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Hi Everyone,

I thought you might be interested in my upcoming trip. I am going to be volunteering for the Humane Society of the US RAVS team in South Dakota in June. RAVS is [Rural Area Veterinary Services](#).

They serve poor communities in the US - the majority I think being Indian Reservations.

This trip involves Rural Area Veterinary Services. Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation. It is one of the biggest reservations in the US and it looks like they make this trip every year.

Approx 40 volunteers descend on the reservation and provide 6 long days of free veterinary services - mostly spay/neuter, vaccines, and parasite control. They do occasionally do other things as well (on the last trip to this location they even repaired a diaphragmatic hernia). My brief reading on [Wikipedia](#) of this reservation talks about how poor these people are. There is a large population of depressed people, etc.

I'm sure you all are very aware of the state of affairs on the reservations. I'm looking forward to having this opportunity to learn about and see what seems like the forgotten part of our society first hand.

I've been going into the shelter (weekly) where I used to work trying to improve my surgery skills and time. The job that I have had for the past 15 yrs has allowed me to NOT do much surgery - therefore requiring that I beef up my skills.

I'm not used to working so hard. They say we may have to get up at 5am and sometimes don't finish each day until 9 or so at night. I'm hoping they are just trying to prepare us but that the truth will be somewhat less :(So I'm a bit nervous. At least at the [Bat Hospital \(Tolga, Australia\)](#) I was able to rest my back on the bed almost daily after I had scooped and cleaned the cages. I know in the end that it is the effort and the being "out of my comfort zone" that tends to really make me value my experiences in the end. So I have faith that this will be the case here as well.

Hope you all are well.

Love,

Kelly