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NEWSLETTER

Volume 14 Spring 2015

Any Rat Rescue is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

Director: Jenna Lillibridge

Assistant Director / Events Coordinator: Margaret Benson

Treasurer: Terri Emerson

Communications Coordinator: Janet Cooper

Newsletter Editor: Lisa Bailey

Thanksgiving in February

Any time is a good time to tell somebody that you appreciate them! It would be impossible for Any Rat Rescue to continue on without the support of so many dedicated people. We would like to take a moment to thank the following people who partner to help us work to fulfill our mission: *To find loving, forever homes for any pet rat in need.*

Volunteers:

Ashley Atkinson-Leon - Petfinder admin
Roseanne Delgado - Tucson tabling events
Doug Ingersoll - social media admin
Cynthia Laymon - hammock seamstress
Michael Leon - Petfinder admin
Jennifer Mahoney-Sty - Bowl-A-Rama chair
Jason Menter - storage and transportation
Naomi Pier - transport and collateral
Keli Quinn - social media admin
Kathy Robertson - transport/tabling/technology
Sean Roe - transport
Brandi Saxton - Tucson coordinator
Jessica Sumner - monthly adoption fliers

Donors:

Michelle Armstrong
Alexander Blokh
April Crow
Sean Davis
Colin Easom
Alexandra Finch
Andrea Gasten
Denise Hagerman
Paula Hudson
Doug Ingersoll
Jennifer Johnson
Cynthia Laymon
Jan Madsen
Darrin McCourt
Frank McMillan
Nicole Melanson
Fred Nadeau
Deb Rodriguez
Roney Family Foundation
Kathleen Rossa
Wade Schultz
Lauren Thomas
Julianna Teeters
Gail Tewalt and family
Johannes Vorster
Babs Vittoria

Fosters:

Stacey Ahart
Noah Benson
Bria Cooper
Rebecca De La Torre
Roseanne Delgado
Keli Quinn
Julie Robbins
Chloe Rollins
Tony Sola
Bethany Valdivia
Frank Winborn
Brynn Heckel

I would personally like to thank Jenna Lillibridge for her undaunted dedication to this wonderful rescue. Without Jenna, homeless rats would not have much of a chance at all, let alone a second and sometimes third chance. The rats and I thank you! -Lisa Bailey





What have we been up to?



The **2014 Fall Rat Bash** was a fun event, raising \$424 for the rescue. The kids played Rattie Bingo, and a happy winner took home one of the darling stuffed Ikea rats. We had one table of silent auction items and everything sold! The holiday rat couples were especially popular this year. Our educational activity was demonstrating how to wrap a rat so they can function, but not curl up enough to take out their sutures. Lucy, who had previously allowed herself to be wrapped a number of times, was not cooperative — and pictures of the challenge can most likely be found on Facebook!

2014 Bowl-A-Rama was a great success and we raised \$1400! In addition we took 2nd Place for our chant about “Radicle Rats!” Our Surfer theme was a hit!



Odds & Ends



Need supplies? Shop with us, (save money) and support ARR!

We always try to keep the following on hand:

- ceramic food bowls
- liquid vitamins
- stacking storage bins
- noni juice
- new water bottles
- liquid duralactin
- crushed walnut litter
- flax seed oil
- Debbie D's molasses mix
- hammocks, cubes and sacks
- cages
- The Rat Health guide
- good quality Suebee's mix (with v-dog or solid gold so it's a complete diet)

Items are offered for a suggested donation that is much lower than retail.

And we always need help with:

- Printing / copying
- Preparing volunteer and adoption packets
- Updating brochures and information handouts
- Sewing hammocks and accessories
- Labeling medication bottles; prepping meds
- Shopping (picking up supplies that ARR pays for)
- Preparing staple food mix
- Placing follow-up phone calls
- Develop and maintain Twitter account
- Develop and maintain eBay store
- Write / send donation thank you notes

ARR has custom made Rat Cages!

These cages are easy to clean and look great. The tall cage is the “Chateau” measuring 36 x 18 x 24”. The long cage is the “Villa” measuring 29 x 18 x 31”. Please contact Jenna Lillibridge via info@anyratrescue.org to obtain one or more. Hurry, supplies are limited!

