



HARELINES



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THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

Fall 2004

Rabbit Spay FAQ's

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Most of us are aware of the medical benefits of performing spays in rabbits. For example, intact females have up to a 70% risk of developing cancer, so it is a no-brainer that sterilization surgery increases both life quality and longevity. Behaviorally, too, in both males and females the benefits of neutering are well-documented facts. Though most of us know why we do it, the majority of us don't know exactly what the procedure involves. The mystery of what constitutes a spay and how the rabbit will do under anesthesia causes a great deal of stress, worry and, I'll say it, fear in the hearts of some rabbit owners. It is my hope that I can help ease the concerns of those so afflicted by generalizing a typical procedure in both boy and girl rabbits, from start to finish. So let's go to my office with Buck and Doe Bunny!

The first order of the day is, obviously, a complete physical examination. We need to be sure that Buck and Doe are healthy and

that their owners know enough basic bunny care to support these two both before and long after their surgery day. Since rabbits don't require annual vaccinations or heartworm testing, most rabbits, for better or worse, will only see their veterinarian at the time of their sterilization. This makes the exam doubly important. Besides the normal examination procedures (listening to the heart and lungs, checking the eyes and ears, palpating for lumps or swellings, etc.), a stool sample will be checked for intestinal parasites and the rabbit looked over carefully for external parasites like mites or fleas. The teeth will be examined for spurs or cheek ulcers, too. The overall appearance will be discussed with special attention paid to proper weight, care of the coat, cage requirements and diet do's and don'ts. A major point will be to double check the gender of the rabbit! It is not uncommon to have boys turn out to be girls and vice versa (bunnies are difficult to tell apart when babies). Many bunnies named "Bob" become "Roberta" and "Alice" becomes "Alex".

After the examination has been completed, the determination can be made that Buck and Doe are healthy and in good shape for surgery. As long as they pass their physical, are not obese and have no

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health condition which would preclude surgery, the date can be set.

Unlike dogs and cats, rabbits do not vomit and there is no need to fast bunnies before their operation. In some cases, fasting is recommended to decrease the size of the cecum (a large sac in the intestinal tract of which our own appendix is but an evolutionary remnant), but in most cases this is unnecessary. In an older rabbit blood work may be recommended. All of these things are called the pre-surgical workup and, for our purposes, Buck and Doe have passed their tests with flying colors.

They will be dropped off first thing in the morning and a quick exam will be repeated to assess their general well being. They will each be given an injection of medication

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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 friends and family of the late Georgia Willison. Your touchingly generous donations have allowed us to establish a "**Georgia Fund**" to help with medical expenses for special-needs and disabled rabbits, those bunnies who were dearest to Georgia's heart. We are grateful to **Arthur and Nancy Santomo, Jeff Mascara, Ms. Rebmann, Eloise and Steve Harm, William and Sandra Wunderly, the Siddalls, Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Teitman, coworkers from SPHS MR Services.**

Linda Beam, for her most generous donation in memory of her beloved Hershey.

Ann Zimmerman and Ray Vasvari, for their wonderful contribution in tribute to Gwyn.

Peter Monett, for his generous gift in memory of Bugs.

Jann Kuntavanish for her generous gift recognizing the dedication of two Cincinnati volunteers, Jen Wolfe and Dawn Hagedorn.

The following members, whose generosity helps us meet our ongoing fostering and educational goals:

John and Mary Jo Mayfield, Ann Zimmerman, Connie Zelesnik, Mary and Kelly Bastian, Andrea and Mike Markey, Karen Kratzer, Walter Schobak, Bonnie Hagerman, Cheryl Walkden, Elizabeth Wilkens, Stephanie Werling, Danielle Laci, Patricia Wolanski, Kathy Kallay, Kathleen Christy, Mike and Rhonda Wadsworth.

Our many new and ongoing **Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors**, whose loyal and steady support is making such a difference to those rabbits who, due to serious medical conditions, cannot be adopted and must spend the rest of their lives in foster care.

The following businesses and individuals, who graciously donated prize and raffle items for our picnics: **Chagrin Pet & Garden, Oxbow Hay, Annie's Homegrown, Petsmart, Ellen Eder's Bolt + Frolic, Christi Mash, Donna Brady.**

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





Farewells



Malcolm

It is with much sadness that I write of Malcolm's passing. He died May 15, 2004 due to an abscess that had developed in his pelvic area. Because of the location of the abscess, nothing could be done for him without causing him much pain and suffering. Malcolm's passing was very peaceful. He was roughly 5 years old.

Malcolm had been a Sanctuary rabbit since the summer of 2000 when a lady who found him wandering in her yard brought him to me. He was the first Buckeye HRS foster rabbit to become a Buckeye HRS Sanctuary bunny. His favorite food was cilantro, which he inhaled every night.

His favorite thing to do (besides eat!) was to lay his head flat on the ground for pets. He will be missed. Thank you to all those who sponsored Malcolm. The medical care he received throughout his life would not have been possible if not for your generous financial contributions.

Goodbye, dear Malcolm—you have left a void in our lives that will never be filled. The day you came to our home, our lives changed for the better. You showed us that adversity could be overcome with a little patience and lots of caring. Things are just not the same without you scooting about, twitching your behind uncontrollably every time you got something good to eat. We will never forget your rushing up to greet us when we walked toward you, head mushed down flat, ready in the petting position. You remain with us always and forever—we love you.

Kristen and Paul Doherty

Reese

Our Reese passed away in late May 2003, after a brave battle with kidney failure. Our entire family is deeply grieving over our loss. Reese loved to be petted and continually kissed us. He loved to listen to our conversations and really loved when we read to him. Reese would cuddle next to Beth in bed as she read her homework out loud and would listen to every word. He was always there to comfort her during those trying early-teenage years.

For nine years, Reese excitedly greeted us as if he were a dog—coming when called and jumping up on our laps for treats and kisses. He welcomed our newly adopted Bunny, grooming her with licks and nudges. As his legacy, our skittish Bunny is now extremely huggable and attentive to us. Death has come to two of our family bunnies, leaving three remaining. Never, never, will we forget the tender blessings of our bunnies past and present.

Overall, I find the silent gentleness of a bunny more rewarding than a dog or cat. They deeply desire human attention, and just sitting on the floor next to them is comforting, trust building, and worth every minute.

Barbara Bramley Galambos



The Importance of Knowing Your Rabbit

By Michele Roth Kerley

August 17, 2003 started off to be as usual as any other day. After waking up, the first thing I did was go in and say good morning to my furry children, Sweetpea and Lily. Lily was cuddled up behind the sofa where she and Sweetpea like to lay. Sweetpea was anxious to see me and greet me at the edge of the room. After giving him his morning pets, I jumped in the shower to get ready for my day not thinking anything out of the ordinary.

I had Maria, a potential adopter, come over a little later in the day to meet and discuss adopting one of my foster rabbits. We went back to the living room, where Sweetpea and Lily reside, to continue the discussion. I always introduce potential adopters to my rabbits and I like them to see my rabbits' accommodations. Being his friendly self, Sweetpea came out right away to say hello and Lily stayed behind the couch, since she's a little more standoffish.

Maria and I talked about several things, including how different the personalities of my rabbits and each of my foster rabbits have been. I went behind the couch where Lily had been laying. She had moved, but not far from where she had been. I bent over to see

if she would let me pick her up and she did, no problem. I was surprised and I told Maria how shocked I was that Lily let me pick her up and hold her. She doesn't care for hands too much and generally does not like to be picked up or held.

After concluding my visit with Maria, I stayed in the living room to watch a little television, still thinking how strange Lily had behaved. I kept peeking at her and was starting to get a little nervous. My husband came in the room and I asked him if he had actually seen Lily eat or drink anything; he couldn't recall if he had or hadn't. I knew I hadn't, which is when my concern started to turn to fear.

