

# Wee Rescue

## Foster/Volunteer Information Packet

**Welcome to Wee Rescue. We hope this information package answers some of the questions you may have about our organization.**

We are an all-volunteer rescue group -- we have no paid members. Our volunteer needs include: foster homes, babysitting, volunteers for adoption events including regularly scheduled Meet & Greets, interviewing potential adopters, reference checks, home visits, phone calling, data entry, and dog transportation. Everybody working together in even the smallest way really adds up to a terrific rescue program.

### **Mission Statement**

Wee Rescue exists in order to place abandoned, neglected or abused Shih Tzu, Lhasa Apso, Havanese, and Pekingese into loving forever homes where they will be taken care of for the rest of their lives. Occasionally we take in other small breeds when foster space is available.

We strive to do this in an atmosphere of mutual respect for all members in our program. We believe that our ability to save lives depends directly on the strength of our program.

## **About Us**

We are an all-volunteer rescue group. We do not have a shelter – all of our dogs live in foster homes until adopted. We are a non-profit organization with 501(c)3 corporation exemption.

## **History**

Wee Rescue started as a small group of volunteers in May of 2001. Our nine member group has grown to over 90 members. We have adopted over 3,000 dogs as of December 2020. Most of us had worked with other rescue groups and wanted to make a difference in our community rescuing small dogs that have exceptional adoption requirements.

## **Animal Dog Intake**

### **Shelter Dogs**

We primarily take Shih Tzus, Lhasa Apsos, Havanese and Pekingese from Austin Animal Center. On a case-by-case basis depending on space available we also take in other small fluffy dogs (under 20 lbs.) We do not discriminate based on age or health. We do not take in dogs that are known to have aggression issues toward humans.

### **Owner Surrenders**

Occasionally we are contacted directly by owners that must surrender their dog(s). We accept the dog into our program, handle the adoption and collect the adoption fee just as for any dog in the program. Since there are so many dogs in danger of certain death at shelters, we occasionally request that the current owner keep the dog as long as possible. If the dog is in a bad situation we will work to get the dog out immediately. In any case, we require the

owner to fill out and sign an Owner Surrender Form prior to us taking the dog into our program. We MUST have this form and any/all relevant paperwork on the dog before we will accept responsibility for the dog.

## **Dogs in our Program**

All adult dogs are adopted only after being altered. Puppies too young to alter require a deposit from adopters. We keep dogs in our program up to date with vaccinations, heartworm and flea preventatives.

We as a group cannot adopt dogs to the public who have aggression problems. There are not only serious legal problems to consider, but this practice fosters a lack of trust and support of rescue groups within the community. To adopt out to the public a dog that is known to bite destroys the efforts of rescue groups everywhere. It is a very sad fact that not all dogs are capable of being family pets.

## **Fostering**

Fosters are the heart of our program. Without fosters, we could not save these dogs. Many of the policies we have in place exist to help support our fosters. This includes providing medical care, grooming, transportation if necessary, crates, professional behaviorist consultation, and whatever else may be needed to make fostering an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

We believe that the foster experience exists to provide a safe haven for dogs while evaluating their needs, and preparing them for adoption. This does not mean that the foster dogs necessarily have the rights and privileges of dogs already living in the house. Our ideal time for a dog to be in foster is two weeks. To insure the proper placement of dogs into forever homes we believe it is

necessary to have them under observation for at least two weeks to determine temperament, behavior and personality.

If, for some reason, a foster parent cannot keep a dog, the foster is to notify their contact person so that the dog can be placed in another home (even if only overnight). Any dog in the program is only allowed to be in a Wee Rescue approved home or boarding facility.

If a foster is interested in adopting their foster dog, they must let a Board member know as soon as possible. This is very important, since between Meet & Greet events, other volunteers are arranging for placement of these dogs. A foster parent may (with Board approval) keep a dog through one Meet & Greet event cycle (2 weeks) while deciding if they have the right dog for them.

If a foster decides to adopt a dog, they must fill out and sign an Adoption Contract, pay the regular adoption fee, and become liable for expenses related to that dog from that date forward. Until and unless an Adoption Contract has been signed and the fee paid, the dog is the property and responsibility of Wee Rescue.

## **Meet and Greet Day Guidelines**

Pre-pandemic, most of our dogs were adopted through the Meet and Greet days that we hold at Petco in The Arboretum on Great Hills Trail. M&G's are on the second and fourth Saturday of the month from 10:00am to Noon. We publish our adoption schedule on our website and via Facebook.

Each foster is expected to make every effort to have their dog(s) at each Meet & Greet. If a foster cannot bring a dog to an event, they must contact their contact person at least three days before to let them know and in some cases transport can be arranged.

We request that fosters feed, water and walk their dogs prior to Meet and Greet events. We discourage putting water and/or treats in the x-pens with the dogs during Meet and Greet days. The water has a tendency to get stepped in, knocked over and made a mess of. The treats can encourage food aggressive behavior when given in such close quarters as the x-pens. And, the water and treats cause more accidents in the stores. Since our Meet and Greet events are only two hours long, we do not feel that withholding food and water for this time will be too difficult on the dogs. We always have a spare water bowl at Meet and Greet events and do offer water to dogs when necessary. This is done outside of the pen area.

Since Meet and Greets are so busy and hectic, we try to have a schedule with assigned duties so that we are able to serve the public while making sure we are keeping an eye on the dogs.

Each dog brought to Meet and Greets will have somebody assigned to him/her as a “dog watcher.” Usually this will be the foster, unless the foster is an Interviewer or has another role assigned. A dog watcher will try to answer questions regarding their assigned dog(s), make sure that children aren’t sticking their hands in the dogs’ faces, get their assigned dog out for potty breaks, clean up their dogs’ accidents, and always know where their dog(s) are.

Only people with approved applications on file are allowed to handle dogs. No dog is to ever leave the Meet and Greet area with a potential applicant without being accompanied by a volunteer. There will be at least one volunteer available to do this. Stay with/walk with potential adopters and the dog to a quiet area for observation.

We do NOT have “same day adoptions” (i.e., show up at a Meet and Greet and leave with a dog). Sometimes people are pre-approved, and in that case they can leave with a dog IF and ONLY IF we approve them for that specific dog and feel that the adopters and the dog are a good match. We do not approve applicants at

Meet and Greet events. No one is approved until we complete a home visit. We cannot promise any dog to any applicant until we have completed the home visit. Sometimes we are able to perform a home visit after Meet and Greet, and place a dog on the same day.

The adoption fee is \$350. We do offer a 25% discount for two dogs adopted at the same time (\$525). The fee is not based on the expenses we have had on any specific dog. Even with adoption fees, we must rely on donations as our vet expenses are very high.

Until further notice the regular Meet and Greets have been suspended due to COVID. All adoptions are being done on a one-on-one basis with the potential adopter and the foster parent.

## **Wee Rescue Forms and Documents**

All regularly used forms and documents are available to all members. Contact Julie Strong at [bjstrong1986@yahoo.com](mailto:bjstrong1986@yahoo.com) to request any documents.

- Adoption Contract
- Placement Questionnaire (Application)
- Foster/Volunteer Information Packet
- Foster Application
- Home Visit Check List
- Volunteer Contact List

If you have any trouble at all, please email [info@weerescue.org](mailto:info@weerescue.org) or [bjstrong1986@yahoo.com](mailto:bjstrong1986@yahoo.com) No question is silly or embarrassing.