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**Content Editor:** Susan Easton  
**Production Editors:** Patti Henningsen,  
 Deborah Miles-Hoyt  
**Proofreader:** Tracy Needham



# Are You Ready?

## Disaster Readiness for Rabbits

by Liz DiNorma

Living in the Washington, DC and Baltimore metro areas we tend to become complacent about disaster preparedness. After all, hurricanes, tornadoes, earthquakes and wildfires are rare here, to say the least. But in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, we have to remember that not all disasters are “natural,” and we, too, need to be prepared in the event of being evacuated from our homes. In fact, not so long ago, homes near the I-95/495 interchange in Springfield were evacuated because of a black powder spill, and homes in Baltimore were evacuated because of a train accident involving hazardous chemicals.

What can you do to be prepared in the event of a disaster or evacuation? The **Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS)** has put together information on animal disaster preparedness, which you can find at their web site: <http://www.uan.org/ears/index.html>. Planning ahead is the key. Before disaster strikes, be prepared. We’ve used the EARS information as a template, and adapted it to be rabbit-specific. If you have other companion animals in your home, please visit the EARS site for additional information.

Some basics that we should all consider: First and foremost, should you have to evacuate your home, **TAKE YOUR PETS WITH YOU**. This cannot be overemphasized. Leaving your animals behind in an emergency situation would greatly increase the chance that they will be lost, injured or killed. What may at the outset seem like a situation that will be resolved in a matter of hours could turn into a relocation for days, or even weeks. If your ani-

mals are left behind, you may not be allowed to return to your home to retrieve them. The best thing you can do is to take them with you.

**Identify several possible locations where you can take your animals should you have to evacuate.** These would be places that would not likely be affected by the same disasters that would hit where you live. This would include friends and family members, boarding kennels and veterinary clinics with boarding space. Look for hotels/motels that accept animals. You can check the MetroPets Online web site ([www.metropets.org](http://www.metropets.org)) for local information on “pet friendly” lodging. Some hotels/motels may not normally allow animals, but they may make an exception during a disaster, so make some inquiries.

**PLEASE NOTE:** Red Cross evacuation shelters will not allow animals, other than seeing eye dogs and other recognized service dogs.

What if you’re not home when disaster strikes? Start a buddy system with a neighbor so that they will check on your animals during a disaster if you’re not home, and you will do the same for them. Make sure to exchange veterinary information and have permission slips put in vet files so that your “buddy” can treat your animals if necessary even if you can’t be reached. If someone watches your animals while you are on vacation, talk with that person about a disaster plan to be used to evacuate and care for your animals in your absence.

**Know where the animal shelters or animal rescue organizations are in your area.** You may need to visit them after a disaster to look for a

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missing animal. It is important to start looking for a missing animal as soon as you realize he/she is gone, as some shelters may not be able to house large numbers of displaced animals that arrive during a disaster for long.

**What can you do to prepare for a disaster?** Use your common sense. Look around your house, and consider the possibilities. Do your bunnies live on the lowest level of your home? Is it possible that your house could experience a significant flood? If so, would your bunnies be able to get up off the floor and out of harm's way as the water rises? In late July 2001 many houses in Washington, DC had a great deal of flooding, and the water in some basements was several feet deep.

**And where are your carriers?** Could you get to your carriers given only a few minutes warning, or do you need to dig them out from the back of the closet for every vet trip? In the case of a tornado, as was experienced recently in the DC metro area, you may have as little as five or six minutes warning to get under cover in your home. If it takes more than five minutes just to locate your carriers... well, you get the idea.

**Can we be ready for every contingency?** No. Of course not. But we can do our best not to be caught completely unprepared. Some of the suggestions on the checklist may seem excessive, but it is designed to be prepared for the worst case scenarios. At the very least, please make sure that you have enough carriers for all of your rabbits. Don't leave them behind.



## Disaster Shopping List for Rabbits

**A**re you prepared to take care of your rabbit when a disaster strikes? If not, NOW is the time to stock up on the items that you will need so you will not be caught unprepared. Below is a handy shopping list for you to use. The next time you buy food or supplies for your rabbit, take this list with you. Don't put off doing what you should do now—it may just enable you to keep your rabbit alive when a disaster strikes.

Here are the supplies that you should have in a disaster kit for rabbits:

**1. FOOD.** Since a rabbit's digestive system is very sensitive to stress, you should keep your rabbit's diet as close to normal as possible during a disaster. In an ideal situation you would be able to obtain fresh vegetables for your rabbit, but during a disaster that is going to be difficult if not impossible. You should have at least two weeks supply of high quality rabbit pellets at all times. Keep the pellets in an airtight, waterproof container, and rotate the pellets at least once every two months. You can store the pellets in air tight containers in the freezer, but if you do, make sure to include a large sign that says "FREEZER" in your emergency supplies so that they are not forgotten during an evacuation. Include a food bowl.

**2. HAY.** Good quality grass hay is an essential part of a rabbit's diet, and having a steady supply during a disaster will help keep your rabbit's digestive system functioning properly. You should have an airtight, waterproof container large enough to carry two weeks worth of hay available, but the hay should ONLY be sealed in the container for transport during a disaster. Hay should NOT be kept in a sealed container for any length of time, as it will mold and cause health problems. Never feed your rabbit moldy hay. Store the hay in the container but

keep it unsealed, and be sure to rotate the hay at least once every two months.

**3. WATER.** Have at least two weeks supply at all times. Store water in plastic container and keep in a cool, dry place. Rotate water at least once every two months. Have a water bottle to hang on your rabbit's cage, or a water bowl if that is what your rabbit is used to.

