

SAN DIEGO RABBIT NEWS

SPRING 2003

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Harnessing Harvey

If you've decided that you want to harness "train" your bunny there are some practical considerations you should take into account.

First, what type of harness?

If you walk through any well stocked pet supply store you'll see dozens of different harnesses. Some are in with the small animal supplies, others are with dog and cat supplies, and most of them, regardless of what species they're marketed for, are ill suited for use with rabbits.

In my experience, there are three important factors to consider when harness shopping: Fit on the animal, safety and ease of use.

The fit of the harness is of utmost importance and should be your number one consideration. If a harness doesn't fit properly, bunny can easily jump out of it, or worse get tangled up in it and injure himself. There should be a strap that encircles the chest and another that goes around the neck. These straps should be adjusted so that one finger can be placed between the harness and bunny. Most store-bought harnesses will need to be customized to fit properly, usually by adding one or more holes in the straps. The more adjustable the harness the better.

The next consideration should be safety; after all, this is supposed to be a fun experience, not a dangerous one. Again, the proper fit of the harness will go a long way toward making it safe, but there are other factors. The straps should be wide and flat. This will prevent bunny from getting "rope burn" if he bolts, and wide straps are also less likely to be chewed through. Fasteners

should be metal or hard, sturdy plastic, not rubbery, flimsy plastic or Velcro. Mesh-type harnesses, if they fit properly, are another option, and offer better support. Any type of harness should have a strap, or support, that runs from the neck strap to the chest strap and passes through the front legs. Figure 8 harnesses do not offer this feature and should be avoided.

Finally the ease of use for the handler should also be considered. Most bunnies are nervous being harnessed and they don't exactly step into the harness; you have to put it on them. Doing so quickly and efficiently will make the experience less stressful. Avoid harnesses that have little screws to adjust or tiny buckles or clips that are impossible to work with. Leashes should detach from the harness, not be "built in." Quick release clips work well, as do sturdy metal buckles.

Getting the right harness can be a study in trial and error. Take the time to measure bunny with a cloth tape. The cat supply sections usually have the best options for harnesses, but don't be afraid to look in the dog section if you have an especially large rabbit. Keep shopping until you find the right one. That may mean several trips back and forth to different stores, but always remember that a harness is like a seat belt, if it doesn't fit right, it's going to do you more harm if worn improperly.

Second, the "training"

Before you venture outside with bunny you need to build your confidence and bunny's comfort with being har-

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CALENDAR

MAY

Saturday, May 17

OPEN HOUSE! 4750 Cass Street (4 blocks north of Garnet Ave.) in Pacific Beach. Join us for food, fun and rabbit info/supplies and gifts. 12 noon - 4 p.m.

Sunday, May 18

North County HRS Adoption Day, 1-3 p.m., call 619-718-7777

JUNE

Sunday, June 1

Pacific Beach HRS Adoption Day, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 619-718-7777

Monday, June 2

Volunteers' Meeting, 4750 Cass Street, Pacific Beach, 7 p.m.

Saturday/Sunday, June 21/22

SD County Fair. Visit our booth at the SD County Fair (formally Del Mar Fair)

Sunday, June 22

North County HRS Adoption Day, 1-3 p.m., call 619-718-7777

JULY

Sunday, July 6

Pacific Beach HRS Adoption Day, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Call 619-718-7777

Monday, July 7

Volunteers' Meeting, 4750 Cass Street, Pacific Beach, 7 p.m.

Sunday, July 27

North County HRS Adoption Day, 1-3 p.m., call 619-718-7777

SEPTEMBER

Sunday, Sept. 28

Bunnyfest, Heritage Park in Old Town, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Join hundreds of people, buy great stuff and have lots of fun while you support San Diego HRS! Stay tuned for updates and more information.

VET CORNER

Perils of Summer

Summer is right around the corner. Along with all the wonderful things that summer brings, it also brings increased dangers for our rabbit friends. As long as we are aware of the risks, we will be able to properly prepare and keep our bunnies safe. If your rabbit is housed indoors, most of these risks are minimized.

Temperature can be a big issue with our rabbits. Because rabbits have a very dense hair coat and because they lack the ability to sweat, the heat can really cause some serious problems. Imagine wearing a head-to-toe fur coat in 80- to 100-degree weather and that's how a rabbit would feel in our inland areas of San Diego County.

Much like dogs and cats, rabbits must cool themselves by increasing respirations or panting. Panting works on the principle that the external temperature is cooler than the internal body temperature. When an animal pants, it inhales cool air and exhales warm air. When the external air is warmer than the internal body temperature, panting becomes inefficient and can even cause the body temperature to rise due to the work it takes to pant. All this panting can cause a rabbit to become dehydrated, because with every exhalation a small amount of body water is lost.

