



HARELINES



Volume 18 Number 2 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY Spring/Summer 2014

I Like Big Buns And I Cannot Lie

By Kristi Cole

My husband, Bill, and I have had house rabbits since we were married over 25 years ago. However, we did not experience the joy of having an XXL rabbit until Samson crossed our path in late 1998. Samson was a two-year-old tan Flemish Giant weighing 17 lbs. He was rescued by a fellow HRS fosterer from a lady who was no longer able to keep him. We recognized right away that he was a special rabbit and we decided to adopt him as our own. Thus began our love for bodacious bunnies.

Soon after that, Xena, a black Flemish Giant was brought to a local shelter and was set to be euthanized the next day, Christmas Eve. We rushed to get her. She had a horrible case of ear mites, so bad that her ears would not stand straight up. Once we remedied that and got

her spayed, we bonded her with Samson. Though Xena wasn't fond of people, she and Samson were inseparable. We began to refer to them as "The Lovebuns" and they were a wonderful pair for many years.

Over the years we have enjoyed the presence of Louis, a Checkered Giant, Sylvester, a Giant Chinchilla, and Clyde and Cleo, French Lops.

Our newest Grande Bunny is Jasper, a six-year-old Flemish Giant weighing 19 lbs. (our largest yet). Jasper had belonged to a young teen who had moved on to different interests as she grew older. Just a month ago, we found out he needed a new home and we were excited to meet

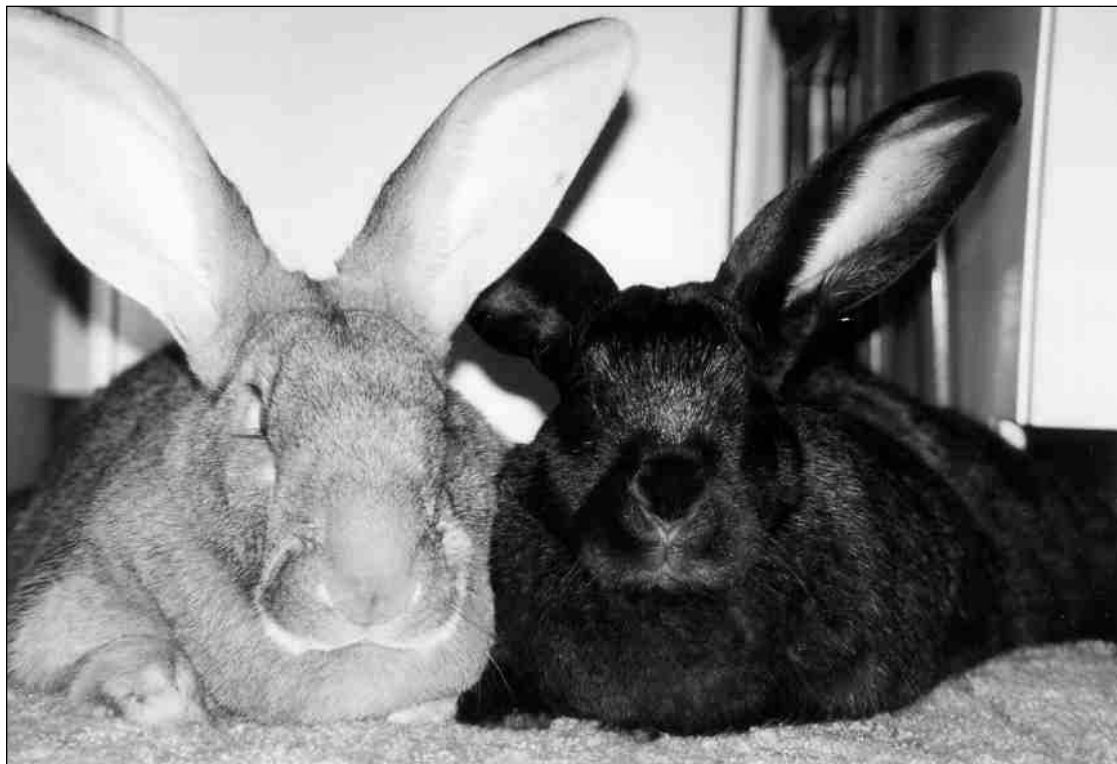
him; it's been several years since we've had a big guy. He is very mellow, loves to be petted, grooms us with kisses, and comes like a puppy when he's called.