**4. SANITATION AND CLEANING SUPPLIES.** If your rabbit is used to using a litterbox, have a small litterbox and enough litter to last for two weeks. Have a small container of dish soap for cleaning water and food bowls, some paper towels, some plastic bags, and a cleaner that you can use for your rabbit's litterbox and cage.

**5. EVACUATION CAGE AND HOUSING.** Have assembled and ready to go a carrier to evacuate each rabbit in your household. An alternative to a carrier is an "Evacsak." It is similar to a pillowcase, takes up a lot less space than a carrier, and, if you have a house full of animals that need to be transported, you can get a lot more Evacsaks into a car. (Evacsaks can be purchased by contacting Animal Care Equipment and Services at 1-800-338-ACES). You should also have a carrier or other traveling cage (if you're using Evacsaks, these can be transported broken down and stacked together, creating more room) to house your rabbit if you have to be away from home for an extended period of time. Your temporary cage should be large enough for a litterbox. Some of the larger carriers would work, and collapsible dog crates come in all sizes and work well for rabbits. Make sure that you have a towel or other cover for the cage or carrier so that your rabbit can be protected from the unwanted intrusion of other animals and people. A collapsible exercise pen would be ideal,

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but **ONLY** if you are housing your rabbit inside in a secure, safe location (such as a friend's house), only if you know that your rabbit will not jump out of the pen, and only if there are no other animals around that could get into the pen. If you are unsure in any way about the safety and security of your location, then an exercise pen should be used only for supervised exercise periods, and should never be left unattended.

In the case of bonded pairs of rabbits (or trios, etc.), they should be housed together if possible. If housed in carriers for transportation they can also be transported together, but if you're using Evacsaks you should have only one rabbit per sack. You can tie the strings of the Evacsaks together for rabbits that should be housed together on arrival. Also be certain to have your name and emergency contact information written on the Evacsaks.

**6. FIRST AID KIT AND BOOK.** You should have among your supplies a basic first aid kit, along with a first aid book for rabbits, such as *Rabbit Health in the 21st Century*. Some suggested items include Betadine solution for cleaning and disinfecting, antibiotic ointment, tweezers, scissors, Q-tips, Simethicone, powdered Pedialyte (packets that can be reconstituted), oral syringes, Critical Care or vegetable baby food for force feeding if necessary (be sure to rotate your supply of baby food to keep it current), and a digital thermometer.

**7. PROTECTING YOUR RABBIT FROM HEAT STROKE.** Rabbits are very prone to heat stroke. If you need to evacuate when the temperature is above 90° F, you'll need to have a way to keep your rabbit cool. Make sure that he/she has shade by covering at least part of the enclosure with a towel. You can freeze one or two liter bottles of water and have them on hand to take with you when you evacuate. After they melt, unless you have access to a freezer you're going to have to work out another way to cool your rabbit. You may be able to get ice from the Red Cross, so try to have a couple of water-tight Tupperware-type containers so that

you can pack them with ice. If your rabbit uses a water bowl, put a few pieces of ice in the water. You can also dampen your rabbit's ears and body with cool water (do not soak your rabbit or dunk his/her ears in cold water) and fan him/her. If you have access to electricity and a fan, dampen the towel over the cage and let the fan blow through the towel.

**8. MEDICATIONS.** If your rabbit is on long-term medication, always have on hand at least a two-week supply, since your vet may not be able to open right away to fill a prescription. Keep your rabbit's medical records with your disaster supplies.

**9. PICTURES AND IDENTIFICATION.** You should have in your supplies some current pictures of your rabbit to use in case your rabbit gets lost during the disaster. Be sure to include yourself in some of the pictures in case you have to show proof of guardianship. You may want to consider having your rabbit micro-chipped so that he/she can be identified.

## NOW AVAILABLE:

### RABBIT HEALTH INSURANCE

Veterinary Pet Insurance, Inc. was founded in 1980 by a veterinarian who wanted to make the miracles of veterinary medicine affordable and help fight economic euthanasia.

Available in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, rabbit caretakers can now purchase health insurance for their rabbits for about \$10 a month.

Skin and respiratory problems, gastroenteritis, fractures, eye and ear infections, accidents, and hairballs are some of the covered diagnoses.

For more information, see:  
[www.petinsurance.com](http://www.petinsurance.com)

## Upcoming Events

Please check our web site for details on all the events, [www.rabbitsinthehouse.org](http://www.rabbitsinthehouse.org).

### Super Pet Expo

Chantilly, VA  
Saturday, April 06, 2002  
10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Sunday, April 07, 2002  
10:00 am to 6:00 pm  
[www.superpetexpo.com](http://www.superpetexpo.com)

### Spring Fling

April 27, 2002  
Ellicott City, MD  
2:00 pm

### Greenbelt Pet Expo

May 11, 2002  
11am-3pm  
Greenbelt Community Center

### Animal Welfare League of Arlington's 2002 Walk for the Animals

May 11, 2002  
8:30 am-noon  
Bluemont Park  
Arlington, VA

### Frederick Walk and Wag

May 18, 2002  
10 am  
Baker Park  
Frederick, MD  
<http://www.fchs.org/>

### Tellington Touch Workshop

with Sandy Rivers  
June 9, 2002  
Howard County, MD

### Disaster Preparedness for People with Pets

Be sure to check the [metropets.org](http://www.metropets.org) web site for listings of future seminars and learn how to prepare for the worst and protect your pets. Seminars are free, but please register here:

<http://www.metropets.org/Newsroom/register.htm>



**M**usic is universal in that each culture finds a way to use it. It fulfills something for us humans, but what about for rabbits? Why do they seem to react to what we listen to? If you have ever played an instrument around your rabbit, you have probably seen the animal give some sort of reaction. They might come closer or head the other way, act calmed or agitated. No matter what, they usually react. Many animals respond to recorded music as well, but it is usually noted more with a live performance. Why?

