Puuuulllllleeeseee, Dr. Adam, come back to visit us!!!
Comment:
Thank you for your time, Dr Adam!!

Comment:
Fun but for 2 wonderful people

Comment:
Dr. Adam should be careful how specific he gets about where he's going to live when he returns to England--EN/CN are well known stalkers, um, er, I mean enthusiastic fans ;-) 

Comment:
Ooohhh...an entomologist! I worked at the Penn State fruit lab a couple of summers with an entomologist and we used to get to go out into the orchards and count bugs!!

Comment:
Thank you Amanda and Dr. Adam for a wonderful hour.

Comment:
Stiff upper lip Dr. A. We'll miss you...

Comment:
What a wonderful world it would be if everyone enjoyed their jobs and so-workers as much as you all do! :)

Comment:
OK, it's time for the two of you to get back to work. That's for your time with the CN.

Congowings:
Bye Dr. Adam. Enjoyed your comments very much!