“What breed of dog will get along with my rabbits?” This question is asked a lot, but it misses the main point. What doggy personality will get along best with your rabbits is the question to ask, not what breed. While it’s true to some extent that breed makes a difference—for example, certain terrier breeds might not be the best choice—we all know examples of these dogs living happily with rabbits and even smaller members of the animal kingdom. Some breeds that I know of living in peace with rabbits are Keeshonds, Collies, Pit bulls, Greyhounds, Scotties, Basset hounds, Corgis, and of course mixed breeds! As you can see, good bunny-loving dogs come in all shapes and sizes!

Generally, a puppy of any breed is not the best choice. Pups don’t have any manners yet and don’t know their own strength. They are unpredictable and can accidentally cause harm while just trying to play. Also, they haven’t learned basic commands yet, like “No” much less, advanced words such as “down-stay” and “gentle”, which are essential for good dog/bunny relationships. However, if you are careful to control all interactions between the pup and your rabbits, it will work fine. Be prepared to monitor the pup’s every move for some months until you have control and he has learned to distinguish between acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

A mature dog is usually easier to integrate into the household. The best place to choose an adult doggy companion is your local shelter or dog rescue group, here you will find a large...
The Year of the Rabbit

by Kathleen Wilsbach

For thousands of years, the Chinese have celebrated the new year as a spring celebration. Chinese New Year is still sometimes called Spring Festival. It is held after the fall harvest and before the start of the spring planting season and brings hope for a good harvest in the year to come.

The Chinese use a calendar based on the phases of the moon. A new moon is the beginning of a month. A full moon is the middle of a month. This is called a lunar calendar, and it is calculated by the time it takes the moon to travel around the earth. (By comparison, the Gregorian calendar that we use is based on the time it takes the earth to circle the sun). Chinese New Year is the first day of the first month of the Chinese calendar. It begins with the second new moon after the winter solstice, which occurs between Jan. 21 and Feb. 19. The Chinese Lunar New Year is celebrated in many Asian countries.

The Chinese name each year after one of 12 different animals. After 12 years, the cycle of animals begins again. February 16, 1999 began the Year of the Rabbit /Hare. According to Chinese legend, Buddha invited all of the animals of the earth to celebrate his departure from this world, but only 12 animals came. In gratitude, Buddha named a year after each of the animals in the order that they arrived: the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Sheep, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Boar. It is believed that persons born during the year inherit some of the personality traits of their respective animal. Persons born in the years 1939, 1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, and 1999 fall under the sign of the Rabbit.

Generally speaking, being born in a rabbit year is lucky. Rabbits are regarded as gentle, virtuous, kind, sweet and talented, reserved but articulate, and are trusted and admired by many. Rabbits keep out of arguments and dislike anything to do with violence or brutality. Their diplomatic skills are striking; they assess situations, find solutions and then act. Rabbits are sensitive, sentimental and quite popular. Rabbit people are famous for their artistic sense and good taste. They usually have beautiful homes and are also usually well-dressed. Rabbit people crave security and so undertake nothing before they have weighed the pros and cons from every angle. Rabbits are born under the signs of virtue and prudence, making them loyal, honest employees, respected by all for their integrity. Famous people born in the Year of the Rabbit include Albert Einstein, Queen Victoria, Orson Welles, Marie Curie, Napoleon Bonaparte, Germaine Greer, Neil Sedaka, Francis Ford Coppola and Nanette Newman.

It is also thought that the year itself adopts the characteristics of the animal as well. After experiencing some of the chaotic events during the preceding Year of the Tiger (1998), many will look forward to the more peaceful existence promised by the Rabbit.

The Year of the Rabbit also has inspired many people in Japan to acquire rabbits as pets. The good news is that since most people in Japan live in apartments, the majority of these rabbits are being kept as indoor companions. We sincerely hope that the current “rabbit craze” is not followed by an aftermath similar to the one that follows the Easter Bunny craze in our own country. Parts of the HRS web site are available in Japanese translation so people won’t lack for good rabbit care information.

Gifts in Remembrance

Thank you to the following people who remembered or honored a special friend with a donation to the House Rabbit Society between October 1998 and April 1999:

Andra Brodetzky in memory of Friz-B
Moira Gingery in memory of Bunsie & Katie
Dana Lehder in memory of Scully
Pet Care Vet. Hospital in memory of Patches
Yael Schloss in memory of Caffeen
Melodye Traupel in Memory of Aunt A. who loved Rum Bun
All rabbits are to be adopted as HOUSE RABBITS only--no exceptions! $50 donation per rabbit, plus $18 membership for non-members. Your other rabbits must be spayed or neutered.

**Amber** is a gorgeous orange minrex girl, about 6 mos old. This sweetheart will steal your heart. (410)889-4104

**Amelia** is a beautiful big girl with up-ears and lovely black markings on a snowy background. Amelia is used to nice dogs. (301)570-9152

**Benedict** is a little loppy boy with a big, comical personality. Benny is a young dude with ataractive gray and white markings. He weighs in at 4 lbs. (703)241-0867

**Boomer** is a sweet love-bun who would do well with a quiet family. He is a sturdy calm fellow who loves to sit quietly for cuddling. (703)830-8359

**Brazen & Cheyenne** are a pretty pair of dwarfy spotted sisters. Brazen is the trouble maker—leading her more reserved sister into all kinds of explorations. (703)241-0867

**Bullet** is a real character—white with brown spots, he is personality plus! Bullet is used to nice dogs. He is a young adult neutered male. (410)889-4104

**Curtis** this amusing boy will keep you laughing with his antics—he loves to toss his toys and dance around. He is a handsome siamese-cat colored boy. (703)241-0867

**Diego** is an adorable little guy. He was the shelter favorite, and they were thrilled to place him in HRS foster care. He is lovable and active. (703)241-0867

**Francesca** is a stunning silver martin girl, about 3.5 lbs with a gentle personality. She would really shine with her own rabbit friend. (703)241-0867

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**SAGE & HAZEL** are a pretty pair of lovebuns. Hazel is a cute little orange and white dwarf girl, and her true love is dashing, funny gray and white Sage. Sage is medium-sized (about 5-6 lbs) (703)241-0867

**Jay** is a handsome black bunny with a small white spot on his nose. Curious and friendly, active little guy about 4 lbs. (410)889-4104

**Jessie** is a super sweet, attention craving black and white spot girl, about 5 lbs. She loves to play with her slinky but most of all she loves to be petted. (410)889-4104

**Jett** will steal your heart—she is a small charming sweet-tempered dwarf girl with oh so handsome jet-black coloring. (410)889-4104

**Marina** is a oh-so-soft minirex girl, white with gray spots. She loves a quiet cuddle. (301)251-4428

**Noah** is an elegant gentleman, sweet as can be. A larger rabbit, he would be a good choice with children. He also knows how to treat the ladies and wouldn’t mind a lady friend of his own. (703)830-8359

**Rowdy** is a very active and vocal minilop. He likes his head rubbed whenever he is resting between romps. (703)830-8359

**Ruby & Pearl** are a beautiful little pair of ruby-eyed dwarf rabbits. They love each other very much and are looking for a home where they can be together forever. Any lonely bachelors out there who would like *2* girlfriends? (301)570-9152

**Rufus** what a pretty boy—he has lovely strawberry blond long hair. He is a large Jersey Woolie with a sweet quiet personality. (410)889-4104

**Wilma** is a sweet girl—can’t decide between a lop or an up-eared rabbit? She is BOTH. She has adorable ears and is quite mellow and tidy. Wilma is good with cats and nice dogs (301)251-4428

**Xander & Willow** are a cute tiny brother and sister pair. Xander is a beautiful dark brown and Willow is a lovely chinchilla gray (410)889-4104
Marshmallow
A Classic Returns
by Liz DiNorna

This is a children’s book that changed my life. My very favorite book as a child was Marshmallow, by Clare Turlay Newberry. This book made me want a bunny - not just a bunny, but a bunny that lived inside with me and nibbled my shoelaces. And so, when I had been living on my own for a few years, felt financially stable enough to have a pet, and was living someplace that allowed them, Mocha Rabbit came home with me.

It was the beginning of an adventure, starting with the discovery that I was not the only person in the world to think that having a rabbit live as an indoor pet was a pretty nifty idea. My parents were more than a bit confused when I visited them with their new “grandbunny” - where on earth had I come up with this strange idea?

The answer: Marshmallow. The true story is about how the author's cat, Oliver, reacted when she brought home a baby bunny. It's touching, sweet and funny, and the art is exquisite. If you think the picture on the cover is adorable, just wait until you see the pictures inside. They're all simple charcoal drawings, and for me they capture the essence of “rabbitness.” Marshmallow has also been recognized as a Caldecott Honor Book.

Marshmallow unfortunately has been out of print for many years. It took a lot of looking and many phone calls before I found a copy for myself a few years ago. On a whim one day last fall I visited amazon.com just to see if they had any copies on hand. They didn't, but one of their on-line reviews had been written by the author's daughter, Felicia Noelle Trujillo. I decided to drop her a line just to let her know what her mother's book had meant to me. She returned my email and let me know that... Marshmallow was re-released in March! SmithMark Publishers has brought back both Marshmallow and another Clare Turlay Newberry book, Babette (about a Siamese kitten). So, look for this children's classic (and a must for all house rabbit lovers). Oh, and don't forget to read the quotes on the back cover! (I'll just let you wonder... )

Terms of Endearment by Joyce Aivalotis

I call my bunnies Doo-Doo Head and Roony-Girl. Of course, these aren’t their real names. Their real names are Ruby and Puff. I believe that a rabbit's given name should be used only by veterinarians and visitors. It is important that the real name be one with some dignity. However, because of our special intimate relationship, it is my privilege to develop the perfect nicknames for my beloved bunnies; and that's just what I did.

When he first came to live with me, Ruby already had been named in honor of his beautiful red eyes. I called him Ruby for a while, but that didn’t seem cute enough for such a sweet little bunny. So I modified it to Ruby-Doo. Better, but it still didn’t quite capture his adorable personality. Ruby-Dooby-Doo was the next iteration. That was much more fun to say, but too lengthy for every day use. I couldn’t say every time I wanted some veggies, “Ruby-Dooby-Doo?” or “Stop eating the furniture, Ruby-Dooby-Doo!” So, I shortened it to Roo-Doo; or sometimes just Roo and sometimes just Doo. Once again, that just didn’t capture his character. Doo-Doo was much closer and more fun to say... Doo-Doo Head, now that’s a real bunny name. Okay, maybe it’s not too flattering, but he doesn’t seem to mind and he has his more dignified handle of Ruby for public use. And it seems to be sticking—at least until I come up with an even better term of endearment.

Puff had also been given her name before I met her. While Puff is an okay name for a bunny, it just wasn’t right for her. Puff was rescued from a harsh life outdoors. She needed a name that would epitomize her gentle, yet survivor's nature. Puff-a-Roonie was the first variation. It was a nice twist, but I wanted something a little more feminine to cement our womanly bond. Rooney-Girl. Now there’s a name that summarized her character: spunky yet feminine. Since she hasn’t been with me as long as Ruby, I haven’t had the chance to go through all the iterations I have in the three years with Doo-Doo Head. I don’t know what the next variation will be, but I’m sure it will illustrate the deep love that I have for my sweet little bunnies.

But you know, every now and then, I wonder what they call me.

Thank you to the following people for showing their support for the rabbits. Every little bit is much appreciated.

Dear Kate, Good news! I'm absolutely crazy about Freda! She's my shining little bunny star. She's so interactive and loves to explore - she hops up on the sofa with me to snuggle, and hops in and out of the tub in the morning! She's a smushy little peanut and I'm so thrilled to have her. If I have a week that I get home before I begin REM sleep, I'd love to compose an article on rabbit obesity management - I can't promise anything REAL soon - my list grows longer by the hour! Take care! Wild about Freda, - Jackie S.

Kate: Forgive me for not writing sooner but it has been hectic around the office this week. Well, we've had the little brute for a week now and fall in love with him on a daily basis. He and Pie spend hours facing each other and licking each other's head. We've taken them into the family room [all carpet] and they have a ball bouncing around all over the room. We are thinking about changing his name to Franklin E Bunny as he has already defeated the security of the fireplace screen and Escaped several times. He is really being enjoyed by all. All of us have come to the conclusion that this is what Piewacket needed to get her out of the doldrums and into the dancing arena...believe me she is out and into the arena. More later, Franklin, Pie, Cozy, Mariellen & Skip

Dear Kathleen,
just thought you might be surprised to hear - as I was to see - that two nights ago when I opened the door to the buns room (they were both out) I finally witnessed snuggling between Mozart and Isabelle. She was laying stretched out and he was licking her head and then they would lay with their noses pressed together! He still runs like the dickens when he's finished but the snuggling sessions seem to be getting longer each time. Finally, some progress! Hope all is well with you and yours and if I don't talk to you before have a great holiday! Lisa Jurist

Hi Susan,
just wanted to let you know that the buns are doing great! They haven't fussed at each other since they've been home. They ran around and thumped when I first got them home but have since calmed down. They snuggle alot, but I still haven't seen them groom each other. I'm sure that will come with time. If I can find some time, I'll take pictures. Thanks a ton, Monet's much happier now, Danielle

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Hello Kate, it's Jamie Johnston. I was the one who adopted Milo from the House Rabbit Society back in September. I wanted to let you know that my bunnies absolutely LOVE each other. Whenever he goes she goes. They are inseparable! I know I did the right thing by adopting him. They have a favorite chair that they sit in together every night when I go to bed and are there waiting for me every morning. Of course I can't turn on the light too bright because it disturbs their sleep (God forbid!). Anyway, I hope everything is going well and please keep me informed of anything new going on. Hope to see you soon! Jamie
Adoptions!

98 in '98! Yes, it's true, we had 98 adoptions last year! And there haven't been any signs of slowing yet. There were 8 adoptions in January, 1999, 9 in February, and there are several adoptions pending. Our web site guru, Kate McGinley (also Director of Fostering), has put our adoption application on-line on our web site, and there have been many already submitted via the internet.

Fall Festival

Our Fall Festival on the grounds of the Baltimore County Humane Society was a big success, with some bunnies from the shelter as our guests of honor. The shelter staff dropped by, and interested visitors were given a tour of the shelter facilities. Our “Bunny Boutique” was full of items donated from our members; Mary Ellen Glover of Manassas donated several boxes of beautiful rabbit items just before this event, and attendees got first crack at them! We also sold hay, litter and T-shirts for sale. The event brought in $740 for the Chapter and $277 for the Monaco's sanctuary. Many thanks to the volunteers who helped out with set up and clean up!

Sanctuary Fundraiser

Volunteers Mikki Staab and Tom Peters hosted a very special event last fall, a wine and cheese evening with a silent auction fundraiser to benefit the Monaco's Sanctuary. Mikki arranged for donations from artists and shops, and the items for auction were amazing: Sandi Monaco's beautiful quilts, a black lacquer plate with rabbits looking at the rabbit in the moon, and a hand crafted earing and pin set. The event was catered by HRS member Alice Seery, who donated the food and catering service. The food was delicious, and beautiful, too! There was also a huge array of rabbit toys and treats available for purchase, as well as all sorts of rabbity knick-knacks. The evening was very special, and $1,628 was raised to benefit the Sanctuary.

Education

We did a lot of Easter education. Susan Wong (Director of Education) with the help of volunteer Tracy Shapiro, sent out 160 public service announcements and press releases to area media outlets. Members everywhere distributed flyers saying “Thinking about a Rabbit? Contact the House Rabbit Society.” We have gotten a very good response.

Kay Bannon and Susan Wong each appeared on cable TV channel Frederick 10 for the Frederick County Humane Society's spot on specialty animals. Member Bobby Vach got us an appearance on Baltimore ABC Channel 2's Rodericks for Breakfast 3/28. We were also featured on DC Fox5 Morning News 3/29. We had spots on radio WTOP AM 1500 and B102.7 FM.

Foster rabbit, Jessie, posed for a photo in the Home and Family section of the Baltimore Sun 3/28. In exchange they ran a small blurb with HRS contact information. The Washington Times ran an article on 4/4. Many local papers such as The Capitol 3/18, the New Bay Times, the OIney Gazette ran articles cautioning people not to buy baby easter rabbits. The North East Register printed an article by member Diane Neumeyer about her rescued ex-Easter rabbit, Luckybun. There may be more we don't know about. If you see an article about HRS in the news, please clip it out and send it to us for our Chapter Archives. HRS also got some wider coverage in the April 1st edition of Family Circle. Mary Cotter was interviewed for a Family Circle article on rabbits, and did a wonderful job of getting the reporter to focus on the HRS philosophy, rather than that of the breeders who she also interviewed. National HRS had their “Easter and Bunnies Don't Mix” internet campaign, and web sites such as Yahoo and Netscape donated banner space for a link to our national web site.

Shelter Assistance

Educator Liz Diorma took a three month sabbatical from nail trimming workshops, but they're back! We scheduled three in March and April, and more will be coming up in future months. If you're interested in attending or even hosting, please contact Liz at (703) 670-3659 or HRSLiz@yahoo.com. HRS member Debra McLaughlin was instrumental in setting up our appearance at the National Geographic Society's Passport Friday program at Explorer Hall in W ashington, DC on Nov. 20, 1998. Many thanks to Nancy Boyd of National Geographic for inviting us to participate. We have been invited back June 4!

Kate McGinley and HRS member and Arlington Shelter volunteer Rebecca Kingerly penned an article for Arlington Shelter's newsletter, “Pawpourri.” It was the feature article in their most recent newsletter, with a big picture of former foster rabbit Zach on the cover. They also invited HRS's Liz Diorma to present a program on rabbit care at the shelter, to an audience of almost 50 people, including all of the shelter staff and over 20 people from the general public. The program was a great success, and we're looking forward to presenting at other shelters in the future. Educator-in-Training and Fosterer-in-Training Susan Easton has been working with the Montgomery County Humane Society, doing all the rabbit adoption interviews and home visits. This has been a great opportunity for educating the shelter's rabbit adopters. They have officially hired...
Volunteer Liz Huffman is going to be setting up another library exhibit at Dolly Madison Public Library in McLean, VA during the month of April. She did a similar display at John Marshall Public Library in Springfield, VA early in 1998, including information on all aspects of rabbit care as well as information on HRS. The display was very popular with the patrons of John Marshall, and she received many compliments. Our chapter received a grant from The William Snyder Foundation for Animals to donate copies of the House Rabbit Handbook to Maryland libraries, and we are pleased to announce that 108 books have been sent out. There's a complete listing of the libraries on our web site. If your library is not listed, don't worry—although we were only awarded half the amount we applied for, we will be applying for the remaining half, so that we can donate books to the rest of Maryland's public libraries. (The William Snyder Foundation for Animals is a MD group, and one stipulation for the grant money is that it must be used within the state of Maryland). We are currently doing some research to see how to make this type of donation possible for Virginia and DC libraries, too.

Our first annual fall Cookie Sale, spearheaded by Satellite Fosterer Kay Bannon, was a great success and brought in $540. If you didn't order or taste these ready to bake, Uncle Ralph's cookies, they're really a treat. And we just completed our annual Log Cabin Easter candy sale, coordinated by Educator-in-Training Laurie Kuhn. This sale has been very successful for us in the past, bringing in $1,000 in 97, $1,500 in 1998, and this year $2,500!

ChocolateoftheMonth.com, an internet company based in Fairfax, VA, along with Brown & Haley ran an Adopt-a-Bunny Program. They donated 20% of the sales of every bunny product sold during the Easter season to our chapter and the HRS Oakland Chapter.

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Once again, we're planning yard sales around the region this summer. Stay tuned for dates and locations, and please let Susan Wong know if you're interested in hosting, donating, or helping out at these events. There have been some real treasures donated in the past—get there early! If you are interested in helping out with these or any other activities, please contact our new Volunteer Coordinator, Laurie Kuhn! Please see her article in this newsletter, “Calling All Volunteers,” for information on getting more involved.

Just a reminder national HRS membership has increased in price (for the first time in its 10-year history). Yearly membership is now $18 for national; our local chapter membership is still $8. If you are interested in receiving periodic updates by email, please send an email to Liz DiOrma letting her know you're interested in being added to our email list (HRSloan@yahoo.com).

Volunteer!

Volunteer Liz DiOrma and Mikki Staub are part-time staff members. Congrats, Susan!
AN AMERICAN RABBIT IN AFRICA

by Agi Kiss

Agi kiss is a local HRS member who works for the World Bank. In 1993 she was posted to Kenya and her angora rabbit Merlin went with her. This story was first published in Bank's World in April 1993. Merlin died in 1995. She now has a sweet little guy named Goblin and adopted Henrietta (now named Gilda) from HRS as a friend for him in October of 1998.

First, to all my friends: I'm doing fine at my new post in Nairobi. Everyone here has been great. I'm busier than I ever imagined I would be, but the work is stimulating.

So, now that we have that out of the way, let's get to what you really want to know. Merlin is doing just fine and seems very happy in his new surroundings.

Merlin is my rabbit almost certainly the only angora rabbit in Kenya and probably in all of East Africa. Based on the reaction we've met at every step along the way, I think he must also be the first rabbit of any kind to make such a journey. Apparently, everyone understands that people take their dogs and cats along to an overseas posting, but a rabbit?

Those who know Merlin understand. With his ridiculously long, soft, luxurious white fur, the black spectacles around his eyes and the silky tufts bobbing jauntily from the tips of his velvety black ears, he is regularly mistaken for a whimsical stuffed toy. He runs free in the house, likes to sit on the sofa, is fastidiously housebroken and comes when he is called as long as his thinks there's a treat in it for him. He has been my house pet and chief conversational piece for more than three years. I never considered leaving him behind. All right, maybe I considered it when I discovered his airfare alone was going to cost $250. But one look into those trusting, shiny black eyes and one nudge from that moist, twitching nose, and I reached for my checkbook.

Rose de Souza, the very efficient Senior Administrative Assistant at the Resident Mission in Nairobi, sent me an official license for import of "one head of rabbit, male." Not being as efficient as she is, I lost it, so I called the Kenyan embassy to arrange for another.

"A rabbit?" The woman at the visa office sounded very doubtful. "We do not issue import licenses for rabbits. Only for cats and dogs. Perhaps you should contact the Kenya Wildlife Service."

Fortunately, I managed to find the original license again. A quick trip to the veterinarian, and I had a certificate confirming Merlin was in good health and there had been no outbreak of myxomatosis in the W ashington area within the past week. Another stop in Annapolis and the health certificate was officially U.S. Government endorsed.

The flight itself was uneventful. I checked him through to Frankfurt, where the ticket agent at the transfer desk whipped out a picture of her own pet rabbit. We spent a restful day at the airport hotel, then arrived in Nairobi on schedule at 6 a.m. I collected Merlin and my suitcases from the conveyer belt and headed for the customs counter, armed with the import license and health certificate. Despite the early hour, the customs official greeted me with a professional smile.

"What is inside?" he asked, indicating the carrier. "A dog?"

"No," I answered, holding the papers out to him. "A rabbit."

"A rabbit?" He asked, bending slightly to peer inside the small window.

"No," I repeated, "a rabbit." Again I offered him Merlin's papers, and this time made a point of displaying my laissez-passer at the same time.

"A rabbit," he said, in the flat, uncompromising voice of a bureaucrat who has come across something non-regulation. He made no effort to take the papers I rustled in front of him. Behind me, the weary travelers melted away to join other lines.

"Import of rabbits is not permitted," he said firmly. Just then, help arrived in the form of a young man from the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Marketing who had been enlisted to come all the way out to the airport at the crack of dawn to help me get Merlin through. God bless the Nairobi Resident Mission.

"No problem," said this knight in a suit and tie. "I will take care of this." The customs agent recognized him and waived me through with obvious relief. We were in.

During my last visit in November, I had arranged with the manager of the Norfolk Hotel (my usual haven when on mission in Nairobi) to spend a few weeks there with Merlin while looking for a house. Still, the receptionist looked dubious when I actually showed up with him in hand. A polite but firm, she asked me to wait while she called the manager to the front desk. Meanwhile, in the lobby, Merlin was attracting a lot of attention from the tourists who had come to Kenya to see wildlife. Someone asked me whether he was a wild African rabbit. The idea of this fluffy epitome of domestication making his way out on the savanna seemed obviously ridiculous to me, but, of course, not everyone is a professional biologist. I was just starting to tell the group about the little known annual angora rabbit migration on the Serengeti plains (they run between the feet of the wildebeest, that's why people rarely see them) when the manager arrived.

After one amazed look, the manager suggested that Merlin would be more comfortable in a suite, which he proceeded to give me at no extra cost. (The moral of this story: to get VIP treatment at hotels, always travel with a rabbit.) In fact, the suite

cont'd on page 10
**Domino's Diary**

Hi! I'm Domino. For those of you who don't know me, I am a very sweet wonderful little Dutch bunny who just happens to be perfect. I live in the HRS Monaco Sanctuary.

February, in the Year of the Rabbit.

Today I talked to the second-year class of veterinary technicians at the Loudoun County Campus of Northern Virginia Community College. Wow! That's a mouthful! I was assisted by my foster Dad and Lucy, my mate. Our topic was “rabbit care and health, and how sweet a rabbit can be when pampered, treated like royalty and given attention twenty-four hours a day.”

I had trouble seeing over the podium, and the students couldn't see me, so my Dad had to hold me. I spoke to them through my Dad most of the time, since most of the students don't talk bunny language yet. Dad told them about how to feed us and what we eat. He talked about litter training, bunny-proofing and important things like health care and what litter to use. He told them about yucky things like taking a bunny's temperature. He showed them how to pick up and hold a rabbit and how to cut nails. I showed them how cute a bunny can be, how sweet and wonderful we are. I got oohs and aahs every time I would lick my Dad's face or rest my head on his shoulder. One girl asked if I could be passed around the room so that everybody could hold me but I didn't approve of that idea.

Then, I got brushed and took Laxatone out of a tube. I'm very particular about this, because I hate to get any on my face or whiskers. We told them about the House Rabbit Society and what wonderful things are being done for us bunnies. This is the part that scares me, and I clung to my Dad and showed them my old injuries and told them about my mental scars. I told them that bunnies should not be kept outside in tiny little cages where we can't be bunnies and do what bunnies do best.

Most of all, I showed them how wonderful we are, me in particular of course, and that we are companions, not just pets. We are social and affectionate, not just the cutest little creatures in the whole wide world. I spoke to them with my big beautiful eyes, my adorable ears and my expressive nose and mouth.

After 2 hours, the class ended. Boy, was I glad, I was getting tired! This teaching stuff is hard work. I gave lots of licks and hugs to my Dad, especially after he gave me a papaya tablet treat. If I could get more treats and attention, I'd do this all the time. Maybe we could tour the country or tape shows in our home, since I don't like to travel. I'm so smart. I should share my knowledge. Don't you think so?

I'm getting tired again. I think for now, I'll just go cuddle in my bed and take a nap.

Love, Domino
Thank you to the following Special Friends who donated $25 or more to help the rabbits:

- Basile Family
- Kevin and Liz Bertha
- Bunny Heaven
- Rick and Robin Cronkite
- Marion Davis
- Rosemary Fleming
- Shari Furst
- Aisa Gravitz
- Jean Hillstrom
- Kathy Ingerson
- Randie Johnson
- Lisa Jurist
- Nancy Kauder Schreiber
- Michael Kirby
- Agnes Kiss
- Bonnee and Frank Korel
- R. B. Lasco
- Johnson Liu
- Debra Magidson+Harry Coplan
- Cindy & Don Mallonee
- Donald and Marion May
- Brian McNellis
- National Geographic Society
- Petsmart Charities
- Leslie Ries
- Nicole Roberts
- Jessica Rogers
- Yael Schloss
- Karey Starnes
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- Connie Tjoumas
- Audrey & Joe Reischer
- Jay Trotta
- Maureen and Michael Volland
- Stacey W aynick
- Cassandra W ilson
- Mark and Michele W ilson
- Deborah W oodcock
- Sherri Yutzy

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

- Alexandria Animal Hospital
- Blueridge Veterinary Associates
- Brookeville Animal Hospital
- Falls Road Animal Hospital
- Ridge Lake Animal Hospital

African Rabbit cont’d from page 8

was perfect, particularly the enclosed patio where Merlin stretched out in the sunshine, ears and nose twitching doubletime as he tried to take in the million new sounds and smells of this strange new world.

We tried to keep a low profile, but Merlin’s reputation spread and soon there was a steady stream of hotel staff knocking politely on my door, asking to see this amazing rabbit they had heard was three time the size of the local variety, had hair down to the floor and knew how to use the toilet. If they were disappointed with the reality (most of his bulk is hair and he only uses a litterbox), they did not let on.

By popular demand I took him into the office one day so everyone there could meet him. I set him loose and he immediately began to hop along the hallway, popping into every open door to see who was inside. I have to confess I enjoyed the chorus of amazed yelps followed by chuckles as one new colleague after another was startled by the large, furry white object that suddenly appeared out of nowhere.

Finally, he reached the end of the hall and hopped smartly through the last doorway. Just then, a colleague grabbed my arm and said, “You know, they are negotiating the Drought Recovery Project in the conference room.”

I will be living and working in Nairobi three years. During that time I hope to win the confidence and respect of the people with whom I will be working, impressing them with my professionalism and maturity. In other words, I hope to live down the initial reputation I undoubtedly earned by interrupting a tense meeting of high-level bank and ministry officials in order to retrieve my fuzzy white bunny.

Meanwhile, Merlin is settling nicely at our new house. Sometimes I find him sitting next to the sliding glass doors that lead out to the sunny garden, his furry face pressed wistfully against the netting I have stretched across the opening. I don’t dare let him outside because every few minutes I can see the shadow of a kite swooping low over the garden, patiently waiting for the tasty morsel lurking just inside. I wonder whether Merlin misses his feline companion, Isis (who will be coming out to Kenya a little later), but he has already become very attached to my housemaid, Beth, whom he follows around the house like a puppy. I suspect she is feeding him lots of the tiny, sweet bananas he seems to love even more than the pears that were his favorite treat in Washington.

All in all, I would have to count Merlin’s first six weeks in Kenya a resounding success. Really, it doesn’t bother me in the least that I am now generally known around town as “the lady with that rabbit,” or that people coming to my house for the first time immediately push past me and start hunting around on the floor. I’m content to shine in the reflected light of the only American rabbit in Africa.

Editor’s note: Agi Kiss is Senior Ecologist, AF2AA.
Calling All Volunteers!!!!

The Baltimore/DC Chapter of the House Rabbit Society has grown in leaps and hops over the last several years. We have gone from Kathleen Wilsbach moving to Baltimore in September of 1994 starting a chapter with no volunteers to a small organization with the few volunteers and fosters she scraped together to a well respected animal organization with over 400 local members and over 25 volunteers.

As the organization has grown, the weight on the shoulders of the core volunteers has increased. In order to continue to grow and not have volunteers burn out, we need help from you. In the past some people who have offered to volunteer have fallen by the way side because the core volunteers have just been too busy to follow up and utilize them. We now have a volunteer coordinator who will be organizing our volunteer efforts. She will be screening volunteers for their strengths and preferences and passing them on to be trained by the volunteer who specializes in that area. If you feel that this is something you would be interested in doing, please contact Laurie Kuhn. Email - laurie.kuhn@eudoramail.com - Phone # 410-661-0581 Ext. 2 (leave a message on the House Rabbit Society voice mail). You will receive a form letter or email letting you know your response was received. Once the responses are in, a meeting will be planned to introduce the core volunteers and the new volunteers. W hat happens from there is up to all of us.

We need volunteers to be trained to help in the following areas:

- Public events (staffing education tables)
- Rabbit bondings
- Classes (facilitating classes at shelters, libraries, etc.)
- Seminars (Nail trimming/grooming)
- Distributing literature
- Mailing out rabbit Information to people who call on
- Fund raising events (cookie sale, candy sale, garage sale, etc.)
- Design of new fundraising premiums like T-shirts, etc.
- Driving rabbits back and forth from Maryland to Northern Virginia
- Cleaning at foster homes and rabbit socializing
- Hosting rabbit matches (where prospective adopters and their rabbits meet rabbits)
- Hosting and helping organize rabbit Social Events
- Working with shelters
- Counseling people who call on the rabbit phoneline
- Bunnysitting a foster rabbit for out-of-town fosterers
- Fostering (temporarily housing a rabbit)
- Driving rabbits to vet appointments
- Newsletter layout and production (computer and computer skills required)
- To pay for litter, food and other supplies
- To help pay for advertising in the PawPrint Post
- To help with the cost of copying and mailing rabbit care info
- Please use my donation wherever it is needed most

Membership Enrollment

- Local and National HRS membership $26
- National HRS membership $18. Members receive quarterly issues of the House Rabbit Journal
- Local HRS membership $8. Support our local rabbit rescue efforts and receive local newsletter 2 times per year. **Must also be a national member.**

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HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY P.O. Box 50311, Baltimore, MD 21211
BUY A BUNNY A LITTLE TIME