The answer may be found in their hearing range. Audio travels in electromagnetic waves measured in frequencies, which we break down into Hertz and kilohertz. The range for humans is generally accepted to be 20 Hertz to 24 kilohertz. The instruments that we love, from guitars to violins to tubas, have frequency responses that are predominately in our hearing. However, the instruments do not necessarily play only in our range. The harmonics of the notes ring above and below what our ears can hear. For animals with a wider range of hearing, instruments, especially stringed instruments, sound very different than they do to us. And a rabbit's range of hearing is about 300 Hertz to 42 kilohertz.

Electronic playback of music may be less interesting to rabbits because it is limited to humans' range of hearing by the technology involved. From the original recording, the transfer to whatever medium and the propagation through speakers, we usually end up with band limited audio between 40 Hertz to 15 kilohertz.

Exactly what rabbits hear or how

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**H**e was a marten sable Netherlands dwarf rabbit who in his most robust years would have weighed perhaps two and three-quarters pounds soaking wet, should such a disaster ever have occurred in his life. He came to us from the Maryland State Fair via a single mom whose ex-husband couldn't resist the children's pleas for yet another animal to add to their already unwieldy menagerie. My husband named him Wee-Wig for the white patch on the back of his neck and for Big-Wig of Watership Down. I gave his formal name a French spelling and added an appropriate surname – Oui-Ouig Lapin – though later he really only answered to the name “Wiggy.” He enchanted us at once and none of us ever got over him.

In our family, all four of us are professional musicians, and in the years when our daughters were still at home, someone was either practicing or teaching lessons during waking hours. We were delighted when we discovered that Wig was himself a music lover and, as his ear developed, a discerning one. He never failed to lay at our younger daughter's feet as she practiced the piano for two to three hours per day (though that could have been love) or to watch as my husband practiced the bassoon (though reeds had to be kept carefully out of the way because to

Wiggy they looked like a smorgasbord.) And in the beginning, he never failed to appear at all the voice lessons I taught at home, and which, in those days, included people of all levels of aptitude.

Wiggy would often run figures eight around the feet of me and my student and then take his position by the pedals until the end of the day's lessons. Since he was lying under a grand piano, I often wondered how he could handle all the noise, but it never seemed to bother him.

After a year or so, when he had become an institution and all my students were accustomed to greeting him as they entered, I began to notice that he was absenting himself from some lessons. I didn't think much about it until I began to realize that he left the same lessons each week as soon as that particular student came in the door and that he reappeared for the next lesson as soon as she or she left. To my astonishment it soon became clear that these were the same students who either didn't practice or who were less blessed in their native talent than my other students, or both. Wee-Wig had become a music critic!

Needless to say, it required all my powers of diplomacy to explain when they asked—and they always asked—“Where is the bunny?”

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Thanks to the following Special Friends who donated \$25 or more to help the rabbits in 2001:

LIZ & KEVIN BERTHA  
TRICIA BISHOP  
LESLIE BLOOM  
CYNTHIA BOSHELLE  
CAROLYN BUBLITZ  
BUCKS FOR BUNS—PETBUNNY LISTSERV  
RICK & ROBIN CRONKITE  
ALISA GRAVITZ  
JENIFER HICKS  
ERICA HOHING  
ANNE & JOHN IMBODEN  
MARSHA IYOMASA  
KAREN JONES  
DIANA KIMBERLING  
REBECCA KINGERY  
JULIE KIZER  
CAROLANN KOPLIK  
R.B. LASCO  
GREGORY & POLLY McCARTY  
BRIAN McNEILL  
PATRICK & BERNADETTE MENEFE  
KENNETH & KARI MINESINGER  
ELIZABETH NOYES-PALMER  
LINDA & ROLAND OLSON  
KAREN & PAUL PHILLIPS  
DIANE RAY  
ELOISA TIGRE & MARK RAYNAULT  
DIANE REICH  
LESLIE RIES  
JENNIFER & GREGORY ROBERTSON  
CAROLYN ROEBUCK  
MITRA PITTS ROGERS  
PETER & MICHELLE ROPER  
POLLY ROST & JAMES BRASELMAN  
TERESA & DONALD SHAFFNER  
MARC & MARY SHAW  
SUZANNE SIMON  
MARNI SOUPKOFF  
M. GREGORY SPENCER  
AMY TOWNSEND  
MELODYE TRAUPEL  
PATRICIA TRENNER  
ANNE WITTY & LES DOERFLER

Special thanks to the following veterinarians who provided discount services, making it possible for us to rescue many needy rabbits:

BLUE RIDGE VETERINARY ASSOCIATES  
BROOKEVILLE ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
FALLS ROAD ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
24 HOUR SHOCK TRAUMA  
FALLSTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
KENTLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
KINGSBROOKE ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
OLD FARM VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
RIDGE LAKE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

## Tips From Our Members

Cover boxes of different heights with slip-proof covering (the kind sold to keep tablecloths or rugs from slipping), lay towels over that, put the boxes next to each other (attach with small pieces of Velcro if necessary) and the rabbit has an artificial rock pile to hop on. Some rabbits like to nap in high places.

*Jennie Langdon*

If you have a bunny that hates to be brushed, use a lint brush—the kind that's like a big roll of tape—and roll it over them to get off loose hair. One of my bunnies acts like I'm giving him a massage when I do it! This probably would not work well for long-haired buns.

