



Issue VIII, May 2001

## IN THIS ISSUE

### I Dream of Jenni

by Patti Henningsen.....1

### Outdoor Rabbits in Peril

by Andrea Jacobs.....3

### Nail Clipping

by Liz DiNorma.....3

### A Farewell to Friends

by Kate McGinley .....5

### "Rescuing" Pet Store Rabbits

by Kathleen Wilsbach.....9

### DEPARTMENTS

Rabbits for Adoption .....6-7

Happy Adoption Letters.....6-7

Chapter Update .....8

Member Tips .....10

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# I Dream of Jenni

with the light brown fur

by Patti Henningsen

Our least favorite neighbors were moving! As a final gesture of ill will, they left a large trash heap on their front lawn. They also left behind many animals. Before Animal Control confiscated them, my husband, Chris grabbed a cage from the trash heap. He called to me, "Come see what I've rescued!"

Beaming with pride at his good deed, he held up a small cage containing a large black rabbit. He pulled the rabbit out of the cage and cradled him in his arms, "Look how friendly he is!"

The big fellow shoved his head into the crook of Chris' elbow as if to say, 'Oh please, please help me!' With that simple gesture, I melted into a blathering, bleeding-heart blob of compassion. We made plans to get him a more suitable, larger cage.

We named him Jar Jar Binks for his extraordinary binkying (dancing) abilities. His being out of the tiny cage that had been his prison for four years and eating fresh salad every day became our mutual happiness. Every night we all enjoyed 'bunny time' or cage-free time. Jar Jar loved to walk around on my back as I lay on my stomach on the floor. And he danced a lot.

### Do You Hear What I Hear?

Much to my surprise one evening, Jar Jar jumped on my lap. Sitting with his back to me, he slowly turned his head from side

to side. I felt he was trying to tell me something and then I saw it. Both of his ears were totally encrusted from deep inside the ear mid-way to the ear tip. The next day I rushed him to the vet. It took three ear-cleaning sessions for Jar Jar to recover. His ears had been totally occluded, and for all practical purposes, he had been deaf. We also learned he was neutered. The vet said, "So someone must have loved him once."

Now able to enjoy all the stimulating sounds around him, Jar Jar loved to sit smack dab in front of our speakers while we watched, yes, *Star Wars: The Phantom Menace*, and thrill at the special effects sounds. With his health restored, a giant new cage, and a domain to freely roam, there was only one thing missing.

One morning, I lay in bed dreaming of lying in a meadow. Jar Jar appeared, jumped on my chest, and put his face right up to mine, waving his head to and fro. Just behind him I noticed a smaller light brown rabbit. When I awoke, I realized, 'Jar Jar wants a mate.'

I picked out a light brown girl bunny from the HRS web site who most resembled the one from my dream and applied to adopt her. I was approved and Jar Jar, Chris, and I piled into the car to go to a 'bunny match' at the home of HRS Director of Fostering Susan Easton. Pens were set up all over

*continued on next page*



continued from page 1

her house and yard. Two bunnies at a time were placed in each pen to see if they would 1) fight, 2) show at least mild complacency with each other, in which case it was a possible match, or 3) fall in love at first sight.

### Enter the Shrew

We watched and waited as many bunnies were happily matched up. I noticed one girl bunny, Jenni, was particularly aggressive with all the others and was quickly pulled from the pens after antagonizing every rabbit she met. Jenni was a beautiful Siamese sable with light brown fur. Hmm...

Jar Jar's turn finally came. He flopped down showing no interest in anything or any bunny. Finally he humped a bun or two and flopped down again. Then, Susan put Jenni in with him. Jenni stalked over to start boxing with him. He stood up and sat on her head (see photo). For a while they stayed like that. We were all laughing and so, I think, was Jar Jar. Then Jenni emerged from underneath Jar Jar, her mouth open and eyes squinting in a 'rabbit smile.' I



Jan Jar and the rabbit of his dreams

knew she was the one.

After a smooth bunny-moon at Susan Wong's house, Jenni came home with us and she and Jar ruled supreme, but there were a few problems that became more extreme over time. She repeatedly antagonized my collie by digging at his tail and lunged at us should we have any thought of picking her up. She was being a shrew—not a rabbit!

### Jenni and Jar Jar's Excellent Adventure

We tried various schools of thought for adjusting her attitude with no success. So I decided to try something different. Jenni, Jar Jar, and I signed up for an animal communication workshop in New York with world-renowned animal communicator and author, Penelope Smith. I would just ask Jenni herself what her problem was instead of asking everyone else.

We stayed at a hotel that allowed pets. Room service seemed mystified at the quantity of salads I ordered. Jen and Jar danced around the hotel room with glee.

The workshop was held in three sessions, the last two to which participants could bring pets. Jen and Jar were the only rabbits there. About ten large dogs ran around barking in the back of the hall, so I set up Jen and Jar's pen next to the stage far from the frolicking canines.

Jen and Jar stole the show, even from Penelope Smith herself, who didn't mind at all. I had set up their pen on top of a large tablecloth so they wouldn't slip on the hardwood floor but I didn't realize the tablecloth was covering a vent. When the heat came on, the tablecloth billowed like a flag in the wind but was held down by the edges of the pen. Jen and Jar danced and hopped on each billow of air as it plumed. Totally distracted, the audience



Jan Jar recreates the courtship tactics that won over his little shrew

politely stifled their laughter.

The last session was held on a lake shore. Jen and Jar once again took stage right and got to munch on some grass inside their pen. A llama attended as well, and when she spied the rabbits, trod up to the pen. Jenni watched closely, then sat up on her haunches at the pen's edge to greet her fellow grazer. The llama stood nose to nose with her for several moments as all 75 of us watched in quiet fascination. Something, I don't know what, transpired between them.

I noticed a dramatic change in Jenni that day. Jenni was soliciting attention from her admirers and enjoying it immensely! At the session's conclusion, participants were asked to pick an animal present with whom to communicate. One lady who'd been enamored with Jenni shared with us, "I was staring at her ears and I saw a butterfly. That's it, just a butterfly."

### Butterflies are Free

Many of the participants came up to me saying they also had rabbits and were members of HRS. Jen and Jar had been such gracious and outstanding rabbit ambassadors, many students told me they were going home to adopt a rabbit.

Then it hit me, the woman's comment about seeing a butterfly on Jenni's ears—butterflies are a symbol of transformation, and Jenni, my little shrewish rabbit, had emerged from her cocoon a new being. Whatever past trauma had marred her spirit were now healed, and she returned home a more tranquil and well-behaved, albeit strong-willed rabbit.

# Outdoor Rabbits In Peril

by Andrea Jacobs

**O**ur first rabbit, a lovely Dutch girl named Indigo, taught us about rabbits. We had naively entered the rabbit world to fulfill the four-legs-and-fur needs of our children. After her youth as a 4-H rabbit, Indigo's life with us began in our backyard hutch on a balmy June day. We did not want her to be in a cage all the time, so my husband built a fenced area to protect her from dogs and foxes. She had room to hop, grass and dandelions to munch, and shade to lounge in. We always returned her to the hutch at night.

Although timid with us, Indigo liked her rabbit run and liked to sun herself. As time went on, HRS led us to more and better information about rabbits, and Fall became Winter, we began to bring Indigo into the house. She easily litterbox trained herself, and we grew closer to her. We realized an inside rabbit was a pet; an outside rabbit was livestock. Nevertheless, it seemed that honoring the wild ancestors of domestic rabbits required they be allowed in the fresh air and breeze. Indigo still spent nice afternoons in her outdoor run.

One Saturday afternoon in early March, I took Indigo outside. Towards dusk, as usual, I went to the backyard to retrieve her and move her back inside. To my utmost horror, in an oh-my-gosh-is-this-really-happening-slow-motion-but-panicked kind of way, there inside the rabbit yard I saw a huge predatory bird, about three feet in height, with our eviscerated Indigo at its side. It looked at me, then raised and spread its wings. Recognizing threat posture, I ran inside the house and called my husband. Our three children, fortunately, were out for the afternoon. He heard the ter-

ror in my voice and raced outside. We knew Indigo was dead, but we were determined to collect her body. My husband, who is 6'3" to my 5', went into the rabbit yard and, with his foot, forced the bird to back out of the gate into the backyard. He wrapped Indigo in her favorite blanket and we placed her in a pretty box.

Of course, we had to tell our children what happened. All of us were distraught and enormously sad. How could this happen to our sweet rabbit? Why didn't we know we had to protect her? How could we have betrayed her? We thought she was safe inside the fence.

On Sunday, we had a funeral in the woods behind our house and buried our rabbit. I am haunted still

by the moment I came upon her. I imagine her fear and hope it was fleeting.

A few weeks after Indigo's demise, I spoke with the predatory birds docent at the Baltimore Zoo, who was not surprised by my story. She said the bird's markings were those of an osprey (a sea eagle), and that the eagle population is increasing in this area. Eagles dive bomb their prey by tucking their wings in, and are so quick that even if we had been outside, we still could not have protected Indigo.

We now share our house with two lops named Bam Bam and Bozo. They are 100% free-range house rabbits, and absolutely delightful. Much of their great good fortune they owe to Indigo.

## Nail Clipping

by Liz DiNorma

**R**abbits' nails grow to be long and sharp unless trimmed regularly. Long nails get caught in carpeting and/or cage wires, resulting in breakage or nail tears—even broken toes. A nail broken close to the toe can bleed profusely and become infected. Keeping a rabbit's nails trimmed is necessary for your rabbit's well-being.

### Anatomy of the Nail

Rabbits have four claws on their rear feet and five on their front feet. The fifth claw on the front, the dew-claw, is found on the inside of the front leg. A vein runs through the claws called the quick. In light-colored nails, the quick is a dark line within the nail. In dark nails, the

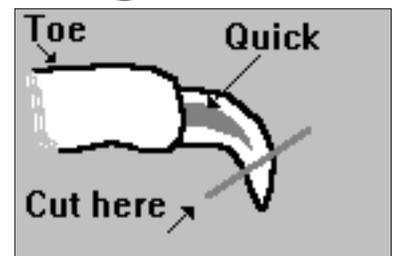


Figure A

quick can be seen under bright light. The end of the nail past the quick is the part that we clip. (See Figure A).

The quick doesn't normally run all the way to the tip of the rabbit's nails unless trimming has been irregular. In this case, the quick will be long and less nail can be trimmed. Trimming smaller amounts more often will train the quick to retreat into the nail bed.

Trimming monthly is sufficient. Active diggers and sprinters often wear down nails on their own.

continued on page 4

Nail Clipping, continued from page 3

Inactive or disabled rabbits need more frequent trims. If you hear toenails clicking on the floor, it's time to trim!

### Tools of the Trim

Clippers, Q-tips or cotton balls, Kwik-Stop (styptic powder) or flour, a towel, flashlight (for dark nails), an assistant (for the first few times), and treats for the bunny are needed.

There are several kinds of clippers: guillotine-style with replaceable blades, pruner-style, and small, scissors-style. Some people use human fingernail or toenail clippers. Whatever kind is used, clippers should be kept sharp to avoid crushing or shattering the nail or pulling rabbit's fur. Consider the thickness of bunny's nails and how comfortable the clippers are for you.

### Getting Down to the Nitty Gritty

Bright lighting is best. Initially, you'll need assistance. Decide who will hold the rabbit and who will trim, and be aware of their very delicate bones.

Be confident. Assume the alpha rabbit role. Rabbits will sense apprehension and struggle. They don't like positions that hinder their defense and escape options.

Holding your rabbit will be your biggest challenge. Read the hold descriptions to decide which works best for you and your rabbit. They are listed in order from least restrictive for the rabbit to most restrictive.

All positions except the front hold can eventually be done by one person. Note the directions are written for a right-handed person—left-handers, simply reverse the hand positions.

### Would You Like to Trance?

Rabbits held on their backs will sometimes trance (See Figure B) into a very relaxed, hypnotic state. To trance your rabbit—while sitting, hold him to your chest with his feet

toward you. Bring your knees up toward the his back while moving your torso and knees closer together as you lean over. Place his back on your legs while keeping one hand on his chest. Position him just between your legs with his head towards your knees, making sure his head is lower than the rest of his body. You can open your legs a bit to have him be a little more securely wedged. Always keep one hand on the rabbit, as they can untrance very quickly and flip themselves over.

Keep in mind, the rear end of the rabbit should be higher than the head and the chin in line with the spine. Gently stroke the forehead with a front to back motion. When the rabbit is relaxed, gently tip the head back to increase the downward angle of the head. When the bottom is up and head is down and back, the rabbit is fully tranced.

**The Hold Positions:** This requires two people. Place your right hand underneath the rabbit around the front of his chest with your two first fingers between his front legs. Place your left hand on his rump and scoop upward, securely supporting the rump. Hold the rabbit to your chest with his feet out.

**Reverse Football:** This is only for trimming back nails and also requires two people. Pick up the rabbit as described in the Front



Figure B

continued on page 11

## GIFTS IN REMEMBRANCE

Phyllis Buff

*In memory of*  
*Herbie*

Elizabeth A. Howard

*In memory of*  
*Savi*

Nicole L. Roberts

*In honor of*  
*George's*  
*4th Birthday*

Mary & Josh Valle

*In Memory of*  
*Mr. Paws*

Robert & Nancy Wersto

*In Memory of*  
*Boo &*  
*Sam I Am*

Marni Soupcoff

*In Memory of*  
*Rajiv Vaidya*

Gregory Dent & Rene Wozny

*In Memory of*  
*Woppy*

# A Farewell to Friends by Kate McGinley

I acquired my first rabbit the way many of us did—I bought him on a whim in a pet store. At first, I did everything wrong. Then my sister gave me a copy of the *House Rabbit Handbook*, and slowly but surely life got better for that little bunny. I got him a friend, and I was on my way to a rabbit love affair.

Back in December of 1995, I subscribed to an email list called Petbunny. Just a few days after I subscribed, I saw an email from **Kathleen Wilsbach**, the founding member and Chapter Manager of the local HRS chapter. It was a plea for fostering help—the **Humane Society of Baltimore County** was full to the top with lovely, adoptable rabbits, including some angoras. My own bunny Pookie is an angora, so it really touched my heart. I thought ‘I have room for one foster,’ so, not knowing what I was getting into, I emailed Kathleen with an offer of help with fostering one of the rabbits at the shelter. I met her in Baltimore, and brought home an adorable Jersey Woolly girl named **Gabrielle**. My husband was very skeptical—he was sure we would just be adding another animal to our household on a permanent basis. But Gabrielle was adopted within a month, and my husband became a believer.

We decided it would be easier to let them go if we fostered two rabbits at a time instead of one, and fosters number two and three arrived—an adorable gray and white Dutch rabbit, **Rembrandt**, and a former stray named **Nigel**. Eventually, the numbers grew until I was fostering four rabbits at once.

At that time, the chapter had no Web site, and all of our adoptions came from putting up flyers and advertising in local papers. I had no experience with Web pages—no formal computer training at all actually—but I discovered that by running a free piece of soft-

ware, I could turn my work computer into a server for a Web page, and no one minded. So, I just gave it a try. Our first “Web site” was a single page with pictures of our rabbits for adoption. It became obvious very quickly that a Web presence was going to make all the difference. Even with that very simple start, we almost immediately started getting online rabbit adoption inquiries. I experimented with Web site formatting, and our site was on its way. Moral of the story? Just do it!

Eventually our chapter grew, as did the **House Rabbit Society** on a national level, and the time came to incorporate, requiring that we set up a **Board of Directors**. I agreed to become **Director of Fostering**, which meant I coordinated the fosterers, foster rabbits, and rescues. This assignment has been very intense but also very rewarding. I think I remember every rabbit that I agreed to rescue from all the shelters, or at least most of them. Each one is special to me. Thanks to our wonderful group of fosterers, it was possible to make a difference not only to the rabbits, but to the various shelters we work with. Our chapter volunteers have become a true team.

The time has come that I must move on—my husband has accepted a great job with the **Illinois Natural History Survey**, and he and I have moved to the Champaign-Urbana area of Illinois (home of the **University of Illinois**). We now live on a lovely 5 acre farmette, complete with all our animals, including my horses. I am looking forward to this change of pace from the Big City (#2 in the country for traffic jams!) to



Kate models the new HRS t-shirt designed by member Lara Byer:

the country (no traffic in sight!).

I leave, with a rather heavy heart, all the good friends I have made here including all the people who have adopted rabbits from me in the last few years. They are all so wonderful, it made it easy to let my foster rabbits go to their new homes. People have been asking me ‘what will the chapter do without you?’ Although my absence might be felt for a while, I leave knowing that because of our excellent Chapter Manager Kathleen and the dedication of the fosterers and volunteers, the chapter will carry on just fine. **Jodi Robertson** has already taken over the Web site, **Susan Easton** is the new **Director of Fostering**, and this is the second issue of *The Clover Leaf* produced by **Patti Henningsen**. New foster homes are added on a regular basis, so the fostering gap will be filled soon.

Just remember—I’m only an email away! So for now good friends, it’s goodbye....



Kate McGinley’s farewell dinner: Pictured clockwise from left are HRS volunteers: Kathleen Wilsbach, Lisa Stegrist, Kathy Eastman, Judy Lainer, Liz Howard, Kate McGinley, Liz DiNorma, Susan Easton, Kay Bannon, and Chris Brannon

# Rabbits for

All rabbits are to be adopted as HOUSE RABBITS only—no exceptions! \$50 donation per rabbit, plus \$18 membership for non-members. You  
RABBIT PICTURES GROUPED TOGETHER DO NOT INDICATE PAIRS OR TRIOS UNLESS



Zane

**BRYCE** and **FLETCHER** are sons of the beautiful Miette (adopted from HRS 2/01). They are each about 4 lbs, but still growing at 5 months old. They are very people oriented rabbits & will do very well in a loving home.



Farley

**FIONA** and **TRUFFLE** are beautiful English Angora sisters, about 3 years old. Fiona is white with blue eyes. She is gentle and doesn't mind being picked up. Truffle is grey and taupe agouti with a white spot on her nose. She is shy but sweet and gentle like her sister. They've been together since birth and are like peas in a pod.

**MELBA** and **GUNTHER** are two siblings rescued from a family of originally seven members. Melba loves to lounge, that is, when she's not climbing and exploring. Gunther is bold and adventurous. He is quite vocal, oinking, purring, and snorting at anything or anyone who cares to listen.

**FIGARO, ROSINA, & LINDORO** are a fun-loving trio. Figaro is full of energy and moves very fast. He likes to snuggle with Rosina and Lindoro. Lindoro is a real

sweetie, easy going and irresistible. Rosina will fall into your arms for a fine cuddle. She LOVES to go off exploring and doesn't miss a thing.

**KLAUS**, and **SONA** are a fun-loving pair of 6 year old rabbits. They are a great pair to watch and get along very well together. They enjoy lots of attention and never seem to get enough!

**FARLEY** is a handsome, black rabbit—a real rabbit's rabbit. He weighs about 8 lbs. and likes nice dogs and cats. He's a strong-willed boy with loads of spunk. When Farley thumps, people listen!

**FROST** is part rex and has lovely soft fur. He is very shy but doesn't mind sitting in laps and seems to be a very laid back guy. What a handsome boy!!!

**JACQUES** is a very sweet French Angora boy whose immaculate white coat needs regular grooming. He may be fluffy, but he's no sissy! He loves to run, jump, and dance! His favorite thing is getting attention and petting.

**KOBE** is a beautiful silver marten mix. Not only is he extra handsome, but he is also the perfect lap bunny. He's being held for long petting sessions. He longs for space to dance about but is always ready to be picked up and cuddled.

**LINDEN** is a beautiful and sweet agouti boy. He's a little shy but is learning to trust his foster mom. His fur is very soft. He really loves to play with toys that have bells in them. He'd really like a rabbit friend so he can relax and feel safe.

**LUIS** is a sweet, gentle, Angora boy weighing about 5 lbs. When he was brought into the shelter, he was quite matted. After a series of brushings, he is turning into a beautiful boy. He loves to dance. Since Luis is a long-haired rabbit, he will require extra attention.

**SUNDANCE** - This dapper mini-lop is fun, cute, and well-mannered. He explores with gusto then flops out when his work is done. True to his name, this bun does some cute dance steps. He likes being petted and being held.

**YODA** was found as a stray. He is about 8 months old with a very nice disposition. He loves pets and will sit still for them for a long time.

## ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥ Happy Adop

Dear HRS,

Here's an update on the lovebirds! They are doing so well, we're amazed! Ethan has become quite comfortable with everyone and loves to hop and explore around the house—with or without Quigley! Sometimes they seem content to stay in the cage and lounge, especially Quigley. We're hoping that means that she really loves her new cage. She is still doing great with the litter box training. And she has finally discovered the upper level—and loves it!

We now have a gate separating the living room area from the kitchen and dining area, so the rabbits can roam around most of the time when we are home. Both the bunnies and the cats tease the dog from the other side of the gate! The cats both seem to like little Ethan, too. They never have known what to do with Quigley since she's the same size as they are, and has no problem hopping right up to them. Ethan likes to play chase with our Persian, Chessy, who has never before liked or paid attention to ANYONE!!!! But she really likes him!!!

Ethan is charming, and we've never seen Ms. Quigley happier!

Stacy & Adam Watts

Dear HRS,

Delta is still a very opinionated bunny who rules our house. She has the run of the den all day and night. We bring her a couple carrot nuggets first thing in the morning. She comes running to the gate when she hears our approach, gets her snack and then signifies she wants to go on the porch by standing up and sniffing the air.

If she has company, she'll do a few rounds of dashing in and out of the house. We can't go to bed without leaving her a nightcap of a few broccoli florettes or some parsley. She still doesn't cotton to being picked up or held, but if you sit on the couch, she'll jump up beside you and let you smooch her nose and stroke her.

Cindy Lipsitz

Dear HRS,

We want to thank you for all your expertise in adopting Babs and Bandit, now known as Butterscotch and Licorice. Our creative bunny-proofing seems to be working. Butterscotch definitely lets us know when it's time for exercise—she shakes the pen quite insistently. I'm glad we secured it to the flooring! We've emailed all our friends and family to check out the photos on the HRS web site. And we're hooked; we like to check out the new adoptees every few days. Again, thank you for all your help in matching us up with Butterscotch and Licorice.

Karl, Gail, Erik and Kyle Wolf

Dear HRS,

Maggie and Scout are getting along fine and they spend a fair amount of time nuzzling and lying next to each other. The cutest thing, though, is when I start to pat either one, the other rushes over to snuggle up and stick his/her head under my hand as well.

Agi Kiss

# Adoption!!!

other rabbits must be spayed or neutered. Pictures of all our foster rabbits can be viewed at our web site, [www.houserabbit.org/BaltWashDC/](http://www.houserabbit.org/BaltWashDC/) THEY ARE IN THE SAME PHOTO. SEE DESCRIPTIONS FOR COMPLETE INFORMATION.

**WHEATON** is an adorable dwarf bunny. Full grown at 2-1/2 pounds, he is friendly and funny. He loves pets having his ears scratched. Because of his size, Wheaton is not recommended for families with children under age 8.

**ZANE** is a dark mini-lop with specks of white. He is full of energy. He will keep you entertained as he carries around his magazine or plays with his soccer ball. He will take a break from his daily activities long enough for pets.

**ANTJE** is a petite (4 lbs) Dutch bunny. She is about 8 months old. Antje is used to cats, dogs, and other rabbits. She is very outgoing and adventurous and likes to chew. Antje is not shy asking for pets. This beautiful girl is very lovable.

**ASTRID** was left behind in the backyard when her owners moved. She is a striking, big girl (9 lbs) She likes people but really misses having other rabbits to hang out with. She would be a good choice for a family with children.

**BROWNYN** is a very intelligent and loving girl. She is a soft, velvety mini-rex who just loves to be touched and petted. She is cream color with a patches of dark grey. She almost has "harlequin" markings. She is active and alert.

**CAROLINE** is a beautiful Himalayan rabbit. She loves to explore and dance. She shows off her athletic ability by jumping over a 30" pen. She is still learning to trust humans again, so she will need a home with TLC.

**CHERRY** is a gorgeous big girl. Outgoing, inquisitive, and full of energy, she puts on some spectacular dancing displays. Her engaging personality made her a favorite with the shelter staff and is delighting her foster family. She is comfortable with cats and nice dogs.

**ELLA** is a sweet 8 month old mini-lop girl. Although she is a bit shy in her cage, when she is allowed out to run, she comes out of her shell completely, leaping and dancing!

**GEENA** is a gorgeous big red-head, weighing around 9 lbs. She is very outgoing and lovable, and would be a good choice for a family with children and/or other pets. She is used to nice dogs and cats.

**QUINNA** is 9 pounds 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 really enjoys playing with her toys, especially wicker baskets! She has a mind of her own, but really enjoys the time spent with her human! She would be great for anyone who wants a fun companion!

**VERILY** is a 5 month old (5 lb) red and white Mini Lop. Her name means "truly." She is very friendly and busy and loves to run around the rabbit room like mad.

**VENUS**, true to her name is a little love goddess. She loves attention and petting. She is last year's Easter Bunny and is looking for someone to love her the way she deserves this time around. She is a zippy little 4lb. girl who likes to dance.



## Adoption Letters! ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

Dear HRS,

André is absolutely wonderful. Zach (my little boy) got back from his weekend away and the two of them hit it off instantly.

We have settled into a routine—every night we come home and let André out, Zach helps me fix the salad and get fresh hay (that's his favorite part), and then it's play time. Zach chases André and then André chases Zach—it's quite amusing!

Tammi Poswiatowsky

Dear HRS,

The bunnies are doing fine together, snuggling and grooming. Abner is still exploring and rubbing his chin on everything, including me, to mark his territory. He's doing his bunny dance: running about, jumping, changing directions mid-air and seeming happy! I think they're doing really well together, and Bun Bun's no longer lonely!

Sandy Curtin

Dear HRS,

Tex is doing great! He's getting more and more relaxed with his exercise time. Last night he flew over the gate I had put up to keep him from going into the hallway! I was so surprised that he could jump that high. He's so determined. He's started to jump on my back while I'm on the floor, and I think I've witnessed some 'dances,' or more like some weird jumps & twists. He's started to

play with toys now, too. I bought him a little wire ball with a bell inside, and he'll chase it when I throw it. I'm still working on having him bring it back to me. Not so sure how that will work.

I found out last night, too, that he loves fresh dill!

I love him dearly!

Barb Cvek

Dear HRS,

Winston is such a delightfully social bun—he'll defer eating food to get petted or to hang out. I have NEVER had a pet with those kinds of civilized priorities. I didn't know how affectionate a rabbit could be.

Our first rabbit, Rorschach, was with us for eight years before she died. And while she was a dear friend, there was always a fair bit of skittishness. She would rarely sit still for anything other than brief petting. We always suspected she had been pretty traumatized before we rescued her.

I was told Winston had a pretty rough start in life himself—someone in DC had thrown him down a flight of stairs. I'm amazed, then, how trusting and friendly he is and what a neat laid back disposition he has. Bless HRS for saving this wonderful chum. What a waste it would be to keep him outside. I wouldn't have missed this friendship for the world.

Gary Axelson

# Chapter Update

The year 2000 was a very good one for our chapter but it was also the end of an era (see *A Farewell to Friends*, page 3). **Director of Fostering Kate McGinley** packed up and left for a life in the country near Champaign/Urbana, Illinois.

**THE TOTAL NUMBER OF RABBITS ADOPTED TO NEW HOMES DURING 2000 IS 113!** For a look at some of these cutie-pies, check out our **Adoption Hall of Fame** on our web site [www.rabbit.org/BaltWashDC](http://www.rabbit.org/BaltWashDC). Of course, if your bunny needs a friend, see our **Rabbits for Adoption** on page 6-7 or visit our Web site and fill out an online application!

**Director of Special Projects, Fosterer,** and bunny-sitter, **Susan Wong**, held her bi-annual yard sale in September, which was once again a huge success, bringing in nearly **\$1,000** for the rabbits! The yard sale was held at her house in Olney and is one of our biggest fundraising events. Kudos Susan!

In September, the **HRS** presence was felt at the **Super Pet Expo** (the third one HRS hosted a table at this year), where we had a booth fully-stocked with rabbit care information, video presentations, rabbit care items (toys, hay, and such), and ambassador rabbits. **HRS** volunteers staffed the booth both days of the weekend, selling many *House Rabbit Handbooks*, as well as answering many rabbit care questions.

In October, **HRS Volunteers Chris Brannon** and **Kay Bannon** had a table at the **Old Farm Veterinary Hospital's Open House** in Frederick where they were accompanied by two **HRS** foster buns and a shelter bun from the **Frederick County Humane Society**.

The rabbits attracted many visitors, and **Kay** and **Chris** talked with them about the rewards of having a rabbit as a companion.

As November skies loomed over us,

we held our **Fall Festival!** This event was held at the lovely home of **HRS Volunteer Barbara Storck**. Delicious food and merry chatter on every imaginable bunny topic highlighted the afternoon. Guests also shopped **The Bunny Boutique**, a collection of bunny collectables, for the benefit of foster buns. Also at the **Fall Festival**, a new **HRS T-shirt** was unveiled (see page 8). The t-shirt was designed by **HRS Member Lara Buyer** and is available in all sizes and also as a sweatshirt. For more information about the t-shirt, see our Web site.

Also in November, **HRS Director of Education Liz DiNorma** held a **Rabbit Care Class** at the **Shirlington Library** in Arlington on behalf of the **Animal Welfare League of Arlington**. **HRS Volunteers Rebecca Kingery** and **Nicky Roberts**, who are also both regular shelter volunteers for the rabbits at

**AWLA**, assisted Liz. About 15 attendees thoroughly quizzed Liz and left that evening with a deeper awareness of rabbit care. Thanks to the **AWLA** for letting us help with rabbit care education!

**HRS Volunteers Deborah McLaughlin** and **Liz Sugermeier** were on hand on November 5 for **National Geographic's Passport Friday**, graciously coordinated by **National Geographic** employee and adopter of two **HRS** rabbits, **Nancy Boyd**. Now you might ask, what is Passport Friday? Every Friday, **National Geographic** invites groups to set up booths in their **Explorer's Hall** during lunchtime. **HRS** has been invited to do this several times now, and **National Geographic** has always made very generous donations each time. Thank you **National Geographic!**



## WHERE CAN YOU BUY RABBIT SUPPLIES FROM A RABBIT-FRIENDLY SOURCE?

### HRS SUPPLIERS:

- Kathleen Wilsbach  
Baltimore, Maryland  
kwilsbach@mindspring.com  
410/889-4104
- Susan Wong  
Olney, Maryland  
sbunny@erols.com  
301/570-9152
- Jodi Robertson  
Bel Air, Maryland  
lapinblanc@home.com  
410/838-3761
- Jamie Sargent  
Springfield, VA  
JAllisonJ@aol.com  
703/642-9350

### AVAILABLE SUPPLIES:

- CareFresh litter \$12.50/bag
- Local Hay by the flake ~\$5
- Oxbow Timothy pellets \$1/lb
- Harlan Hi Fiber pellets \$.50/lb
- Oxbow Hay \$2/lb  
(Jodi Robertson doesn't have this yet)
- Litter pans
- Water bottles
- Brushes
- Combs
- Nail clippers
- X-pens
- HRS handbooks



**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!**

## **BREAKING NEWS . . . Maryland Passes Felony Animal Cruelty**

**Law.** The Maryland Senate gave final approval to HB649, making it a felony to: mutilate, torture, cruelly kill or beat an animal, organize a dog or cock fight or injure a police animal in the line of duty. The penalty—up to three years in jail with a minimum fine of \$2,500. The final vote was 45 to 0. No amendments were offered. Governor Glendening supports felony cruelty legislation and is expected to sign it.

# “Rescuing” Pet Store Rabbits

by Kathleen Wilsbach

Many HRS members and adopters tell me they purchased a rabbit from a pet store or breeder before they knew about HRS or the many rabbits in shelters. There isn't any shame in this. When I decided to get my first rabbit back in 1990, I, too, was looking at baby rabbits in pet stores. I didn't know about the need for rescue. The only thing that stopped me from buying one was a neighbor telling me he was planning to euthanize his rabbit when he moved. Thus Clover entered my life.

What is more problematic is buying rabbits when you do “know better.” People may explain that these rabbits need homes too, they were bought out of pity, or even call this “rescuing” a rabbit.

Most of us have seen baby pet store rabbits whose days are numbered either because of illness, not being sold, or approaching puberty. Maybe the store owner reveals the awful destiny if not sold—being fed to snakes or shipped back to the breeder for slaughter. Rabbit lovers that we are, our first impulse is to “rescue” these unfortunate waifs.

### **The Economics of Rabbit Supply and Demand**

Please consider the consequences when you “rescue” a suffering rabbit by buying him from a pet

store or breeder. You are rewarding that establishment for causing suffering and condemning many more rabbits to the same fate!

Refusing to purchase rabbits from pet stores causes sellers loss. Thus they stock fewer rabbits thereby causing the breeder to produce less. If no one ever bought rabbits in pet stores, breeders would stop breeding. It may seem harsh to leave pet store or breeder rabbits to their fate, but you will help many more rabbits.

Boycott stores that sell rabbits. Let the owner or manager know why you're doing it. Numerous pet stores have stopped selling puppies and kittens. Let's make rabbits next.

Rabbits are sold locally in many stores and chains, including Petco (which is again selling rabbits in Virginia). Purchase supplies from venues that don't sell rabbits. Our Web site lists local rabbit-friendly and mail order suppliers. HRS members can buy many supplies from HRS with 100% of the profits going to support our rescue efforts.

### **Reporting Abuse and Neglect**

The best way to help rabbits suffering from neglect in pet stores—no water, dirty water, dirty bedding, sick rabbits not receiving medical attention—is to report the problem to the person in charge of the rabbits. Done tactfully and non-judgmentally, the problem may be immediately corrected.

If the neglect persists, contact local Animal Control authorities. In most cases, you can report neglect to your local animal control office or humane organization. In Baltimore County, only Animal Control has authority to investigate cruelty and neglect complaints.

Most pet stores are governed by vague animal cruelty statutes. At <http://www.animal-law.org/statutes> it is stated that animals must be provided with “necessary sustenance, food, drink, and shelter” in northern Virginia and DC. Maryland is a little better, mentioning space and veterinary care.

Once charges are pressed, the Animal Control officer and the judge determine what is “adequate” or “necessary.” Your testimony is important. Collect information and observations over a period of time to strengthen the case. Photos can be used as evidence. Keep a journal with dates and times of visits and problems observed; note names of people you spoke with about the problem and their reactions. If your journal shows a pattern of poor care, action can be taken.

Some jurisdictions have better-defined laws and require pet stores to be licensed. The USDA Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) regulates large animal facilities under the federal Animal Welfare Act, but most pet stores,

*continued on page 12*

**T**hanks to the following Special Friends who donated \$25 or more to help the rabbits:

Bunny Heaven  
Paul M. and Brenda R. CORAN  
Colleen COUGHLIN  
FORT HUNT ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
Melinda GUNTHER  
Irena GUTNIKOVA-OLEYNIK  
Anne G. IMBODEN  
Liz Huffman & Dean OLMSTEAD  
Edmund & Theresa KELETY  
Pamela & Isaac KIDD  
Carolyn & Michael KIRBY  
Agnes KISS  
Nicole & Steven KOLLER  
Douglas LAFON  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SOCIETY  
Mark RAYNAULT  
Cynthia A. & James S. PAPPAS  
Wendy A POBANZ  
Karin R. PRESCOTT  
Karen I. RARICK  
Regina SPALLONE  
Mary E. STOXEN  
Constance TJOUMAS  
John WHITE  
Anne E. WITTY  
Mary & Charles ZEMAN

**\$**pecial 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 HR EMERGENCY  
FALLSTON VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
KENTLANDS VETERINARY HOSPITAL  
KINGSBROOKE ANIMAL HOSPITAL  
OLD FARM VETERINARY CLINIC  
RIDGE LAKE ANIMAL HOSPITAL



## Tips From Our Members

To encourage your bunny to snuggle with you more, lay or sit on the couch in a comfortable position, shake papaya bottle saying "who wants a treat?" You may need to begin this on the floor if your bunnies don't know what 'treat' means! Once they do, they will come running when they hear the bottle. Then, when they're on your lap, give a papaya, then hide the bottle while they are chewing, and begin petting the bunny in his favorite way. At first, the bunny will barely stop chewing before bolting, but over time, petting will become as important as the treat! It has taken a year for our Samantha Jean, but she hangs around for a good 20 minutes now! The boys, Thomas and Edmund, took almost as long, and now when I come home and lay on the couch, they jump up and look for the treats, but still stay if none are offered and lay down for pets. We only do treats every few days to keep them guessing!

*Barbara Fueschel*

I bought a paper shredder and shred paper to mix with Carefresh to make the bags of Carefresh last longer and save me money! I take paper home from work that I would otherwise throw away, and also shred things like junk mail—both sources give me an endless supply! It of course also helps for when I am out of litter and can't get to store. I find that it works best when mixed with the Carefresh instead of just by itself because the paper gets soaked pretty fast. Anyway, it's nothing new, but it sure does help me out.

*Diane Ray*

We put lawn and leaf bags in the bottom of litter pans. Then we buy large bales of peat moss and line all our trays with it. The acid moss neutralizes bunny urine. To clean the cages, we simply invert the bag so all the peat moss and bunny dung is captured in the bag. The bags then get emptied onto our compost heap with a shovel of leaves. We have the best compost on the planet!

We also find that the boy bunnies, even though neutered, will mark in front of each others cages. We have solved this problem by placing plastic mats underneath and along the "front doors" of each of the cages. A roll of paper towels and some vinegar is kept close at hand for "accidents."

*Nan Roche*

I use Fellowes Neat Idea Cubes (bought from Reliable Office Supplies at [www.reliable.com](http://www.reliable.com)) linked together with cable ties around the edge of the bed to keep my rabbits from getting underneath and playing with the dust bunnies. I've tied a few places together with socks so I can open the barrier easily for storage or to clean.

*Cara Griego*

Jack & Lily adore wild raspberry leaves and stems, which are abundant in our region; the buns gobble them down thorns and all. Get someone to show you how to recognize the plant, and be sure the area is not sprayed for pesticides—then watch your bunnies enjoy!!

*Victoria Clements*

**SEND IN YOUR TIPS!** We love hearing great 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 [ChiefOfOwsla@aol.com](mailto:ChiefOfOwsla@aol.com)

Nail Clipping, continued from page 4

Hold. Now, use your right hand (holding his chest and front paws) to tuck his upper half under your left arm, still cradling his rump with your left hand. Hold his head and upper body snugly between your arm and side.

**Half Burrito:** This is only for front nails. Place your rabbit on a towel and snugly wrap it around his rear half. This leaves his front paws free. Place him on your lap in a trance .

**Full Burrito:** This is for the uncooperative rabbit. Place your rabbit on a towel and wrap it around his body, leaving only his head out. When you've got control, gently free one foot at a time to trim. Hold him in whatever position works best for you, either upside down on your lap in a trance , or right side up on a table.

### Alas, The Manicure!

Now you're ready to trim!

Expose the nail from the fur, locate

the quick, and snip off the end of the nail. To locate the quick in dark nails, look at the nail from different angles in bright light or try back-lighting with a flashlight. If you still can't find the quick, trim a little off the end and repeat in a week. If you accidentally cut the quick, apply pressure to the end of the nail with a cotton ball, or apply a clotting agent (styptic powder or flour) to the area by dabbing it on with a damp Q-tip and apply pressure. DON'T WORRY! It happens to everyone... even vets! Just stay calm and continue trimming.

Don't forget to reward your brave rabbit with a small, nutritious treat and tell her she's a good rabbit! Congratulations!

### Some Creative Methods and Preventive Maintenance

**Emerg Board:** Glue medium grit sandpaper to heavy cardboard with non-toxic glue. Put in cage near feeding dish. It is most effective on

front nails but the back ones will also wear down.

**Trim or Treat?:** When putting your rabbit in her cage at night, give her raisins through the top of her cage. To reach it, she will 'climb' the side of her cage. As she does this, her nails will stick out. Then while she is trying to bite a piece of raisin, clip her nails.

**Wag the Carrot:** Set a carrot in front of your rabbit and let her munch while trim her nails. She may get so distracted in her carrot-eating frenzy, that you can lift her paws up just enough to get under the nails.

<sup>1</sup> Graphic reprinted with permission. *Rabbit Care News - A Practical Guide to Indoor Companion Rabbits* by Jennifer Royce, 1996 Southern Tier Rabbit Care Network.

Many thanks to all who contributed: Jennifer Royce of the NY Chapter of HRS; Jean and Phil Seymour of B.U.N.S.; the San Diego Chapter of HRS; Leiann Mensinger and Noelle from the Etherbun mailing list; and Kate McGinley from the Maryland/DC/ NoVA Chapter of HRS.

## 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 Maryland, Northern Virginia 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.houserabbit.org/BaltWashDC](http://www.houserabbit.org/BaltWashDC) and fill out the online volunteer form. THANKS!!



## Is Your Membership Current? Are You Moving?

Is there a "TIME TO RENEW" stamp on the opposite side of this page? If so, please renew your membership by filling in this form and mailing it to the address below. Is your address printed correctly on the opposite side of this page? If not, please take a moment to fill out the form below with your corrected address and mail it to the address 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.

- RENEWAL
- VOLUNTEER
- ADDRESS CORRECTION
- CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to also make a donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Make check payable to HRS

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

Pet Store Rabbits, continued from page 9  
excepting stores selling *real* exotics like hedgehogs and sugargliders, are exempt from APHIS regulation.

Fines range from \$100 to \$1000. In Maryland, Virginia, and DC, most acts of animal cruelty are misdemeanors. Thirty-one states now levy felony charges for certain animal cruelty violations. Maryland, Virginia, and DC are all currently weighing measures to make serious acts of animal cruelty felonies.

The DC City Council passed and the Mayor signed, the Freedom from Cruelty to Animals Protection Act of 2000. The U.S. Congress must now approve the bill. Similar

Maryland legislation is Senate Bill 356 and House Bill 649 while similar Virginia legislation is Senate Bill 897. More information on this issue can be found at [http://www.hsus.org/whatnew/cruel\\_law071200.html](http://www.hsus.org/whatnew/cruel_law071200.html) and <http://lisaviolet.com/cathouse/cruelty.html>.

Reporting to the authorities and litigation may seem arduous and indirect in helping rabbits suffering in pet stores, but in the long run it helps many more animals. And in our society where capitalism rules, put your money where your heart is and boycott those businesses perpetuating cruelty and contributing to pet overpopulation.



**BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME**

**INSIDE:**

- Nail Clipping Guide .....p.3
- Where to Buy Rabbit Supplies  
That Help Rabbits .....p.8
- Maryland's Felony Animal  
Cruelty Law Passes.....p.10

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 such use of our members' addresses.

**HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY**

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