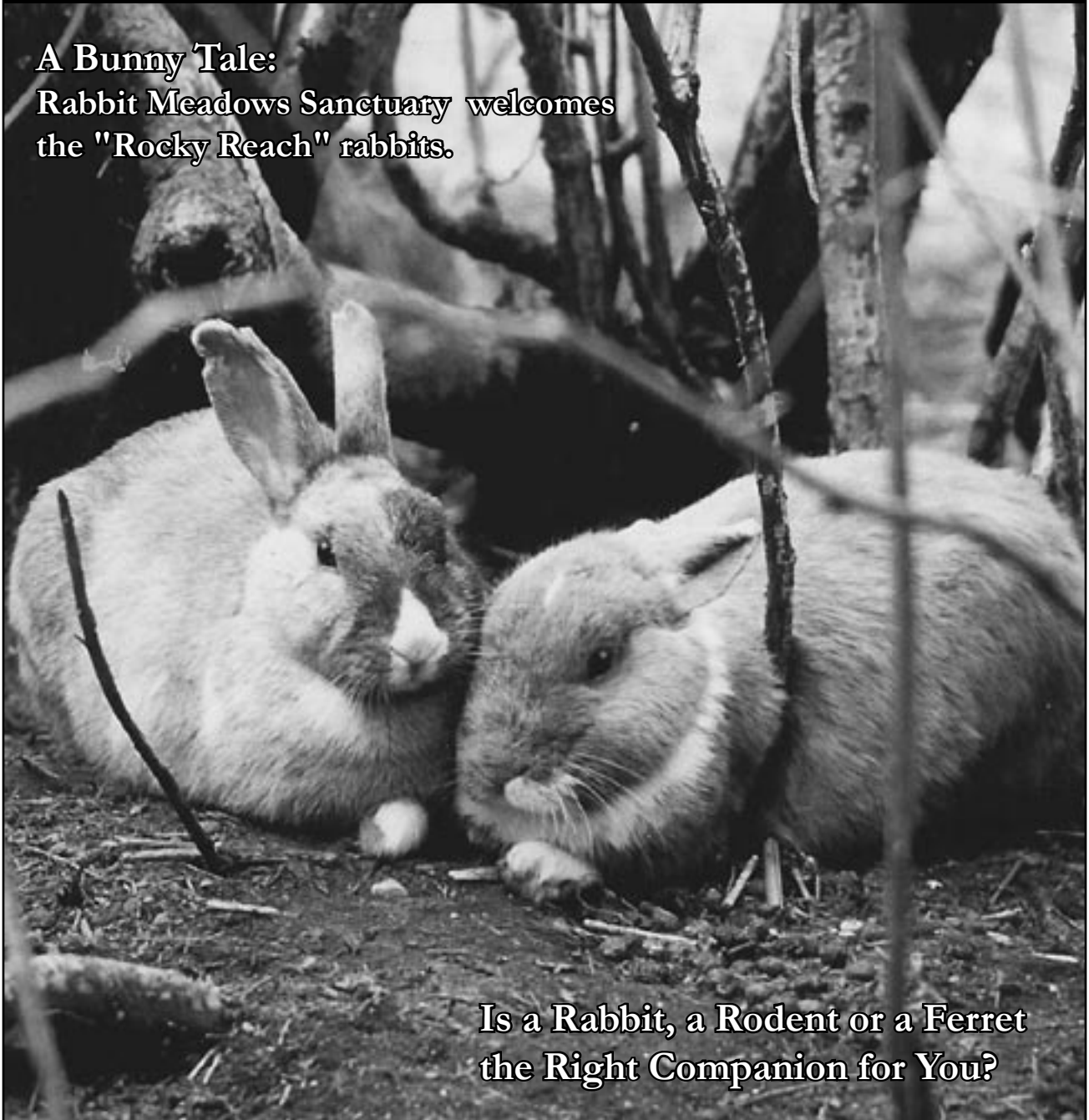


Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret News



A Bunny Tale:
Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary welcomes
the "Rocky Reach" rabbits.



**Is a Rabbit, a Rodent or a Ferret
the Right Companion for You?**

All this and more inside this issue of Rabbit , Rodent & Ferret News.

Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret News is a quarterly newsletter published by the Best Little Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret House, dba House Rabbit Society. Every reasonable effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information in this newsletter, however the editors and Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret House assume no responsibility for unintentional errors, omissions, and especially typos.

Our membership list is kept private. BLRRFH does not share, sell, or rent its membership list with other organizations, persons, or businesses, ever!

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Wan Ling, from Singapore visits BLRRFH

We met Wan Ling 10 years ago on the Internet, when her rabbit Min Min had uterine cancer. Her Singapore vet was put in touch with vets here and successfully performed her first rabbit spay on Min Min. Ten years later her veterinarian is Singapore's leading rabbit veterinarian.



Memorial for Dr. Barbara Deeb

Please join Dr. Barbara Deeb's family and friends in remembering and celebrating her life. A public memorial will be held from 3 - 6 p.m. on Sunday, June 19th at the UW Faculty Club on the University of Washington Campus. Contact Allpet Vet Clinic at 206-365-1102 for more information.