Many people have shied away from having a large rabbit, thinking they take up so much more space. In some sense, that is true. In other ways, it's no different than caring for any other rabbit. They obviously won't fit in a cage (which we don't recommend for any size rabbits), but a few exercise pens linked together could work if you need an enclosure.

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Samson and Xena



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The Buckeye HRS Respects Your Privacy
We know our members value their privacy and that's why we never, ever, sell our mailing list or distribute it to any other party. All of our members' information is held in the strictest confidence.

Special Thanks to:

The Coniam family and bunny Malley of Avon Lake, for their generous donation to the Fremont foster rabbits.

Jim and Laura Gills and bunny Tabby, for their surprise Christmas gifts of hay and pellets and for their thoughtful contribution in honor of Sadie.

Summit County Executive Russ Pry, for hosting "Change for Change" at Rockne's Pub in Akron on April 29. All tips collected benefited the Buckeye HRS!

Laurie and Billy at Small Pet Select, for donating 10% of timothy hay purchases to the Buckeye HRS. See our website for details (under Rabbit Supplies) and remember to use the coupon code "Buckeye" to receive free shipping and to help us help more bunnies.

The following members, whose monetary and in-kind donations allow us to meet our ongoing fostering and educational goals:

Liz and Steve Claytor, Stacie Hecht, Kathy Kallay, Jacob Larson, Tricia and David Graham, Marjorie Aleva, David and Joyce Weaver, Bob Piekarczyk, Judy O'Neil, Shirley Wood.

Our new and continuing Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors! These special rabbits, who must spend the rest of their lives in foster care due to serious medical conditions, have you to thank. We wish we could acknowledge each of you individually!

As always, the **Monks Copy Shop** of downtown Columbus, for their discount on printing our newsletter.

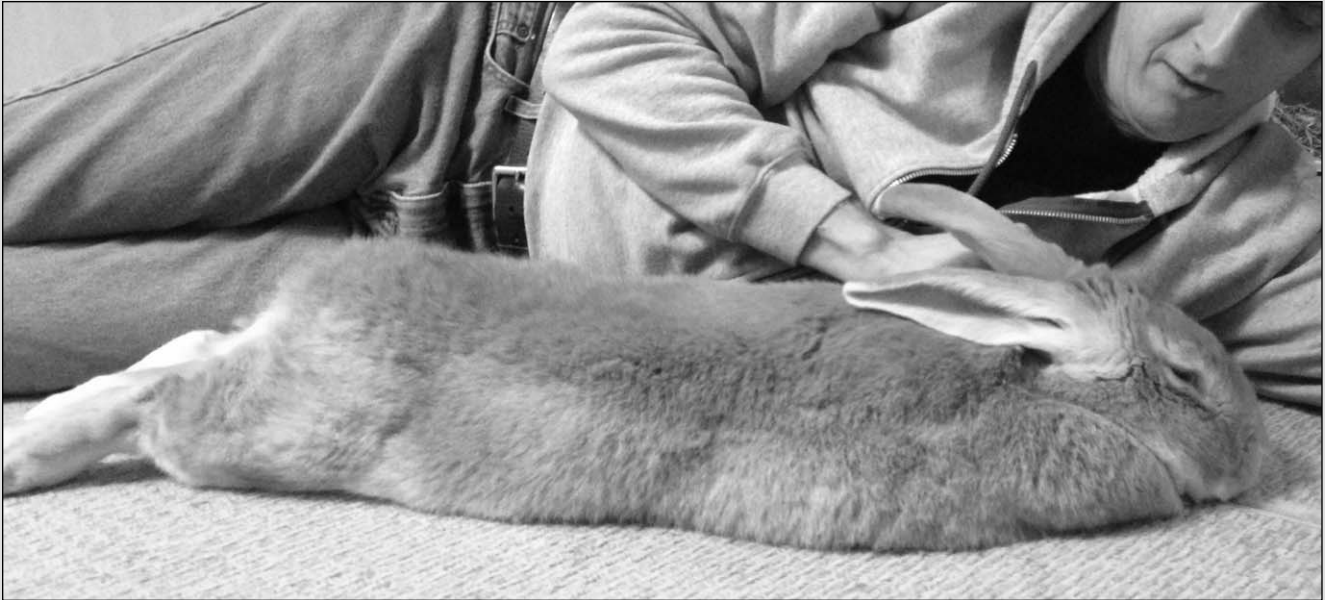
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Bill and Jasper

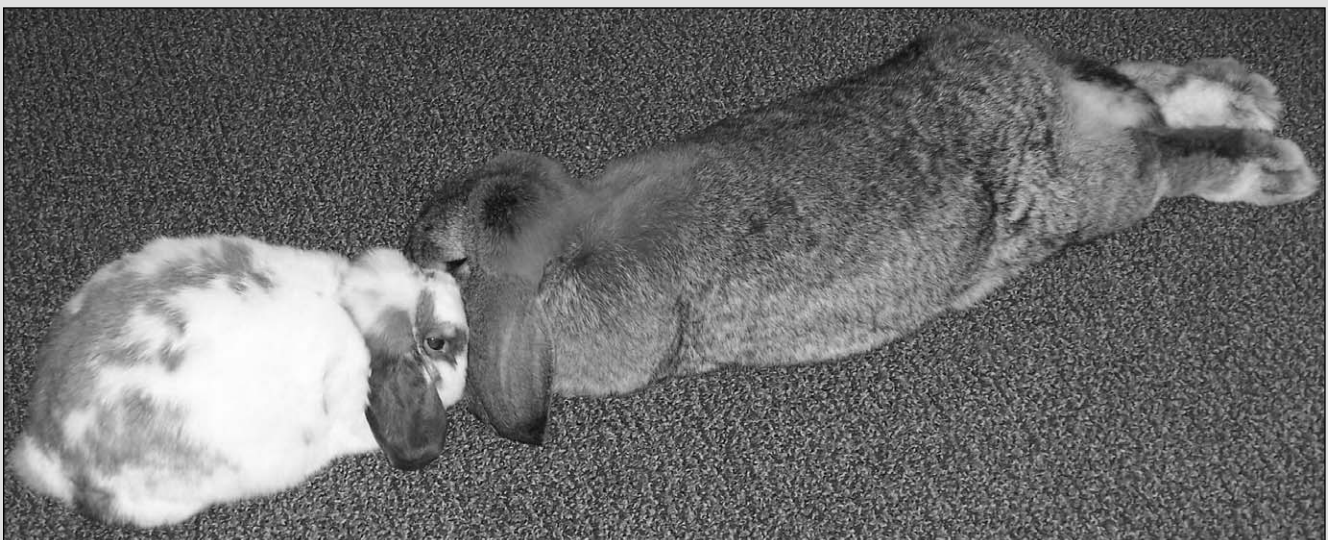
If you have a room available, that is even better. We use our 10ft x 12ft laundry room as Jasper's home base, where he is confined when we are not home. When we are home, he has free reign of the bunny-proofed family room.

The litter pan will need to be larger to make sure bun doesn't hang over the edge while trying to have good litter habits. You will go through a bit more hay, greens, and veggies than with a small bun. The bunny proofing is the same for all rabbits. Cover your cords and protect anything you don't want to be nibbled. Remember to assess a possible higher reach since a bigger bunny will be taller when he stands up. Grooming and medical care remain the same as for

any other rabbit.

Large bunnies aren't limited to bonding with other large bunnies. Remember it's how their personalities blend that determines success more than size. I have seen several pairs mismatched in size who became the best of friends. We had a bonded trio with two French Lops and a small lop. Clyde, Cleo, and Stewy got along wonderfully.

Don't overlook the large rabbit if you have a chance to adopt one. We have found that in general most have more mellow personalities and enjoy more interaction with people than the average rabbit. A bigger bunny is just more to love!



Cleo and Stewy



A Tale of Two Loves

By **Debbi Braunschweiger**

Whether the species is human or animal, we are all looking for love and acceptance. So when I'm asked if a rabbit can co-exist with other animals in the household, my answer always comes back to the relationship between our Californian bunny, Peppermint, and our cat, Merlin.

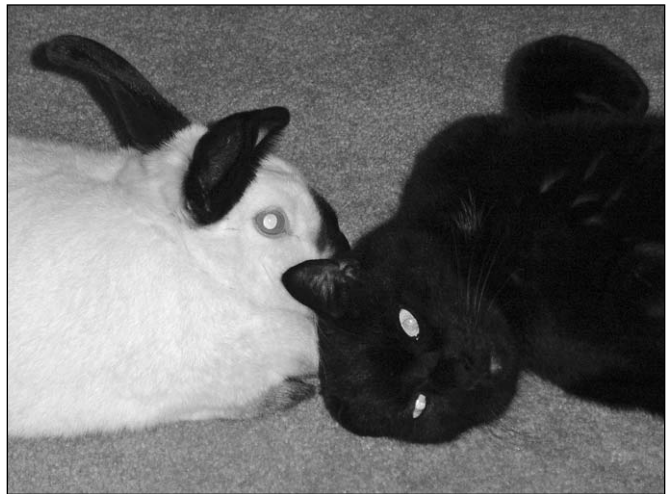
We adopted Merlin from a litter of five orphan kittens that we fostered. Yep, foster failures, guilty as charged! Foster kitty or adopted member of the family, Merlin never met a stranger. Let it be said that Merlin wasn't the sharpest tool in the shed. However, what he lacked in street smarts he more than made up for in his capacity to love.

Many animals later came one of my first rabbit fosters, Peppermint. She was very sweet but painfully shy when I met her at our local shelter, where the rabbits were housed in a very chaotic lobby. It didn't take long to realize how stressed she was, so we decided to add Peppermint to our home's foster roster.

When we prepared for a vacation a few months later, there was an opening at the shelter in our newly designated room, the Rabbitat, and we thought it would be a good chance for Peppermint to get some face time with potential adopters. During the weekend, volunteers noticed that she was incredibly depressed and lethargic and called me to ask if we could bring her back to our house. Of course, we did. Even though we hadn't thought of adding another rabbit to the crew, just knowing how much she was enjoying living with us was enough to adopt her. What we soon found out was that she was really missing her new BFF, Merlin.

In the evenings when Peppermint was enjoying her out time, Merlin would always be next to her, often with one arm wrapped over her shoulder. When I'd tell Merlin it was time for bed he'd jump up and begin to nudge her with his head, gently letting her know it was time to go to her cage. Each morning when I'd open her condo door, he would climb in and they'd groom each other until I arrived with her food and he knew it was time to jump out.

When Merlin was two he was diagnosed with a heart condition and, although it was detected at



Peppermint & Merlin

an early stage, it was clear he wouldn't have the life span of a normal, healthy cat. So it wasn't a big surprise when he started showing signs of congestive heart failure and ultimately passed away at only 9 years of age. As you can see from their picture, he was a black cat. There was nothing outwardly significant about him and, as most of you know, black animals in any rescues are the most overlooked. Like pink-eyed bunnies, as was Peppermint. However, I have a theory about them -- they're given incredible personalities that go far beyond their initial appearance. If you give them a chance, they'll steal your heart. Maybe you call it kindred spirits, but all I know is that Merlin and Peppermint stole each other's hearts and ours.

Grief manifests itself in many different forms. About two or three weeks after Merlin passed, my husband and I both noticed how much Peppermint's personality had changed. She no longer really cared about the jaw massages I used to give her that made her melt into a puddle of fur. She didn't really even want to come out of her condo. What really got my attention, though, was when I noticed that the "sock" on her left front foot had gone from brown to white. It had vanished. We were stunned and also wondering what to do to help her through her grief. Enter Bailey.