Therefore, rabbits need shelter and lots of water in the summertime to try to remain cool, and to prevent deadly heat stroke. When the temperature gets above 85 degrees, it would be wise to bring your rabbit indoors. If you let your rabbit outdoors for fun or exercise, remember to do so in the morning or

early evening when the temperatures are not so high.

Insects also increase their activity and numbers in spring and summer. Problems with ants, flies, bees and mosquitoes can severely affect our rabbits. Ants tend to swarm very rapidly. One minute there are none and then an hour later there are thousands! Ants not only cause stress, but can get into your rabbit's food and water and prevent him from eating and drinking, and some even inflict nasty bites.

Flies usually cause problems by either biting at the tips of the ears and causing infection, or by laying their eggs on debilitated (obese or in poor health) rabbits. Debilitated rabbits often do not groom themselves well and can, therefore develop urine scald, infected skin, matted hair or fecal impaction on the perineal (anal) area.

These are wonderful places for flies to lay their eggs. When the eggs develop, they turn into maggots. The maggots then eat the underlying flesh. Many older, debilitated or poorly cared for rabbits die each year from infection and trauma caused by maggots. Your rabbit should be groomed frequently and his bottom side (anal or genital area) checked for maggots. If you find fecal material, your rabbit's bottom must be thoroughly cleaned by washing with tepid, clear water.

Most bees do not bother rabbits, but depending on cage placement and the type of bees (Africanized, honey, etc), rabbits may be pestered or stung. Bee stings can cause an anaphylactic or hypersensitivity reaction (swelling,

Rabbits' ears act as air-conditioners. As the blood circulates near the surface of the ears, it exchanges heat with the atmosphere. In hot weather, misting the ears will help keep your rabbit's body from overheating.

inflammation, pain and irritation).

Mosquitoes will occasionally bite rabbits and can cause either the typical localized reaction we are all familiar with, or transmit diseases. While any biting insect that draws blood can transmit blood-borne viral or parasitic disease, mosquitoes are the most efficient and common vectors for this transmission. Mosquitoes are commonly implicated in a viral disease called "Big Head" or myxomatosis in rabbits. This disease is a poxvirus and causes severe fever and inflammation of the eyes, nose, face and perineal region. There is no treatment for myxomatosis and it is usually fatal.

Prevention is the best protection. Rid your property of standing water that attracts mosquitoes, and keep your rabbits indoors or in a screened area.

While always a problem in San Diego, fleas are a big problem in the summer. Fleas can cause intense itching and discomfort. In addition, if their numbers are sufficient, they can suck enough blood to make the animal anemic and even cause death due to blood loss. A topical flea preventative, such as Advantage, will effectively

prevent and treat fleas. Contact your veterinarian to find out which topical flea medication is safe and effective for your rabbits. Remember, these products are made for dogs and cats and some may be too strong for rabbits.

Predators can be a problem year round, but the summer seems to bring with it increased risk of attack. Coyotes, raccoons, skunks, hawks and dogs will attack rabbits. When letting your rabbits out to play, always do so under strict supervision. Never leave rabbits unattended outdoors! Fully fenced yards and enclosures will deter some, but not all, predators.

With these tips in mind, I hope you and your buns have a great and safe summer!

*Carmine G. Bausone, DVM
Acacia Animal Health Center
1040 N Broadway, Escondido CA 92026
760-745-8115*

Editor's note: To learn more tips for keeping bunny safe in summer heat, visit our website at www.rabbit.org/chapters/san-diego/health/cool.html.

If you notice your bunny panting, drooling or listless, immediate action is needed. Dampen ears with a mister or washcloth, put him next to a bottle of ice, and take him to the vet ASAP.

Myxomatosis Confirmed in Northern Cal

Another reason to keep rabbits safely indoors — and fix those screens!

In November and December 2002, myxomatosis was confirmed via post mortem tissue pathology in rabbits living indoors in Solano County (Vallejo) and in Sonoma County (Sebastopol). On March 31, 2003, another Vallejo house rabbit presented with end-stage myxomatosis symptoms and was euthanized.

That this last Vallejo house rabbit became infected with myxomatosis so early in the spring would indicate that the disease "wintered over" in host insects and that rabbits who live outdoors or who go outside (at any time of day) are at risk of infection.

Contrary to what some of us believe, mosquitoes are active throughout the

day, not only at dusk and dawn. They prefer the shade, where, if your rabbit was outside to romp, he or she may have rested. The Vallejo rabbits who died from myxo were all house rabbits let outside to play only under supervision by their caregivers and only during hours when mosquitoes were thought to be inactive.

Symptoms of myxomatosis are extremely elevated body temperature (106); puffy, swollen face; lesions on nose and/or around genitals; deeply inflamed, swollen eyelids, nostrils, lips, genitals, anus and ears.