Adoption success stories:

At Any Rat Rescue, we are dedicated to finding loving, forever homes for rats in need. While it can sometimes be challenging and it may take some time to find the right fit, below are some of our most recent success stories.

Alfonso

After being fostered for over a year, two-year-old Alfonso found a home in his senior year that also is willing to keep up with his medical regimen. This is why we never say never!

Lucy, who our Director Jenna was fostering, came to us at age 2. She was surrendered by a 15-year-old living in dual households in which neither set of adults were willing to get her vet care. We were able to help, and she is now super active and



sweet. This is a wonderful example of ARR's hard work and how easy rats are to rehabilitate. We are happy to report that Lucy found her forever home right before Christmas!

Spark, Lulu, and Apple

ARR recently placed two females and one male rattie at a home with three children ranging in ages 5 to 11. Ellie, the oldest, was diagnosed with autism last August.

Ellie has had difficulty keeping friends and so longed for a pet — a creature who would never tease her and that would not care about her social faux pas.

She's been great with her rats, caring for them so well and staying calm around them. Ellie has been keeping up the cage, and the girls are playing with the rats two or three times a day. Ellie has improved her bedroom as a place for them to range safely, and the rats are often able to roam freely.

For young rats too squirmy for little hands, the family tried a tube hammock. The rat goes into the tube hammock, and the little hands can cradle the whole thing. The rat seems comfortable peeking out the end, and the little hands have the animal held securely.

The family noted that the rats run around the room a lot, and they don't seem to want to cuddle much. They wondered if they should be doing something particular to encourage that. The children try to stroke the rats when they can, and they let the rats climb on them, and they pick the rats up by either just picking them up when they might be near, or by enticing them into a tube hammock and then

holding them snuggled in that. Sometimes the rats stay for a minute, but then they run down and continue to explore, explore, explore, running all around.

Essentially, there are two reasons why rats may not be not cuddly (well some never are but still love coming to their humans in their own terms):

1. Age- this group is still very young. Hard to say when they will mellow, as girls will retain curiosity but the high energy is likely to slow a bit in next six months.

2. Gender- girls are more adventurous and active than boys. However he is likely to want to fit in and keep up with them.

Overall, this rat and human family are a great fit and yet another example of how rats work well in many different situations.



One of the daughters and her newly adopted fuzzy friend

THE MAKING OF A THERAPY RAT

What started out as a typical day at an adoption event has turned into a journey of bringing smiles to everyone.

Last Spring I fell in love with a baby rat while at an adoption event. I volunteer with a Golden Retriever rescue group, but always manage to stop by the Any Rat Rescue booth while working at these events. I had rats previously and while I was holding this sweet little girl, it came back to me how much I absolutely love rats. What better thing to do than adopt the girl I fell in love with - and her two sisters too!

The day I brought them home I introduced them to my Golden Retriever right away. He was instantly interested in them and would watch them for hours during the day. We spent time together every day playing with the rats and letting them explore the house. We got to the point where my dog would lay on the bed and let the rats run all over him. The rats get excited every time they get to come out and play with him.

From being handled regularly since they were born, and interacting with everyone that comes over to visit, these three girls are the most socialized and well behaved rats of any I have owned.



At least once a week I would come home from work to find my neighbor girl waiting in the driveway to come and play with the rats. Like many adults, her mother initially thought "Ewe, rats are gross", but once she realized how sweet they are and the joy they brought to her daughter, she has completely changed her mind. Seeing this transformation made me realize that it is up to us to be advocates for these animals and teach people they are loveable, affectionate and sociable creatures.

Last summer I decided it was time to test my Golden Retriever to be a therapy dog. I decided to go through the Pet Partners organization and while looking around on their website for course locations and evaluators, I saw that a couple of the evaluators in the valley test "pocket pets". Everyone knows of dogs and

cats as being therapy pets, but who in the world would have thought of pocket pets? I contacted the evaluator to learn more and she said pocket pets can definitely be



therapy pets; they just have different testing criteria. I thought to myself, how exciting would it be to do therapy with my rats and teach others what awesome pets they are. Unfortunately they have a bad reputation, so this is an opportunity to show others how special they are and be an advocate for these wonderful animals.

I decided to go forward with the therapy testing and we scheduled our evaluations. I think the evaluators were surprised when we showed up, as well as the testing assistants, and weren't really sure what to expect. We tested one rat at a time and they had to be handled by several different people, sit still on a lap for petting, not jump away when approached by several people, walk by a neutral dog without reaction, sit still for grooming and take a treat from a stranger. They all passed with flying colors!

So, now that we passed our evaluations, got registered with Pet Partners and have our official badges, our plan is to attend elementary schools and reading programs around the valley. We are now ready to start our journey of educating people on these fabulous pets and bringing smiles to everyone we meet, so stay tuned for updates on our visits.

- April Crow



The Mobile Rat-A Harness/Leash That Works

by ARR foster Roseanne DelGado, Tucson

After searching and searching for a rat harness that was both comfortable and secure, I decided to start playing with a few ideas for making my own. I started with a design involving a pipe cleaner that I found online, but found that it was too small for my big boy and too easy to wriggle out of for my little girls. I played with the design until I came up with the harness and lead pictured. Yarn wrapped, adjustable, and with a crocheted lead and wrist loop, this is the best harness I have tried, both of my own design and of those purchased from others.

I was so happy with it, I decided to go ahead and start selling — and The Mobile Rat was born! It is still in the early stages but an Etsy shop is on the way! Credit for the design in its early stages goes to Michaela at theagilerat.com. In the meantime, email me at

delgador@email.arizona.edu to start creating your custom order.



Bangarang in his harness with me at a Tucson Bookman's Tabling Event for ARR.

A basic harness (no accessories) is \$8.00 plus shipping and you choose:

Yarn color(s) (can mix two of available colors)- Availability varies, I usually have more options than this. If you're looking for a specific color, ask. I might be able to get some.

White
Grey
Dusky Rose
Emerald Green
Blue/White combo
Blue/Brown/Tan combo



Finished Harness with 44 in. lead

Size-Harnesses come in four adjustable sizes, XL, L, M, S. I pick the best fit based on your rat's weight, and then there is room for adjustment. If the harness size is too small or large even with max adjustment, you can return and I will send a better size.

Up to two accessories (\$1.00 each)

Each harness is made to order, I don't have any pre-mades available. Once payment is received (cash or check) your harness will be created and mailed to you, usually within 5 business days.

Jewel Flower Charms



Bowties



Love Charms



Initial Charms



ARR's Youngest Foster Yet!

Hooray for Samantha Landay, our youngest foster at age 9. Samantha and Mom, Sharon, took on two boys named Auggie and Lowel and 4 girls, named Shalom, Or, Amiga, and Esperanza over the summer. They cared for them for about 6 months. Samantha really enjoyed playing with them and would build them forts with pillows and blankets. The hardest part for her, and I'm sure most fosters will agree, is when they were adopted. It's hard to say goodbye but well worth the effort to see them in their forever homes. Mom Sharon advises others to make sure that their child is old enough and ready to take on the responsibility of caring for rats. It's a big commitment and they have to be ready for it. Samantha and Sharon have always liked rats and they enjoyed the foster experience.

Kudos to Samantha and Sharon for opening their home and their hearts to help our cause. The rats thank you too!

If you're interested in becoming a foster home, please let us know by email at info@anyratrescue.org or by calling 480-663-3338. Thank you!



Amiga (now named Marshmallow) and Shalom (now named Fidget) were adopted by Abby and are loving their new forever home.



Adoptions in 2014 = 115!



Don't forget to visit <http://www.anyratrescue.org/> to see all of the cute furry friends just waiting for you to give them their forever home!



Good News!



We love to hear from you. Below is a sweet note from a prospective adopter who met Lucy:



ARR was recently interviewed for an article in Kings River Life magazine, "A California Magazine with Local Focus and Global Appeal."

Please use the link provided to read this interview. <http://kingsriverlife.com/01/10/any-rat-rescue/>



Help out Any Rat Rescue by donating a Sprouts Gift Card today! This goes a long way in assisting the rescue to make food mixes used by our foster homes and given to new adopters as part of the adoption package. A gift card enables us to shop NOW instead of waiting for the next sale. Send one in today!

Got a health question about your rat?
Check the Rat Health Care Guide
<http://ratguide.com/>



Note: The guide is not a substitute for a professional exotics veterinarian.

A REMINDER:

Any Rat Rescue is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit and donations are tax deductible.

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PayPal c/o info@anyratrescue.org

Thank you for your generous support!