*Diane Ray*

### ***What to do if your bun has GI stasis until you can get him to the vet:***

1. Keep him warm with a heating pad, heat lamp or heated waterbed. Buns become hypothermic when they are experiencing painful GI stoppage.
2. Go to an all-night pharmacy and get liquid simethicone drops (used for infant gas relief) or get adult mint Phazyme tablets, which contain simethicone. If your bun will munch a tablet, this is easier than giving him the liquid simethicone drops.
3. Also pick up some Pedialyte or generic brand of fluids for babies with diarrhea. It contains electrolytes, which his gut needs. It's very sweet and most buns will drink it readily. But if not, use a syringe to dribble some into the corner of his mouth. Never squirt

liquid into the mouth, the bun could breathe it in and get fluid in his lungs.

4. Give him a tummy massage.

*Melody Traupel*

We have a big girl—a 10 lb. Californian—so this litterbox setup might work better for larger buns.

We put a sheet of newspaper in a kitty litterbox and top it with a small, level roasting rack for her to step on (the ones with both horizontal and vertical wires to create squares to step on).

The rack is big enough to cover the entire box, hence her feet stay clean and dry while everything drops to the bottom of the pan. We also give her a paper roll on top instead of putting the usual hay in the litterbox. This eliminates anything getting kicked out of the box and we don't need to buy special litter.

*Diane Neumeyer*

My Emily loves chasing and of course biting a wadded up piece of paper tied to a string that I dangle or pull (sort of like the way one might play with a cat).

*Mary Ganikos*

I take my Little Green Machine and fill it with really hot water and a whole scoop of Oxiclean. When I spray the urine spots on my carpet, no matter how bad, I can watch the color from the stain disappear before my eyes. When it's gone, just apply suction with your machine and you'll have a carpet Mom would be proud of.

*Patti Henningsen*

**SEND IN YOUR TIPS!** We love hearing ideas from our members. We can't publish them all, but we will be featuring a few in every issue of *The Clover Leaf*. Email your tips to [debhoyt@aol.com](mailto:debhoyt@aol.com).

# RABBITS FOR

All rabbits are to be adopted as HOUSE RABBITS only—no exceptions! \$60 donation per rabbit, plus \$18 membership for non-members.

**MARCEL** and **GINNY** are a couple of mini-lop rabbits who like to entertain anyone who is willing to sit and watch. Marcel loves attention and will follow you around like a dog. Ginny is a bit of a temperamental prima donna. As long as everyone agrees that she can be boss, she is happy.

**PRESTON** and **ACORN**—Preston knows he's impossibly cute. He's an even-tempered guy with some serious lounging in mind. You



**PRESTON & ACORN**

could easily mistake Acorn for a little cottontail! He greets you when you come in the room and leads you around to show you what he wants. These two friends sleep together every night and are an extremely close pair. They need a stable home where they can be assured they'll be responsibly cared for.

That's something they've had and lost so they're hoping for a forever home this time.

**SAMSON** and **DAHLILA**—These two little faces are all it takes to brighten the day. Either first thing in the morning or after a long day at work they are happy to greet you and provide a few dance steps. Samson is a bit shy as he relies on Dahlila to tell you how things should be. With a little love from their foster mom, Samson is coming out of his shell and Dahlila is allowing a few choices be made by others.

**SAMANTHA** and **EVELYN** are a pair of mellow, easy going mother and daughter mini lop girls. Evelyn, the mother, is the smaller of the two at about 6lbs. She is white with brown markings. Samantha weighs in around 8lbs and is a very attractive white and pearl gray mixture. While they are still a little shy both girls will happily come running for a tasty treat and ear rub.



**MARLON**

**SPARKY** and **SERA** are two very gentle bunnies. They were given up because their human family would not find time for the newborn addition as well as their funny family members. After months of neglect Sparky and Sera are starting to enjoy human company again. Sparky is coming out of his shell and is exploring his new surroundings. Sera likes to stay close to home and the comfort of her box.

**KLAUS** and **SONA** are special needs rabbits. They were adopted from HRS August 1996. Sadly a couple years later when a human baby was added to their household, their humans decided that they did not have time for them anymore. They are now over 6 years old. They both tested positive for E. cuniculi, a parasite that can infect the kidneys and nervous system. Many rabbits silently carry this infection and only 12% develop symptoms. They receive daily medication which is lowering their antibody titer. They deserve a home where they will get all the snuggles and petting they crave.

If you have toyed with the idea of becoming a foster home but are concerned that you'd become attached and have a hard time giving up your foster rabbits when someone wanted to adopt them, this could be the perfect opportunity. If you adopted/fostered Klaus and Sona, they would essentially become yours, but HRS would continue to provide support and medical care throughout their lives.

**DEREK** is a young male sweetie, about 6 pounds. Derek loves attention, treats, pets, and people. He does not seem to be bothered by dogs at all. His fat cheeks are just adorable.

**GREGORY** is so friendly! He loves attention and running and jumping and sitting in your lap for pets (believe it or not!). Give him plenty of chew toys. Gregory can jump over a 30" pen to explore.

## ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥ Happy Adop

Dear HRS,

This is my first time with two. They are keeping me busy! I want to play with and pick them up more frequently, but when I think about how they have been in five places in the last three months, I realize that they need time. I have to be patient. They are both so loveable. They are getting along beautifully—grooming each other, cuddling in their little house, and chasing each other around the family room at a furious speed. After an eleven year old, I had forgotten how active young bunnies are. I am also very glad that I decided on a pair.

Gissie's middle name should be Houdini. They graduated on Wednesday from the exercise pen to the downstairs family room. I am using, or rather trying to use, the pen to block off the furnace, sump, his workshop, etc. However, she has figured out, and taught Nickelby, how they can use their little teeth to move the end partition so they can explore the back of the basement and hide under or behind all of the "stuff" stored back there. At present the score is Giselle 2 and Pat 0. The escape hatch got wired to the wall this morning.

