

Quarterly News from the
Sacramento House Rabbit Society

All Ears in Sacramento



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Summer 2009

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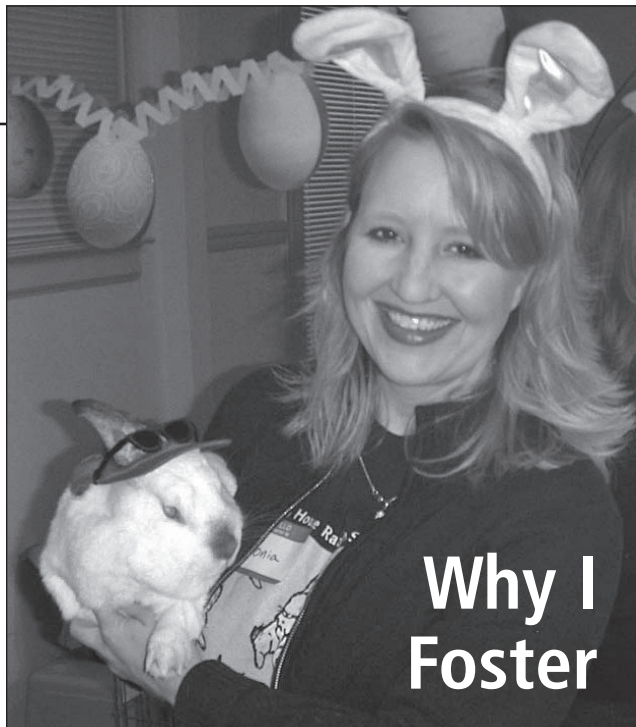
photo courtesy of saveabunny.org

Economic times are tough these days in California, and everywhere people are paring down and trying to cut expenses. Sadly, one of the many effects of a recession like this one is overflowing animal shelters. Not only are more animals being surrendered, but there are fewer potential adopters willing to make the financial commitment of feeding and providing veterinary care for a pet. Surrendered rabbits are especially at risk because of their low visibility at the shelters...it's not uncommon for a rabbit to spend months and months confined to a cage in a side room.

The House Rabbit Society's fostering network provides these overlooked shelter bunnies with a true second chance at a happy life. We give them loving homes, behavioral training and, eventually, visibility to potential

adopters. Animals who have been abused or neglected learn to trust again in foster homes. And being in a foster home greatly increases the bunny's chances of being adopted - many potential adopters gravitate toward animals that are already comfortably living in a home. Most bunnies' personalities bloom once they're out of a shelter, and a foster parent can provide a potential adopter with information about the bunny's personality, likes, dislikes, and quirks - information that shelter staff probably wouldn't know.

Right now, more than ever, SHRS is in need of new foster homes. If you have been thinking of volunteering, this is the perfect time to get involved. What do you need to know? Here's our Top 5 list of why you should foster a bunny:



Why I Foster

I never imagined myself as involved or fulfilled by fostering as I have become over the past two years. Like many people who love animals, I always knew I wanted to foster homeless animals "some day," but I never planned on when or how I would begin. Within a week of losing my first and dearest mini-lop of 11 years, I got involved with the rescue of two neglected neighborhood bunnies. I had plenty of love and experience to help them, but was not prepared to adopt new rabbits. I decided to foster and the volunteers of the Sacramento House Rabbit Society extended a friendly welcome from the start. Friends and family did not believe someone who adored her pets as much as I do could ever part with fosters and I wondered how I would handle this transition. I admit, I cried when I delivered my first bonded pair, Sugar and Pepper, to their new and fabulous forever home. The trade was knowing I helped save two deserving rabbits that are now the center of their adopter's attention and I had room for new fosters that were much happier and safer waiting for permanent home with me than a shelter. I have adopted out 11 rabbits to wonderful people since I began. My boyfriend and I enjoy the rare opportunity to interact with more amazing rabbits than we would ever be able to own in such a short time frame. We have the privilege of matchmaking rabbits and potential adopters at monthly adoption days, which are also great opportunities to learn and share information with other volunteers and visitors. Everything I have gained has been invaluable to my family and me. I love the time I have with my current fosters and look forward to those I have yet to meet.

— Sonia Tedsen

WANTED: A Few Good Foster Homes

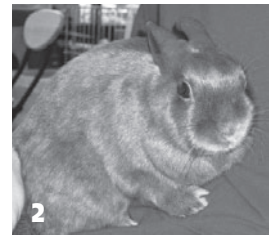
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1. Volunteering is good for the soul. Providing a foster home for a needy animal is one of the easiest ways to give back to your community and do a good deed. If you've been thinking about volunteering, this is the time to get involved. We need you!
2. Expenses are minimal. Foster families are reimbursed for 75% of veterinary costs, including spays and neuters. Out of pocket costs are usually limited to produce, hay and pellets. SHRS even has loaner cages and other supplies you can borrow to get started.
3. The time commitment is minimal. SHRS holds Adoption Days one Saturday per month. These provide the perfect opportunity for you to introduce your bunny to potential adopters. (You're not required to attend each one, but you'll find it's a wonderful place to socialize with other "bunny people"!)
4. You get to pick your foster bunny! Well, most of the time...in some cases, we have particular special-needs bunnies that need a home. But usually, when the shelters are full, our fosterers have a variety of bunnies to choose from. (You get to name the bunny, too!)
5. There's nothing more rewarding than watching a transformation. Foster bunnies almost always seem to know that they've been given a second chance. They "talk" to us in their own way...you'll know what we mean the first time you see your new foster leap for joy in the middle of your living room!

If you would like more information about joining our foster program, we'd love to talk to you! Call us at (916) 863-9690 and leave a message. One of our volunteers will call you back and answer any questions you have, and we'll send you a copy of our Foster Agreement to look over. The commitment is minimal, and the benefits are enormous.

— Kirsten Macintyre

Rabbits Available for Adoption



1. Dakota likes being petted and held. She is a shy sweetie just looking for a loving home where she can bloom!

2. Misty needs a caring home due to a previous health challenge. She is a very sweet girl who loves to be held.

3. Sophie was one of a bonded pair, until she decided she wanted all the attention for herself! She is a very sweet and curious girl.

4. Babette is a large and voluptuous French Lop looking for someone to rub her velvety ears full-time. Don't worry about carrying such a big girl because she is a floor-only bunny who likes to throw her toys around the cage at breakfast and dinner time.

5. Lady Bug is a young dwarf with a BIG personality. The experienced rabbit person will fall in love with her fun and outgoing personality. She loves to give kisses in exchange for petting. Lady Bug will do best in a home without children and with people who have had rabbits.

6. Our names (left to right) are **Mimi, Rosie, Smudge, Pudge, Oscar, Napoleon, and Peanut**. Five girls and two boys. We were rescued from the same location and have grown up as a family herd. We can be adopted out as pairs or more to very special homes.

7. Eliza has excellent litter box habits and loves to explore. Her favorite hobby is deconstructing wicker baskets.

8. Elvira is an active adult girl. She has great litterbox habits. She enjoys attention and being held.

9. Isabella enjoys gentle handling, occasional lap sits, and exploring! She gets along with dogs, cats and bunnies.

10. Mickey and Willow are a wonderful bonded pair for an experienced bunny home. Mickey is a beautiful blue-eyed white bunny, and Willow is a Jersey-Wooly mix.

11. Eleu is a male mini-rex who loves to play with toys.

12. Maybelline is a beautiful dwarf Hotot who likes to pop binkies till the cows come home!

13. Rhett Bunnler is an active male. He enjoys digging and shredding the yellow pages. He likes to be held and petted, after he's had a chance to race around and get his exercise.

Godiva with her new family



Recent Adoptions

Juneau was adopted by Chantel Johnson as companion for Jelly Belly

Bilbo (now Buster) was adopted by Tammie Ursini as a pal for her bunny Tinkerbell

Godiva is in her forever home with Joe Sebastian and Michele Ochesky

Baby and Hana were adopted by Lauren Goodfriend

Mitzi's new mom is Marlene Slichter

Tom Terrific was adopted by Anne Cunningham as a companion for Honey Bun

Juneau and Jelly Belly, happy together



Vitamin Supplements:

Does Your Bunny Need One a Day?

All Ears in Sacramento is published quarterly by the Sacramento House Rabbit Society, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization.

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I recently noticed bunny vitamins for sale in a feed store where I purchase hay and other supplies for my rabbit. Curious, I read the back of the package.

"Small Animal Multivitamins are an essential blend of vitamins formulated for your pet's needs. These high potency daily liquids provide the supplements necessary for normal development, growth and health of pet hamsters, gerbils, guinea pigs, rabbits and ferrets."

When I got home, I hopped onto the Internet and did a little research. And it turns out that, as with most marketing language, the claims that these supplements are "essential" and "necessary for normal development" are greatly exaggerated.

In most cases, vitamin supplements aren't necessary for the healthy rabbit. If the bunny is eating hay and fresh vegetables on a regular basis, he's probably getting all the nutrients he needs from his food. In fact, a rabbit's body is especially efficient at processing nutrients.

Here's why:

Rabbits have a structure called a cecum as part of their digestive tracts. The cecum, which is located at the junction of the small and large intestines, is where the fermentation of food occurs. When food reaches the

cecum, the digestible portion is broken down by bacteria, which then produce fatty acids, amino acids (proteins), vitamins and minerals.

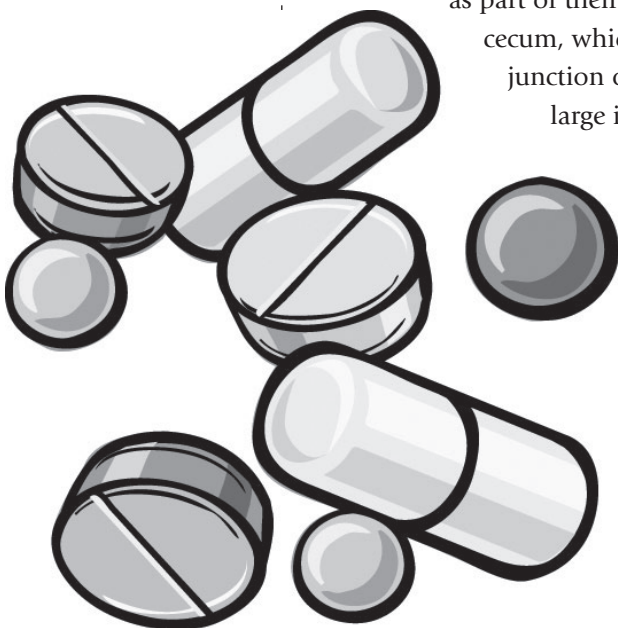
Some of these nutrients are absorbed directly through the wall of the cecum, but most are condensed into cecotropes, which consist of a greenish, soft and smelly substance that the rabbit excretes about four to six hours after eating.

A healthy bunny will re-ingest the cecotropes immediately. After the rabbit eats the cecotropes, it will re-digest the material and extract all the necessary nutrients. Although this seems more than a little disgusting to us humans, it's a very normal and necessary part of rabbit physiology. The ability to produce these nutrient-rich cecotropes give rabbits in the wild a better chance of survival when food is scarce.

Because this system works so well, additional vitamin supplements are not needed. In fact, they can do more harm than good. An accidental overdose could lead to serious health problems. And liquid vitamins that are added to a rabbit's drinking water can change the taste of the water and discourage him from drinking enough water. Water additives can also promote bacterial growth in the bottle or container.

There may be certain health conditions in which your veterinarian will suggest nutrient supplements for your bunny, but generally speaking, you shouldn't believe the claims on the box. Instead of spending your money on unnecessary products, focus instead on keeping your bunny healthy by providing the right foods and lots of love.

— Kirsten Macintyre



Chapter Highlights

Fourth Annual Run for the Buns a Huge Success

March 29 was a sunny, bunny day for SHRS! More than \$3,200 was raised from runners and walkers young and old who came to enjoy the beautiful weather, adorable foster bunnies, carrot cake and silent auction. Thank you to everyone who participated and donated, and we can't wait to see you back next spring! A special thanks to Rose Zahnn, Healthy Habits Staff and volunteers from SHRS and the college service fraternity.