I told my husband that I wasn't going to take any chances and I started to call the emergency veterinary clinic. Out of all the clinics in the area, only one was able to treat rabbits on a Sunday afternoon. I let them know I was on my way, packed up Lily and we were off.

After examining Lily my worst fears were confirmed. She had a blockage in her stomach and it had expanded to four times the size it should have been. The vet did what he could to release some of the pressure and explained to me that

it didn't look good. He said that if I hadn't brought her in when I did, she would not have made it. He then proceeded to tell me that they weren't equipped to operate on Lily and referred me to whom he deemed "the best rabbit doctor in the city." There was nothing else to do but take Lily home and keep her warm and comfortable until I was able to take her to the vet in the morning.



Loving Lily kisses Sweetpea.

I put her in a cage to keep Sweetpea from bothering her, but also so he could see her. I lay next to the cage all night keeping the hot water in a milk jug next to her. As my concern continued throughout the night so did Sweetpea's. He kept going around the

cage, then coming over to me licking my arm, as if asking if she was going to be all right. By six in the morning I knew it was useless to try and sleep, so I jumped in the shower and got ready to take Lily to the vet. I wanted to be there when the doors opened—and I was. The vet's assistant let us in when she arrived and I proceeded to hand her the x-rays and explain to her why I was there, as best I could through the sounds of my sobbing. I was able to compose myself a bit when it was time to talk to the vet and I explained to him everything that the emergency vet had said and did. The vet said it was a good thing I knew



my rabbit as well as I did to recognize she was in distress and he also said that the emergency doctor did everything he should have.

After examining Lily, the doctor didn't rush her into the operating room like I thought he would. He said he wanted to try treating her without surgery first and see how things went. He broke through the blockage, got Lily eating again and last but not least—producing droppings! I was able to bring Lily home after only an overnight stay and no surgery was performed.



"To know me is to love me—and vice-versa"

Twice during this ordeal I was told that Lily made it because I was able to recognize that she wasn't acting like herself. I really believe Lily is alive today because I got her to the vet's and she received treatment right away. As delicate as a rabbit's digestive system is, this is just one of the reasons it's so important to know the behavior and routine of your bunny. 🐰

Adopted!

Jacki, now called **Liebe**, has been adopted by the Culvers and she stole their hearts immediately. 🐰 **Gonzo** and **Mooshka** have moved in with Paula and her family and are enjoying their new room. 🐰 **Lila** has moved into her new home with Natalya and has become a pal to former HRS foster rabbit Carl. 🐰 **Scampy** has been adopted by Courtney and is now getting settled into her new home, learning to explore her very own living room. 🐰 **Jackson** has been taken in for good by another of our own—Jennifer and Eric Wolfe of Cincinnati.