Myxomatosis is deadly.

Pick Up One for the Bunnies

When you go to the grocery store, office supply or other stores, pick one up for the bunnies! The bunnies can use the following:

- New or clean, used bath towels
- New or clean, used pet carriers
- Medium or large plastic cat litterboxes
- White vinegar for shelter/foster home cleaning
- Rolls of paper towels for shelter/foster home cleaning
- 37¢ stamps

Wish List

We can also use these following items:

- Puppy exercise pens, folding-panel type, from 24" to 36" high
- Gift certificates for hay from local hay vendors such as Carter's Hay (Encinitas and Lakeside) or R Hay & Grain (Escondido).
- Digital cameras (including software to upload photos to computer) so that we may take photos of shelter rabbits to post on websites to maximize their exposure to potential adopters
- Gift certificates from veterinarians who specialize in rabbit medicine (see our website at <http://www.sandiegorabbits.org/health/vetlist.html>)

Contact HRS to make arrangements 619-718-7777. Thanks so much!

Tip

Eva Stresemann sends us this unique way she keeps her rabbit Poppy from licking a sore she has on her side so it has time to heal. This handy trick could also be used after surgery where you need to keep the rabbit from licking the incision site.

After the E-collar* was a disaster (these are not usually recommended for use with rabbits), Eva sewed a "skirt" to the mesh harness she found for rabbits. Except for a few nibbles, this has worked very well.

Eva notes there was a little chaffing and hair loss under the front leg, due to the vest moving around a bit, and you should be sure the "little house coat" is snug enough so Bun can't slip out easily. Isn't Poppy cute?!

Thanks for the great tip, Eva!

*E-collar is shorthand for "Elizabethan collar," so named because it looks like the standup collars worn by Queen Elizabeth I. They are used on dogs and cats to keep them from licking and biting at wounds. But in rabbits, the collars also prevent them from reaching their cecals, which are the rabbit's primary source of nutrition.

Pins and Needles

Dr. Rosanne Brown of the Rancho San Diego Animal Hospital in El Cajon is now doing veterinary acupuncture. She's already very experienced with rabbits, and is offering acupuncture on rabbits as a complement to traditional Western medicine. The hospital phone number is (619) 660-6767.

Harnessing

(continued from page 1)

nessed. Chances are bunny will never make friends with the harness like a dog might, but given time and patience he should at least make a semblance of peace with the idea of being in it. Indoor "training" is a must! You don't want to find out outdoors that the



Poppy in her no-lick outfit.

harness you thought fit perfectly is in fact, too big! In a small room

gather bunny, harness and treats (raisins work well). Harness bunny. Try again to harness bunny. Let bunny rest, dab your scratches with hydrogen peroxide. Finally get harness on bunny. Hummm ...doesn't look right, bunny's leg is squished funny. Remove harness; try again. With harness securely and properly on bunny, give bunny a treat. Encourage bunny to move in harness by tempting with treats. Don't tease bunny, just encourage movement then give small treat. Let bunny hop around a small room wearing the harness for 10-15 minutes, give a treat, remove harness. Never leave bunny unattended in his harness!

Follow this training routine for several days before attaching the leash to the harness. If bunny doesn't make peace with the harness, you may not want to continue. Buy a pen instead.

When you attach the lead to the harness in one of the training sessions don't try to lead bunny; allow bunny to lead you. That is generally how it works, anyway — they lead, you follow. If you are very patient, you can get bunny to follow closely with treats — don't overdo the treats though!

Last, the bunny hop

Now that you and bunny have mastered the whole harnessing dry run routine, it's time to go for a hop. Always make sure there are no predators around (dogs and others). Know your destination. Common concerns to watch for are poisonous plants, fertilizers, bugs (fleas, ticks, mosquitoes, etc), weather (damp, hot sunny), and small children (they run to bunny and frighten him). Don't let bunny get tangled up in bushes or over exert herself hopping around. If bunny starts bolting, it's time to go home.

With proper training, a well fitting harness and lots of patience, your bunny can be a sight to behold around town. Remember, always take it slow and easy anytime you have bunny on a hop, it's supposed to be fun!

by Debra Doerfler

Gerry Streff Honored

Once again Gerry Streff has been honored for her tireless volunteer work. She was one of our HRS Valued Volunteers, and now she has been named Volunteer of the Quarter by the Rancho Coastal Humane Society. She is featured in an article in the latest issue of the Wag Times, the RCHS newsletter.

The article reminds us that Gerry assisted the shelter in designing the rabbit yard, trains staff and other volunteers on rabbit care and handling, and was also a founding member of RCHS's Resource and Development Committee.

Gerry participates in the Humane Education Program to help teach children about rabbits. Needless to say, she is also at the shelter several days a week and always goes out of her way to meet someone or to make an adoption happen.

Congratulations, Gerry. Thanks for all your hard work!

Valued Volunteer Sandi Stewart

Clara Barton for Rabbits

In 1997 Sandi Stewart contacted Michelle Whilhems, Chapter Manager, to express her interest in fostering HRS bunnies. At that point Sandi had been living with house rabbits for more than 10 years, but because of her work schedule at Tri-City Hospital's Emergency Room, she had been unable to volunteer sooner. Michelle had asked me to transfer one of my foster bunnies (an easy first foster bunny) to Sandi and get her properly set up. When I got to her home, I knew a true bunny enthusiast lived there — there was bunny statuary throughout her garden and an equal amount of bunny-themed decorations inside her home.

Sandi's first foster bunny, Thumper, was adopted within a month and with that, Sandi was officially indoctrinated into the HRS volunteer program.

Debra Doerfler: Sandi, tell me about your first bunny.

Sandi Stewart: Before 1986 I didn't know a thing about rabbits; in fact, I didn't know people even kept them as pets. In the summer of '86 the family across the street was tasked with caring for a "classroom" bunny. That was my first exposure to pet rabbits. I would go over to the neighbors, or they would bring the bunny over to my place; I just fell in love with this particular rabbit. I would watch the rabbit for 2-3 days as my schedule allowed and then she would go back to the neighbors. This went on for the whole summer. When fall came, I knew I couldn't let the bunny go, I'd completely bonded with her. As it turned out the teacher didn't want her back anyway, so Fanny became my first house rabbit.

DD: And here I thought every child in America had an Easter bunny at one time or another! So in 1997 you called Michelle and got your first foster. How many bunnies have you fostered since then?

SS: I think it's 43. I keep a notebook with their information. I really like nurturing the ones that need medical care — it's my nursing background. It's nice to be able to help them overcome their fear and be there one-on-one during medical treatments.

DD: Your nursing background has definitely helped dozens of bunnies! Will you share a part of your private life that might interest our readers?

SS: When I was 28, I worked as a papal volunteer in Venezuela in the foothills of the Andes. I was there for four years and during that time I coordinated the establishment of three health centers in the barrio where I worked and lived. That experience is what fuels my dream of a sanctuary for HRS bunnies. I would love to help design and set up the medical side of a sanctuary for the San Diego chapter.

DD: When we find the money and the land for a facility...and the volunteers to staff it, maybe it will become a reality!

When Sandi isn't busy working with foster bunnies she spends time with her personal companions: bunnies Heidi and Hans, Cedric and Babs; and kitties Holly, Sugarplum and Willie.

Thank you, Sandi, for all you do for the bunnies. You are a valued volunteer!



Sandi Stewart's first house rabbit, Fanny

Rabbit Care Resources

- www.rabbit.org — House Rabbit Society
- www.sandiegorabbits.org — San Diego House Rabbit Society
- www.morfz.com/rabrefs.html — Rabbit Resources
- www.catsandrabbitsandmore.com — Cats & Rabbits & More

Online Update

Want to keep updated on the San Diego chapter activities by e-mail? Join our online update and get monthly updates sent right to your desktop. We post to this list only once or twice a month as important events come up, so don't worry, this is not a busy list. Join by sending a blank e-mail to: sandiegorabbitsonline-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Vacuum for Heavy-Duty Clean-Up

HRS foster mom Judith Pierce writes that she loves her new Riccar America vacuum, Model 8955. She bought it at Poway Sewing & Vacuum on Poway Road. Internal parts are metal instead of plastic.

"I learned about it after taking our Hoover (top line model) into them for the fourth time within six months to get new belts and other parts for the beater brush. It's hideously expensive — runs about \$600, got mine for \$500 on special — but, oh my gosh, does it work! I brought one home for a test drive and cleaned the entire house: hay, bunny poops, dog hair, dirt, you name it. It was fantastic. Made our carpet look new again. Could not believe it; had to have one! They do have less expensive models, but I didn't try them," she says.

"It has a very simple design, self-adjusting height, no fancy bells and whistles, just works really, really well. I still try to pick up the largest pieces of hay, but this thing just chops them to pieces and sucks them right up. We've only gotten a little overzealous and plugged up the hose once. It used to happen every day on the old vacuum.

"Also, it is not self-propelled, but it's very easy to push around. Not too hard on my back. I now vacuum almost every day, where before I dreaded it because my back would go out too easily. A very nice vacuum."

Adoptions, Spay/Neuter, Hay Packing Among Chapter Activities for 2002

Last year, 2002, was a very busy year for the San Diego HRS chapter and its volunteers. A record number of rabbits were relinquished to our shelters. At many times throughout the year, there were way more than 100 rabbits in the shelters and in HRS foster care. A huge thank you goes to all of our shelter and foster care volunteers who worked their "buns" off helping to care for these rabbits. Many rabbits would not have found homes without your efforts. We'd also like to thank everyone who adopted from SD HRS or a local shelter. You have helped us save these precious rabbit lives.

In order for a chapter to run smoothly, many volunteers are needed. We have volunteers working on our Web site, taking photos of foster and shelter rabbits, running ads, paying bills, returning hundreds of phone calls and e-mails, scheduling adoption and education events, getting our printing done, screening adoption calls, running rabbits to and from the vets, maintaining and delivering supplies, writing this newsletter...and of course, packing hay.

Our Hay Elves deserve a special mention. We now have more than 25 official Hay Elves. Hay Elves are busy in different areas of the county every weekend packing and distributing hundreds of boxes of hay. For us, it's fundraising; for you, you get to feed your rabbit freshly mixed, quality hay while supporting our rabbit rescue and education services. That's a great deal any way you look at it. Thank you to all the dedicated Hay Elves and to those of you who purchase our hay. We appreciate all your support!

In 2002, San Diego HRS was able to take 75 rabbits into HRS foster care and we adopted out 76 rabbits. Currently, six rabbits remain in sanctuary care. Additionally, we spayed/neutered

310 rabbits! These rabbits were either in foster care or from our local shelters. That's 310 rabbits who will not be adding to the pet overpopulation problem and who will have a better chance of staying in their adoptive homes.

We'd also like to thank all the shelters that allow us to help them with their rabbits: the Oceanside Humane Society and SPCA, the San Diego Humane Society, San Diego County Department of Animal Services (north, south and central locations), Chula Vista Animal Control and the Rancho Coastal Humane Society. Often, these shelters will transfer rabbits to one another in an attempt to find them homes. It's cooperation like this that truly helps save lives.

We thank Rancho Coastal Humane for allowing HRS volunteer Gerry Streff to conduct rabbit classes for the staff and Heidi Burke at County Animal Services for allowing HRS volunteers Debra Doerfler, Gerry Streff, Claudia La Rue and Michelle Wilhelms to give talks to the volunteers and staff of the three county shelters. Education is the key. Thank you so much!

Thanks to the County Department of Animal Services for including rabbit articles from HRS in each issue of Shelter Tails, the newsletter for their shelter volunteers. Thanks for helping us spread the word.

And, we are grateful for the volunteers who help maintain our chapter's Web site at www.sandiegorabbits.org. Also, our companion site, www.catsandrabbitsandmore.com, highlights all the shelter rabbits with links to adoptable rabbits throughout Southern California, as well as other small animals who are in need of homes. This Web site has become a very important

avenue for adoptions. Thank you, everyone!

Although our volunteers are not paid monetarily, the rewards of saving and improving the lives of so many rabbits makes the hard work worthwhile.

If you think you have time to

Everyday Educating

Here are some ways you can help the rabbits in your community when you don't have a lot of time to spare — ways to educate everyday — and perhaps you can come up with new ideas to share with us.

- If you use e-mail regularly, make use of your signature line by promoting rabbits as house pets or by signing off with “Be sure to visit www.sandiegorabbits.org”

- While you run errands, post HRS adoption flyers on community bulletin boards, coffee houses, vet offices, etc. Keep a stack of flyers with you in your car or briefcase. Go to www.sandiegorabbit.org and click on About Us. There you will find all the updated flyers we have available for download.

- Where you spend your money sends a message, too. Concerned individuals can choose to buy at stores which sell *supplies only*, not animals. Your purchasing decision helps support this philosophy. Or better yet, purchase your rabbit supplies from HRS where you not only get good quality supplies but your purchases help the rabbits directly! Contact us for more info or see page 10.

- Another way to practice everyday educating is to show off rabbits everywhere you go and strike up a conversation. Wear your HRS T-shirt whenever you can or use the HRS tote bag to bring veggies home from the market. Place photos of your beloved buns on your desk at work. The most difficult part, many members say, is keeping the conversation moving in a positive

spend at a local shelter helping to clean and feed the rabbits or want to get more involved in our work, give us a call and share your ideas. If this level of involvement seems a little daunting, see the article below for ideas you can do with little time commitment.

Michelle Wilhelms, HRS San Diego Chapter Manager

direction. Often, people want to tell you about their rabbit who met with a tragic end. One helpful way to move this into a real learning opportunity is to share with the person how much we have all learned about rabbits in the past few years, and how markedly different rabbit care and behavior information is now, from even just a few years ago.

And, while there is not much time in these everyday encounters to communicate all the wonderful things there are to know about rabbits, any informative point/s could make a huge difference. To make this easy, the most important, basic types of information are listed at right.