Wish List Spotlight

Do you have a used minivan in good running condition you would like to donate?

The BLRRFH shelter and Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary is in need of a new van to transport animals, hay, veggies and supplies and is an essential part of our day to day operations. Our current van has served us well over the years but is showing it's age and is beyond repair.

Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret News Underwriter Needed

You can help us to educate people about small companion animals, recognize our donors and volunteers for their generosity, give the animals in our shelter much needed exposure so they can find permanent loving homes and ensure more of each membership dollar goes to direct care. All of our design work, collating, folding and mail prep is done by volunteers making our publication relatively inexpensive, but we must incur the expense of printing and postage. If you are interested in underwriting our newsletter, please contact Sandi at (206) 365-9105 or Sandi@RabbitRodentFerret.org. Thank you!

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Your membership and donation dollars help support our rescued rabbits, rodents and ferrets. Please help us help the animals.

A Bunny Tale

Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary recently partnered with the Wenatchee Valley Humane Society to rescue 110 rabbits from the Rocky Reach Dam – a property located about 7 miles upstream from Wenatchee on the Columbia River.

The Chelan County Public Utility District, responsible for the grounds at Rocky Reach, coordinated the effort to “roundup” the bunnies. The Wenatchee Valley Humane Society took responsibility for giving the rabbits health exams, having them spayed or neutered and transporting them to Rabbit Meadows, where they will live the remainder of their lives in a protected and safe environment.

The Rocky Reach rescue is not a first for the sanctuary. Rabbit Meadows was originally founded to provide a home to 462 of the 652 rabbits rescued from a Redmond business park by the Redmond Rabbit Coalition. Over the years, rabbits from other rescues have continued to join the original “Redmond rabbits.” Rabbit Meadows has played an instrumental role in saving

and providing lifelong care to abandoned rabbits from all over Washington State. The sanctuary is also committed to partnering with other organizations and agencies in an effort to help rabbits in need and educate the public.

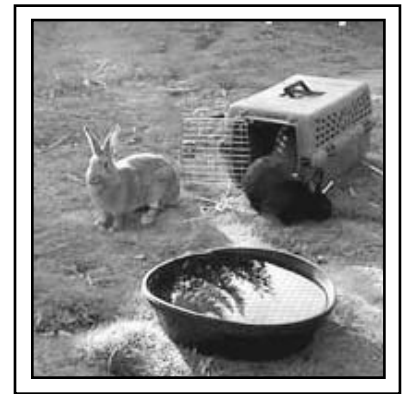
These rabbits were once brought into homes as loved and desired companions, but when their families discovered the extent of upkeep necessary to devote to a domestic rabbit, they decided they no longer wanted the responsibility of caring for them, and released them into the “wild.”

Unfortunately, there is a commonly held belief that “pet” rabbits will live a happier and fuller life if they are “freed” and released into the seemingly idealistic setting of a park. This couldn’t be farther from the truth. Domestic rabbits rely on humans to provide them with food, water and shelter from predators. Outdoors, they are easy marks for a variety of predators chased and maimed by dogs and cats, can contract parasites and disease, must deal with the elements, get hit by cars, are subject to abuse by humans – and the list goes on.

The populations of these abandoned

rabbits can grow quickly. Seeing a rabbit in a park encourages people to abandon their own rabbits, and because these rabbits are rarely altered, they begin to reproduce. These large numbers of rabbits eventually begin to cause conflicts with people and wildlife.

These “Rocky Reach” rabbits, as well as the “Redmond” rabbits were lucky. They were rescued and brought to a safe place, where they will be cared for appropriately. At Rabbit Meadows, they are fed, obtain medical treatment



Two of the “Rocky Reach” rabbits arrive at the sanctuary.

when necessary, and are kept in a safe environment – protected from the elements, and predators. Hundreds of

Cont'd on page 11



Dr. Barbara Deeb

On Monday, May 9, 2005, Dr. Barbara Deeb, our dear friend, proud supporter of our shelter and compassionate caregiver for many of your companion animals passed away.

I first met Dr. Deeb about 16 years ago, after reading an article she wrote about rabbit health. Over the years, we became good friends with a shared interest in the welfare of small companion animals.

Dr. Deeb dedicated her career to improving the lives of animals. She always shared her knowledge and expertise with colleagues around the world and was the primary contributing editor to Rabbit Health News for Veterinarians. She spent untold hours researching new treatments and therapies to improve and extend the lives of our small companions. She was also one of

our shelter's most dedicated supporters.

Terry and Jennie Savery wrote “We expect she is in heaven, and that some of those angel wings are actually rabbit ears, misperceived for centuries, due no doubt to the distances, the blue sky and white fleecy clouds of the setting.” I know that Dr. Deeb appreciates this sentiment and is smiling.

We are collecting stories, photos and remembrances of Dr. Deeb to share in the next issue of Rabbit Rodent & Ferret News as well as for a tribute wall in our shelter. If you have a story about Dr. Deeb or about how she helped one of your companions, please mail or e-mail them to us.

We will truly miss Dr. Deeb and we thank her for her friendship and compassion. The world is a better place for having known her.

Sandi

Is a Rabbit the Right Companion for You?