🐰 **Tootsie** has been adopted by the Plastow family and is looking forward to living in her new bunny fort. 🐰 **Missy** is enjoying her loving new home with Donna Hatch. 🐰 Little **Lilo** is making herself at home with the Kuntavanish family of Dayton. 🐰 Lynn Ahlers has welcomed **Rosco** into her family. 🐰 The Schroeder family of Perrysburg is enjoying the company of their new house rabbit, **Bucky**. 🐰 And **Gigi** makes three! Suzanne Ainsworth of Cleveland and bunnies Vinnie and Jupiter have welcomed Gigi into their home, making the bunny pair a trio. 🐰 Natalie Lee and daughter, Amanda, have added **Marge** to their family in Wauseon, OH. Margie has been waiting a long time in foster care and is very happy to be in a permanent loving home! 🐰 **Simba** has a great new home in Michigan with Tara and Rick Galda and new bunny pal, Thumper. 🐰 **Frosty** is getting along well with buddy Butch at his new home with Janet. 🐰 **Earl Grey** was adopted by Nancy and her family of Centerburg. 🐰 **Bailey** and **Sappho** have filled the lives of Christy and Erin with endless joy. 🐰 **Fiona II** shares lots of running time with Chester at Ann and Ray's home in Cleveland Heights. 🐰 **Joyce** and **Danny** are working on becoming a pair while getting adjusted to their new home with Audrey and her niece. 🐰 **Guinness** is getting to know her friend Butterscotch while settling in at the Joseph home in Lyndhurst. 🐰 **Zipper** has joined the Bryan family of Brecksville. 🐰 **Marisol** has moved in with Felicia and her fiancé of Cleveland Heights. 🐰 **Charlotte** was adopted by one of our Buckeye volunteers, Christine, from Solon. 🐰 **Finn** now gets undivided attention from Lagomorph Lounger Angela Brandt and her husband Matt., who live in New York. 🐰 **Louise** is happily getting to know Shannon and Marlin—and Cooper, her look-alike. 🐰 Congratulations to the Roth family on the adoption of the cute and adorable **Diego**. Diego has already become extremely attached to his new family and showers them with bunny kisses. 🐰 Ann Bell is the lucky new companion for **Pooh**. Here's wishing them both a long lifetime of happiness. 🐰 Bunny, has found a new companion in **Socks**. Socks not only has a new bunny friend, but also enjoys getting pets from the Herrells while watching TV. 🐰 Good things come in small packages and **Wilbur** is now getting lots of love from his new family. 🐰 Buckles, now **Admiral Wigglesworth Hiccup**, is soaking in tons of love and attention from Tamra, Poetry, Austin and several four-legged companions.



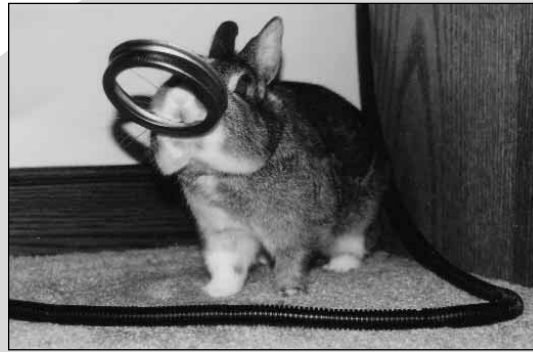
Cutest face: **Thumper**
Humans: **John & Kathy Toler**



Bunnies & friends: **Thumper, Bambi & Brownie**
Humans: **John & Kathy Toler**



Funniest face: **Snowball**
Humans: **John & Kathy Toler**



Bunnies in Action: **Boo**
Humans: **David & Joyce Weaver**

NE Ohio Winners

Picn



Bunny statue winners:
Kathy & Brandy Toler

NE OHio Raffle Winners



Bunny apron winner:
Tina Smith



Bunny vest winner:
Cynthia Hatfield



Bunnybox winner: **Jackie Muster**



Photo contest winners (L to R): **David & Joyce Weaver, Kathy & John Toler & Brandy**



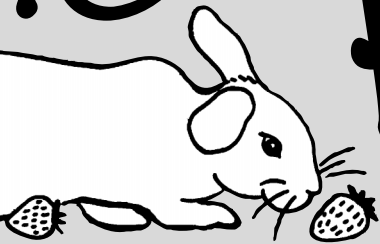
Farthest Travelled: **Corinna Stephens**
Photo contest winners (L to R):
Dawn Hagedorn, Kelly Montana

Cinci Winners

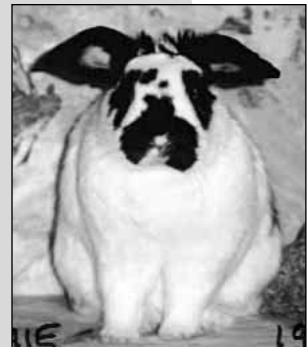


Cutest face: **Toby**
Human: **Kelly Montana**

ic Pics!



Bunnies in Action: **Annie**
Human: **Kelly Montana**



Funniest face: **Jamie**
Human: **Kelly Montana**



Cincinnati Raffle Winners!



Bunnies & friends: **Wilbur**
Human: **Dawn Hagedorn**

Somebunny Needs YOU!



Soft, fluffy, and very sweet, **Marshall** (sitting) and **Mellow** (lounging) are a calm, comfortable couple. Like so many large white bunnies with red eyes, their attractive disposition and gentle ways more than compensate for their unremarkable physical appearance. Marshall weighs about 8 lbs., Mellow about 6 lbs. They're healthy and happy and must be adopted together. **Please contact Herta Rodina (herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**



Verde is a 5.5 lb black Havana who likes to sleep on top of her box. Verde was born in November 2002. She's very tidy with her litterbox and loves to run through her cardboard tunnel. She's an excellent hay eater, too! **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Maya is a sweet black Havana, born in August 2002. She came to us with her babies—Sonny, Blue, Verde, and Maya—who are now all grown. Maya weighs roughly 5.5 lbs, is great with her litterbox, and loves to eat her salads. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Scarlet is one of Maya's daughters with sleek black fur and a pleasant demeanor. She is now full-grown. She likes to be petted and to lay stretched out in her litterbox. Scarlet weighs about 5 lbs. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Bonnie is a curious and friendly 5.5 lb girl who gobbles all of her hay and comes running for pets. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Schroeder, approximately 5 lbs, is an outgoing brown and white Dutch who runs up to people for pets. You can't resist his adorable face when he comes asking for attention! **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Courtney is a spunky white lop with beautiful taupe-colored accents on her fur. Courtney is young and energetic, and also very tidy. This makes it easy to let her stay out of her pen for long periods of time. Courtney knows her mind, but she also loves to be petted and will seek you out for attention. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Soleil (French for Sun) was rescued from a house fire where over 200 rabbits were found living in squalor, but this sweet bunny didn't let it get her down. She is pure sunshine! Full of sweetness and silliness, she will dance around to amuse you, then will lay at your feet for hours. Once you touch her head, she mashes down for a long pet! Soleil is perfect with her litter box, and she loves to eat her salad and hay. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Alfonso, a little mini-rex, gets so excited for his meals that he runs round and round frantically until he is fed. If you pick him up however, he melts in your arms and nuzzles his face under your chin. He weighs about 3.5 lbs, is perfect with his litter-box, and eats a ton of hay for such a little guy. He also loves cruising through his miniature tunnels and boxes. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



We are almost certain that **D.Q.** is Finn's sister. She was rescued 9 months after Finn by the same "dog catcher" who rescued Finn. We can't help but wonder what she's been doing for the last nine months! D.Q. has the same leg

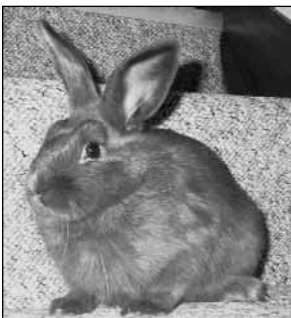
deformity as Finn. Fortunately, however, D.Q. has one "good" leg and can get around very well on her own. In fact, she has no problem jumping on top of her tall pet carrier. Therefore she won't need any work done to correct the deformity. D.Q. is extremely friendly and loves to be petted. When it comes time to give her medicine, however (she had the required 7 days of medicine to rid her of a parasite), watch out—D.Q. (Drama Queen) shows her true self! She hates taking her meds and makes sure to let us know. This little girl will keep you laughing for hours. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Elsie is a sweet young girl, white with black spots, weighing roughly 4 lbs. She's happy and calm, and easy to please by giving her lots of nose pets. She doesn't mind being held; in fact, she loves to snuggle. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**

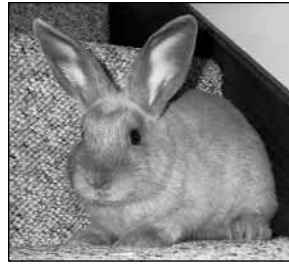


Merlin is a young, reddish-brown boy who is quiet and gentle. He enjoys being petted, but like many bunnies, not held. He especially loves being around children and is comfortable with dogs. Merlin does great with his litterbox, is a hearty eater, and weighs roughly 5-6 lbs. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Reno is a darling male bunny in a deep gray package. Born in the summer of 2004, he is not yet full grown, but will be about 5-6 lbs. as an adult. He is very playful and loves to toss paper towel tubes and do big jumps in the air. **Please contact Kristi Cole**

(kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.



Tahoe was born in the summer of 2004 and he's a real cutie, with his coat of various shades of tans and browns. He is very friendly and likes to play inside of and on top of his cardboard box "hut". He is not yet full grown, but will be about 5-6 lbs. as an adult. **Please contact Kristi Cole (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.**



Sylvia is a gorgeous silver marten female approximately a year old. She likes people, loves hay and is excellent with her litter habits. Sylvia is about 4 lbs. **Please contact Kristi Cole (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.**



My name is **Bam-Bam** and I am a big boy (7 lbs). Somebody moved out of their apartment and "forgot" to take me along. I love my new foster home, but I would be very happy

to have a permanent home with somebody special. I am friendly and happy and I like to be around people. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Meet **Romper** the Stomper! Romper was found running loose in a rough area of Cleveland. (Hats off to Rainbow Connection Animal Rescue for finding him, holding him until we had an open spot, AND getting him neutered.) He is a small guy,

weighing only 3 lbs., and he's probably only about 8 months old. Romper got his name because his first few hours in foster care were spent letting everybun know he was "in the house." He has a quiet disposition now and is just starting to come out of his shell. He should do well with an active household that's ready for a young, curious bunny! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Somebunny Needs YOU! Cont'd.



I can't say enough good things about this tiny bundle of bunny! **Flower** is a Dwarf/Dutch mix with shiny dark chocolate-brown fur. She loves attention from humans (but be careful not to step on her because she follows you everywhere). She has excellent

litterbox habits and is loaded with personality and charm. She is sure to be a delightful addition to your family! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Hello, my name is **Pebbles**. I was found wandering around a shopping center parking lot. Some nice people helped me and brought me to a great foster home. I am very sweet but a

little bit shy until I learn that I can trust you to be my friend. I am blind in one eye but that doesn't bother me one bit so it should not bother you either. I would really like to be a part of your family. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Bizzy certainly lives up to her name. She has beautiful blue/gray coloring and gorgeous brown eyes. She is a small, sweet little girl who is about 9 months old and weighs 4 lbs. Bizzy does lots of running in her pen and loves to climb onto her cardboard boxes. She especially

enjoys meal time and nose pets. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Who's **Ringo**? Ringo's your best mate, always ready to play, watch TV from the sofa, or curiously investigate that piece of furniture over in the corner. If there's anything that can be done to bring a smile to your face, then

Ringo will do his best to bring you the biggest of smiles. This 4 lb bunny is full of youthful energy and ready to spend it all on you. Wouldn't you like to do the same for him? **Please contact Michele Kerley (michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.**

2005 calendars

Ring in the New Year with a rabbit!

Check our online gift shop at

www.ohare.org

for 3 new styles of 2005 calendars.

Rabbit Spay FAQ's, Cont'd.

which will serve as both a tranquilizer and pain medication. At my hospital we usually give an injection of Buprenorphine, a morphine derivative. This allows a lower dose of anesthesia during surgery, prevents pain and calms the rabbit down while in a strange place. Additionally we will give an injection of meloxicam, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication for pain. Following surgery, an oral form of this will also be given to the owners for post operative pain relief. After the rabbit is calm and ready, we will place an anesthetic mask over the face and deliver a gas anesthetic which will cause the bunny to lose consciousness. This is called gas anesthesia and is usually isofluorane or sevofluorane. After the rabbit is "out", a tube will be placed in the trachea or "windpipe" to directly flow the measured gas into the lungs. In rabbits this is a difficult procedure and is accomplished with the use of a rigid endoscope which allows us to view the mouth on a TV monitor and gently thread the tube into the windpipe without damaging the delicate glottis. Once intubated, we attach a ventilator which will automatically inflate the lungs at measured intervals which we set into a computer based upon the weight of the patient. Rabbits tend to take short, wimpy breaths under anesthesia, which can increase



their risk of dying, so using a ventilator, in my opinion, is an important part of any bunny surgery and a sure lifesaver. A small crystal called a Doppler will be placed over the femoral pulse so that we can hear both the rate and the quality of the heartbeats. A monitor is sometimes used to measure the oxygen saturation of the blood, but these are unreliable in rabbits and can deliver a false sense of security. I don't recommend their use. At this point boys and girls go through different operations.

Buck will be placed on his back and his scrotum plucked of all hair. His scrotum will be surgically prepped with antiseptic scrub and solution and then draped with a sterile drape. Incisions are made directly into the scrotum and the testicles retrieved through their respective compartments, little internal sacs called vaginal tunics. The testicles have a large blood supply and spermatic cord as well as a fat pad. These are tied off and placed in their proper positions once the testicles have been removed. Interestingly, the testicle communicates with the abdominal cavity through a small canal. It is therefore important to suture the now empty tunic with a small suture material which the bunny can absorb. Otherwise the intestines can wiggle out or herniate through this hole and the poor guy will be in serious trouble. The scrotum can be left to heal on its own or a small amount of

adhesive placed to close the tiny hole. Buck wakes up in his cage and is observed to make sure he begins to eat shortly after recovery. If so, he's ready to go home. His owners will be told how to follow up with his pain medicine and to keep things calm and quiet for at least a week to ten days. Buck's owners are instructed to call if there is any discharge, bleeding, lack of appetite or droppings, or discomfort.

Doe is prepped for abdominal surgery. Her belly or abdomen will be shaved or plucked and scrubbed aseptically to prevent contamination. When her monitors are in place and she is ready, an incision will be made in her abdomen. This may be a small incision or a large one depending upon whether she has had litters, her weight and the experience or preference of the surgeon. Her ovaries are large, jelly-bean-sized organs surrounded by a fat-laden pouch and this is all bound to the body by a large ligament which must be carefully dissected before removing the organ. Special care must be taken to remove the entire ovary, for if any ovarian tissue is left in place, infection or cancer may occur years later on the ovary, uterine stump or breast tissue. The uterus is shaped like the fork on a carving set (two prongs) and these are removed. Unlike many other mammals, including humans, there are two cervixes, not one. These are both removed. The ligation must be tied securely and properly to prevent

later infection or urine leakage. This is due to the fact that the uterus can communicate to the bladder through the large, internal vagina. The abdomen is closed in two to three layers and absorbable sutures placed underneath the skin to prevent Doe from pulling out her sutures, which most bunnies are wont to do, (they are very clean animals). Her post-operative instructions and care are similar to Buck's—mostly treat the pain and stay quiet for a couple of weeks. Most people see their bunny eating and drinking and think, "well, he doesn't look painful. I guess I'll skip the meds". This is unwise because bunnies are one of the most stoic of all creatures and would never show pain unless it was agonal. Just as it would be unimaginable not to treat pain in yourself for major surgery, it would be equally so in our rabbit patients (or in any animal for that matter). Antibiotics should be unnecessary unless the rabbit had an infection of the reproductive tract at the time of surgery.

That is pretty much the long and short of sterilizing your pet rabbit. We should all be familiar with why we do it (and if not, contact your local House Rabbit Society rep or veterinarian), but now you know a bit more about just what it is we do. The procedure takes a little longer than in a dog or cat due to anatomic considerations but doesn't differ greatly in terms of difficulty or risk, so long as the anesthetic and anatomic peculiarities of rabbits are known to the surgeon. 🐰



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

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The grieving family receives an acknowledgment of your gracious gesture.

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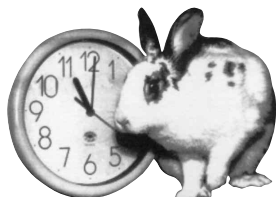
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