

HARELINES

Volume 6 Number 2

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT

SOCIETY Spring/Summer 2002

Head Tilt in Rabbits

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Head tilt, "wry neck", or vestibular disease is an all-too-common clinical presentation of pet rabbits. In this disease, rabbits of all ages can show a variety of symptoms and severities from an array of potential causes.

Head tilt is commonly thought of as simply an ear disease, although brain lesions can also show similar signs. When the ear is the source of the problem, the signs and the severity of any particular case are often determined by the "depth" of the lesion. In other words, does it involve the external, middle or inner portion of the ear?

To understand this condition, a short anatomy review is in order. The external ear, or ear canal, is the portion of the ear from the ear opening to the eardrum. The middle

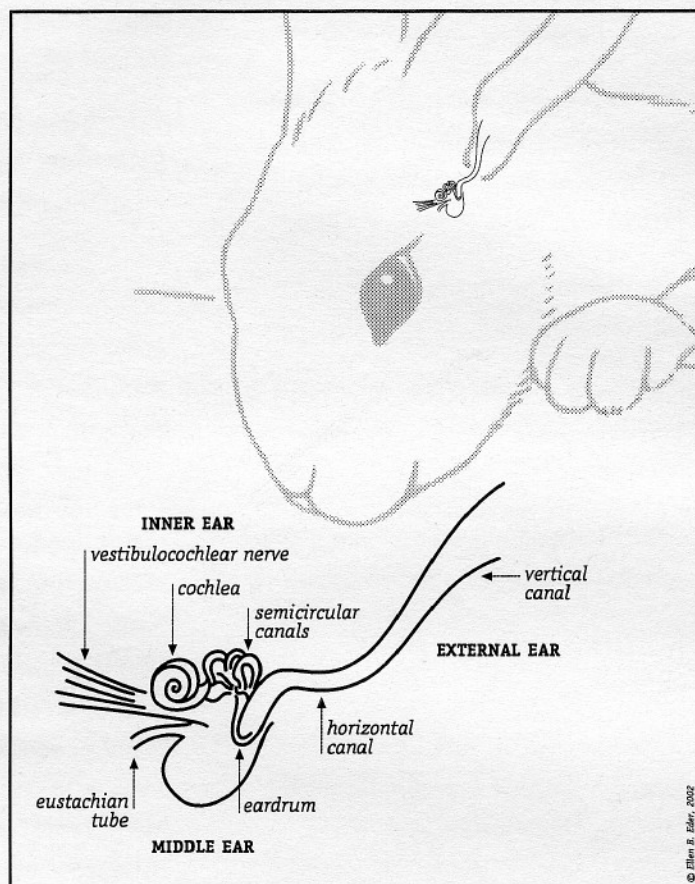


Diagram of the anatomy of the ear.

ear is made up of the eardrum (or tympanum), the eustachian tube (connects ear to oral cavity), three auditory vesicles (bones), and the tympanic nerve (branch of the facial nerve). The internal ear includes the cochlea, vestibule, semi-circular canals, and vestibulocochlear nerve – all of which regulate position of the head. If your rabbit shows pain on ear manipulation with visible canal debris and without a tilt, it is probably an external ear problem. If he also displays lip or ear droop,

drooling or loss of blink response, the middle ear may also be involved. If, in addition, there is head tilt, rolling or nystagmus (uniform rapid eye movements), you can assume that the internal ear is involved. The internal ear involvement is a more serious scenario, not only due to the increased severity of symptoms, but also because of the extremely close proximity to the brain and the risk of brain infection.

So what causes these problems and how do they occur? There are many possible causes and it is often difficult to pinpoint the original underlying cause. Certainly, the most common culprit is bacterial infection. *Pasteurella*, because of its prevalence in the pet rabbit population, is always high on the suspect list. It is not, however, the only possibility, and all head tilt

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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:

Cathy Montiegel, for her thoughtful contribution in tribute to Kari Raschke, a very tiny bunny with a huge personality.

Peter Monett, for his most generous donation in memory of his beloved Bugs, who passed away in August 2000.

Lin Beam, for her kind gift in honor of Harry Hairball.

Lois and Eric Raphael, for their donation in memory of Monkey Doherty.

Mary Kalb, for her generous gift in honor of Harvey's adoption day.

Christine Hales for graciously agreeing to host our first-ever garage sale.

Tracy Schuld, for coordinating our "Sponsor a Sanctuary Rabbit" program.

Georgia Willison, for her tireless work in sending out our information packs.

Karin Wurst, for donating a beautiful Leith Petwerks bunny condo to our foster program.

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

The following members, whose incredible generosity is helping so many foster rabbits: **Jeannie Holt, Andy Bania, Sharon Wiant, Linda Gardner, Karen Salvagno, Jim and Laura Brown, Adrian Mastroguiseppe, Bonnie Hagerman, Marcia Baker, Irma Laszlo, Bob Piekarczyk, Henry Pintz and Susan Porter, Melodye Traupel, Angela Windau, Jim and Nancy Reed, Michelle Ellington, Loretta Henderson, Jody Lynn and Jacqueline Slain, Carrie Wegner, Mary Sarah and Joel Stout.** We appreciate your support!

Buckeye HRS Dues Increase Effective July 1, 2002

The Buckeye House Rabbit Society has been helping rabbits in Ohio for five years now. When we were founded in 1997 our annual membership dues, including three issues of *Harelines* during the year, was \$10.00. It has remained at that amount for five years, while postage and printing costs have steadily risen over that same time period. We're no longer able to cover the costs of printing and mailing *Harelines* at the current dues rate. **It has become necessary to increase our annual membership fees to \$15.00. We thank you for your continued support and are glad to hear that our members enjoy receiving this publication.**

The response to our "Sponsor a Sanctuary Rabbit" program has been overwhelming!

We would like to offer our heartfelt thanks to the following members, whose pledges are making such a difference to some wonderful special-needs rabbits:

Katrin Carmody, Laura Culver (her pledge is in loving memory of Kitten, a beautiful black satin rabbit owned and loved by Emily Culver. 7-15-94 to 12-13-01), Jacqueline and Jody Lynn Slain, Doris Mastroguiseppe, Angela Windau, Connie Zelesnik, Paul Ward, Michael Heit, Rob Lovicz and Kim Johnson, Lin Beam.

For more information on our Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsorship program, please go to www.ohare.org/need/sanctuary/sanctuary.htm or call Kristi Cole at 330-484-8416 to receive a brochure.

Adopted!

Lola has found a new home with Mark and Robin and is getting acquainted with the resident bun, Joxer. ➤ **Wyatt** shares a living room with his guinea pig friend, Mr. Chewy, at the residence of Susan Heidinger of Cleveland. ➤ **Cheech-the-Mighty** was adopted by the Bania family of Mayfield Heights. ➤ **Domino** was adopted by Tina and has a happy new life with her new buddy Maximus. They live in Akron. ➤ **Snuggles** now gets the attention she craves, and deserves, from Krista in Akron. ➤ **Rusty** enjoys free run of his new apartment, and is being spoiled by John in Dayton. ➤ **Pluto** is charming both Flopsy and Katie with his affectionate ways and exuberant character. ➤ **Juno** is now living happily with Penelope in Litchfield. ➤ **Teddy** has snuggled his way into Cindy's heart and home. ➤ **Harley** is now living with Lisa and is enjoying more freedom and friendship with his new buddy, Cocoa. ➤ **Amelia** has been adopted and is now living with Tami in Kent. ➤ **Malta** has a new home with the Adelsbergers and is making friends with Cinnamon. ➤ We're happy to report that after 14 months in foster care, **Hamilton** has found a wonderful home with Pamela and, best of all, he has a new best bunny friend, Thumper. ➤ **Dixie** has decided to make a life with her companion Louis, as well as Trinity and Eric in Cincinnati. ➤ Pam and Ron of Columbus are thrilled to have **Violet** as a new member of their family. ➤ **Tiny Alfred** (now **Snowball**) has traveled to Mars (PA) to become pals with James and Josh.

Coming Soon to our Gift Shop ...

**... the 2003
bunny calendar!**

This gorgeous, all-color wall calendar is a fantastic alternative to the photo-studio rabbit calendars normally on the market, because it features rescued foster rabbits living in an HRS home.

Look for more info in our Fall 2002 Harelines and sooner on www.ohare.org. Plan to buy your 2003 calendar from the Buckeye HRS, rather than a local bookstore; you'll be helping our foster rabbits with every purchase.



Head Tilt in Rabbits, Cont'd.

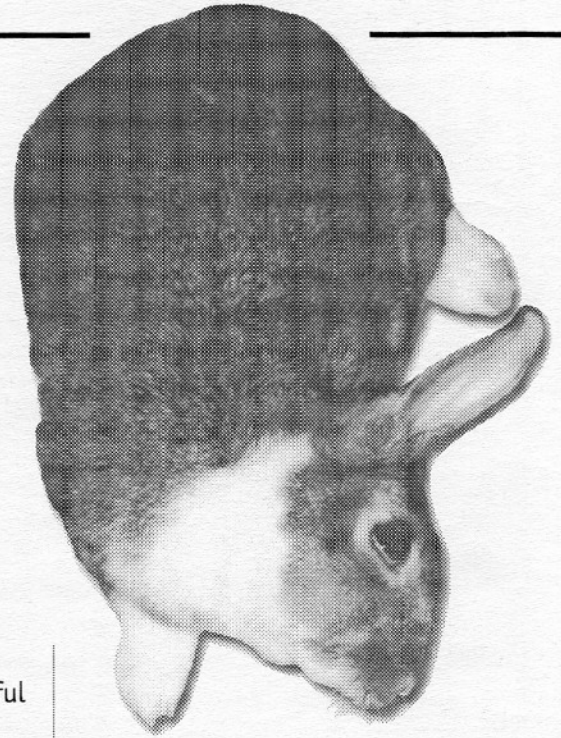
cases should be cultured in an attempt to achieve an accurate diagnosis, giving the best chance at treatment. Bacteria can enter the ear from the ear canal, through the blood, or up through the eustachian tubes from the oral cavity, so various diagnostic sampling sites may also be necessary to locate the offender. Other possible head tilt causes that need to be ruled out as part of the initial work-up are parasites (such as ear mites, *E. cuniculi*, and raccoon roundworm [*Baylisascaris*]), viruses, fungi/yeast, and traumatic damage.

Treatment of rabbit head tilt is dependent on the cause, portion of ear involved, and severity of signs. Close examination of the ear by visual exam down the canal and by x-ray is essential to determine the extent of infection. The use of video-otoscopes or rigid endoscopes to examine the canals is extremely beneficial in most cases. Sedation may be required to adequately examine the ear, since it is important to see deeply into the canal to inspect the eardrum. In addition, sedation is beneficial when probing an infected ear proves to be painful for the rabbit.

After a diagnosis is made and lab samples have been taken, a treatment plan can be developed. Type, frequency, and length of treatment differ based on where the infection occurs. In general, frequent treatments over weeks and months may be necessary to hold the problem in

check or to gain improvements. The type of medication will also vary. If the eardrum is not intact, many types of medications and ear flushes cannot be used since they can sometimes add to the nerve damage. Your veterinarian may also use drug combinations including agents that enable the medications to better penetrate into infected tissue. Usually, a combination of both systemic (oral or injectable) and topical medication will be required. A useful adjunct to therapy in our practice has been the use of frequent deep ear flushing or irrigations. Pulsed water and suction, combined with endoscopic removal of debris, has in many cases more rapidly improved clinical cases and slowed the progression of infection. The frequency of these procedures is again determined by the severity of the problem, although frequent treatments are beneficial until improvement can be seen. We find that rabbits tolerate these flushing procedures well, and in many cases, can even acclimate to flushing without sedation.

In severe cases not responsive to the above treatment, surgery may be the only remaining option. Surgical opening of the bony "bullae" surrounding the middle ear allows removal of debris and direct treatment of infected tissues. This has been rewarding in many cases, although with a somewhat guarded prognosis due to the degree of damage that is usually already present.



Calvin, one of our sanctuary rabbits.

In addition to antimicrobials and flushing, other medications can sometimes be added to further improve your pet's quality of life. These include anti-inflammatory drugs to reduce tissue swelling and help with pain, vestibular stabilizing drugs (sea/motion-sickness medications) and pain medications if indicated.

As you can see, the causes, severity, treatment, and prognosis of a "wry neck" bunny are often difficult to determine or predict, although they're always considered serious. Because of the progressing nature of this problem, however, early intervention is extremely important. It is essential to act quickly, aggressively, and persistently to give your pet the best chance of overcoming this often debilitating syndrome. ➡

Caring for a Bunny with Head Tilt

by Kristen Doherty

Calvin, one of our sanctuary rabbits, arrived at our house November 1, 2001. I learned of his head tilt condition roughly 8 hours prior to his arrival – not much time to prepare. And there was no way to prepare for the months that followed. We had to take it one week at a time, and we learned as we went along.

A friend of mine drove Calvin to my house from the shelter, a two-hour trip. When he arrived, Calvin was rolling uncontrollably inside the small carrier that was padded with towels. His body was contorted and twisted, and he rolled continuously in one direction for several hours. When he was upright, his head tilted greater than 90 degrees to the left – it was nearly upside down. I stayed up part of the night holding my hands on him to give him a break from the rolling episodes.

I gently removed him from the carrier and immediately placed him into a large wicker laundry basket lined with towels and fleece. I feared he would roll out of the basket, so I moved him to another setup, a 25" w x 16" d x 15" h cage with a top-opening lid. I quickly realized that to keep him from rolling, he had to be wedged in tightly and securely, so I placed a

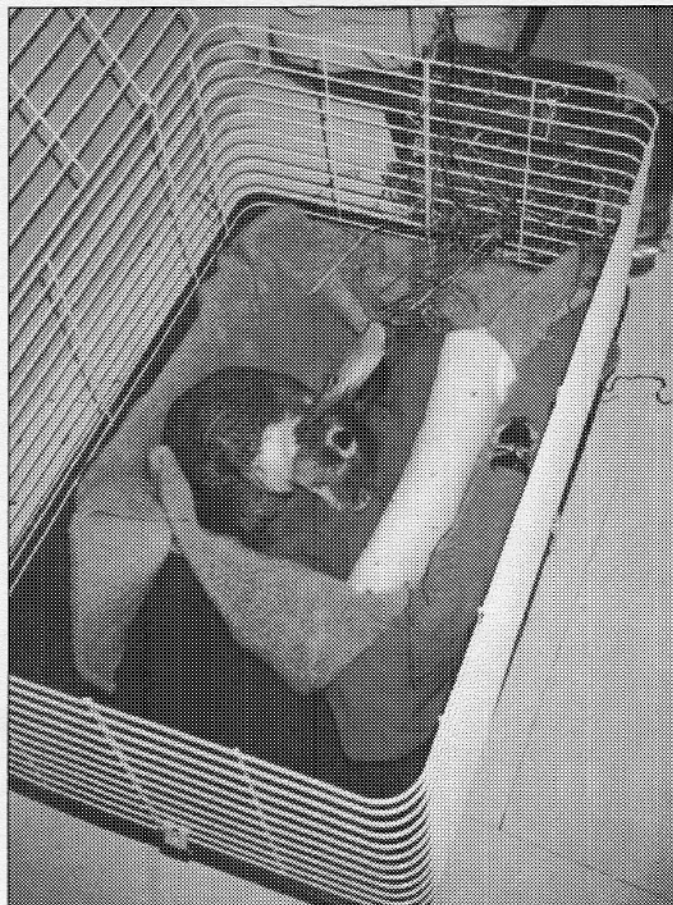
small, tall-sided litterbox inside the cage and lined it with towels. I added a layer of fleece fabric over the towels to wick away the moisture. I kept him propped upright on all fours by placing rolled-up towels all around him, and although he could still roll, at least he wouldn't hurt himself this way. At the suggestion of my vet, I placed him in a quiet bedroom upstairs, away from the other bunnies. I pulled the shades down so the light would not over-stimulate him. Instead of using lamps or overheads, I turned on a night-light. The slightest noise, or turning on a light, or the smell of food nearby would send him into a rolling fit that could only be stopped by pinning him down with my hands.

After reviewing some HRS medical literature, revisiting some on-line discussions, and talking with my vet, I started giving him a motion-sickness medication called meclizine, which I bought over-the-counter at a pharmacy. That seemed to help a little, but it didn't stop him from rolling. It made him a little drowsy, which mostly calmed him down and probably helped with any nausea or dizziness he might have experienced. We also put antibacterial eye ointment in his "down" eye, the one facing the ground, so it wouldn't dry out and cause him pain.

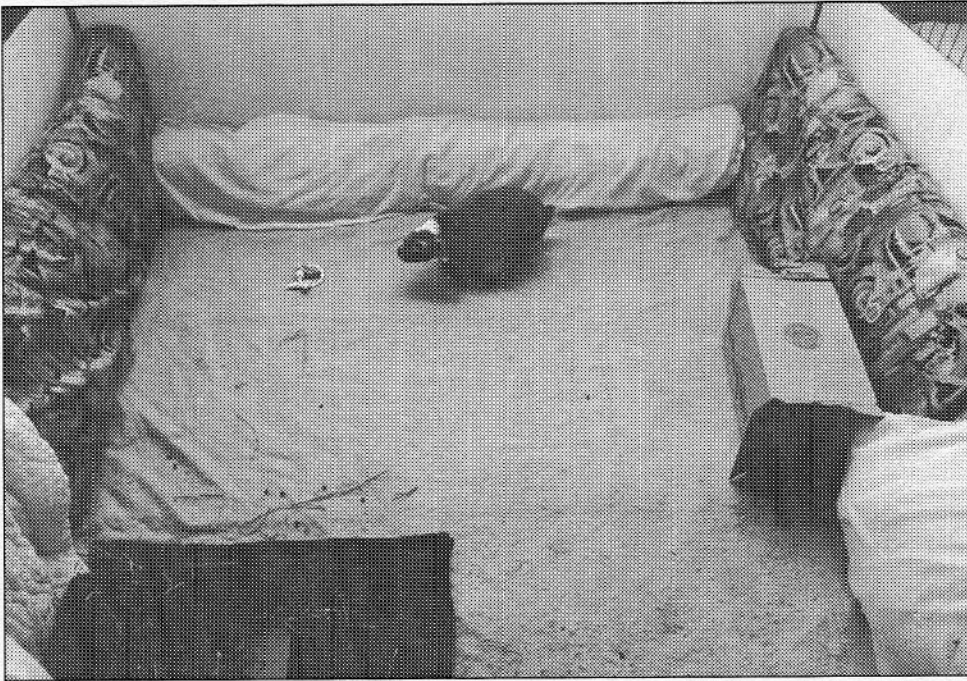
The Exercise Area

Calvin spent the first two months living in the setup described above, what we called his "pod". We changed the towels and fleece two to three times a day. Many times I had to bathe him (a major challenge) since he was rolling around in his urine and feces for much of the day. There was no room for him to move in the pod, so we took him out twice a day for exercise, for at least an hour at a time. We decided to

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Calvin in his "pod."



Calvin's new living space and exercise area.

build **Caring for a Bunny with Head Tilt, Cont'd.**

him a special exercise area. For flooring, we put down three long rubber-backed rugs, forming a 5' x 5' square. We covered the square with a washable fleece blanket. Then we padded the entire pen with three 4' x 2' window-seat cushions, propped up against a low exercise pen. We filled in the spaces with old pillows so the entire perimeter was padded.

During his exercise sessions those first two months, to prevent him from rolling we had to place a hand on his back end at all times while he attempted to walk. He never rolled just once, either – once he started, he couldn't stop himself, and we were concerned that he might seriously injure himself if left unattended. As we got into the third month, we were able to leave him

out in his pen for longer and longer periods on weekends so we could monitor his rolling. By the end of January, he was beginning to catch himself on his own!

Treatment

Calvin also had occasional sneezing, which indicated that the cause of his head tilt may have been an upper respiratory infection that traveled into his middle/inner ear through his nose. From the time he was in my care, he was receiving antibiotic injections to treat the infection, a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medication, antibiotic eardrops (mixed with a penetrating agent) for his ears, and the motion-sickness medication. The antibiotic eradicated his sneezing altogether, although it took several months.

After three months on the antibiotics, Calvin began receiving (and still does) ear flushings to clean the excess "mung" out of his ears from the infection. The first ear flushing seemed miraculous. On the night he came home, he was running in circles around his pen – no rolling! That lasted roughly two weeks, then he began rolling frequently, so I took him in to have his ears flushed again. He improved. From that point on, as soon as his rolling increased, he was off to the vet for another flushing, and it almost always helped. He's had four ear flushings thus far, and now we can go for longer periods of time between flushings.

After six months of treatment, Calvin is happily living in his padded pen, 24 hours a day, unattended. He does an occasional roll when he's excited about something, but for the most part he acts like the other bunnies. He even has a cardboard tunnel to run through, but instead of a round tube, it's square. He shows off by zipping through it repeatedly while running his track. We still use a night-light instead of an overhead light, since his "up" eye looks at the ceiling. Calvin is able to drink from a water bottle or a heavy bowl, but the bottle is safer – he can't tip it over or hit his head on it. After he was neutered, we added a modified litterbox: a flat tray filled with a layer of soft cellulose litter, covered with a layer of fleece (secured to the tray) for traction and comfort.



I should mention that the entire treatment path was not always a straight upward progression. There were times when we questioned whether or not he would live much longer, or ever be able to stand on his own, or run around like the other bunnies. Although he has improved by leaps and bounds, we went through periods of decline, always followed by improvement, and up and down. We never held the expectation that Calvin's head and neck would straighten up again, but

instead, what we hoped for was to be able to leave him unattended without rolling, and that has been the case for two months now. He has been off the motion sickness pills for two months, and sits, stands, hops and runs on his own. He squirms and twists when we try to hold him, so we rarely pick him up. Instead, we sit on the floor with him to snuggle. He nestles up close to us, gives us kisses, nudges for pets, and generally wants to be with us as much as possible.

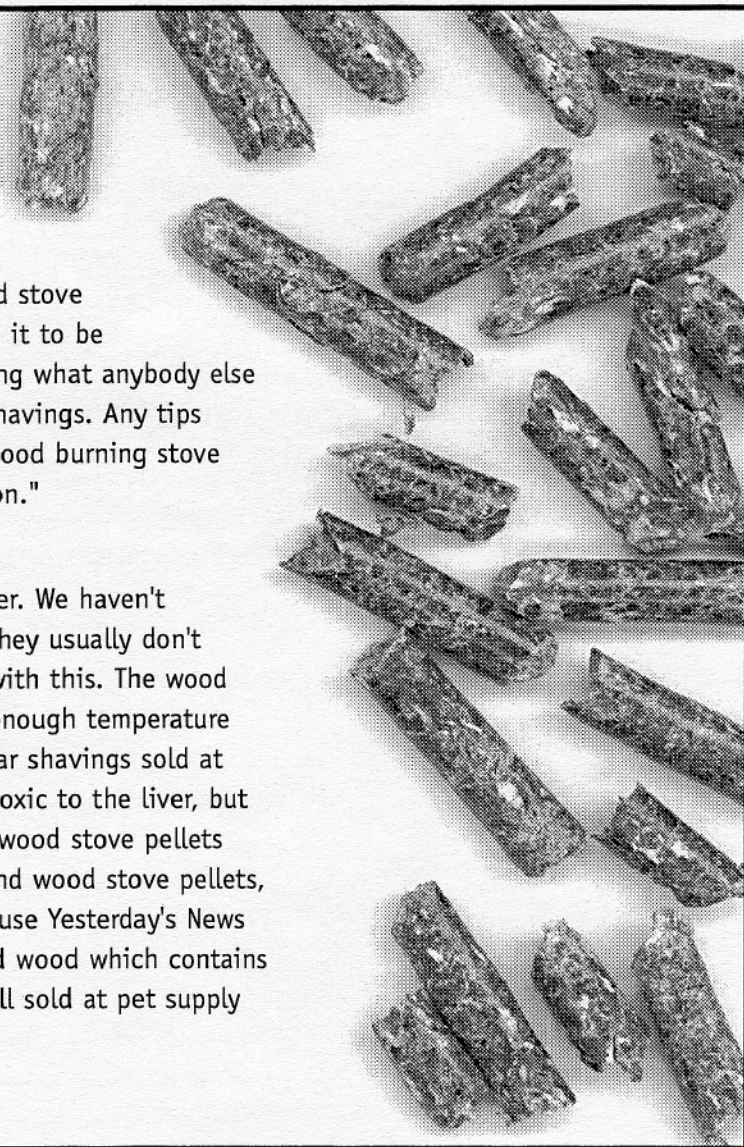
I encourage anyone with a head tilt bunny to find a knowledgeable vet and stay the course of treatment. It takes a long time and much patience, but if treatment is successful, the rewards can be tremendous. Of course, not every case will be as successful as Calvin's, but not pursuing aggressive treatment for this precious little guy was not an option for my husband and me. 🐰

You Asked Us!

by Kristen Doherty

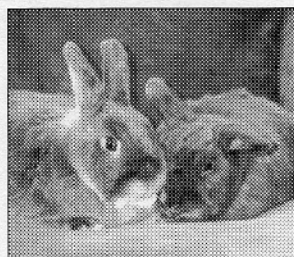
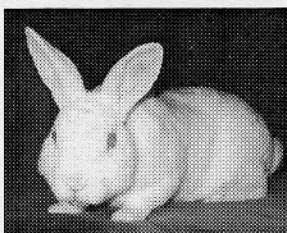
Q: Per your recommendation, we've been using wood stove pellets as litter for the past couple of years, finding it to be inexpensive, effective, and available. I was wondering what anybody else is using. I would hate to have to go back to pine shavings. Any tips would be greatly appreciated. Also, on the bag of wood burning stove pellets, I read "not for human or animal consumption." I thought I would ask if they are really safe.


A: Wood stove pellets are safe to use as bunny litter. We haven't seen or heard of a bunny eating them. If they do, they usually don't continue to eat them. We've never had a problem with this. The wood pelleting process uses kiln-drying, which is a high enough temperature to burn off the toxic oils found in the pine and cedar shavings sold at pet stores. Pine shavings contain phenols that are toxic to the liver, but we have been reassured by several researchers that wood stove pellets are perfectly safe for your bunny. When you can't find wood stove pellets, there are several alternatives you can use. I like to use Yesterday's News (pelleted, recycled newspaper), Feline Pine (pelleted wood which contains no phenols), or Care Fresh (reclaimed wood pulp), all sold at pet supply stores in the cat litter aisle.



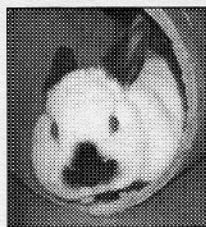
Somebunny Needs YOU!

Fidget, a small white rex about a year old, has no fear of anyone or anything. He has a unique combination of qualities – he can't seem to sit still when alone, yet mushes right into your lap for pets as soon as you pick him up. He would adapt well to almost any family setting. **Please contact Kristen Doherty (kristen@ohare.org) 440-543-4959.**




 Lewis & Clark are a bonded pair, both males, both

gray, roughly two years old. They are best buddies who explore their surroundings together, and also love to be petted by humans. **Please contact Kristen Doherty (kristen@ohare.org) 440-543-4959.**



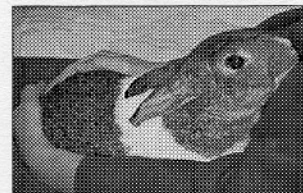
PJ is a 2.5 lb Himalayan dwarf who is as friendly as she is cute. PJ has exemplary litterbox habits, and surprisingly, can pack a large quantity of hay into her tiny body. PJ loves to be stroked on the nose. She also likes to run through her miniature tube and cardboard box. **Please contact Kristen Doherty (kristen@ohare.org) 440-543-4959.**




 This sweet 5.8 lb all-black lop was rescued with the help of the Wood

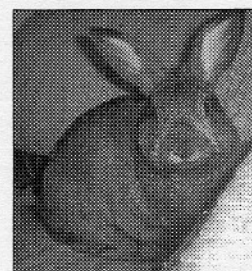
County Humane Society. **Venus** loves to be petted, knows how to use her litterbox, and enjoys handfuls of fresh hay. **Please contact Kristen Doherty (kristen@ohare.org) 440-543-4959.**

Checkers is a young active male, no older than 6 months, who was left on someone's doorstep. His favorite activity is eating his salads on top of his cardboard box. Checkers loves people and although he's a busy boy, he always stops for pets. **Please contact Kristen Doherty (kristen@ohare.org) 440-543-4959.**



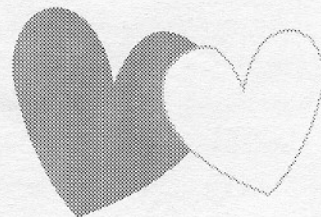
 Shy **Ivy** arrived in foster care bonded

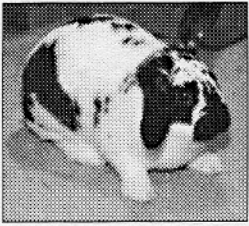
with a more outgoing bunny, Holly. Sadly, Holly died suddenly, leaving Ivy on her own to interact with humans. She's gradually showing more trust, but Ivy is still a very timid, cautious bunny. She needs a quiet home with a patient, understanding family, and may possibly make friends with another rabbit. Ivy is less than one year old and weighs about five pounds. Both her appetite and litter habits are excellent. **Please contact Herta Rodina (herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**



Odin is a big guy (about 8 lbs.) who has come a long way with trusting

humans since his rescue. He loves his hay and greens – and just lying around the house or (especially) on a lap. **Please contact Herta Rodina (herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**





Jasmine is a 5 lb. sassy female about 1 year old. She is playful

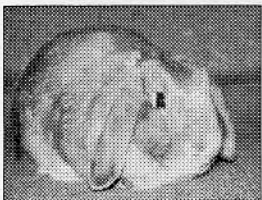
and enjoys jumping, running, and eating her hay. In the evening, Jasmine will settle in your arms for a while – if you can catch her.

Please contact Eileen Matias (eileen@ohare.org) 330-865-9924.



Claire is a young female black lop who was an Easter bunny. She is

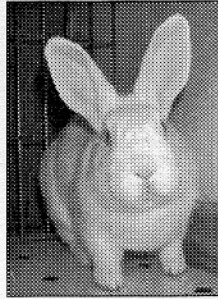
very sweet and likes to be petted. One of her favorite toys is a paper grocery bag. Right now she weighs 3 lbs. but she still has some growing to do. **Please contact Kristi Cole** (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.



Macy is a gorgeous female mini lop with a

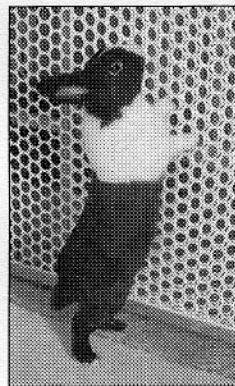
coat that is mainly gray, but has tan and cream highlights. She enjoys digging in her cardboard box and knows how to relax by taking deep bunny naps. She is approximately a year old and weighs 6 lbs.

Please contact Kristi Cole (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.



Camille is an energetic gal, who loves to dance around the room. She was found outdoors right

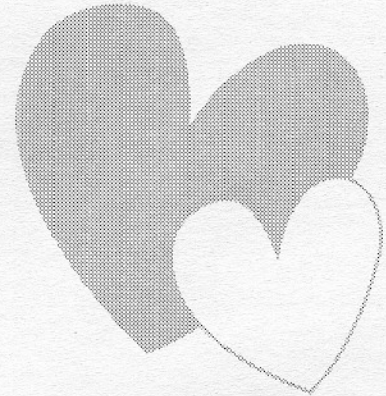
before a snowstorm and is approximately 9-12 months old. She has perfect litter habits and enjoys rearranging her toys to be "just so". She also really knows how to relax, sleeping soundly while lying nearly upside down. **Please contact Kristi Cole** (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.



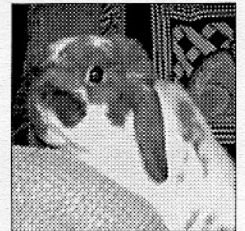
Rascal is an affectionate, dwarf size Dutch, who loves pretending to be a "big bunny". He enjoys being petted on the

nose and being a part of whatever you are doing. Rascal is a 2-year-old male and weighs 3.5 pounds.

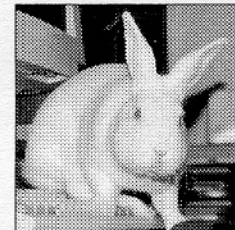
Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433



Max is a young male Holland lop. He's a real cutie and enjoys human atten-



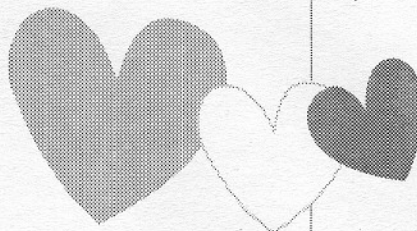
tion as well as running laps around his pen and playing in his cardboard hut. He weighs 4 lbs. and is about 6-12 months old. **Please contact Kristi Cole** (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.



Reuben is a sweet, friendly male who loves to give kisses. He weighs 4 lbs.

and really enjoys being around humans with his laid back personality. He is approximately 1 year old.

Please contact Kristi Cole (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.





crunch
MUNCH
 nibblenibble
 nibblenibble
GRAW
 sip sip sip
 graze
 nibble
 nibble

Sounds like Picnic Time!

Mark your calendars for
 the annual Northeast Ohio
 Buckeye House Rabbit
 Society picnic
 to be held June 15th
 in Aurora.

Each year we have
 more food, more fun
 and more foster rabbits!
 Make plans to join us and
 watch your mailbox for
 further information.

The central Ohio area
 picnic will be held on
 September 14th
 at Blacklick Metro Park
 in Columbus.

Special Dates

*Congratulations and best wishes to these cherished bunnies
 and their devoted human companions!*

Celebrating in May:

Dante with Kathy; **Siggy**, 3 years
 with Amy; **Rascal**, 2 years with Kim;
Jillie with Suzanne and Dan;
Beatrice and **Benjamin** with Judy;
Roger and **Knickers**, 3 years with
 Keith; **Lily**, 4 years with Mary;
"M", 4 years with Carla and Patrick;
Penelope with Karen; **Petie**, 4 years
 with Gina; **Houdini**, 3 years with
 Holly; **Gwyn**, 4 years with Ann and
 Ray; **Puppy Bunny**, 6 years with
 Robert; **Vincent** and **Snow**, 4 years
 with Brenda; **Beau** and **Millie** with
 Eileen; **Banana**, 4 years with Karen;
 Christine with **Biscuit**; **Jasper** and
Prince, 5 and 3 years, respectively,
 with Paula; **Slater**, 1 year with Jane;
Elmer, 1 year with John and Heather.

Celebrating in June:

Merry, 10 years with Kathleen and
 David; **Murray**, 4 years with Kathy;
Blossom, 3 years with Loretta;
Sneaker, 4 years with Carol and Joe;
Arthur, 5 years with Stacie; **Mocha**,
 3 years with Paul; **Ginger** with Clay
 and Nancy; **Superbunny**, 5 years with
 Victoria; **Boo**, 8 years with Joyce;
Zelda, 4 years with Leslie; **Kirby**,
 3 years with Gail; **J.J.**, 4 years with
 Lynn; **Rocky**, **Christina**, and **Matilda**,
 4 years with Brenda; **Lily**, 4 years
 with Lori; **Misty**, 6 years with
 Deanna; **Cocoa Bunny** and **Banana**
Jack, 4 years with Kitty; **Angel**,
 4 years with Pat; **Sassi Frassi** and
Misti Lou, 5 years with Debbie;

Alice and **Beatrix**, 6 years with Cathy;
Hershey and **Pattie**, 3 years with Lin.

Celebrating in July:

Teddy, 2 years with Liz; **Prize** with
 Amy; **Mushy**, 3 years with Angela;
Caramel, 10 years with Lisa; **Rocky**
 and **McQuirk**, 10 years with Carla and
 Patrick; **Melbourne** and **Brisbane**,
 2 years with Julie; **Elliott** with Karen;
Shelby, 3 years with John and Mary
 Jo; **Quincy** and **Flopsy** with Terri and
 Jeremy; **Astro** with Victoria; **Coco**,
 4 years with Charles; **Junie**, 4 years
 with Karen; **Sassy**, 8 years with Pam.

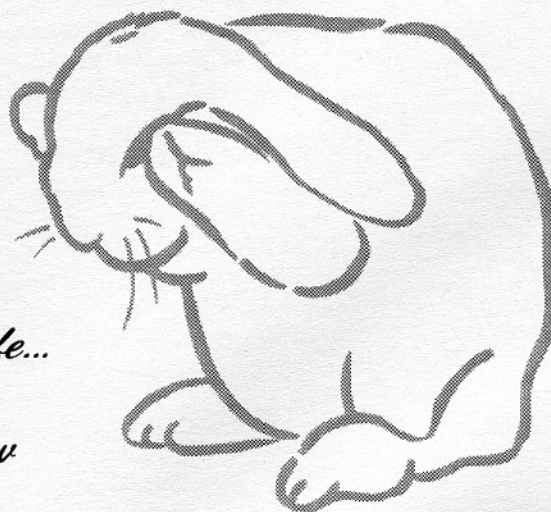
Celebrating in August:

Mochie, 3 years with Suzanne and
 Dan; **Casey**, 3 years with Susan;
Thomas and **Talbot**, 4 years with
 Michele; **Piglet**, 5 years with Lisa;
Sammie with Pam; **Brussels**, 3 years
 with Carla and Patrick; **Mister**,
 5 years with John and Mary Jo;
Cinnamon, 3 years with Cheryl;
Rosebud, 5 years with Linda;
Ophelia, 3 years with Gary and Sue;
Tickles and **Sneakers**, 3 years with
 Patty; **Houdini** and **Prize**, 1 year and
 2 years, respectively, with Amy;
Bailey, 4 years with Kimberly; **Orion**,
 5 years with Julie; **Kisses**, 5 years
 with Andrea; **Casey**, 1 year with
 Keith and Sue.

Tavie

by Tonya Mitchell

*I have a little lop bunny
who shares my home.
Instead of a cage,
I give her free roam.
She's my best friend;
to some, it sounds strange,
but since she entered my life...
Oh, how it's changed!
My lap's always warm now
when I watch t.v.
and wherever I go....
she has to be.*



*There's a lump under my covers
when I go to bed
and I wake sometimes to a bunny
snoozing on my head!
We have an understanding,
she and I:*



*She makes the rules
and I simply comply!
My grocery list has changed
to include her favorite treats.
It's cute to watch her beg
by tugging on my jeans.*

*She scatters her toys
all around the house.*

*If I could only teach her
how to put them back!
Yes, life has changed...
but that's o.k.
I wouldn't trade a single day!*