By Kathy Smith

If you are considering adding a rabbit to your family, here are some questions that will help you decide whether a rabbit is a good "fit" for your family.

Does anyone in your household have allergies?

Many people who are allergic to dogs and/or cats are not allergic to rabbits. However, even if no one has animal allergies, someone may be allergic to hay — the most important element of your rabbit's diet. Before bringing a rabbit into your home, have any family member with allergies spend some time with rabbits — perhaps helping at a shelter or foster home — to help determine whether allergies will be a problem.

Are you looking for a "starter pet" for your child?

Don't be fooled by the cute pictures you see of rabbits and children at Easter! Rabbits are best suited for adult families or families with children who enjoy quiet forms of play. Loud activities, commotion, and sudden movements — in other words normal childhood behavior — can be terrifying to a rabbit. Although rabbits need daily exercise and interaction with their human families, most do not like to be picked up, held, or chased after. For the safety of both rabbit and child, parents need to carefully supervise their children's interaction with the family rabbit. Improper handling can cause serious injury to the rabbit, child, or both.

Are you looking for an "easy to care for pet?"

If you are considering a rabbit because you think they are easier to care



for than a dog or cat — think again. Providing proper rabbit care can require more time, energy, and money than is required for either a cat or dog. Rabbits need food and water available at all times

— there is almost no margin for error. A good rabbit veterinarian may be difficult to find near your home, and quality veterinary care for a rabbit is almost always more expensive than the same care for a dog or cat!

Are you willing to make a long-term commitment to your rabbit?

A well-cared-for rabbit can live 10 years or even longer. Rabbits develop a deep bond with their primary caretaker. They crave human companionship and can become quite depressed if

they are separated from their human or if their human suddenly has no time for them. If you are planning to move, get married, or have a child, consider whether there will be a place for your rabbit in your new home or family.

Are you willing to make some adjustments to your décor?

If you have a companion rabbit, your house will probably never be picture perfect. Your rabbit may need a litterbox, as well as his favorite toys, in your family room. You need to be able to adjust to the idea of hay, rabbit hair, and the occasional stray "poop" anywhere at any time. It is natural for rabbits to

want to chew and dig. Despite your best efforts to rabbit-proof, occasionally this will mean damage to carpet, woodwork, electronics, or furniture. Learn to laugh and appreciate your rabbit's unique decorating touches. He may wish to customize the shape and texture of furniture and moldings. Or he may decide that corners should not be carpeted or that the wallpaper really needs to go.

Are you willing to work to keep your rabbit and your prized possessions safe from each other?

Rabbits are naturally attracted to electric cords. In the blink of an eye your rabbit can chomp through a cord, endangering himself and ruining your electronics. Your rabbit cannot tell the difference between the old phone book you gave him to rip apart and your child's \$100 textbook. Anything left on the floor in the rabbit's area is "fair game" for him to chew on. Rabbits can also be quite resourceful about reaching things outside their cage or exercise pen. In your rabbit's

eyes, there is no difference between the towel you gave him to play with and the designer sweater you carelessly

draped on a chair next to his cage — except perhaps the challenge of reaching that sweater! Remember, if you are careless with your possessions and they get chewed, it your fault, not the rabbit's.

Can you handle having a "pet" who can outsmart you?

Rabbits are very intelligent and can be creative problem-solvers. Don't assume that a cage or room is escape-proof — many rabbits have Houdini tendencies. Never take for granted that your rabbit cannot find a way to reach the kitchen cabinet, computer desk, or handmade wall hanging over the sofa!

Rabbits are resourceful about using whatever is in their "space" as a tool to achieve their goal. They are certainly bright enough to be taught tricks and obedience like dogs; most rabbits, however, choose not to be ruled by their human.

Are you interested in learning to see the world from a completely new perspective?

In contrast to cats, dogs, and humans — all of which are predators — rabbits are prey animals. This role drives everything from their reaction to danger (real or perceived) to the sexual obsession of unaltered rabbits. If you are willing and able to make a paradigm shift and begin to view the world through your rabbit's eyes, you can learn a lot from these wise souls!

Can you offer your rabbit unconditional love and acceptance?

Like humans, each rabbit has an individual personality. If you accept him as a valued family member, you will love him for who he is, even if he turns out not to be anything like the pet your family expected him to be.

New Companion Rabbit Checklist

- ☐ Litter box
- ☐ Timothy Hay
- ☐ Veggies
- ☐ Enclosure
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ House
- ☐ Water Bottle
- ☐ Water Bowl
- ☐ Food Bowl
- ☐ Rabbit Proof Your House
- ☐ Quality Alfalfa or Timothy Pellets
- ☐ Veterinarian
- ☐ Love



Adoption Spotlight



Cathy

Cathy is around 5 years old. As is typical of lop eared rabbits, when Cathy arrived she had two ear infections which we've treated and cleared up. Now that she's feeling good, Cathy has "attitude!" She either wants to be petted and adored or will grumble at you if you mess around in her cage. Cathy could be a good companion for your middle aged boy bunny.

George

George was born in March 2004. He is a very social guy who loves to talk and be the center of attention. George would like to find a permanent home and a cute guinea pig girl to love and talk to.



Betty and Moe

Betty and Moe are around 10-12 months old. They are very adorable together and look a lot alike. Betty and Moe have a lot of energy - they love to play and explore their surroundings. They have their distemper vaccination, are microchipped and ready to become members of their new loving family.

Bullet

Bullet was in the last litter of "Redmond" rabbit babies born on 2/12/99. He had lived with his sister until recently when she passed away and his human family returned him to our shelter. Bullet would like to share the rest of his life with a loving human family and a girl rabbit.



Is a Ferret the Right Companion for You?

By Sandi

Do you like to watch animals do really silly things to entertain you and make you fall off your chair laughing?

Do you mind if you lose your socks or car keys?

Can you trim nails and clean ears every two weeks?

Can you "ferret proof" your house...
...so that he cannot get into the bottom of your bed or couch?
...so that he cannot get into the exhaust vent for your dryer?

...so that he cannot climb onto a window sill, where he will push out the screen and fall to the ground?

...so that anything as small as an inch high (such as the bottom of a door) would prevent your ferret from passing



through?

Ferrets are joyful, somewhat careless critters and it's up to you to protect and keep them safe from their own mischievous selves. Ferrets cannot be let out into the yard to play by themselves, because they will just take off exploring and will be unable to find their way

home. And, if ferrets are allowed to go outside while you supervise, it's quite possible that they will come home with the common dog/cat flea.

Ferrets are social animals and need to live with another ferret. They play very rough, way rougher than us humans can tolerate. So letting them play out their energy with another ferret is best for their behavior and for their health. Once they're exhausted, then they might consider sitting with you for awhile.

Ferrets are joyful, somewhat careless critters and it's up to you to protect and keep them safe from their own mischievous selves.

Allergies

Although it's rare for people to be allergic to ferrets, it certainly can happen. Plan to spend at least an hour or two handling ferrets before deciding that allergies won't be a problem for any of your family members.

Daily expenses

A quality ferret food is mandatory if you want to keep your companion healthy for as long as possible. Ferret food can be quite expensive. Then

there's litter. Litter boxes should be changed daily, so that they don't have to live with their own feces. There are many ferret treats available,

but our vet feeds her ferrets a piece of broiled chicken or fish as a healthy treat. And while we don't feed our foster ferrets a lot of treats, we do use Ferretone to train a ferret to use his litter box and a way to distract him when we clip his nails.

Housing

Ferrets will require a large enclosure with a number of hammocks and sleep-

Foster Care Spotlight: Carmen

From Troy Tady

Last December, my partner and I had the wonderful opportunity to become involved in the ferret foster program at the Rabbit, Rodent and Ferret House. We were lucky enough to be able to foster a little 6 year-old fitch female named Carmen. Although I had previously raised a ferret to the ripe old age of nearly 10 years old when I lived in Montana, it was my partner's first experience with a ferret. I think he was extremely surprised to find out how gentle, affectionate, intelligent, and playful ferrets can be. Carmen is all of those things and has become a very valuable member of the family.

When Carmen came home with us, she explored her surroundings quite thoroughly. She now has her "rounds" pretty well established but always loves to follow anybody around from room to room to see what's going on. Her favorite play areas are on the big rugs out in the living room and in the "office" where she has her cage and her cardboard box filled with puzzle pieces (where we sometimes hide treats so she can dig around in the puzzle pieces).

Carmen also loves to go outside on her leash although it took her a few times to get used to the harness on the leash. She will now either wait by the door to go outside or try to coral us toward the door. If she sees the leash, she will run to the door. When she is outside she goes absolutely wild. She runs, jumps, roles, squeaks, "attacks," and just generally has a pretty great time.

Carmen also has a particular fondness for her showers, which she gets a couple times a week. She will go and wait by the tub when she hears the water running. She generally likes to be held under the water spray but she will also run in and out of the water if placed on the floor of the tub.



Carmen enjoying a shower

Editors Note: If you'd be interested in fostering one or two of our older ferrets, please contact Sandi at Sandi@RabbitRodentFerret.org or 206-365-9105.

ing areas, space for a litter box and food and water bowls. They will also need to have space to play and exercise. Ferrets are very intelligent and inquisitive animals and need to be provided with activities, toys and things to explore safely.

Vacations

Not all of your friends will be willing to pet sit your ferrets. So, you'll need to find a good pet sitter, whether you'll be away for a weekend or for a week.

Veterinary Care

Most veterinarians have not been trained in the treatment of ferrets, so you'll need to spend time locating a good vet, before an emergency arises. A veterinarian trained in the care of ferrets can be more expensive than a vet trained only in the care of cats and

dogs. Ferrets require yearly distemper vaccines, and after age two require yearly teeth cleaning. Sometime after age 4 (usually after age 5) ferrets will likely come down with adrenal disease requiring an expensive surgery or expensive

monthly injections. If not adrenal disease then a ferret is prone to tumors on their pancreas, requiring surgery and perhaps daily medication for the remainder of their lives. It is seriously best to start a veterinary fund, at the same time you acquire your first ferret.

Your new family member

It is very important to consider the long term before adding a ferret to your family. Ferrets live 6 - 10 years and will require a lot of your time and money. If you are con-

sidering any life changes, like moving or having a child, please take the time to think about how your ferret will fit in or what accommodations will need to be made to ensure your ferret's well being.