One day I received a call from our local shelter manager that a "kill shelter" in our area found a large male lop in a box at their door that morning and were going to put him down if we didn't take him. I couldn't let that happen, so I promised we'd take him and brought him home that day. The name Bailey seemed to suit him, as he acted like a Basset Hound in a 7-pound bunny suit with long ears. You



Peppermint & Merlin

couldn't help but love that sweet, laid-back guy. It was difficult to understand how someone could throw away something so adorable; it wasn't long before we decided to neuter him and give him his new forever home.

Fast forward a couple of weeks later. While Peppermint was venturing around, she repeatedly walked right up to Bailey's cage and sat staring at him. As I watched them to see what was going to happen next, he seemed to be just as interested in her. So I took a big chance and opened his condo door. It was almost like something out of a fairy tale as they sniffed each other, followed each other around the room, did a little mutual grooming, and then settled in side by side in the middle of the floor like they'd been bonded for years.

It was truly magical. Over the last few years I've been a facilitator in many bonding dates, but have never done a single session without any mounting by either rabbit. Bailey and Peppermint never felt the need to determine who would be dominant in their relationship. Time and time again I'm reminded that things happen for a reason. And Bailey came into our lives to help all of us. Peppermint clearly knew he would give her the love she was missing and Bailey knew he would get a chance at love in a safe home.

Watching the two of them together was pure joy. They both had a little "junk in their trunks" and weren't ones to get big air with their binkies. But they sure could do some laps and twerk those bunny hips.

I'm not sure when we realized that Peppermint's left

sock had reappeared. In hindsight I wish I had taken before and after pictures. It never occurred to me that what happened was even a possibility but, sure enough, there it was.

Peppermint and Bailey were able to enjoy each other for a little over a year before she passed away. That was last October. Bailey knew she was suffering and gave her space during those days leading up to her passing. Even though we allowed him time with her after, it's obvious his heart is still mourning his special friend. We're hoping that someday soon he'll give us a sign like she did that he's ready to try for that second chance at love.



Peppermint & Bailey



Rabbit Tattoos on People, Not Rabbits

By Stephanie Lodge

Tattoos are an amazing form of self-expression. While some people end up with tattoos on a whim, there are those of us who spend months, sometimes even years, planning everything from the artist, the location on our body, the symbolism, and of course the tattoo itself.

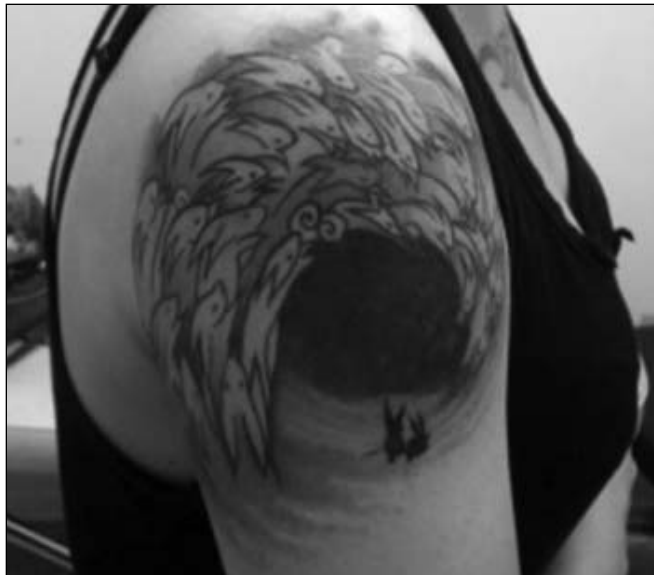
Many people in rabbit rescue are not just involved; they are devoted to the cause. This devotion can easily turn into a tattoo. When I first decided to write about people getting rabbit tattoos, I was sure I would find a few to participate in my article, but what I didn't anticipate was dozens of people willing to share their tattoos with the world. Below are just a few:

Gretta Parker founded the Flopsy Parker Memorial Sanctuary in West Virginia two years ago in memory of her beloved bunny, Flopsy. Her sanctuary deals mainly with special needs rabbits, but also takes aggressive, handicapped, and elder buns. Flopsy Parker not only inspired the sanctuary, but also several books and a non-profit that delivers toys to bunnies in need, www.basketsforbunnies.org.

Jessica Frey Cucka from Connecticut works tirelessly with the Bunderground Railroad helping to transport rabbits in



Both Jessica and Monica have the Flopsy tattoo, as drawn by Maya Tolliver for the children's book The Easter Bunny that Grew Up.



The rainbow rabbit tattoo stands for all the bunnies who will come into Gretta's life through her rescue.

need – <http://bundergroundrailroad.org/blog/>

Monica Taomina Cocci from Philadelphia has been involved in rescue her entire life. She supports Clover Patch Sanctuary, Little Furrries Rescue-Referral, Bunny Feathers Rabbit Rescue and the Flopsy Parker Memorial Sanctuary. She is also very active with the Bunderground Railroad.



Rabbit in the moon.

Patricia Stern Mulcahy is the President/Co-chapter Manager/Education Director at San Diego Companion Rabbit Society – www.sandiegorabbits.org



"My heart bunny, Katie, a copper Satin. The tattoo artist created a very recognizable image of her. People who know her recognize her in the tattoo!" Patricia



Bonnie Hanslik, rabbit momma in Lakewood, Ohio got this adorable tattoo to remind her of her first bunny, Sneezzy. While Sneezzy was supposed to be a temporary foster, he wiggled his way into Bonnie's and her family's hearts.



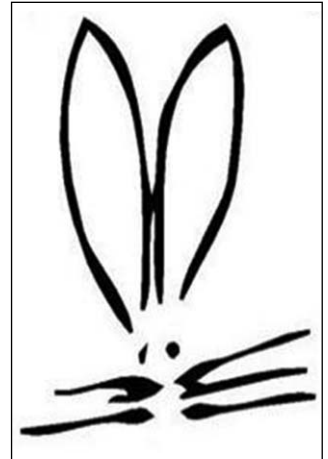
Amy Mott, HRS Educator and President of Clover Patch Sanctuary – www.cloverpatchsanctuary.com – lives in Franklin, Tennessee and has been rescuing bunnies since 2001.



Amy's most beloved bunny tattoo is from The Egg Book by Margaret Wise Brown and symbolizes her unending love of bunnies and ducks.



"This was my first bunny tattoo and it's located on the inside of my right ankle. It symbolizes peace among rabbit rescues and how we should always unite in our common cause." Amy



Monica Taomina Cocci and Amy Mott shared tattoos.

Stephanie Lodge: Lastly I have to add myself to this list. I have been a fosterer and educator for the Buckeye House Rabbit Society since 2010. I had always wanted a rabbit tattoo, but couldn't decide on a lop or an uppity-ear bun, so I found this design which could be either.



"This tattoo is on my inner right forearm. It symbolizes how all bunnies are welcome to take sanctuary under my umbrella of protection." Amy



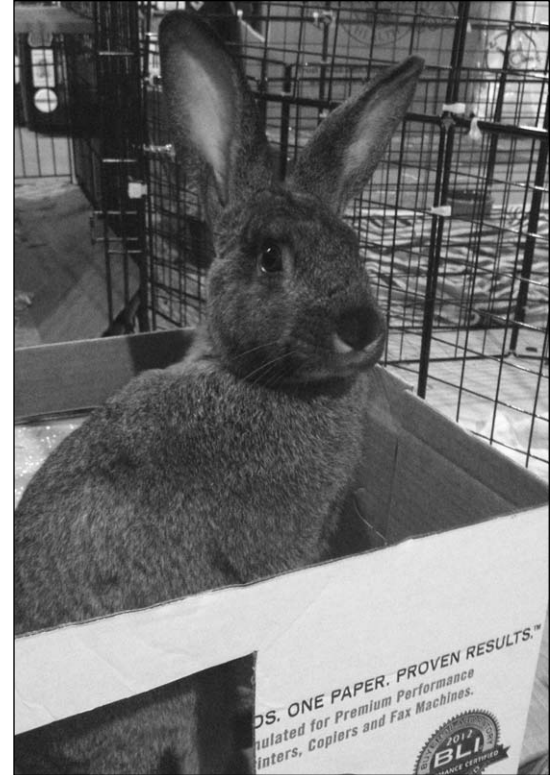
Somebunny Needs YOU!



We are excited to announce that **Figaro Cooke** has finally arrived! He received his name from a generous donor through our Name Our Next Foster Rabbit program. Figaro is a 1-year old adorable male lion head. He came to us recently from another large hoarding case in Indiana involving over 200 rabbits. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhhs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Meet **Raven**, she is a big, beautiful and sweet rabbit with shiny black fur. Although shy at first, she is curious and playful. If Poe had met this Raven, he would have rewritten his poem for her ... Quoth the Raven, "my forever home". **Please contact Michele Roth (bhhs-michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.**



Carmen was found in Cincinnati with Woodruff and other bunnies loose in a neighborhood. She absolutely thrives on human interaction and gets excited each time she sees someone. She is younger, under 2 years, and a perfectly healthy, happy bunny. Her interests include body pets and chunky pieces of Timothy hay. We found out recently that she loves cats. Just seeing her silly head shakes will bring a smile to your face. **Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhhs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.**

Daphne's Babies: These two sweeties have been spayed/neutered and are now available for adoption. They are very social and are accustomed to being held, petted, and talked to throughout the day. They thrive on the attention!



Kinsie, although slightly smaller than Dok, has an equally fun-loving personality. **Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhhs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.**

Dokken (Dok) is largest of his brothers and sister. He's adventurous and super sweet. His hindquarters have more black than his brothers.



Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhhs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.



Tavi, a small Mini Rex, is full of love and energy. She enjoys exploring her surroundings and doesn't mind being held for a good cuddle. **Please**

contact Sue Zimmerman (bhhs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.



Meet **Barley** and **Hops**, aka "The Beer Babies." Barley and Hops are a pair of super friendly "BWBs" (Big White Buns). Barley is a sweet boy and likes to be involved in whatever you are doing. Hops is a cute and curious little girl. We would like them to stay together. BWBs grow to be larger than average bunnies, but they have the sweetest temperaments. They are mostly laid back and easy going. BWBs are good for families with younger children. Come see for yourselves how wonderful these guys really are. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Addison is a young and playful little girl who is always busy. She enjoys head pets, giving kisses, hopping through tunnels, and running the "Bunny 500". Her adventurous personality makes a large pen a necessity. Addison is a perfect example that small bunnies can have BIG personalities. **Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.**



Meet **Leo**! Leo is a handsome, curious young fellow who enjoys the company of humans and likes to be held. He is very neat with his litter box and keeps his house nice and clean. Leo is an all-around good bunny. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**

Adopted!

Mia has wonderful new digs with Belinda Flucker and is bonding with her bunny pal, Mozart. ♥ **Tikki** (now Tiki) loves her new home with Kaycee Buhrow. ♥ Congratulations to the Fischers for adding **Sawyer** to their family. He is sharing new adventures with his friend Minnie. ♥ **Izzy** has found his loving forever home with the Price family. ♥ **Nutmeg** has a new home with Jessica Oetjens of Toledo. ♥ Blake Jule of Fenton, MI now shares her home with **Rogie**. ♥ **Schmoopy** was adopted by Hannah Sloas of Port Clinton. ♥ The Beck family of Avon has introduced their bunny Riley to his new friend, **Kiwi**.



Let Your Rabbits Choose Their Own Toys

By Shawna Lemerise

When I adopted my first rabbit, I excitedly bought colorful cubes on chains, blocks of wood, and all kinds of other pricey goodies. I arranged them in his pen and watched and waited for him to come out and play. And waited. And waited. Until eventually I realized that he did not like these toys I chose for him. Unsure why he did not appreciate my effort, I started to watch his regular behaviors more closely. I found he thoroughly enjoyed ripping at the back of the living room couch and squeezing himself under. Then, he liked to pull apart the fabric from the inside-out. These are signs not just of a destructive bunny, but also a bored bun who has a tendency to burrow.

I tried out a "diggy box". To make it, you simply take a cardboard box or laundry basket, make an entrance and exit on either side, fill it with shredded newspaper or recycled shredded paper, and hide some treats. Proud of my handiwork, I placed this in the pen and watched bun feverishly hop inside and begin pushing out the paper! He kept at it until the box was nice and clean, then I would mischievously refill the paper back into the box, and off to work he went again.

There are lots of inexpensive ways to create homemade toys especially suited for your bun's personality. Some great materials to experiment with include: cardboard boxes, paper towel tubes, toilet paper tubes, newspaper, scrap paper (make sure there are non-toxic dyes), and untreated, non-poisonous wood and wicker baskets.

The Burrower:

These rabbits are worker bees. They are very project-oriented

and are happiest when they have something to accomplish. They may enjoy:

- The diggy box.
- A sturdy cardboard building form or cement tunnel, which can be purchased inexpensively from a hardware store. Fill it with lots of stuff (hay, paper, treats, etc.) for bun to dig and search for treats.
- A large pot planted with grass, or some fresh vegetables and herbs for bun to find on his/her own!

The Explorer:

Some rabbits are as brave as they are curious about their environment. Sometimes you may find them in unexpected places throughout your home.

- If bun likes to hop on the couch, rearrange cushions and pillows to make a jungle gym. Lean two cushions together to create a tunnel and hiding places.
- A box castle can be constructed by arranging various sized cardboard boxes. Cut slits into the top of one box as well as into the bottom of a second box and fit them together. Cut an entrance and exit on the first floor, and cut a hole in the floor of the top of the box for bun to jump to the second level. You can also use some wood and scrap carpet to make a ramp to different levels.
- A maze can be created with the same



The Diggy Box



materials above. Instead of stacking the boxes, line several boxes horizontally together to create tunnels and hide outs.

The Shredder:

Aside from burrowing, my bun loves to tear apart

make noise. They may enjoy creating a bed with an old towel, blanket or pillow. Lay the items in bun's living space, in a box, or in a basket for him/her to rearrange. Since they like to move things, they could also enjoy:

important papers. So, I started leaving non-important papers around for him to shred instead.

- The mystery box, which you can create with a paper towel tube, brown paper bag or small cardboard box.
- Non-treated wicker baskets are also fun for these destructive buns to tear apart.
- A paper towel roll or brown paper bag filled with hay and treats. Cut some holes in the roll or bag for hay to stick out. For added fun, hang the toy from the side or ceiling of a pen for bun to work at.

The Organizer:

Some bunnies like to push, pull, and toss things until they are just right -- whether to make a cozy bed, move their "furniture", or just

- Tossing around Slinkies.
- Pushing toy cars.
- Rolling a ball.
- Jingling baby keys or a similar toy.

Your bun may enjoy some, all, none, or any combination of these items since they each have their own individual personality. However, with a little observation and trial and error, you will be able to create fun, interesting and unique toys especially suited for your bunny.

Note: Some toy ideas have been borrowed from rabbit.org.



Cement tunnel



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Your \$33.00 annual membership in the Buckeye HRS includes:

- National membership (\$18.00) and 3-4 issues of the House Rabbit Journal
- Local membership (\$15.00) and issues of Harelines

If you are already a national member, your local fee is \$15.00

- I would like to donate \$_____ to help a foster rabbit (vet care, supplies)
- I would like to donate \$_____ in memory of _____.
The grieving family receives an acknowledgment of your gracious gesture.

I would like to volunteer to:

- Distribute information to vets
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- Help at Buckeye HRS booth at Pet Expos and fairs
- Other _____

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Bunnies' names and special dates _____

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