Thank you for calling me. Once I picked those critters up, my bunny decision was made. —Patty Flynn

Dear HRS,

The buns are doing GREAT...even better than I had hoped!!! They are really

affectionate with each other, and Miss Poopy has even given up her cherished napping spot by the window in order to snuggle up with Yoda at the other end of the room. Yoda is such a cheery little fellow! We don't bother caging them at all now, and it's just the cutest thing to walk into their room and be surrounded by swarming bunnies...Miss Poopy trying to climb up your leg, Yoda working very hard to untie your shoelaces, and then the two of them hopping around and around your feet! Bottom line...they are very happy, and we are delighted with them! —Siobhan

Dear HRS,

Last night my husband and I went out. When I returned, I decided to lay down on the sofa to rest for a minute or two. Before you know it I had two rabbits on my chest giving me lots of licks in the face. Now is that love or what. They love to tear up newspaper and cardboard boxes. Thanks again for all that you do. —Myra Witcher

Dear HRS,

I wanted to update you on Melba and Gunther. They are doing great. You were right, if they got any cuter they would burst into cartoons. Melba is warming up to us much faster than Gunther is. She will come over and check out what's going on and then report back to Gunther. He will come forward first only if it

# ADOPTION!!!

Your other rabbits must be spayed or neutered. Pictures of all our foster rabbits can be viewed at our web site, [www.rabbitsinthehouse.org](http://www.rabbitsinthehouse.org).

**HARRISON** is a medium sized (about 5 lb.) minirex who is white with handsome black spots. He is extremely curious about all of his surroundings and likes to explore. He is getting used to human affection and with time, will grow to love pets, but right now he'd rather explore than be snuggled.

**JULES** is an agouti-colored dwarf rabbit weighing only 3 pounds, yet he is full grown. He is a happy guy who loves to explore and telescope to see everything around him. Jules does enjoy petting and is an attention hound. This little guy's long whiskers will fickle you when you try to give him a kiss!

**JINGLE** is a little clown. His floorshow routine will have you in stitches. This little guy is almost always in motion. He's very friendly but has a hard time sitting still for very long, so petting has to be done in shorter sessions. Jingle is about a year old and was neutered in December.

**MARLON** is a very nice 6 lbs. Mini-Lop. He was given up to the Washington County shelter. Marlon is not used to most bunny treats yet but is learning fast. This bunny likes to be petted and will be a great pet for the right person.

**RICKY** has more energy than the energizer bunny, but also likes to sit still for pets and head kisses. Ricky is a happy little chap, who can really kick up his heels. He is looking for a home where he can have plenty of room to race and dance. Ricky is very good with nice cats.

**ROCKY** is a big boy weighing in at 7+ lbs. He's a little under a year old and a real sweet heart. He's salt and pepper colored and very friendly. He would be a good choice for a family with children. He loves to run up and down the ramp of his condo and dash around the house.

**ZIGGY** was given up with his brother at the age of 4 months. He is 1 year now and a very handsome young man at this point. Ziggy is very curious about people and getting used to yummy

treats and people attention.

**ASPEN** is a beautiful very dark agouti girl with a white underside. When you pet her, she'll sprawl out like a rug and she'll stay that way until you're done. She's a wonderful dancer and loves her greens. Aspen is getting used to dogs and would make a wonderful pet for someone that wants an affectionate rabbit.

**CINNABUN** is a medium sized (about 5 lb.) minirex with beautiful rich brown fur. She is curious and likes to chew, run around and climb on the furniture. She enjoys being petted and will purr when you get it right.

**KAATJE** is a Dutch-Rex mix and a very active young lady. She loves her toys and always wants to know what is going on around her. Kaatje is still a little skittish but starting to really like to be petted and will give bunny kisses every once in a while. Kaatje does not seem to mind well-behaved dogs.

**MARCIE** is 20 lbs of energy stuffed into a 4 lb rabbit. She loves to run and dance but will not hesitate to stop for pets. Her favorite toy is the phone book. She will spend many hours digging in the book for the right phone number.

**MINA** is a shy girl at first, but when you least expect it, she'll be zoomin' through the room at top speed leaping and twisting into the air! She really enjoys being pet, but not being picked up. Her favorite thing is to dig in cardboard boxes and when she's all tuckered out, chill and relax in them until she's ready to dig some more. She currently lives with a cat.



QUINNA

**QUINNA** is 9 lbs of very energetic, busy bun who enjoys having room to stretch her legs! She has rexy type fur and really enjoys a good pet! She's a great dancer and enjoys playing with wicker baskets! She has a mind of her own, but really enjoys the time spent with her human!

## tion Letters! ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

involves food or treats. They come over to Justine without any hesitation at all and hang with her longer than they will with either Sue or I. (Justine is their primary feeder). Thanks for your help.—Mike Friedman

Dear HRS,

Just thought I'd drop you a note to say George and Martha are doing extremely well. I think that they have become attached at the hip. They are constantly running around together, cuddling, kissing, grooming each other, and most of all getting into mischief together.

George was busy eating some parsley (his favorite), and Martha ran up to him, practically sat on his head, and began grooming his ears. it was so cute!!! They love to run around the apartment all day, and lounge under the nice dark couch to rest! They seem very happy.—Jane Oster

Dear HRS,

Thank you so much for fostering such a wonderful bunny! Ella at once took to her cage, enjoying lounging around in there as long as the door is open, which it has been except for the first night. She nearly goes into a trance while being petted—just soaks it up for 45 to 50 min. while I watch TV. She's made a few manic dashes around my apt. running along the balcony windows and rattling

all the vertical blinds and last night worked from 3:00 am until dawn banging on the rabbit pen which I'm using as a barrier to my bedroom. Thanks a million again. HRS is really wonderful.—Jean Alexander

Dear HRS,

Noel is doing great!!! Her bonding with my baby boy, Truman, went very well. They were very relaxed around each other from the start. It took them about a week to start snuggling, but now they snuggle almost non-stop. They really enjoy each other's company and both are very happy. When they run around the apartment they constantly jump up in the air and give a little wriggle of the body. Noel is still getting use to things so she is a bit skittish around my husband and I but she is definitely warming up to us with each passing day. I pet her constantly but when she hops away I respect her need to do this on her terms and don't chase after her. She is such a sweet bunny with a great personality and we really love having her as part of our family.

I know Truman does too! We are all doing wonderfully!!!! I hope the other adopters are even half as happy with their new buns as we are with Noel. Thank you for opening your heart and your home to bunnies in need. I really do appreciate what you do. And I wanted you to know that Noel is very much loved and doing very well!—Diane Reich

# CHAPTER UPDATE

**2001** was another banner year for our chapter.

We **rescued 112 rabbits** from our local shelters, and **adopted out 106 rabbits** to their new homes!

Throughout the year our fosterers have provided loving care to their foster bunnies. In addition to meeting the daily needs of the foster buns, these volunteers have also helped socialize shy bunnies, cleaned countless litterboxes, driven to vet appointments and adoption events where foster bunnies can meet potential mates, help screen potential adopters and “bonded” pairs during the adoption process. We currently have 18 foster homes, housing 42 foster rabbits. And we just **rescued our 600th rabbit**, Harrison!

Unfortunately, 16 adopted rabbits were returned in 2001. Now that we have seven years of adopted rabbits out there, some of the rabbits coming back are not youngsters. If you have considered fostering but reject-

ed the idea because you think you couldn't give up your foster rabbits, please consider providing a **permanent foster home** for a couple of our **harder to place, older bunnies**. HRS will provide financial support for their care.

In 2001 our **foster homes** were: **Kay Bannon, Chris Brannon, Kathy Brooks-Denny, Susan Easton, Jim and Terilee Edwards-Hewitt, Mary Ganikos, Patti Henningsen, Jill Prater and Tom Kim-bis, Nicole Koller, Laurie Kuhn, Judi Lainer, Lincoln Stanley and Barbara Mazer, Carla Picket, Regina Polo, Jodi Robertson, Jamie Sargent, Michelle Thomas, Kathleen Wilsbach and Susan Wong**. Many thanks to all of them for their dedication.

In March and April, the chapter united in efforts to bring attention to our annual **Easter campaign** spearheaded by **Director of Special Projects Susan Wong**. Hundreds of media kits were mailed to the press which **generated television**

**appearances by Chapter Manager Kathleen Wilsbach** and many articles in area papers including the **Washington Post** and the **Washington Times**.

Next, a big thank you to **Nicole Koller** for hosting the **Spring Fling** last May. Her lovely home in Reisterstown provided a merry setting for rabbit chatter among chapter members. A good time was had by all. And an additional big thank you to **Nicole**, who has agreed to be our chapter's **Volunteer Coordinator**. She's got great ideas and enthusiasm, and we're very grateful for her help.

May also saw **Susan Wong** holding another famous **HRS yard sale** which brought in about \$500. We had many volunteers on hand to help including **Susan Easton, Chris Henningsen, Bob Wersto, John Bishop, Atanu Basu, Kathy Brooks-Denny, and Regina Polo**. Many thanks to these volunteers for their hard work and hearty humor!

From June 30–July 4, HRS had a booth (see photo this page) at the **2001 Animal Rights Conference** held in Tyson's Corner, VA. HRS volunteers **Liz DiNorma, Susan Wong, Megan Hemmer, Liz Howard, Susan Easton, Liz Bennett, Mitra Pitts, Kathleen Wilsbach, Patti Henningsen, Judi Lainer, Mary Ganikos, and Nicky Roberts** took shifts at the booth, passing out rabbit care information and talking with passersby about house rabbits. The con-



HRS' booth at the 53rd Montgomery County Agricultural Fair won Third Place for Outside Exhibitors

**PLEASE MAKE A DONATION TO OUR CHAPTER TO HELP US RESCUE MORE RABBITS. USE THE COUPON ON PAGE 11 TO MAKE A DONATION AND/OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP. THANKS!**





HRS Director of Education Liz DiNorma at the Animal Rights 2001 Conference

ference was very well-attended and the HRS booth was busy. The new **Executive Director of National HRS Margo DeMello** attended the conference on behalf of her employer, In Defense of Animals. It was very exciting to be able to meet her in person, and Margo and several of our booth volunteers went to dinner together one evening.

In July we were invited to present library programs for children in **two Prince William County Public Libraries**. **Liz DiNorma and Liz Kidd** had the kids attend “rabbit school” to learn what it was like to be a bunny. And our chapter donates a **House Rabbit Handbook** to every library where we do a presentation.

Also in July, Susan Wong sent out a **preliminary survey to over 600 local veterinarians**. About 120 responses were received, which is a phenomenal response. A final survey has now been mailed out. The survey will provide us invaluable information about area veterinarians who treat rabbits.

In August, **Fox Morning News** invited us to do a short presentation on one of their Monday morning “**Animal Attraction**” segments. **Liz DiNorma** handled the interview, and foster bunny **Quinna** handled the camera shots. (Quinna is still available for adoption, by the way!)

Also in August, **Susan Wong** organized our chapter’s most ambitious appearance ever, at the **Montgomery County Agricultural Fair**. The fair lasted nine days, for twelve hours each day, and we were required to have our

booth staffed at all times. It was quite a feat of organization, and Susan did an incredible job with this daunting task.

Overall, it was an amazingly successful educational event.

**About 250 packages of information** were passed out to people who already had

rabbits or are serious about having one, over **300 six-page care packs** to people thinking about getting a rabbit, as well as hundreds of brochures and other pieces of literature. We had 600–700 people actually stop and talk with us. We also won **third prize for our outdoor display** designed by **Patti Henningsen** (see photo).

Many thanks to all of our volunteers: **Susan Wong, Patti Henningsen, Anne Schroeder, Kathy and Alan Juers, Marni Soupkoff, Athanasia Manzouranis, Jamie Sargent, Michele Carsrud, Cathy Brown, Kathy Anderson, Winnie Roberts, Barbara Popofsky, Shelley Barber, Natalie Vasey, Doris Lin, Julianne Wiener, Natalie Medina, and Marsha Iyomasa**. They stuck it out through tough times, long hours, and very bad weather—there were bad thunderstorms, and the top of the tent actually blew off one day! Many thanks to the Girl Scouts in the next tent who let us borrow their tent when the going got rough, and to Patti Henningsen who had to re-do the whole display overnight after the tent blew away and the everything was soaked.

From an education standpoint the Fair was a huge success, and we’re planning on participating again this year. We would love your help for a shift or two! If you think you’ll be interested in helping at this event, or at the Maryland State Fair in Timonium, please let us know!

(continued on page 10)

## GIFTS IN REMEMBRANCE

Marni Soupcoff

*In Honor of*

*Randall*

&

*Harley*

Brian R. McNeill

*In Memory of*

*Rabbit E. Lee*

Eloise, Mark, & Lena  
Raynault

*In Memory of*

*Hops*

Benjamin Y. Fleishman

*In Memory of*

*Silver*

Anne G. Imboden

*In Memory of*

*Whiskers*

&

*Perri*

(Chapter Update from page 9)

In other fair news, the **Animal Welfare League of Arlington** once again invited us to be a featured guest at their booth at the **Arlington County Fair** in August. **Liz DiNorma and Rebecca Kingery** were there to answer questions and show off some of our foster bunnies. And in September, HRS was present at the **Latino Festival** held at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds.

Our **Fall Festival** was held in November at the home of **Barbara Storck** in Annandale, Virginia. Many thanks to Barbara for letting her home be overrun with “bunny people.” In addition to all of our usual items offered for sale, multi-talented Director of Fostering Susan Easton debuted some beautiful semi-precious stone rabbit jewelry creations.

After the events of early September, disaster was on our minds. **HRS** teamed up with **MetroPets** to offer a **Disaster Preparedness Class** for pet owners. **Liz DiNorma and Anne Schroeder** of MetroPets worked hard to make this happen, and the first class was offered in November. It was very successful, and received good reviews from attendees, so we’re planning on offering several more classes throughout the region during 2002. Information on dates and locations will be available at the MetroPets Web site ([www.metropets.org](http://www.metropets.org)).

In happier news, we had another successful fundraiser in our **Fall Cookie Sale**. **Amber Wunningham** offered to coordinate this event and did a great job. The sale raised over **\$1,700** for the chapter, the highest amount ever! **Top seller Suzanne Simon** sold 46 items for a total of \$115. **Barb Popofsky** (37) and **Jennifer Hicks** (36) were neck-and-neck for second and third. Also participating were **Diane Reich, Jean Hillstrom, Karen Jones, Robert Wersto, Erinn Kravitz, Jane Oster, Milli Rae, Traci Van Buren, Diana Rekos, Christia Weiss, Liz DiNorma, Traci Needham, Leesa Kuo, Kathy Winter, Janelle & Bryan, Amber Wunningham, Kathleen Wilsbach, Chris Gawel, Shirley Rowley, Olivia Hill, Connie Tjoumas, Pat Flynn, Tricia Benner, Diane**

**Neumeyer, and Darlene Saudarg.**

Amber has been a member of our chapter for many, many years. On more than one occasion she was the top seller for our cookie and candy sales. This past year Amber lost one of her closest friends, her French Angora and first rabbit, Chance. Amber dedicated this fundraising drive to Chance. She felt that he had given her so much, she wanted to give something back, to help other rabbits in his memory. As this newsletter goes to press, Amber just finished leading our annual **Log Cabin Easter Candy Sale**. If you are interested in participating in future HRS cookie and candy sales, please contact Amber at [drewandamber@comcast.net](mailto:drewandamber@comcast.net) or 410-453-9557. Here’s to you, Chance. The HRS foster rabbits are so lucky that you hopped into Amber’s life and heart.

The first weekend in February HRS had a very successful booth at the **World of Pets Expo** held at the **Maryland State Fair Grounds in Timonium**. There was good attendance and we were able to spread the word to many people about house rabbits. We also sold rabbit supplies and HRS premiums, the most popular items... bunny toys! Our chapter netted \$394. Many thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who helped make this a successful event. **Jackie Hill** (and her van), **Anne Imboden, and Susan Wong** were invaluable for their help setting up our booth. Many thanks also go to **Katie Rickman** for lending us her pick-up, and to **Liz DiNorma, Laurie Kuhn, Nicole Koller, Diane Neumeyer, Nicole**

**Roberts, Delores Doyle, Ginger Roberts, Anne Imboden, Kay Bannon, Holly Hagner, Kathleen Wilsbach, Chris Brannon, Kathy Brooks-Denny, Carla Pickett, Brandi Scanlon, Katrina Wagner-Remer, Judi Lainer, Jeff Remer, Jolie Smith, Brian McNeill, Jim Proimos, Leesa Kuo, Deanna Tompkins, Robin Patalon, Bill Patalon, Irma Arispe, Faye Levine** (and her Jeep Wrangler), and **Carolyn Bublitz** (and her huge van). Special recognition goes to **Laura-Lynn Renner** whose idea for a “Top Ten Things You Didn’t Know About Rabbits” handout helped many people see rabbits in a whole new light. And it’s now available as a T-shirt.

We will have a booth at the **Super Pet Expo** in **Chantilly, VA** from April 6–7. Look for us there.

**Spring Fling** will be held this year at the home of Connie Tjoumas in Ellicott City, MD on **April 27**. We will send out invitations as we get closer to the event. We have been trying to save some postage by sending announcements out to folks via **email**. If you have an email address make sure you are signed up with our yahoo groups announcement list. To subscribe, send a message to [hms\\_md-dc-nova-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:hms_md-dc-nova-subscribe@yahoo.com).

Are you interested in some of the activities that are outlined here? Won’t you help us continue this invaluable work by making a donation to our chapter and/or volunteer some of your time?

### Rabbits...

- 1 ...have a life-span of 10-12 years and require as much work as a dog or cat.
- 2 ...can be litter-box trained and require lots of out of the cage exercise.
- 3 ...are not “low-maintenance” pets and are a poor choice as a pet for young children.
- 4 ...are intelligent, amusing creatures and love to play with toys like cardboard boxes, paper towel rolls, grass mats.
- 5 ...purr when contented and dance and race around when they are happy.
- 6 ...love to chew electrical cords and furniture, so your home must be bunny-proofed.
- 7 ...must be spayed or neutered to improve health and behavior.
- 8 ...require an annual check-up with a rabbit veterinarian.
- 9 ...love to be petted but do not like to be held.
- 10...are social and should live indoors as members of the family.

# BREAKING NEWS . . . . . BREAKING NEWS

## RABBIT VIRAL OUTBREAK NOW "OVER"

On August 17, 2001, USDA's Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) confirmed rabbit hemorrhagic disease (RHD), also known as rabbit calicivirus disease in a rabbitry in Utah County, Utah. In Montana, 15 premises were put under quarantine but they have now been lifted due to movement of some rabbits from Utah. Some rabbits reached Mercer County Illinois before they were apprehended.

APHIS, Veterinary Services (VS) considers this current outbreak to be over. VS will continue to investigate reports of suspect RHD as part of their foreign animal disease surveillance program.

## Hop to It!

You can now become more active in the House Rabbit Society by joining the new **Volunteer Network**. As a Volunteer Network Member you will learn more about the House Rabbit Society goals and activities by working directly with Chapter veterans. Volunteer activities include assisting with foster rabbit care, fundraising, community outreach, newsletter production and Chapter events such as Fall Festival and Spring Fling. To join the network please e-mail **Volunteer Coordinator Nicole Koller** at [bunerrabbit@comcastnet](mailto:bunerrabbit@comcastnet) or call 410-889-4104.

Have you received an unsolicited mailing from another rabbit organization recently?

We would like to restate that it is not the policy of the House Rabbit Society to share its mailing list with any other organizations or groups.

The Maryland/DC/Northern Virginia Chapter of the House Rabbit Society would like to apologize for any inconvenience and/or confusion, and to assure you that any use of its mailing list by other organizations is unauthorized. We will take steps to avoid any further use of our members' addresses.

### Calling All Volunteers!

We always need volunteers for the following activities. If you would like to volunteer, check all that apply:

- Public events (staffing education tables)
- Driving rabbits between MD, NOVA and DC
- Hosting and organizing social events
- Rabbit bondings
- Classes and seminars
- Distributing literature
- Fundraising events
- Bunnysitting
- Fostering
- Hosting rabbit matches
- Design projects
- Mailing
- Counseling
- Working with shelters
- Newsletter

You can either fill in this form and mail it to the address below or go to our Web site [www.rabbitsinthehouse.org](http://www.rabbitsinthehouse.org) and fill out the online volunteer form. THANKS!!



### Is Your Membership Current?

#### Are You Moving?

Is it your TIME TO RENEW? Please check the expiration date on your mailing label. If your membership has expired, please renew by filling in the form below.

- Local and National HRS membership . . . . . \$26
- National HRS membership . . . . . \$18  
Members receive issues of The House Rabbit Journal
- Local HRS membership . . . . . \$8  
Support our local rabbit rescue efforts and receive local newsletter twice yearly. Must also be a national member.

<input type="checkbox"/> RENEWAL	Name _____
<input type="checkbox"/> VOLUNTEER	Address _____
<input type="checkbox"/> ADDRESS CORRECTION	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
<input type="checkbox"/> CHANGE OF ADDRESS	Phone _____ E-mail _____
I would like to also make a donation of \$ _____ <small>Make check payable to HRS</small>	

CLIP AND MAIL TO: HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY, P.O. BOX 50311, BALTIMORE, MD 21211



(The Music Critic from page 4)

Wig has since passed on and Gus and Claire have taken his place underneath the piano. But it is clear to me that, for them, it is only an eagle-free place for an afternoon's snooze and has nothing whatever to do with music appreciation.

(Music sidebar from page 4)

they feel about music is, of course, speculation. Does a rabbit who huddles below the soundboard of a hammered dulcimer do so to enjoy the music? There's no reason to think otherwise. To paraphrase Billy Joel, "...No matter what species we're from, everyone loves music."

*Stacey Abbott, animal and music lover, is an Audio Engineer at National Public Radio.*



**BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME**

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