Bird & Pet Clinic Open House

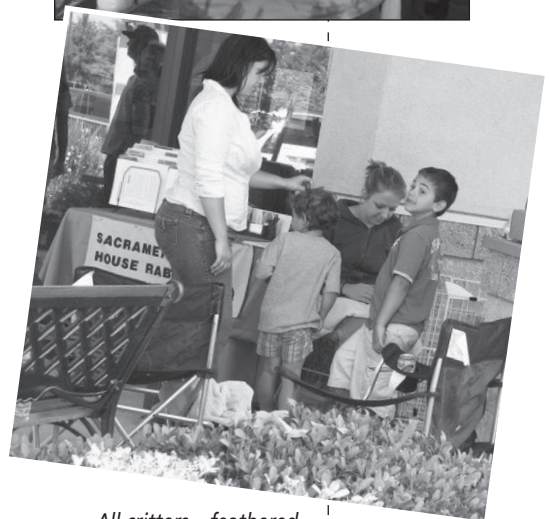


Sacramento House Rabbit Society volunteers Brandon Chee, Sonia Tedsen, Luisa Diebert and Emily Jacobson attended an educational "Open House and BBQ" event Sunday, May 24th, at the Bird & Pet Clinic in Roseville. This was a wonderful opportunity to share educational materials, answer questions, and introduce foster rabbits Maybel-line, Godiva and Lady Bug to potential adopters. Other rescue groups were present with dogs, cats, reptiles, and of course birds, both

domestic and wild. Perfect weather, good food, a nice flow of patrons, interesting animals, and the adoption of one of our sweet rabbits (Godiva) all contributed to a successful day.



The "littlest runner" got into the RFTB spirit!



All critters – feathered, furry and human – enjoyed the Bird & Pet Clinic Open House.

HRS NATIONAL NEWS

Help us Flush!

The good folks at HRS Headquarters in Richmond are crossing their fingers *and* their legs in the hopes of raising funds to overhaul their aging plumbing system. They are in need of \$5,800 to flush their troubles away.

If you are renewing your membership (check the renewal date on your address label) can you throw in an extra five or ten bucks to help them out? SHRS will contribute matching funds (up to \$500), so your \$10 becomes \$20 – what a deal!

To donate, look for the "secret symbol" on the Keep in Touch panel on page 8. You don't have to be renewing to contribute to this very worthy cause.



SHRS Assists FUR in Large-scale Rescue

Many SHRS members saw the same news report in the middle of March, describing the confiscation of a large number of neglected rabbits from a property in Rio Linda. The 60 that survived without food and water were rescued and taken to the Sacramento County shelter on Bradshaw Road to be examined and cared for while an investigation of animal cruelty and abandonment took place.

Kimberly Wheatfill, the director of Team F.U.R. (Friends of Unwanted Rabbits), worked closely with the county shelter and began coordinating assistance from her own organization as well as other local rabbit rescue groups.

SHRS was one of several groups able to donate supplies and offer volunteers to help feed and care for the rabbits during their stay.

The bunnies were housed in three covered horse stalls furnished with ample-sized dog cages stacked along the interior walls. The intentions of the rabbits' former owner were clear when we realized all were tattooed purebreds and the majority were females. Fortunately none of the rescued rabbits were pregnant. The bunnies included Britannia Petites, Polish and Netherland Dwarfs in

a variety of colors, Dwarf Hotots, Dutch, Lionheads, and Harlequins. Amazingly, these rabbits were exuberant and tolerant throughout this ordeal, which indicated to all of us that they would make wonderful house bunnies when the shelter was ready to release them for adoption.

A special adoption day was publicized in every local forum, announcing a two-for-one special the Saturday before Easter. This caused some concern, so to reduce impulse adoptions, the rabbits adopted that day were not released until the following week after being spayed and neutered with funds from a \$3,000 donation by Petco. Volunteers from F.U.R. and SHRS were present to screen and inform potential adopters. Adoption packages contained donated literature and toys to help people welcome their new companions home.

The event was a great success that accounted for 32 rabbits adopted in one day! Another 10 were adopted in the weeks to follow, and at the end of April rabbit rescue groups were asked to take the remaining rabbits. SHRS made space for four special dwarfs, three of which have already been placed in loving homes.

The full story of the accused woman in this case was never relayed to us, but the important part was the happy ending for 60 fortunate rabbits, rescued from their single cages in a barn where they were kept only for breeding purposes to make money for their owner. The tale of these rabbits, their endurance, and the good people who helped them is all that matters. (As I recount this experience, I am accompanied by my one remaining foster from this particular rescue, a blue-eyed, white, Britannia Petite I call Lady Bug. She is waiting for a special rabbit person to give her a forever home!)

