

The Sacramento House Rabbit Society

Who We Are, and Why We Do What We Do

The Sacramento House Rabbit Society is a local network of about 200 rabbit lovers who keep these wonderful animals as family companions and housepets. We treat our rabbits like most people treat their cats and dogs – they live indoors with us, they're litter trained and they're spoiled rotten! Our members love to amaze friends and co-workers with stories about their rabbits who beg for treats, come when they're called or otherwise love to prove that they have distinct and fun personalities. Once you've seen a house rabbit in action, you'll wonder why on earth you never gave any thought to these creatures before!

The answer to that, quite simply, is that most people still think of rabbits as sweet but simple creatures who should be kept in a hutch outdoors. (Think for a moment, though – if you kept a kitten outside, caged all the time, the kit-

ten would never develop a personality. Rabbits are no different!) Any rabbit has the potential to be a wonderful, interactive companion. All it takes is a little understanding and interest on the part of the human owner.

It all starts with a little spark of knowledge...

SHRS volunteers are dedicated to educating the public about the delights of living with rabbits at housepets. We encourage new and longtime rabbit owners alike to call us with questions about their pets. We offer free, printed information on a variety of topics such as rabbit health, behavior, litter training and longevity. Once a month, we host an adoption/information clinic where we encourage people to bring their own bunnies to socialize (we'll clip their nails and check their teeth and fur, too!). We maintain a list of rabbit-savvy veterinar-

ians, and we're willing to give referrals when necessary. We try to be a visible presence at the shelters and at pet-related public events. Our members have even given classroom talks about rabbits and participated in veterinary conferences.

We run a bunny phone hotline that is checked daily, and we maintain a web site that offers helpful information and links to other bunny-friendly sites. We answer all sorts of questions – and if we don't know the answer, we'll try to dig it up for you. For us, volunteering is a two-way street, and we are constantly learning more all the time.

The SHRS Foster Program

Our members do much more than just talk, though. The SHRS is a part of a much larger, national organization that is focused on animal rescue and placement. Here in Sacramento, we have a network of about 10 foster homes, with

Interested in Joining the House Rabbit Society?

The annual membership to the House Rabbit Society is \$18. This includes a subscription to the *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: _____

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volunteers who tirelessly care for foster bunnies in addition to their own house rabbits. Once a month, we have adoption days, in which people who are interested in adopting a companion rabbit can come visit our fosters and try to make a "love match." On average, we adopt out 2-7 rabbits per month, and those spaces quickly fill up again, as there is a never-ending supply of bunnies in need at the local shelters.

We often get calls from people who are hoping to place their pets into foster care for a variety of reasons (most often, the person has simply tired of taking care of the animal and they want to get rid of it). We politely explain that it is our policy not to take rabbits in these cases. It's for a very practical reason: Our first priority must be those rabbits at the shelters who are in immediate danger of euthanization if they do not find homes. We can work with people who need to relocate their pets, but our foster homes are always very full and so we must set very strict rules on the ones we do accept into our foster program.

The rabbits who come through our program are of all shapes and sizes. We've had tiny dwarf bunnies, big lop-eared bunnies, angora bunnies, soft-coated rex bunnies, and everything in between. Often, we choose the rabbits who are ill and need medical attention.

Our fosters see to it that the rabbit is treated and cured before being made available for adoption.

The Sacramento House Rabbit Society is a non-profit organization; our sole source of income is donations. Foster families pay for the bunnies' care out of their own pockets. Sometimes, one bunny will cost us hundreds of dollars to rehabilitate. For us, it's purely a labor of love.

You might wonder how our fosterers part with the special rabbits who come through our doors. We'd be lying if we said it was easy to give them up! But we must remind ourselves that the foster home is simply a "stop" for this rabbit on the way to finding a permanent, loving home. Our foster homes are full of many rabbits and it's impossible to give each bunny the attention he or she craves and deserves. Foster care is better than a small cage at the shelter, but it's never as good as truly being part of a family.

And – last but not least! – we can't ever forget that for every bunny who finds a home, there's another bunny who is waiting for us to help them find a home.

How can you get involved?

The SHRS is always looking for new members and volunteers. There are so many ways you can help! If you have space in your home and a little time

to spare, consider fostering a bunny through SHRS. If you have a few hours on a Saturday, talk with us about volunteering at one of the local shelters (volunteers are always needed at the local shelters, to clean cages, feed rabbits and simply spend time socializing.) And of course, contributions to our newsletter are always welcome. Write a story about your house rabbit and send us a picture. "Giving" can be as simple (and fun!) as sharing your experiences with other rabbit lovers.

Most of all, we ask that you help us get the word out about the joys of companion rabbits. If you have an outdoor bunny yourself, bring him or her indoors. Don't buy rabbits from pet stores, which only encourages the bunny overpopulation problem. Spay or neuter your bunny – a "fixed" rabbit is a happier, healthy rabbit!

**Sacramento
House Rabbit Society**
(916) 863-9690
www.allearsac.org

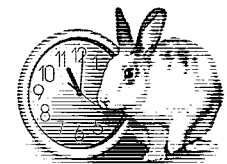
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Interested in Volunteering with the House Rabbit Society?

Would you like to help local rabbits and bunny-lovers? Volunteers must be members of Sacramento House Rabbit Society (to join, see reverse side.) We could use volunteers in the following areas:

- Public Events (staffing education tables)
- Fundraising Events
- Distributing Literature
- Working with Shelters
- Transporting rabbits to the National Headquarters in Richmond
- Fostering

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HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY