



HARELINES



Volume 15 Number 3 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

Fall 2011

Going Green for Your Pets

By Michele Roth Kerley

Going green means different things to different people. Some people recycle and plant trees, some use renewable products, while others buy natural or organic products. As someone who has made a conscience effort to do her part, I've done a lot of research on the subject. I've made some small and major changes, including buying a hybrid car. But to me, the most important green changes I've made are the ones that affect the health and quality of life of my beloved rabbit and his canine brother and avian sister.

Having a multi-species household has been a joy but it also has its challenges. What might be safe for one of my critters can be dangerous to another. With that in mind, I made the decision to "go green" in an effort to provide safe living conditions for all of my animal companions. For several years now I've collected information from various sources. Here are some "green" solutions and alternatives to chemicals and other toxic substances associated with the health and well being of your pet and his/her surroundings.

Flea Control

Topical flea treatments can be harmful and even fatal to rabbits. These chemical-free steps can help you prevent, control and eliminate fleas.

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Outside – Fleas and flea larvae incubate in moist, dark places. By keeping your shrubs, bushes and grass trimmed you can reduce the areas where fleas develop. Eliminating standing or slow-moving water from around your house will also keep mosquitoes away.

Inside – Frequently wash all animal bedding, towels, throw rugs and anything else you can toss in the washing machine that your furry ones come in contact with. While running the wash; vacuum your carpet, upholstery and under the sofa cushions. Make sure to get around the baseboards and other nooks and crannies since

GOING GREEN

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Visit the House Rabbit Society at <http://www.rabbit.org> and the Buckeye House Rabbit Society at <http://www.ohare.org>

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:

Mike and Rhonda Wadsworth, for their thoughtful donation in memory of **Kerwin**.

Clay and Nancy Pasternack, for their generous contribution in tribute to their beloved **Allie**.

Karalee Curry and the volunteers at the Columbus HRS, for their most generous gift to help cover the cost of unexpected and expensive medical care for some of our foster rabbits.

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

Judy O'Neil, Jann Kuntavanish, Michelle Fadeley, Linda Gardner, Junko Rogers, Irene Lee, Tracy Reeb, Barbara Roberts, Christa Billerman, Wei-Ting Yin, Sue Milewski, June Gates, Leslie Mapes, Jim and Nancy Reed, Phillip Lodge, Michelle Wheadon, Hillary Gerity.

Our new and continuing Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors! This program would not be possible without your compassion and generosity. 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.



We're on Facebook!

Thanks to our Dayton volunteers, the Buckeye HRS now has a Facebook page. Please join us and share your bunny-related comments, pictures, posts, and musings!

Remember, we're on Twitter too – BuckeyeHRS -- so follow us!



Reverse Clicker Training a "less-adoptable" Rabbit

By Rebecca Nagley

A few thoughts on the fine art of making your rabbit realize that unpleasant, but necessary treatments are not related to YOU.

I used to work at a vet's office where I would answer a lot of questions regarding rabbit behavior and other rabbit-related issues. Interestingly, half of our rabbit clients inquired about gentle methods for medicating their pets, since they felt their bunny was starting to hate them. After numerous exams, possible surgeries, and especially after being medicated, most bunnies just weren't acting the same. The clients' most common question was: "Can't I just stop doing this to him? He really hates me now, he runs away and thumps whenever I approach! This can't continue." I often suggested treats, affection, or even a fun roam time in a more exciting area of the house in order to reward the rabbit and cancel out the disapproval. However, with certain rabbits, things are NOT that easy!

I once had a very shy, skittish rabbit who was not going to trust me EVER, no matter which strategy I was trying. Aimee Sue was given to us by somebody who found a stray rabbit, unaware that she was pregnant. Clearly the new owner could not keep all the little ones and he asked me over to determine the genders. I ended up taking in Aimee, who was described as the most difficult.

During her first exam we discovered that she had a terrible ear infection, with one ear being filled with blood and pus. It ended up being a chronic issue with one major and one minor surgery to follow, not to mention the constant post-operative care. It surely bothered Aimee, who always ran and hid and, right from the start, never got to trust or even take a treat from us. It was very sad; we tried treats, larger rooms, smaller rooms, more hideouts, fewer hideouts, you name it, but she always just ran from us.

After her surgeries, I had to clean her ears twice a

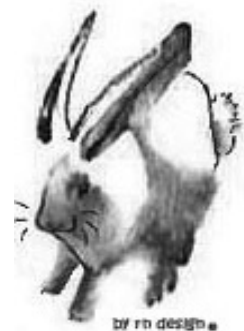
week and medicate them with prescribed drops during flare ups. Actually, this was an improvement from the initial two ear cleanings a day! Aimee was good during the ear cleaning, but she always ran off as soon as I set her down, determined to get away fast. She was curious, yet scared of people; this made me think that she actually WANTED to trust and like people but was simply too insecure.

I wondered, what if I could make her associate negative procedures with a certain sound? If that sound wasn't present, there would be nothing to worry about on her side. I was never a big fan of clicker training; I had three other buns who were quite trained just by hearing our voice, so of course I never got into it. However, everyone at the vet's raved about it; they even gave me a bunny clicker training pack as a gift. So I thought, what if I could mark negative things, instead of positive? Sure enough, I tried it.

Every time I approached Aimee I just said calmly, "Ear cleaning," then clicked the clicker or just clicked without speaking. I then took her out of her pen, set her up, cleaned her ear, gave her the treat and set her back down for roaming. It was the usual routine, but without sweet-talking her while chasing her through her pen or trying to pick her up. The sweet talk I saved for non-negative times, trying to have her associate my voice and me petting her strictly with affection.

Hard to believe, but it worked! In about two to three weeks, which was much faster than I thought. After three wasted years, I was thrilled. Aimee was happy, curious and, best of all, at peace. She would hop right over to me, struggle less when I picked her up, and take food from my hand. She'd still run and hide and it still required some effort to coax her out, but only when she heard a click, not my voice and not my appearance. She definitely associated unpleasant procedures with "that sound".

I hope my experience with clicker training helps make caring easier for somebody or somebunny, as it did for us.





Going Green for Your Pets Cont'd.

that's where the larvae will most likely be. (Also see Borax in the next section.)

Grooming – Before bringing your pet back in the room you just cleaned so thoroughly, go over him with a fine-tooth comb, literally. A fine-tooth comb will keep the fleas from slipping through so that they can be removed. As soon as you see a flea, immerse it in water so it drowns. If it's not too stressful for your rabbit, you can also bathe him with a mild, safe soap.

Flea Trap – Before, during, and after the above suggestions make a safe flea trap to start eliminating the fleas. In a pie pan or shallow dish, place vegetable oil (you can also use karo syrup or honey.) Place the pan out of reach of all animals and make the room as dark as possible. Place a light (even a night light should work) by the dish. The fleas will be attracted to the light, jump on the pan, and become stuck.

Natural Cleaning Solutions

Many common household cleaners are unhealthy for every living creature in your home, including you. Any product that has to have a warning label on it falls under this category and these products don't have to be ingested to be dangerous. They can be absorbed through the skin and introduced to the respiratory system with every breath you take. Here are some healthier solutions. If you would still like to buy pre-made cleaners, go

for the products that specifically state they are green.

Your shopping list – Borax, vinegar, baking soda, and lemon juice.

Air Freshener – The healthiest home should smell like a clean home. An excellent alternative to eliminate odor is to place dishes of baking soda or vinegar mixed with a little lemon juice around the house. Coffee grounds can also absorb odors. If you would still like a little fragrance, you can simmer cinnamon or other favorite herbs and spices in a small sauce pan.

Stain Remover – Mix equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle, then spray the stain. Wait several minutes then sponge or blot with warm soapy water. For harder stains or urine areas, straight vinegar can be used directly on the spot.

Carpet Deodorizer – Sprinkle baking soda lightly on your carpet, then let it sit for several hours before vacuuming. You can also add a light dusting of Borax before vacuuming which can help eliminate fleas and flea larvae.

Disinfectants – Mix equal parts vinegar and water in a spray bottle. Lemon juice can be added for additional cleaning properties as well as a fresh, clean scent. For a stronger solution you can add two teaspoons of Borax. Vinegar can effectively kill mold, viruses and bacteria.

Tile, vinyl and linoleum floor cleaner – Add a couple of drops of olive oil (or baby oil) and

one cup of vinegar to a gallon of water. For a more abrasive cleaner add a quarter cup of borax (not recommended for linoleum).

Window Cleaner – Mix two teaspoons of white vinegar with one quart of water. Spray and wipe glass. Using newspaper to clean glass leaves a streak-free window.

Natural Remedies

The following remedies are suggestions for common rabbit care; some should not be given in abundance, but only in small, occasional amounts.

Consult your veterinarian for all treatments, illnesses and injuries.

Birch – Pain reliever, anti-inflammatory, and diuretic.

Chamomile – Pain reliever, sedative, and relieves eye colds.

Dandelion – Acts as both an astringent and a laxative, so it regulates both soft stools and constipation, respiratory ailments, and bladder infections.

Lavender – Pain reliever, antidepressant, antiseptic, gas reliever; it is also said to reduce anxiety.

Marigold – May relieve contusions, ulcers, slow healing wounds, digestive problems.

Mint – Can be used for cold-like symptoms, inflammation, and oozing of the eye; relaxes the digestive tract and stimulates fecal flow while relieving bloating.

Nasturtium – A type of water cress that can be used as a strong antiseptic.

Oats – Strengthens teeth and nails, may relieve digestive problems, kidney and bladder disorders and arthritis.

Oregano – Strengthens the immune system.

Rosemary – Relieves depression and lethargy, low blood pressure, circulatory problems; aids digestion and may alleviate exhaustion.

Going green doesn't have to be complicated. Going back to the basics and using natural ingredients will give you effective cleaning products that are good for the environment and that will also save you money. After all, having peace of mind and knowing your family – human and non-human alike– is happy and healthy, are priceless.



Farewell to Clyde

Clyde, our big teddy bear, we miss you so much. You and Cleo were our first French Lops and we loved having you. Now you and Cleo are together again. We miss your clumsy running up and down the stairs, your trying to sit on the end table and barely fitting, your kissing our toes. We miss your big hind feet flipping us off after a nail trim. You had so much personality.

Love, Bill and Kristi



Calling All Authors!



Have a funny bunny story? Want to share it with other rabbit folks? Here's your chance! Send us your rabbit tale and we'll publish it in a future issue of Harelines. Just email a Word document and any accompanying photos to: bhrs-herta@ohare.org

We're anxious to hear from you!





Bunny Groomathon – Brushing for Bucks in Dayton!



On a warm and sunny Sunday in July while many of us were relaxing in the shade, our dedicated Dayton volunteers were busy, busy, busy trimming nails and brushing bunny fur at the Subaru dealership.





The spa day was a huge success and raised money to help support Dayton-area shelter rabbits while they wait for their forever home.

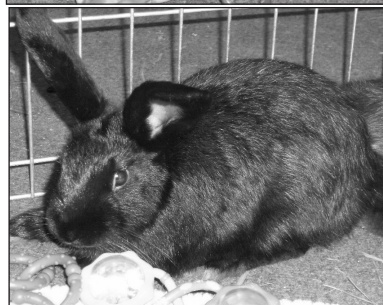




Somebunny Needs YOU!



Chili and Chiqua came all the way to Ohio from a large rescue in New Mexico. **Chili** has dark chocolate-brown fur and a spicy personality. She also has one ear that lops down and the other that stands straight up. **Chiqua** is all black with velvety-soft fur and lots of curiosity. Make an appointment to meet them today! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Shorty is a very unique looking young boy. He appears to be a mix of lionhead and Dutch rabbits, and it makes him look like he's having a bad hair day. He is a lovable little guy who likes being groomed and he's cautiously curious. He is also very good with his litterbox. **Please contact**

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



Dixie knows how to have a good time; whether it is tossing around her toys, chewing on her ball, or racing through her tunnel. When she is done, this adorable white bunny (with long white eye lashes), will sit for a

good petting and then stretch out in her box for a nice nap. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Have you ever wanted back into a time of innocence, when rabbits could be big and white and magic? This young lovely, born in spring '09, will take you there. Open your door to her, and come home to the land of **Honalee**. **Please contact Herta Rodina (bhrrs-herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**

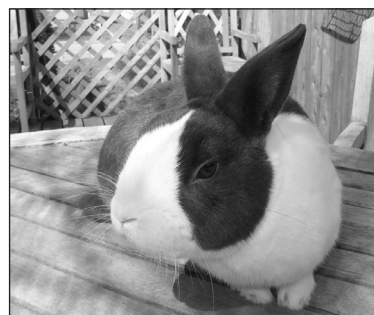


This is **Pumpkin**! She is a very sweet young lady. Just look at her awesome blue/gray fur! What a beautiful bunny! Pumpkin enjoys playing with her toys and she especially loves to chomp on

hay. Wouldn't you love to make Pumpkin a member of your family? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Coco Bean is a real snuggle bunny. She loves to be petted and is very friendly. With her velvet soft fur **Coco** is quite a beauty. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



"Izzy" cute and adorable or what? Yes, he is! Meet **Izzy**; this four-pound gray dutch bunny is as sweet as he is cute and adorable. He has excellent litterbox habits too. **"Izzy"** going to be a part of your family? **Please contact Michele**

Roth Kerley (bhrrs-michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.



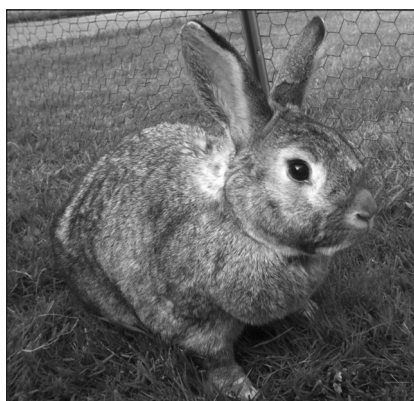
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Sylvester is quite a unique looking bunny with his stripes and two-toned face! He LOVES his free time and pellets. This handsome guy would make a great addition to your home. He has lots of love to give. Why not make an appointment to meet him? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



If you have a sweet tooth, you will love **Anise**. She is as black as licorice but she is way sweeter. This special girl is waiting for a loving family to show off her excellent litterbox habits. Call today to make her a part of your home, but careful, she's so sweet she may cause cavities! **Please contact Michele Roth Kerley (bhrrs-michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.**



Fievel is an extremely friendly rabbit who needs cuddles and pets every day; in fact, he's a bunny who thrives on lots of human interaction. He likes to be snuggled on the ground as opposed to being picked up, which he dislikes. He's a larger bunny, nearly

nine pounds, with beautiful white and gray chinchilla-like fur. **Fievel** is good with his litterbox, and overall is a happy, healthy eight-year-old friend. **Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.**



Mischa is a very energetic young female who LOVES her free time. She always wants to explore and prefers not to be in her pen. She is a voracious hay eater (that's a good thing!), and does well with her

litterbox. She's also fearless and gets along well with our dogs. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Tabby is a gorgeous petite black bun with a spot on her nose and the tips of her front toes. She is friendly, enjoys being groomed, and is great with her litterbox. She is full grown, so this is as big as she's going to get! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Meet Luna and Matilda ("Mattie"), nine-month old sisters. They look a lot like little Siamese kittens. They are very, very curious and anxious to explore their

surroundings. Both are friendly and good at being held. They've been spayed and are now ready for adoption. We prefer that they be adopted together. Make an appointment to meet these cuties today! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**

Adopted!

Tessie has a new home with the Schreiners of Sandusky, where it was love at first sight with bunny pal, Bert.





The Joys of Fostering

By Stephanie Lodge

Whenever I talk about fostering rabbits, people always tell me, "I couldn't do that. I would keep them all!" Opening your heart and home to a bunny is most certainly the easiest part, at least for me. I volunteer for both the Buckeye House Rabbit Society and the Cleveland Animal Protective League and I often end up with fosters at the most unexpected times. If it wasn't for these two organizations working together, with me in the middle, there would be many more homeless bunnies in the Greater Cleveland area.

My husband and I first started fostering animals when I was laid off from work. Since I had extra free time on my hands, I felt it was mandatory that I do something good with it. Our first foster was actually a guinea pig scheduled for euthanasia on a Friday. Patrick was very sick, as was the rest of his family. Since he was in the best health of the bunch, I volunteered to take him home until he recovered.

Here we are one year later, and we find ourselves continuing to foster rabbits in need. There have been many times when the APL gets a bunny who isn't suitable for adoption due to medical or behavioral issues, and this is why they call me. I consider the combination of the Buckeye HRS, Kristen Doherty (Cleveland East fosterer extraordinaire) and myself the last chance for these guys.

Compared to some of the veteran HRS volunteers, my husband and I have fostered a small number of bunnies. We've had some stay overnight and some stay six months. Like all the fosterers, I don't want to ever take on more than I can handle. Our bonus bunnies, as my husband likes to call them, deserve as much love and attention as humanly possible from someone who also works full-time. The bond I've developed with some of the babies like Isabella, Snickers, Maximus, and our current foster bunny Fievel is very strong.

As much as I think I could never love another foster bunny more, each time we get a new one, I see his personality and figure out what makes him special. Everyone has favorites when it comes to long hair, short hair, uppity ears, and so forth. Every time I think I've found the most "perfect" bunny, another one comes along who is very different yet equally amazing. As difficult as it is to say goodbye once they are adopted, that pain doesn't come close to the joy they bring while I have them. As Selma Hayek says in the movie *Frida*, "At the end of the day, we can endure much more than we think we can." My friends tell me that the rabbits I foster are lucky, but they have it all wrong. I'm the lucky one. I get to spend time with many, many bunnies, have a positive impact on their lives, learn from them, and then know that they are going to a wonderful "forever" home.





Don't Mess with Sydney

By Debbi Braunschweiger

If there were ever a rabbit version of a child in her "terrible twos", it's Sydney. She's an adorable black and white lop who joined our family about a year and a half ago when I was looking for a friend for my male lop, Scooby. Fellow volunteer Jann Kuntavanish had a six-month-old foster from a hoarding situation and thought she'd make a great match. She's a ball of energy and is always looking for ways to explore and wreak havoc.

When Sydney was about eight months old and still new to us, she was playing in the living room when my husband walked in with a bag of pretzels. Hearing the cellophane bag rustle, Sydney appeared next to him with ears erect and in full begging mode. Not willing to share something he thought was bad for her, he shooed her away. Syd, being the determined young bun she is, tried again with no luck, so she bounced off to hide behind the loveseat and sulk. Done with his lunch, Craig stands to head back to the kitchen and, as if watching a slow motion catastrophe in the making, I look up to see Syd flying out from around the loveseat and heading right for Craig's leg. In the blink of an eye, she launched herself in the air, grabbed the back of his lounge pants with her teeth, and ripped them all the way down. My heart sank thinking this adorable little "she devil" had just earned a one-way ticket back to her foster mom's house. Instead, my husband laughed it off once he recovered from the shock of a rabbit attack and spent the next few days coming up with clever aliases like Syd Vicious or Sharky.

Fast forward to the present. Although our little angel has mellowed some, she remains the most strong-willed bun I have ever encountered. She and Scooby reside in a custom-made 4'x8' pen in our basement. When she feels it's time to run and stretch, she'll shake the wire of her cage so violently you'd think it was going to rip open. All

the while that little brown eye is making sure I'm watching her tantrum.

A few months ago I had to resort to using a cookie cooling rack in her litter box to keep her from digging all the litter out during one of her rages. It wasn't too long afterward that she discovered she could drag the rack out with her teeth; she then morphed into a furry tornado leaving litter, hay, and feces spread all over the pen, watching my frustration with a twinkle in her eye. Her poor partner, Scooby, would struggle to find a neutral corner while his two favorite girls engaged in a battle of wills -- me trying to clean up the mess and Sydney trying to take the dustpan out of my hand. It would've been hysterical to watch if I wasn't so aggravated cleaning it up. After a few repeat performances, my husband suggested that we drill holes in the litter boxes and use cable ties to secure the rack. I wish I could've been a fly on the wall the first time she grabbed the rack and wasn't able to move it.

As often as our little two-year-old "terror in a bunny suit" frustrates us, she just as often makes us laugh with her crazy antics and feisty personality and we wouldn't have it any other way. She keeps us on our toes, for sure, but we adore the little monkey and can't wait to see what she comes up with next.





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

☐ Assist with mailing

☐ Help at Buckeye HRS booth at Pet Expos and fairs

☐ Other _____

Name _____

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Bunnies' names and special dates _____

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Buy a bunny a little time...