— Sonia Tedsen

Top photo: the bunnies were stacked like products in an open-air horse stall.

Bottom photo: steadfast SHRS volunteer Emily Jacobson helping out on the big day.



Upcoming Events

Adoption and Information Clinics

Are you thinking about adding a bunny to your household? Or are you just looking to learn more about the one you've already got? Regardless of whether you've had a rabbit for years or if you're new to the joys of rabbit companionship, you'll have a great time at our monthly Adoption and Information Clinics. Come ask us questions about bunny behavior, care, grooming, nutrition, or anything else you can think of. We have free printed information on a variety of topics, and, of course, we also have our fabulous fosters on hand, waiting for just the right family to come along! The adoption donation is \$50 (\$75 for two), and includes the *Your New Rabbit* guide.

If you already have a bunny, you're welcome to bring him or her to the Clinic in a secure carrier. We do offer nail trims for a \$5 donation, but please call our hotline at least 48 hours in advance to set an appointment time (so we'll be sure to have someone available for you!). Please also bring your own, sterilized clippers. Grooming and de-matting services are also available outside of Clinic hours, but by appointment only. Call our hotline for more information.

August 8 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Arden Petco 1878 Arden Way	September 12 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Fair Oaks Petco 8840 Madison Avenue	October 10 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Citrus Heights Petco 6067 Greenback Lane	November 14 10:00 am – 3:00 pm Folsom Petco 855 E. Bidwell Street
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Gizzy and Buffy are Sweethearts

We adopted sisters Gizzy and Ramsey from the SSPCA. They were two abandoned kittens found on a farm. They were feral and then fed by the farmer who later brought them to the shelter for adoption. About three weeks ago we came across Buffy the Bunny and thought she would make an excellent addition to our family. We let her run around our kitchen for free time, and I noticed my kitties were very taken with her. So under close supervision, I let them play together. I also let Buffy sit out on top of her cage, so she can be pet by us, and get attention. The other day, Gizzy jumped up there too. I was a little startled at first, but then I realized Gizzy had the intention to snuggle with Buffy. Now the two of them are just the best buds. When I put Buffy back in her cage, Gizzy gives me a snarly noise. Gizzy often sits by Buffy's cage until their next encounter.

— Jason Profumo



Gizzy the cat was very happy when Buffy joined the family.

Also happy is daughter Kadie, who enjoys sharing breakfast with Buffy.





Sacramento House Rabbit Society
 P.O. Box 19850
 Sacramento, CA 95819-0850

membership
 expiration date




Not a Member?

Sacramento House Rabbit Society depends on donations to keep running. Please fill out the form below to keep receiving *All Ears in Sacramento*, and to support local rabbits in need! *SHRS does not sell or share our member's information with any other organizations or companies.*

Keep in Touch!

Time to renew your membership? New to the House Rabbit Society? The annual membership to the House Rabbit Society is \$18. This includes a subscription to the quarterly *House Rabbit Journal*. The annual membership fee for the Sacramento Chapter, which includes the quarterly *All Ears in Sacramento*, is \$20. The House Rabbit Society is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization. All membership fees are tax-deductible and go towards care expenses for the rabbits and for providing educational materials, such as these newsletters.

- Please sign me up for the National Membership, \$18
- Please sign me up for the Sacramento Membership, \$20
- Please sign me up for both for \$35
- I have enclosed an additional donation of \$ _____
-  \$ _____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

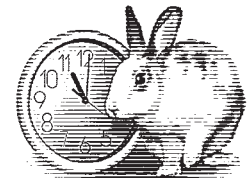
email address: _____

Return with check payable to House Rabbit Society to:
 Sacramento House Rabbit Society, P.O. Box 19850, Sacramento, CA 95819-0850

Volunteer!

Would you like to help local rabbits and bunny-lovers? We could use volunteers in the following areas:

- Public Events (staffing education tables)
- Fundraising Events
- Distributing Literature
- Working with Shelters
- Transporting shelter rabbits to local adoption days
- Fostering



HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY