THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT

A Bond Like No Other

By Debbi Braunschweiger

Volume 22 Number 3

For many years I've volunteered at my local shelter, working with their rescue bunny program and acting as their adoption counselor. Like many of us who talk to potential adopters, I hear their reasons for adopting a rabbit – from the ideal "we love rabbits and want to share our home with one" to the unacceptable "we have a beautiful outdoor hutch and think a bunny would be a good pet" and everything in between.

On Valentine's day Debbie Hampton stopped by the shelter to meet our rabbits available for adoption. As we sat down to talk she explained she had an unusual reason for wanting to adopt and wasn't sure if we'd approve her application. Normally when an adopter leads with that kind of statement I'm immediately nervous, but there was something about the way she said it that made me want to know more. She softly shared with me that her 89-year-old mother, Dolores, lives with her and is suffering from Alzheimer's. Dolores's beloved canine companion recently passed away and Dolores was taking it very hard. Debbie, who had had pet rabbits throughout her life, felt that maybe a rabbit would be a good companion for Dolores, if she could find a bunny with the right temperament. We continued to talk about where the bunny would live in her home, adapting areas for the bunny to access his/her cage and be with Dolores as well. It was clear she'd given it a great deal of thought. She even had a ramp next to her mother's bed for easy access. Our next step was finding the right bunny.

At the time we literally had dozens of bunnies in the shelter's rescue program. All ages, sizes, and breeds. Debbie had read about Kimmy on the shelter's website and was drawn to her age, calm demeanor, and sad history and felt she might be the perfect match. Kimmy is a four-year-old Rex who came to the shelter as a stray. She was adopted within a month and kept

for about a year before her owner fell on hard times and returned her. A month later Kimmy found another home, but after a few weeks her adopter decided she wasn't prepared to have

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a pet. Yet again, Kimmy came back to us through no fault of her own and continued her search for the perfect forever home. This time Kimmy's sweet, gentle personality and her desire to be a couch potato were

SOCIETY

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Fall 2018



Dolores and her new friend Kimmy.



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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:

Christine Hales, for her generous donation of supplies and funds in tribute to her beloved Nelson, whom she adopted from us in 2006. Nelson enjoyed a long, happy, and healthy life thanks to Christine's love and care.

Stephanie Ash, for her kind gift in Humphrey's memory. All of us at the Buckeye HRS were saddened when this sweet sanctuary bunny passed away, but Stephanie had the strongest bond with him and knew him best. Thanks to her, Humphrey felt safe and knew love in his final months.

Amy Spintman, for donating four Cottontail Cottages to our foster rabbits!

The following members, whose monetary and in-kind donations allow us to meet our ongoing fostering and educational goals: Clay and Nancy Pasternack, Carol Danko, Sue Milewski, the Covert Family, Amy Marshall, Ann-Marie and Mike Polansky, Marjorie Aleva, Irma Laszlo, Junko Imai Rogers, Srikanth Sivashankaran, Jim and Nancy Reed, Judy O'Neil, Debbie Dowell, Bob Piekarczyk, Barbara Galambos, Katherine Reading, Shannon Rodak.

Our new and continuing Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors! These special rabbits, who will spend the rest of their lives in foster care due to serious medical conditions, have you kind and generous people to thank!

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

BUNFEST 2018!

Come join us for Midwest BunFest! Mark your calendar now for Saturday October 27, 9:30 am to 5 pm, Northland Performing Arts Center, 4411 Tamarack Blvd., Columbus, Ohio 43229. For details visit www. midwestbunfest.org. Hope to see you all there!

Adopted!

Cupcake couldn't be happier with her new mom, Carole Newman, a life-long rabbit lover who opened her heart and home to this sweetie. ♥ Chester, a big, goofy, lovable puppy dog in a bunny suit, found his forever home with Buckeye's own Debbi Braunschweiger! ♥ Elsa has a new home with Kristin Granche, where she has lots of room to run and play. ♥ Ashes bonded almost immediately with a little lop named Wilbur. Their human mom Charlotte loves her fuzzy new addition. ♥ Buddy was not available long before he was snatched up by his new mom Sarah and rabbit wife Claire. Although neither lady was convinced at first, Buddy has wiggled his way into both of their hearts. ♥ Sir Hopsalot found his forever home with the most wonderful family. Melissa and Kyle recently wrote: "He is perfect. The end."



exactly the makings for a bond like no other. After Debbie met Kimmy she agreed and she and her mother opened their hearts and home to Kimmy.

Recently Debbie gave us an update on the bond Dolores and Kimmy share: "Mom fell and broke her wrist last night. We brought her home from the ER and she was crying. I got her into bed and put Kimmy in with her. Kimmy climbed right up onto her chest and started licking away her tears. Of course, it was the salt that attracted her, but Mom was sure she was kissing her tears away."

It took us a few years to find Kimmy a family of her own, but we like to think all the bumps along the way were just bumps on the road to her perfect home. She needed someone to love her unconditionally and she needed to give that same love to someone in need. Thanks to Debbie and Dolores, Kimmy has found the perfect place to live. She has found her home. She has found her family.



Debbie and Kimmy.

Holiday Raffle to Benefit Buckeye HRS Foster Rabbits!

For our thirteenth annual holiday raffle, we proudly present two handmade stone sculptures by Ohio artist George Carruth.

Deck the halls with these two beautiful original sculptures featuring frolicking rabbits.

- Bramble Bunnies Hook on back to hang.
 - o Weight: 2 lbs. Dimensions: 2.5" x 11.5" x 1.25". Composition: hand-cast concrete
- Leaping Bunny Can stand alone.
- o Weight: 3 lbs. Dimensions: 9" x 5" x 2". Composition: hand-cast concrete
- For more information about George Carruth visit www. carruthstudio.com

All proceeds will go directly to our foster program and will ensure that needy bunnies have a safe and happy holiday season while they await the ultimate gift, a permanent home.

Tickets cost \$1 each and you may buy as many as you wish. **All entries must be postmarked no later than December 10, 2018.** Please include your phone number and email (if available) with your check or money order and indicate it's for the raffle. Mail your request to: Buckeye HRS, P.O. Box 61, Vickery, OH

43464. If you prefer, you may pay by credit card through our website – www.ohare.org/wordpress/support/ our-raffle – for ticket purchases of \$5 or more.

The lucky winner will be notified mid-December and will receive the prize in time for holiday gift-giving.







Hidden Holiday Hazards

By Phyllis O'Beollain

We all know how wonderful the holidays can be ... the lights, decorations, family and friends, and a delicious holiday feast. We all love our house rabbits, and while they are a part of our family, the lights, sounds, and smells of the season can make this a stressful time for them. Here are some tips to help keep them safe and healthy:

No human food! Resist the temptation to share your holiday treats with your rabbit. Foods not normally part of their diet can quickly lead to diarrhea, gassiness, and potentially fatal gastrointestinal stasis. Keep healthy treats available: some fresh herbs for example - and feed in moderation. Avoid gas-producing foods such as cabbage, cauliflower, or broccoli.

Many holiday plants are extremely toxic to rabbits, but even safe vegetation unfamiliar to your pet can cause gastrointestinal upset. Put the plants out of reach (this may mean putting them in a different room as rabbits are agile and can be quite determined).

Holiday lights, tinsel, angel hair, and other decorations present potentially fatal consequences for your rabbit – as do electrical cords. Keep these items safely out of reach or place an exercise pen around the decorations or around the pet. Forget the tinsel. Pick up ribbons and wrapping paper which can create life-threatening intestinal blockages if ingested. Keep gift wrap, tape, and ribbon out of bunny's reach!

If your rabbit is free range, be mindful of where you hide your presents. Just because the kids can't find the gifts doesn't mean the rabbit can't! You don't want to have to buy a new sweater for your daughter on Christmas Eve night because your rabbit decided to bed down in the first one, or worse, ate some of it and now needs to be rushed to the emergency clinic.

The altered routines and strange sounds and smells of the holidays are a huge stressor for your bunny.



It's important to keep your bunnies safe this holiday season!

People going in and out of the house provide opportunities for escape as well as a great risk of being stepped upon. For the safety and happiness of your rabbit, keep him in a quiet, secure exercise pen or other enclosure (or in a separate room with a closed door). Make sure he has comfortable bedding, fresh food and water, and his favorite, familiar toys. Give him extra attention periodically throughout the day, and stick to the usual feeding and cleaning routines. Many bunnies enjoy a radio at low volume, tuned to soft classical music or light jazz.

Make sure family and guests don't leave their medication bottles where playful, gnawing pets can carry them off (the bottles, not the guests). A rabbit can chew into a plastic medication bottle rapidly and easily ingest Grandma Betty's heart medicine.

Set ground rules for guests – small hands can squeeze a little too hard; dropping a wriggling rabbit can result in her paralysis or death. Don't risk it: no one handles the rabbits. Explain and



Keep an eye on that gift wrap!

reinforce that Flopsy cannot be handled as she is nervous about all the unfamiliar activities and may nip (or whatever explanation works for you). No unsupervised guests should even visit with the pets, as it takes one second for an overly excited child or uninformed adult to mishandle a bunny and permanently cripple or kill him. Older children/adults might sit on the floor with the rabbit in the enclosure, depending on the temperament of the visitor and the temperament of the bunny (reinforce the no-people-treats rule and ensure rabbit-savvy adult supervision).

Flameless candles are a safe option to open flames which are obvious fire hazards should your



Your bunny could be naughty...

curious pet knock over a lit candle. Make sure your fireplace is securely enclosed and, as some purchased woods contain chemical propellants, even the ashes can be dangerous if ingested by your pet. Do NOT let your rabbit get into any commercially-produced potpourri mixtures, as the artificial colorings, scents, and preservatives can be toxic.

Eccentric pet owners (such as myself) sometimes enjoy dressing up their rabbit at the holidays; this is fine for a quick snapshot (if your bunny is not frightened or otherwise upset at this) but more than a couple of minutes in a costume or hat may stress him out or provoke him to take a bite out of the costume and either choke on it or ingest it and risk intestinal blockage. Keep the costume-wearing *minimal*.

Prepare in advance for worst-case scenarios; know the location and phone number of the nearest pet emergency room that treats rabbits. For some of us, this means a drive to another city.

Your bunny is part of the family and should be included in the happiness of the holidays, but be aware of the dangers and stressors that accompany the season's festivities. As the guardians of our pets, we are responsible for their safety and wellbeing. Make sure to keep the holiday season as enjoyable for your rabbit as it is for you and the rest of your family.



...or nice this Christmas!

Santa's Little Hopper

By Phyllis O'Beollain

Christmas trees and small pets do not necessarily go together. You cannot use tinsel (choking hazard) and you must be extremely careful with electric lights (electrocution hazard) and glass ornaments (breakage, lacerations, and trips to the ER for both owner and pet). Even with precautions in place to guard against such safety issues, the tree itself is often considered one big toy (by the pet). Cats take flying leaps into tree branches, rabbits chew on branches, and dogs ... well, you know.

This author had an extremely spoiled house rabbit who, because of ongoing dental issues, refused to chew on hay, willow branches, wooden toys, or any of the many other acceptable chewing items. He of course immediately rushed over to the artificial Christmas tree and began chewing the fake needles. (Sigh).

So ... I set up NIC (Neat Idea Cube) grid wire panels around the tree. These were an effective barrier until he quickly discovered he could launch himself off the computer bench and land inside the NIC-panel tree pen.

A second tier of NIC panels was added; the tree now appeared to be in a wrestling cage match.

Then a friend sent me information on a brilliant scheme to keep small pets away from the tree. I put my tree on a dairy crate inside a large box (free from a friendly neighborhood retailer) and put Christmas wrap on the box. A few NIC panels remained at the front of the box to prevent the Grinch-like house rabbit from ripping the paper off of the box. The lights on the tree are batteryoperated LED lights.

This set-up was an extremely effective solution to the problem for a good 24 hours. Then I had to go to work on Monday morning.

I came home and Lord Grantham was nowhere



You don't want to find your bunny under the tree.

to be found. He was not dozing under 'his' table, he was not passed out on the couch, he was not sitting under the tree (so I knew the NIC set-up was still effective), and he was not resting on the computer bench. I felt a small wave of panic -WHERE could he be?

The photo says it all.

The fuzzy Christmas elf was removed, a very tall x-pen was placed around the tree, and the tree was once again in a cage match: Lord Grantham 1, Christmas tree 0.



Take time to pet-proof your Christmas tree!

Take A Second Look...

By Stephanie Lodge & Sue Zimmerman

As usual, Buckeye HRS foster homes are filled to the ears with many amazing rabbits. Most get adopted quickly. Some, however, have been in foster care for much longer than they should be, overlooked for adoption simply because of fur or eye color or shyness or personality quirks. Please take a second look at these long-term foster bunnies. Do you have room in your heart to give one of them a loving forever home?

Cyndi: In foster care for two years, Cyndi is a beautiful solid black Mini Rex. She was just a few weeks old when her mom and litter mates were rescued from a cruelty case in June 2016. Her entire family was adopted very quickly, but for some reason Cyndi is still here. A little on the shy side, she absolutely loves being out of her pen



Sweet Cyndi needs a home.

for free time and is easy to handle and groom. She would flourish in a home with lots of attention and free-range opportunities. Contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrssue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.

Bootsy: Bootsy, also surrendered in a cruelty case, has been with us for a year and a half. This 2-year-old angora

has fuzzy fur that does require a bit of extra time and attention, but he does not mind. We think Bootsy has been overlooked because of his white fur and pink eyes, but he is such a sweet and patient boy. Contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ ohare.org) 419-355-8433.

DC and Fi: DC and Fi are a bonded pair who have been looking for their next home for over



Bootsy is a sweet and patient boy.

a year and a half. When their human caregiver passed away from cancer, we took them in as fosters. This dynamic duo likes to chase each other, perform heavy bunstruction on their cardboard box house, and snuggle together. DC (male, white) is more cautious than his fearless mate, while Fi (female, black) loves to explore. They both have a zest for life and love to beg for treats. Fi and DC are inseparable and must be adopted together. Contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare. org) 216-571-1088.

You can be somebunny's hero! When you adopt from us, you actually save two lives – the rabbit you take home and the next rescue who will fill that space in foster care.



Bonded pair DC and Fi are looking for a home.



Somebunny Needs YOU!

Cherish Truelsch is a unique-looking Californian rabbit. Check out that dewlap! Found wandering the neighborhood in the scorching July heat, Cherish is a sweet girl who is looking for someone to snuggle with and show her that she is special. Cherish was named by David Truelsch in the Name Our Next Foster program (details on our website). Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare. org) 419-355-8433.



If you are looking for a confident and energetic bunny, then Fred is the man for you! He's extraordinarily soft and cuddly and has great litterbox habits. Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrsstephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.





Maddie is our first-ever bunny to be rescued in the middle of the night, arriving at our foster home just after 3:00 am. If you are looking for a BIG bunny, Maddie is your girl. This Flemish Giant has a good temperament, a big heart, and is loads of fun to have around. Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.



Marshall was dumped behind an ice cream shop in East Cleveland. Despite being from the mean streets, he's a lover bunny. This big marshmallow man has a big personality to match. If you are late on dinner or he needs an extra head rub, he isn't afraid to tell you! Please contact Stephanie

Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.

There are sure to be many "hocus pocus" antics with these three sisters. **Winifred**, **Sarah**, and **Mary** have plenty of tricks for you. Each is available separately. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Winifred is very social and enjoys kisses on her forehead. She loves her hay, but her favorite activity is tossing her cardboard box around.



Sarah loves her free time and is very adventurous.



Mary is extremely outgoing and friendly. She is our resident goof-ball and is quite entertaining.



Good things come in small packages. Meet the little but mighty **Raisin**. A young and feisty female dwarf-mix, Raisin loves to run and play and tolerates being held and groomed. She would love to have her very own FUR-ever home. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org)** 419-355-8433.



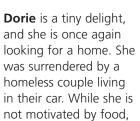
Mario is a ton of fun and just loves pets and kisses. He was found under someone's car trying to keep cool in the 90-plus degrees of summer. Mario is overthe-top friendly and a great bunny for a family. Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.



Ruby is a petite darling who is a bit shy at first. She loves adventure and having room to run. **Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.**



Olaf is a big boy with a big heart. He is sure to delight you with his charming personality and stunning good looks. Happiest when hanging out with his human companions, Olaf just wants to be part of a family with a lot of activity. Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare. org) 419-355-8433.



she is definitely motivated by love. Dorie needs to be cuddled every day and is also very free with kisses. Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.



Kate is a charming Harlequin mix with beautiful gray stripes in her white fur. She is social and likes to run around and explore. Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.



Figaro is a tiny threepound powerhouse full of energy and spunk. Don't let his small

appearance fool you; his nickname should be Napoleon. Please contact Stephanie Lodge (bhrs-stephanie@ohare.org) 216-571-1088.

Rabbit Life Hacks

By Shawnna Lemerise

As good bunny caretakers, we diligently do our research on rabbit care, provide healthy food, interesting toys, tasty treats, build a comfortable living space, and buy nice things all to give our rabbit the best life. But sometimes, there is an easier, less time consuming or more affordable way to provide the very best. Here are a few rabbit "life hacks," or a few things I wish I knew a whole lot sooner after much trial and error.

Parrot Toys: If you're at the pet supply store looking for an easy, new treat to give bun, you may be sorely disappointed by the rabbit section. Don't waste your money on wood blocks in the shape of a carrot or chew sticks that she will ignore. BUT parrot toys, though a bit more expensive, can provide a more enriching experience for buns. Parrots are notoriously hard to entertain and their toys are designed to be more interactive.



Parrot toys are always a bunny favorite!

Look for wood and paper toys; anything with a bell is a bonus. Hang it in a place where bun has to pass under the toy or put it on the floor so she can toss and chew it.

FRP Board: AKA fiberglass reinforced plastic. You can buy a 4 ft. by 8 ft. panel at a home improvement store for about \$25. Why is it so great? It makes an excellent floor cover and is

> almost a perfect fit paired with an x-pen enclosure. I went through countless carpets, foam mats, and other hopeless floor protectors until fellow volunteer, Stephanie Lodge, shared this discovery. Traditionally used in bathrooms, it cleans incredibly easily, is textured (for minimal bun sliding), and protects your floors. Tip: When purchasing an FRP board, you can fit it in a regular-sized car with a little muscle and rolling it to fit.

Water Dish: | know this may seem obvious, but



FRP – fiberglass reinforced plastic – makes a great floor for your bunny.

as new bunny caretakers we are given the impression rabbits like drinking from water bottles. I've bought so many versions over the years and have had an issue with each type on the market. There's no way to clean them completely and eventually they leak or get jammed (though bottles can provide several days' worth of water, you have to check daily to make sure they are working). Trade in the bottle for a ceramic or metal water dish, save yourself hassle, and ensure an always-hydrated bunny. I prefer a plastic dish that screws into the cage side so the buns can't flip it. You can find them at the pet supply store in the small animal or bird aisle.



Many bunnies use water dishes instead of bottles.

More Highlights From Our Archives

By Maggie Reading

Here's another small sampling of what's available in back issues of Harelines on our website:

"Arthritis/Spondylosis" by Kathy Smith, Winter 2004, Volume 8 No. 1 An explanation of arthritis in rabbits and suggestions for how to care for a rabbit post diagnosis.

"Treating and Preventing Sore Hocks" by Kristi Cole, Fall 2006, Volume 10 No. 3 A detailed guide for treating and preventing sore hocks.

"Rabbit Syphilis" by Dr. Kristen West, DVM, Mandel Veterinary Hospital, Cleveland Heights, Winter 2009, Volume 13 No. 1 As with any illness, early detection and appropriate treatment are key when dealing with rabbit syphilis. Dr. West describes the common symptoms.

"How to Make a Comfortable Environment for a Bun with Mobility Problems" by Sue Zimmerman, Winter 2010, Volume 14 No. 1 Sue shares advice from her experience housing rabbits with mobility issues.

"Pre- and Post-Operative Care of Rabbits" by Dana Krempels, Ph.D. University of Miami Department of Biology, Winter 2012, Volume 15 No. 2 Dr. Krempels details many aspects of pre- and post-operative care to help you and your rabbit get through either emergency or elective surgery with maximal safety and minimal stress.

"The Harelem Globetrotter: A Rabbit Relocation How-To" by Jim Brown, Fall 2012, Volume 16 No.

An account of one rabbit's transatlantic move and advice from his experience.

"Rabbit Fractures" by Dr. Gary Riggs DVM, ABVP NorthCoast Bird & Exotic Specialties, Fall 2013, Volume 17 No. 3

An explanation of the complicated nature of fracture injuries in rabbits and a detailed summary on the care required to heal these injuries.

"Let Your Rabbits Choose Their Own Toys" by Shawnna Lemerise, Spring/Summer 2014, Volume

A list of ideas for homemade rabbit toys and tips on how to determine what toys your rabbit would like best.

"Thinking Inside the Box: Litterbox Training Your House Rabbit" by Renee Argento, Winter 2015, Volume 19 No. 1

A reference for litter box training from an experienced owner including troubleshooting tips and advice for multiple rabbits.

"Tips for a Well-Groomed Rabbit" by Rob Lovicz, Fall 2015, Volume 19 No. 3 An overview of the shedding process as well as proper grooming techniques for healthy, happy

Buckeye House Rabbit Society P.O. Box 61 Vickery, Ohio 43464



Buy a bunny a little time...

MEMBERSHIP FORM ——— Your \$35.00 annual membership in the Buckeye HRS includes: Please make checks payable to: • National membership (\$20.00) and 3-4 issues of the House Rabbit Journal **Buckeye** • Local membership (\$15.00) and issues of Harelines If you are already a national member, your local fee is \$15.00 **House Rabbit Society** ☐ I would like to donate \$______ to help a foster rabbit (vet care, supplies) P.O. Box 61 □ I would like to donate \$_____ in memory of ______. Vickery, Ohio 43464 The grieving family receives an acknowledgment of your gracious gesture. All donations are I would like to volunteer to: tax-deductible. ☐ Distribute information to vets ☐ Assist with mailing □ Other _____ ☐ Help at Buckeye HRS booth at Pet Expos and fairs Name Address__ City, State, Zip ______ Phone _____ E-mail address _____

Bunnies' names and special dates _____