Before considering a ferret as a companion for your child, you need to make sure that you and your entire family wants a ferret as a companion and be willing to commit to their lifelong care and expense.

Ferrets are very social animals who build strong bonds with their human families and ferret friends alike. You will become a significant part of your ferret's social world and your ferret will likely become very depressed if you have to give him away. Please be sure you can commit to the social, physical and monetary needs of a ferret before adding one to your family.

We don't want to discourage you from adopting a ferret, as they can be wonderful companions. We do want you to consider the requirements for successfully keeping a ferret as a permanent part of your family.

Ferret Startup Costs



- Ferret adoption: \$100
- Cage: \$150 - \$250
- Water bottle: \$6 - \$8
- Litter: \$10
- Litterbox(es): \$10 - \$20
- Quality Food: 5# bag \$15 - \$25
- Hammocks/Beds: \$10 - \$100
- Food and water bowls: \$6 - \$10
- Vaccinations: 8, 12, 16 weeks, then yearly, is the required schedule for vaccinations to keep your ferret safe from distemper \$50 avg.

How You Can Help

Become a Member

When you become a member of BLRRFH or HRS, you are helping to support our rescue efforts. You are helping to provide spay/neuter, vaccinations, surgery, lab costs, medication, food, shelter, toys, litter and everything else that is needed to ensure quality care of the animals at BLRRFH and at Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary. You are also helping the rabbits, rodents and ferrets find permanent loving homes.

Your membership will include:

- **Our quarterly newsletter:**
Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret News,
- **Membership card**
- **5% discount on merchandise when you visit our shelter**

Become a BLRRFH

Constant Companion

Become a constant companion to the animals with an automatic monthly credit card donation. Your monthly donation will provide a dependable source of income so we can continue to do our lifesaving work.

Sponsor an Animal

Sponsoring a rabbit, rodent or ferret in our shelter will help us pay for the much needed supplies, medical care and food that is required to care for them. You can choose to sponsor an individual animal in the shelter or a particular species. Your sponsorship will include a color photo

of your sponsored animal, a photo frame magnet and a short biography. The minimum sponsorship is \$40 a year. You can pay for your sponsorship with a 1 time donation or with a monthly automatic credit card donation.

We rely entirely on donations and could not provide the high quality care for the animals at our shelter and sanctuary without the generosity of people like you. Thank you for your support!

Is a Guinea Pig the right Companion for you?

By Sandi

Guinea pigs are admittedly very adorable. Their excited "wheeks" and intoxicating joy for life could melt anyone's heart. But before you decide to bring a guinea pig into your family, please consider the following:

Guinea pigs can live 6 to 8 years or even longer. You must be willing to make a commitment to provide care and attention to your companion every day.

Are you looking for an animal who will run up to you and "ask" to be picked up? Do you want an animal who will entertain you by doing tricks? Do you want an animal who can safely be picked up and carried around by your child? If so, a guinea pig may not be the right companion



ion for your family.

Guinea pigs are prey animals with short little legs, and as such are rightfully fearful of having their four little feet lifted off the ground and carried high above their natural landscape.

As prey animals, their bones are much less dense than that of (for instance) a cat because they were created to be eaten by carnivores.

If they fall...they will break! Adults and children over 10

(or of an age where they are secure on their own feet and cautious of their little charge) are the only ones who should lift and carry a guinea pig. Younger children should be taught to sit on the floor at all times and not to jump or run around when the guinea pig is out. You know your own children, but in general chil-

Guinea pigs can live 6 to 8 years or even longer.

dren under age 6 have attention spans which are too short to safely interact with a guinea pig without constant adult supervision.

Guinea pigs must have roughage, usually in the form of hay in their diet in order to keep their digestive system healthy and to keep them in tip top shape. Are you allergic to grasses? If so you may not be able to live with grass hay in the house. If you have already fallen

in love with a guinea pig, there might be a work around that you could consider, but it will not be as convenient as purchasing

hay from a nearby pet supply store. Other types of hay could work, but you may have to order it from the Internet or may have to travel some distance from your home to purchase it. Allergies are an important consideration before deciding upon a companion who must have hay in their diet.

Wish List

You can help the animals at BLRRFH by donating much needed supplies. Below, we have listed items that we use every day and a few items we wish we had. Your gift will help us continue to provide the best care possible to the animals that rely on BLRRFH every day.

Baby Incubator

White Vinegar (*we use it by the gallons for cleaning*)

Bleach (*not Clorox, they test on rabbits*)

Paper Towels

USB Zip Drive

Laundry Soap (*bulk containers*)

Towels (*primarily bath towels, but other sizes as well*)

Black garbage bags (*33 - 36 gallon bags*)

White 13 gal garbage bags

Overhead Projector

Adobe Software for

Windows:

InDesign CS license

GoLive CS

Adobe Photoshop 7.0

Walk-in Refrigerator (*keep veggies fresh for shelter and sanctuary rabbits*)

Dish Sponges

Security Cameras

Baby Blankets

Rugs (*bathroom and throw rugs*)

Van Good, *used van to transport veggies, hay and animals*

A Special Thank You

Angela Rittinger and crew framed in one of our garage doors and gave us an actual door to go through. The garage door had been inconvenient and dangerous as it would not always stay up when it was supposed to. We use that access many times throughout the day to go across the parking lot to our shed, where hay and other supplies are stored.

Thank you Angela Rittinger, James Kennedy and Guy Robbins for your time and expertise and Kim Burnett from Lowe's, Enfield Construction, and Cedar Mountain Construction for donating supplies. Thanks also to Donnie the bunny for his inspiration.



What will you do with your guinea pigs when you go away for the weekend or an even longer vacation? You will have to get someone to come in to care for them, or find someplace else to board them. Of course, this is true of every companion animal and so may be something you've already realized and are prepared to accept. Since you may stay in motels or smaller places while on vacation, it's not unreasonable for your guinea pig to have a smaller vacation home of his own. That may even make it possible for your herd to travel with you, or at the very least will make it easier for a friend to care for them at home.

Because most veterinarians do not have the training necessary to treat a guinea pig you will need to find one who is experienced in their medical issues. Although you will not need to bring your pig in for yearly vaccinations (*in the US*), they may need to receive treatment at sometime in their life and they should also be spayed or neutered (*Many rescues*

and shelters subsidize the cost of the spay/neuter and will ask for an adoption fee that is only a portion of those costs...another excellent reason to locate a guinea pig rescuer).

Guinea pigs should be provided with as large of a space as possible. They are very active and inquisitive animals who need room to exercise and explore. Even if you bring home a young pig, you should invest in an enclosure that will also suit him when he is an adult instead of purchasing a "starter cage." Just as the adult guinea pigs, the young pigs require a lot of space to do

all of the things any baby does. Explore, exercise and enjoy life.

Another thing to consider is the very social nature of these animals. In the wild, they live in large family groups who they can "talk" to and interact with and they are rarely alone. We can not be with our guinea pig companions 24 hours a day and no matter how hard we may try to "speak" their language, it's just not the same. To help ensure your pig's happiness, we strongly recommend that you

consider adopting two guinea pigs instead of one.

New Companion Guinea Pig Checklist

- ☐ Litter box
- ☐ Timothy Hay
- ☐ Veggies
- ☐ Enclosure
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ House
- ☐ Water Bottle
- ☐ Food Bowl
- ☐ Quality Guinea Pig Pellets
- ☐ Veterinarian
- ☐ Love



Volunteer Spotlight: Danielle Brewer

Danielle Brewer began volunteering at BLRRFH in 2000 for her school required community service hours. After her school requirements were over, Danielle had enjoyed working with us so much, she continued through the summer. Danielle has been an immense help to us over the

past 5 years. She knows every job here at the shelter and because of that we've been able to hire her periodically to work some of her summer, winter and spring breaks. Danielle is a real asset to our organization and we thank her for her compassion and dedication to the animals at BLRRFH.



Help the animals, become a Volunteer!

We could not do our lifesaving work without dedicated volunteers who donate their time and expertise. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please stop by our shelter, e-mail us at Info@RabbitRodentFerret.org, or call us at (206) 365-9105. Thank you!

We currently need volunteers for:

Data Entry, *bookkeeping, incoming animals, etc.*

Shelter Cleaning, *help is always needed (we need someone who can clean and mop floors once a week)*

Fold/Staple Newsletters

E-Bay, *manage an E-bay auction for us*

Window, Parking Lot Cleaning

Trim Rabbit Nails

Trim Guinea Pig Nails

Adoptable Animal Photos, *take photos and update web page*

Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary, *cleaning every 2 months*

Distribute Brochures, *to veterinary clinics*

Prepare and Hand Out Veggies, *2 1/2 hour a week commitment*

Clean Rodent Cages *once a week*

Is a Mouse the Right Companion for You?

By C. Hays

Mice are wonderful, intelligent and affectionate animals. Here are some things to consider before adopting and how to keep your mouse healthy and happy.

There is a common perception that mice are disposable because they are cheaply priced when sold in pet stores, but their value goes far beyond the arbitrary dollar amount placed on them. They are living creatures who depend on us to see to their needs and their lives are every bit as important as any other companion animal we bring into our families.

You must be willing to make a lifetime commitment to your companion animal and prepared to provide daily care including feeding, changing water and cleaning their enclosure as well as educating

yourself about their behavior and providing veterinary care when needed. If you're a responsible, gentle person who has the time to give to a small animal, then a mouse might just be the right companion for you.

Mice do not make appropriate companions for young children, the youngest I might suggest a mouse for would be a 10 year old. They are extremely fragile and can "break" by falling off a table, or from a pair of shaky hands. They are small and can be easily lost if they are not closely supervised. Remember, if you do adopt a mouse for your child, you must be responsible for ensuring their daily care. Your mouse should not be used as a learning tool. If they are neglected or forgotten, they suffer.

Mice are social animals and enjoy each others company. Two females will almost

always get along, however two males frequently end up fighting. A single male mouse can be neutered and then introduced to a female mouse so that they both can have companionship.

You should learn how to sex mice to avoid accidental and unwanted litters (*Mice can breed extremely rapidly – every month, they can have up to 20 babies.*) If you are unsure of their gender, mice should be kept separate until a vet or a specialist can sex them. Mice should be housed in a wire cage with a small mesh (*plastic cages or aquariums do not allow for the proper circulation of air*) and

provided with as much space as possible. They need room to explore and exercise.

Mice are happiest between 70 and 75 degrees. Over 80 and under 65 will put them at risk for disease or death. Aspen, Carefresh™, and/or newspaper as long

New Companion Mouse Checklist

- ☐ Enclosure
- ☐ Toys
- ☐ Bedding
- ☐ House
- ☐ Quality Rodent Blocks
- ☐ Water Bottle
- ☐ Food Bowl
- ☐ Veterinarian
- ☐ Love

Thank You!

Your generosity enables us to save and improve the lives of countless rabbits, rodents and ferrets. We would also like to thank our volunteers and supporters who have contributed much needed funds, time for a variety of tasks and projects and the items we use every day. Thank you for being there!

All of our wonderful and dedicated volunteers and supporters

Vineeta Anand
Matt Andrews
Mary-Ann Argoe
Karen Baker
Lois Ballew
Alayne Boyko
Alisa Brooks
Allison Brown
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Candice Bush
Mary Carlson
Beth Carroll
Dave Claar, *connecting electricity to the hay shed*
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Sharon Hummel, *for donating supplies*
Amy L. and Justin L. Hunt
Brandy Ian
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Celia Jensen
Karen and David Johnson

Linda Keaton, *for grooming and loving bunnies every Monday*
Jeff Klima, *for continued upkeep of shelter vehicles*
Zoe Kluge, *for sponsoring Chestnut's medical bills*
Nancy Koslosky, *for veggies*
Yu-Ling Kuo
Mary Lancaster
Margo Lakin
Mary and Robbin Lawson, *for new washing machine*
Eric Leggett and Beth Schwarzmann
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as it's printed with non toxic soy ink, are the best choices for bedding. (*Pine and Cedar shavings are toxic to mice and should never be used.*)

Mice should be fed a diet of quality rodent blocks. Beware of mouse food mixes as they generally contain too much sugar and fat. Also be careful of feeding your mouse anything they might choke on, like peanut butter. The occasional treat is okay, but try to avoid "spoiling" your mouse with food, as they are prone to obesity. They need their health as much as we do. Instead, if you want to make your mouse happy, give them lots of toys to climb on and hide in, as well as a wheel – they love wheels. The bigger the better, up to about 12 inches diameter.

Mice are nocturnal, and like to play at night and you should avoid waking them during the day. They love to run and play and you will make a perfect playground. Give your mouse at least half an hour every day of playtime with you, and give them your full attention – do not let your mind wander, and never forget where your mouse is! When they are out playing, be mindful of possible falls, cups of

water they can drown in, live wires they might chew, and dangerous things they might eat or come across.

You should never grab a mouse, predators do this, and it will make your mouse fearful. Be patient and let them crawl into our hand. You don't have to hold onto them – they won't fall on their own, but just in case, never hold them where they would have a long way to fall, or over a hard surface.

When a mouse will come immediately into your hand,

you have a trusting friend. It might take a while, be patient and don't give up easily.

Mice will require veterinary care when or if they become ill. It is important to educate yourself about mice and to know your mouse well. Mice have an instinct to hide or "mask" their symptoms so they do not appear as easy prey to predators. They generally will not act sick until they are very ill, becoming listless, still, and slow moving. They might also make noise, any mouse that makes any noise at all is likely sick. The term "quiet as a

When a mouse will come immediately into your hand, you have a trusting friend.

mouse" is true of all healthy mice.

It is very important to bring your mouse to the vet as soon as possible if you suspect that they are not well. Most treatment for mouse illnesses are inexpensive, generally consisting of an office visit and antibiotics. If antibiotics are prescribed, make sure the mouse receives them on schedule everyday (often twice a day),

for the entire time required. I find that making a mouse take medicine is hard – so I hide the meds in several drops of Soy Dream

vanilla ice cream. (*One should not use regular ice cream because the calcium in it can cause some antibiotics not to work as well.*)

Mice will live about two years. When they get older, they may lose some dexterity and strength, but they will still enjoy playtime. If you decide to bring a mouse into your family, remember that albino mice are every bit as loving and affectionate as fancy colored mice and you should consider adopting from a shelter.

A Bunny Tale: Cont'd from page 3

rabbits live at the sanctuary. Rabbit Meadows does not get funds from the government to support our efforts, we rely on the generous donations from individuals who care about the welfare of rabbits.

If you have a companion rabbit that you are unable to keep, please be responsible and find them a loving, adoptive fam-

ily, or take them to an animal shelter that can. Do not abandon your "pet" into the "wild" where he will surely suffer.

If you are considering adopting a rabbit, please do your research and make sure that they will be a good fit for your family. Ask yourself these questions: Can I make a commitment to care for this rabbit for the next 8 to 10 years? Can I provide for their special behavior and dietary needs?

Am I willing to spend money on their health care, including spay or neuter surgery?

Taking the time to know the individual characteristics and needs of a potential new family member will make the life of your companion animal much happier. Your family will also benefit from knowing how to properly care for, commit to and enjoy your new family member!

In Loving Memory of Sparkle ♥



Sparkle, the long-time queen rabbit at Allpet Veterinary Clinic, died on Valentines Day. She had thymoma, a cancer in her chest; she lived well for almost 8 months after this was discovered.

For all but the first few months of her 10+ years, Sparkle took her job at the clinic seriously: she greeted clients and let them pet her; she watched over patients; she inspected conditions and procedures in the surgery room. She often "volunteered" to be a demo bunny to teach handling and caring for other pet bunnies. She taught us about bunny behavior

Sparkle had strong opinions, especially about her territory and who she wanted to share it with. She entertained us with her planned adventures. Hide and seek was one of them. Sparkle loved to hide in a dark corner of the forbidden basement while everyone searched for her and then gleefully ran back upstairs.

She was a mischievous but perfect rabbit, and she was supposed to live forever.

Barb Deeb, DVM (*.....and she was supposed to live forever.*)

In Loving Memory of our animal friends... Frango the guinea pig, Jimmy the ferret, Manny the ferret, Zoe the guinea pig and Zorro the ferret



The Best Little Rabbit, Rodent and Ferret House and Rabbit Meadows Sanctuary depend on the generosity of people like you.

Your gift will help ensure the continued high quality care and shelter we provide to the small companion animals who rely on us every day. You are also enabling us to do the important work of educating the public about the needs of rabbits, rodents and ferrets - making the world a happier and safer place for them to live.

Your support is crucial to animals like Noah, a rabbit who was found on a golf course after being hit with a club. His injuries were so severe that they required he have both of his eyes removed - fortunately, BLRRFH was able to provide him with veterinary care, shelter and a lot of attention. After becoming quite the star at our shelter, due to his very loving personality, Noah was eventually able to be adopted into a loving and permanent home and enjoying his new life. Without the expertise and compassion of BLRRFH, Noah would have had very few options and likely been euthanized.

On behalf of all the animals and people at BLRRFH, thank you for your support!



A Lasting Tribute Portrait Order Form



☐ Photo is enclosed

Name of Animal _____

Inscription for under portrait (*if any, 15 words or less please*)

☐ This is a gift, please send acknowledgment card to:

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

** If ordering more than 1 portrait, please include details on a separate piece of paper*

**Please fill out your information on the bottom of this page.*



Yes, I want to help the animals at the Best Little Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret House!



___ Yes, I would like to become a member of

___ BLRRFH \$15 (1 year membership)

___ National HRS \$18 (1 year membership)

___ Both \$31 (a \$2 savings for a 1 year membership)

___ I would like to give a BLRRFH membership to a friend/family member. Please enclose the name and address of the gift recipient separately.

___ I would like to order 'A Lasting Tribute' portrait for \$50, I have filled out the form on the top of this page and enclosed a photo.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State Zip _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

I would like to receive my newsletter ___ on-line ___ in the mail.

Please mail form to: **Best Little Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret House**
14317 Lake City Way NE
Seattle, WA 98125

___ I have enclosed my company's matching gift form.

___ Yes, I would like to Sponsor an Animal
(*\$40 a year minimum for sponsorship*)

___ Rabbit ___ Ferret ___ Guinea Pig

___ Rodent (_____)

(*If you are sponsoring an animal as a gift to a friend or family member, please enclose their name and address separately.*)

___ Please enroll me as a BLRRFH Constant Companion and charge my credit card \$ _____ monthly.

I have enclosed my gift of \$ _____ to help the animals.

___ I have enclosed my check payable to BLRRFH or HRS

Please charge my credit card ___ M/C ___ Visa

Total Gift Amount \$ _____

_____-_____-_____-_____-_____-_____-_____-_____-_____-

Expires ___/___/___ Signature _____

Thank You!



Best Little Rabbit, Rodent & Ferret House

14317 Lake City Way NE
Seattle, WA 98125

Whether you are looking for the perfect gift for an animal lover or creating a lasting memory to a companion animal in your life, BLRRFH has two exciting and unique opportunities for you.

We have partnered with Marnie Tyson of Windgypsy Designs to offer hand painted portraits and portrait quilts of your companion animals.

A Lasting Tribute Portraits

Windgypsy Designs will paint a 5" x 7" portrait on canvas of a companion animal from one of your photos. The portraits can either be hung in our shelter as a lasting tribute to your animal while bringing our shelter walls alive with a testament to all that our small companions bring to our lives or for you to display in your own home. If you choose for



the painting to be hung in our shelter, you will receive a photo of the painting or if you are giving this as a gift, we will send a card and photo to the recipient. Portraits are \$50.00 and proceeds benefit the animals at BLRRFH.



Portrait of Goldie the ferret napping

A Lasting Tribute Portrait Quilts

Windgypsy Designs will create a beautiful hand sewn quilt from a photo of an animal who is special to you. A portion of the proceeds from each quilt will benefit the animals at BLRRFH. Kathy Smith who commissioned the quilt below wrote "Marnie Tyson's fabric art has made a wonderful addition to 'The Murray Gallery.'" The exquisite detail of King Murray's quilt makes it a fitting tribute to the memory of His Royal Highness." Please contact Windgypsy Designs at windgypsy@msn.com for more information on ordering a quilt.



Quilt of King Murray