- Even if time is short, you can provide a wealth of information by simply directing the person to our web site or by handing them an HRS business card. This allows people to investigate whatever interests them as much as they want or need. Telling one person about HRS could improve countless rabbit lives.

- And, finally, please don't forget the power of example. The love and care you demonstrate each day for your rabbits and other animals, and the community around you, is one of the most effective ways you can everyday educate.

Adapted from “Everyday Educating,” by Ingrid Harding, MN HRS Education Director. The New Rabbit Thymes, December 2002.

Quick Sweeps

If you just have a bunny or two and want something for quick clean-ups of stray hay and poops, newsletter editor Kristin Tow recommends the Shark cordless sweeper. “Baxter is fond of dragging his hay out into the room, and this does a great job of gobbling it up,” she says.

It has a very low profile and the handle collapses flush with the floor so you can get under beds and furniture.

“It’s a sweeper, not a vacuum, so don’t expect major sucking action, but it does a nice job of getting the surface fur and debris.” No vacuum bags, just an easy-to-pull-out plastic canister. Weighs less than 5 lbs. The \$60 Bed, Bath & Beyond price is a bit less than the TV infomercial cost.

Top 5 Things to Know and Share about Rabbits

5. Rabbits can be litter box trained.

4. Healthy rabbits need a diet of:
-unlimited hay
-generous dark leafy greens
-limited pellets

3. Rabbits need to be housed indoors.

2. Rabbits need to be spayed or neutered just like cats or dogs

1. Visit www.sandiegorabbits.org for important rabbit care information.

Adopting from the HRS

Did you know that rabbits crave companionship and are typically most happy when part of a pair? If you have only one rabbit, go to www.rabbit.org/faq/sections/multiple.html and learn about the advantages of getting a companion. HRS volunteers will be happy to help you find an appropriate companion for your bunny and guide you through the bonding process.

Unless noted otherwise, call 619-718-7777 to learn more about any of these, or other, rabbits.

The HRS adoption fee is \$50 (\$80 for a pair), which includes a spayed or neutered rabbit, free vet exam, box of hay, coupon for another box of hay and a one-year membership in the San Diego House Rabbit Society. Supplies are also available at HRS adoption days.

Double the Fun

Experienced bunny families will tell you that bunnies usually prefer to have a friend, and caring for a bonded pair is just as easy as for one! Visit the HRS website to learn more: www.sandiegorabbits.org.

Why Overweight is Bad

Overweight is not good from any perspective, but is particularly dangerous for rabbits' feet, which have no foot pads. The more overweight the bunny, the worse the pressure on the bones of the feet, and the more likely the bunny is to develop serious problems, such as sore hocks.

You might observe a messy bottom in overweight rabbits. This occurs because they can't bend over to reach their cecals, which are the real source of rabbit nutrition.

Some Bunny Would Love a Permanent Home

Lilly is a young adult English Spot female, with a vivacious personality!

She's friendly, active, loves to be petted and is fairly easy to hold.



This

young lady loves to play with toys and is pretty good with her litterbox. Lilly is a smaller girl, weighing about 4 lbs.

Heather is a beautiful tri-colored lop girl, about 4 years old, who was featured in our last issue. She is a very special girl who is active, happy, and loves attention, despite the horrible neglect she endured just before coming into HRS care.



We are eager

to place Heather in a loving home where she will receive the love and attention she craves and deserves. Heather is very good with her litter box and is good around kitties; she has also been around quiet children.

This handsome fellow is **Bradley**, a dwarf-mix bunny about 5 years old. Recently widowed, Bradley is currently seeking a lovely lady bunny with whom he can share the dance floor, enjoy fine dining, and snuggle on the sofa. Bradley is a small bunny boy, about 3 lbs, and is looking for a "petite" companion girl to love. He

also has a periodic problem with molar spurs, and needs to have a vet check at least twice a year to have them trimmed. Otherwise, he's healthy and simply wishing for a new bunny girl to keep him company.



Elise is a young adult female, about 4 pounds. Elise likes the finer things in life — fresh sweet hay, herbs



and veggies for dinner, and a little treat of Timothy pellets

or fruit before bedtime. Elise does like her things to be arranged "just so!" and has been known to chase you away from her room, to keep you from messing about with her things. Elise would probably do best in a quiet adult home, with a sweet bunny boy for a companion.

Georgia is a big beautiful New



Zealand black mix girl. She has one white sock and a white dot on her chin. She loves attention and is a lot happier now in foster care. She even

dances during run time! We know she would really blossom in a permanent home with some one-on-one attention.

Josephine is an affectionate little Himalayan girl, about 1 year old and 4 lbs., and good with cats. Josephine initially had a hard time adjusting to all the changes in her life, but after



being spayed has quieted down considerably and is learning to enjoy human companionship. She will lean into your hand when you give her a gentle scratch on the ears or cheek, and just needs a patient bunny person to help her on her road to confidence.

Lizetta is a beautiful young girl, about 1 year old. This sweet girl is easy to handle, friendly, funny, and has wonderful young bunny energy.



Lizetta needs a lot of run time and interaction to keep her from getting bored. We can hardly believe this wonderful young girl has not yet been adopted. She's very sweet and friendly, and will make some lucky person a very special companion. She's better suited to being a single bunny than bonded with a male, but she will certainly become "your" best friend!

Popcorn is a neutered male Mini

Lop, about a year and a half old. He's an active boy who loves his run time, and will need a lot of interaction to keep him mentally stimulated and prevent boredom. Popcorn is really hoping to find a new home soon, where he will be loved. He needs a quiet, rabbit-experienced home with adults who can understand his shy and sometimes unpredictable nature. With gentle interaction, he really does open up, but needs someone patient and loving who will take the time to earn his trust. We do not feel he would be appropriate for children.



Alex and Emily are two young Californian kids, about 10 months old. Alex, on the left, has a light grey coloring on his nose, ears, and feet, while Emily's are a darker brown color. These two youngsters are spayed/neutered, and ready for their new home. They are two very active kids, full of energy, curiosity, and funny bunny dances! A bonded pair, they do everything together. They have grown to be fairly large, as most Californians do, but true to their breed they are very friendly.



THANK YOU, THANK YOU

We asked you for carpet samples recently and boy were our pleas answered! We'd like to thank the following people for gathering and/or donating carpet for HRS foster and shelter bunnies:

*Diane White
The Kuske Company, Escondido
Dennis Sandell
Lowe's Mission Valley (Thanks, Brandy!)
Lisa Ronco
Scott Schalon*

The McLaughlin family gave carpet, litterboxes and towels

New shelter volunteer Vicki Graff donated a case of paper towels and a case of white vinegar.

Bronie Crosby donated litterboxes and towels.

Shelter Volunteers Needed

Do you have a few hours a month to volunteer at your local animal shelter? We need shelter volunteers in all areas of the county, especially South County. Duties include cleaning cages, grooming and socializing rabbits, handing out veggies and hay; and updating HRS. Shelter volunteers must have some experience handling rabbits, be reliable and able to communicate with shelter staff and HRS volunteers.

If you are interested in helping at your local shelter, contact Michelle at 619-718-7777 for further information. The bunnies say thanks and hurry up with the carrots!

Who We Are

The San Diego Rabbit News is published by the nonprofit House Rabbit Society, San Diego Chapter. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information in the News, however the editors and House Rabbit Society assume no responsibility for unintentional errors and omissions.

The content of this newsletter has not been reviewed by the national House Rabbit Society, which is in no way responsible for its content.

There is no expressed or implied recommendation for any vendor/sponsor named in this newsletter.

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Hay, CareFRESH Sources

The House Rabbit Hay Exchange offers fresh hay and grasses at an affordable price. For just \$8 (\$8.62 with tax) you get a good-sized box filled with hay. Plan ahead. Don't let your hay supply run out before trying to buy more.

Hay sales by the sources below provide valuable income for the HRS. The money supports our spay/neuter efforts and the veterinary care for our foster and shelter bunnies.

Hay is boxed and distributed by volunteers. Please call ahead to see if there is hay available so you won't waste a trip.

Central San Diego	Cabrillo Veterinary Hospital	619-224-9516
	Avian & Exotic Animal Hospital	619-260-1412
East County	Rancho San Diego Animal Hospital	619-660-6767
North County	Diane Calkins	760-633-1564
	Acacia Animal Hospital	760-745-8115

Many pet supply stores, as well as some of the hay sources listed here, carry CareFRESH litter.

Happy Adoption

Private Clara, Now Harrah

"I just wanted to take a moment to tell you how well my rabbit is doing. I adopted Harrah from SD HRS in December 2000. HRS rescued her from a shelter on Camp Pendleton, hence her original name 'Private Clara.' Harrah gets the run of the living room every night, where she watches TV with me, my husband, and our three cats. She has her own corner with a cardboard box and rug remnant to destroy. She has a good life with no hardships. In fact, she tries to play with the kittens I am fostering when they dare set forth in 'her' territory. Thank you for all that you do for the rabbits."

Happy Adoption

River

We are the new adopted family for River who came to us from the South County Shelter. Tonight is his first night home, and he seems to be doing really well. He has a new companion with our guinea pig, Squeaks. They're snuggling next to each other in their separate cages at the moment. He's still not sure about the family dog, Honey (a Corgi/Golden mix), but not to worry, they're separated until everyone is comfortable. Honey really is a sweet-heart and wants to get to know her newest "puppy." I had rabbits as pets when I was younger and can't wait for my children to have the same great experiences I did.

Thanks so much for all the information that was sent home with him from the shelter. Our kids did quite a bit of research before we got him (a requirement for any pet here), and they were able to access a lot of it through your website.

Thanks again from our happy home!

The Swann Family

ORDER FORM

Name _____ I'm interested in volunteering. Please call me.

Address _____ Apt. _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home phone _____ Work phone _____ E-mail _____

ITEM	COLOR: 1st choice	2nd choice	SIZE	QTY	PRICE EACH	TOTAL
SAN DIEGO RABBIT NEWS with 1-year San Diego chapter membership <i>(San Diego membership does NOT include national membership; join national below)</i>				1 YR	\$10	no tax
National House Rabbit Society Membership <i>(Does not include local membership or San Diego's newsletter)</i>				1 YR	\$18	no tax
House Rabbit Handbook, 3rd edition					\$10	

Your purchases support HRS in San Diego



Totes — Buy a Bunny a Little Time "clock" motif in black on natural canvas tote bags. **\$12**

Caps — cotton baseball-style caps, one size with adjustable strap. Herman head design (upper right this page). Apricot or aqua blue **\$12**

Clock motif T-shirt — Long-sleeve, imprinted in front in black. Gray or natural in S,M,L,XL,XXL **\$18**

Clock motif T-shirt — Short-sleeve tee, imprinted center front in black. White or gray in S,M,L,XL,XXL; Sky blue or bright yellow in M,L,XL,XXL **\$15**

Scoop-neck ladies T-shirt — Clock motif on short-sleeve T. Violet, light blue, light yellow S,M,L **\$15**

3-Rabbit T-shirt - Crew-neck short-sleeve tee with color illustrations on white backgrounds. Blue or natural in S,M,L,XL **\$15**

3-Rabbit T-shirt - Scoop-neck ladies short-sleeve T. White or violet. S, M, L, XL **\$15**



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Additional donation for San Diego rabbit rescue

TOTAL ENCLOSED

Postage & handling:
Clothing / hats, totes, posters: Southern Cal delivery \$4 first item, \$1 each additional; all other areas, \$5 first item, \$1.50 each additional item.
Grocery pads: 75¢ for one, 50¢ each additional.
Handbook: \$2.40 each

Make checks payable to House Rabbit Society and mail with this order form to P. O. Box 2628, Spring Valley, CA 91979

NOTE: Quantities may be limited in some sizes and colors, so please indicate a second choice.

San Diego Rabbit News
P. O. Box 2628
Spring Valley, CA 91979

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San Diego HRS.

Ask HRS volunteers your rabbit
questions.

Get your rabbits nails trimmed
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Questions? Call 619-718-7777

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Sunday, Sept. 28
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10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

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Be there!

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Traveling with Bun

If you are traveling with your rabbit(s) this summer, here are some tips to make your trip safe and happy. And don't forget the camera so you can take photos of Bun on the Road.

What to take

Ice chest to fill regularly with ice and baggies of fresh leafy greens, carrots, apples and other high-moisture foods
Thermos of cold water from home (so it tastes familiar)
Small spritz bottle to mist rabbit ears and veggies
Toys
Spare towels for buns to sit on
Exercise pen for frequent rest stops
Crock for water
Grooming comb for long-haired rabbits
Fresh hay
Pellets (if you feed them)
Spare litterbox
Shade cloths to shield from sunlight
Battery-powered fan and plenty of batteries
First-aid kit
List of rabbit-savvy veterinarians and/or HRS chapters along the way

Before you go

Visit vet for check-up.
Get flea preventatives
Clip nails
If you don't already have one, buy a carrier for each rabbit or bonded pair that has firm sides and is just a bit larger than the animals, yet able to hold a litterbox. A carrier

that is too roomy will let the rabbit fly around and injure himself in case of an accident.

Plan your route with places for frequent rest stops. Rabbits often won't eat or go to the bathroom in a moving car, so plan to stop every two hours or so. More frequent stops may be necessary on curvy, twisty road trips; you can spread out stops a little more on long stretches of straight freeway.
Find pet-friendly lodging

In the car

Securely strap carrier with seat belts or bungee cords. Pack suitcases around carrier for added protection. If you can't fit a litterbox in the carrier, line the bottom with newspaper and hay. Add a piece of nonskid carpet if there's room.
At rest stops offer a crock of cool water even if your rabbit usually uses a bottle. Give every opportunity for your rabbit to keep hydrated. Plan to rest at least 20 minutes. It'll take a little while for your rabbit to get his "land legs" and calm down and be ready to drink or eat or poop.
Clamp a small battery-powered fan to the carrier to provide additional air circulation, especially if the carrier might get direct sun.
Provide plenty of safe run time when you stop for the night.
Don't put the carrier next to a window. Sun coming through the glass can be very intense and hot.