

The Rabbit Rag

#14, Winter 2009

Vancouver Rabbit Rescue and Advocacy www.vrra.org



We Need Your Support

2009 has been a very busy year for VRRRA. We've taken in what seems to be a never ending number of rabbits, all of whom require vet care and housing until they are adopted into their forever homes. We also have several special needs rabbits that are just as fun, loving, and deserving of a home as other rabbits, but given their needs, tend to be at the shelter indefinitely until the right home comes along.

VRRRA is run entirely by volunteers – all the daily rabbit chores, the trips to the vet, the education and outreach we do is done solely by volunteers. And we need more volunteers. As an increasing number of rabbits are abandoned and surrendered, we need more and more resources to care for them and to find them homes. We also need more resources to partake in our advocacy work.

It is a lot of work running a not-for-profit animal welfare and shelter organization, and we need your help to ensure we are able to help the many rabbits that depend on us. For those of you who have adopted rabbits from us – your rabbit was once a shelter rabbit, waiting patiently for its forever home. Without the generous support of individuals like yourself, your bunny may never have been saved.

Please support VRRRA this season and going forward in whatever way you can:

1. **Volunteer** – volunteering can be a very rewarding experience. Helping in the shelter, at events, with administration – we need you!
2. **Become a member** – for just \$10 a year, you can become a VRRRA member
3. **Support VRRRA's store, Urban Rabbit Supply** – wonderful goodies, toys, food, and hay for your favourite furry friend. All proceeds go directly to our shelter. Without the store funds, we can't help as many rabbits.
4. **Purchase our 2010 calendar** – hot off the press, this year's calendar is full of fabulous pictures of house rabbits doing house rabbit things. What a great gift for anyone on your list...and a great way to support VRRRA!
5. **Donate** – your funds go directly to rabbit care. Being volunteer-run, we don't have staffing costs, so the money goes entirely to those who need it most: the rabbits. Sponsor a cage for a month, donate money for greens, or contribute toward spay/neuter costs. There are many ways you can help us financially.
6. **Be a foster home** – we are always in need of foster homes for emergency situations and longer durations. This is a much-needed and very rewarding role.

Visit our website for more information on any of the above, www.vrra.org. Any help you can offer is greatly appreciated!

Thank you VOLUNTEERS!!!

Thank you, thank you, thank you! To all our wonderful, dedicated, caring volunteers: we can't do what we do without you. No one knows it more than all the rabbits we saved and rehomed in 2009. Your generosity is so greatly appreciated.

Rabbit Stats

VRRRA has had a good year for rabbit adoptions with **68 bunnies** going to good homes so far and some more adoptions pending in December.

Rabbit's, Naturally

Get your 2010 calendars today!



Visit www.vrra.org to view and order.

Rabbits in Cold Weather

It's looking like a cold December. We do not recommend rabbits be kept outdoors for several good reasons. However, if you do have a rabbit outdoors make sure that he has a dry sheltered place to go. Rabbits do better in cold than in heat but only if they are out of wind and wet. Straw and hay make good warm bedding. Make sure the water does not freeze. A heavy crock is better in freezing weather than a water bottle that has a metal drinking part.

If rabbits generally go out to play for a few hours a day such as on a deck or in a protected area in the garden, they can continue to do so. The time should be shorter and they should be given a warm, cozy place to retreat to if they like. Rabbits will enjoy a few inches of snow to play in (at least some do). Just like dogs, some will romp and roll in it. Others shake their feet with disgust and look at you with a "what are you doing" look. The latter is more likely with rabbits that do not usually go outside.

If you wish to help feral rabbits that are living in parks or building grounds near you, the best thing you can give them is hay. Put the hay under bushes where the bunnies can get it but remain partly hidden. Avoid pellets which attract rats. Hay will give them needed protein without freezing or getting moldy like pellets, lettuce or carrots. Giving hay to rabbits is akin to giving children a good bowl of oatmeal, whereas giving lettuce or carrots is like giving a bowl of sugared flakes. Quality, 100% timothy hay can be bought by the flake from VRRRA's store, Urban Rabbit Supply. All proceeds from the store support our shelter, so you are helping more than just your rabbit when you purchase healthy foods and toys from URS.

What to Get Your Favourite Bun

Looking for something a little more interesting than a pinecone for your furry friend? VRRRA's Urban Rabbit Supply is loaded with great rabbit gifties for your rabbit. Visit <http://vrra.org/chews.htm> for pricing and photos. All proceeds go towards the care and housing of our shelter rabbits.

1. **Chew Toys Galore!**: choose from a wide selection of grass and willow mats, natural sea grass mats, willow chew rings and bowls, willow balls, grass balls, and organic apple sticks.
2. **Timothy Hay Bungalow**: This great new product from the Oxbow Hay Company is a bungalow made entirely of timothy grass hay. This shelter provides fun, exercise and chewing pleasure - a great place to hide and relax.
3. **Willow Playhouse Basket**: hiding and chewing – best of both worlds!
4. **Willow Tents and Tunnels**
5. **Maze Haven**: build a single or double storey cardboard maze that is sure to amuse your rabbits for hours. Great for napping, chewing, hiding, and stimulating your bun's curiosity. Easily collapsible and can be made into various configurations.



Urban Rabbit Supply

the one hop bunny shop!

Hay • Pelleted feed • Chews & Toys • T-shirts
Posters • Books • Reconditioned Carriers and more...

www.vrra.org

e-mail shop@vrra.org • call (604) 731-6026

All profits support Vancouver Rabbit Rescue & Advocacy

Buns for adoption

Rambo and Jessica

This pair make a delightful couple. Rambo is a black and white Holland Lop, 6 years old. Jessica is a dwarf girl in a red tan coat. She is 5 years old. They are friendly bunnies who love their hay. Both are good with the litter box and are active and outgoing. Both are healthy bunnies who look for a home to grow old in.



Tootsie

Tootsie is a young rabbit with lots of personality. Most of the time she has one ear up and one ear down. Tootsie is active, curious and strong willed. She uses her litter box well and loves to race about. Tootsie loves to be petted, putting her head down and closing her eyes. She doesn't like being picked up but will put up with it if necessary.



Rowley

Here's a super family pet. Rowley is a New Zealand White rabbit - the classic Easter boy. In fact he could have been a baby bunny around Easter time. He was found eating dry leaves in a local park where some kind people picked him up and saved him from the coyotes. Rowley is probably no older than 8 months and he may grow a little bigger. He has the very nice, calm and kind NZW personality. Rowley uses his litter box, likes people and loves to run and play.



Animal Advocacy Camp

Date and time: January 23rd, 10am to 5pm

Location: Vancouver Public Library,
Downtown Branch

Animal Advocacy Camp will be a practical, attendee-led conference, where topics and discussions are suggested by the attendees rather than following a pre-set agenda.

To learn more, visit www.animaladvocacycamp.ca.

VRRRA Board Members

President: Olga Betts

Treasurer: Russell Uhler

Secretary: Mary Johnson

Director: Robin Van Heck

Director: Karen Webster

Contact Information

Send e-mail to vrra@vrra.org with the board member's name in the subject line.

Send mail to VRRRA or board members at: P.O. Box 45039, Dunbar RPO, Vancouver, B.C. V6S 2M8

Call: (604) 612-7699

Newsletter Committee:

Contributing Editors: Olga Betts, Mary Johnson, Robin Van Heck, Karen Webster, Dani Conrad

Drawings: Trish Avis

Layout and Design: Glenn Gaetz

6th Annual Rabbit Festival

The 2009 Rabbit Festival was jam packed full of people, information, and rabbits – and fun!

Featuring housing demos, food and health information booths, touch testing bedding and litter samples, by-donation nail clipping and grooming, and by-donation health checks, it's no wonder this year's festival was so popular.

We also had a few fun contests and prizes – a poop counting contest, a knowledge contest, door prizes, and

a raffle for a custom painting by local artist Tricia Aviss. And back by popular demand was our Bunny Lounge – a supervised playground for rabbits visiting the festival.

Thank you to everyone who came to Rabbit Festival 2009 – for supporting VRRRA and for helping us help rabbits.

And thank you especially to all the wonderful volunteers who made Rabbit Festival possible – your dedication and support are outstanding.



Honey's Story

We wish all our stories could be very happy. But sometimes stories are sad.

Honey came to VRRR in April of 2004. She was a dwarf bunny, snow white with ruby eyes. She came from a local shelter when she was about 6 months old. She had a badly bitten nose. A large rabbit had snipped off a piece of her nose from between the bars of the cage. Her nose soon healed but perhaps this was why Honey always held other rabbits in contempt.

She was a combination of shy and bold. People were put off because she would back away and if they persisted she would charge and box at them all the time growling fiercely. One, very nice woman, saw through this and wanted Honey as her pet. But Honey had to get along with her other girl rabbit. After several months and as many trips to the veterinarian to have the other bunny's ear stitched and various other wounds treated, the woman gave up and returned Honey to the shelter.

And so Honey stayed and became our longest stay resident. She maintained her feisty attitude. It was amusing to watch her rush up and down the adjoining fence threatening the other, often much larger rabbit on the other side. She was completely overlooked as the wonderful companion pet she could have been. Honey loved to explore and was very curious and active. She used her litter box and never chewed things. She loved to lie on something soft and to climb as high as she could. I was the only person in her life and I would sit with her in our meet and greet area. While I watched TV she would race about exploring and then come and lie beside me to be petted. If I stopped petting her she would get up into my lap and lie there so I would continue.



Honey as a young rabbit with her sister, Dian



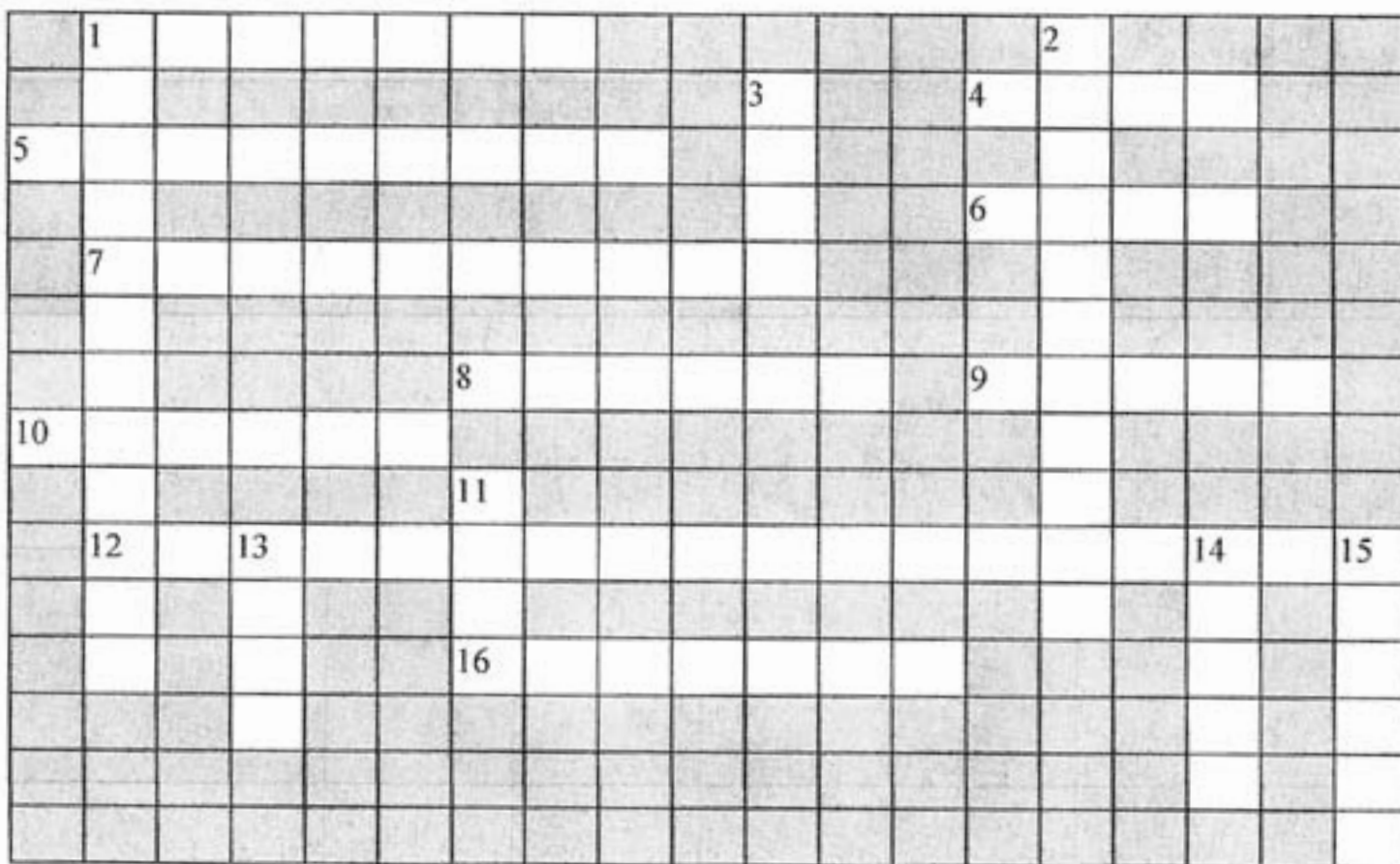
Honey near the end of her life

In September this year she suddenly got a little red pimple on her eyelid. It didn't seem like much so I watched it but when it started to get larger I took her to the veterinarian. It was treated with some antibiotic and ointment to make sure it was not an infection. We were not sure if it was that or a cyst. It grew quickly and so I had it biopsied and found it was a very aggressive cancer. Prognosis was not good. It could not be removed and even if it could the veterinarian suspected that this small tumor was the tip of the iceberg. The tumor grew quickly and became a very ugly, large thing that covered her eye. Then a lump under her chin started to grow and became a large mass that went from side to side. Through it all Honey ate and remained active. Then she started to slow down. The mass on her eye and under her chin bothered her though she put up a brave air. She started to eat less and wanted to stay hidden in her box. I gave her lots of treats and petted her as much as I could. On November 24th I decided that I should not let her become any worse. She now had a lump forming on her shoulder. I held her and talked to her as she drifted away at the vets and now she waits for me at the Rainbow Bridge. The very sad thing is that no one but I had the pleasure of this interesting little rabbit's company. She was passed by for passive rabbits. I will scatter her ashes around the rabbit pens so she can delight in running about and annoying all the other rabbits.



Honey's visible tumor

Bunny crossword



ACROSS

1. the best hay to feed your rabbit
4. a type of wood shaving that should never be used as bedding for rabbits
5. family of lagomorpha that consist of rabbits and hares
6. a group of rabbits
7. the number of days of a typical gestation period
8. name of the oldest living rabbit, as declared by the Guinness Book of World Records
9. a term used to describe a rabbit's joyful, playful behaviour
10. a 'second chin' often seen in overweight females
12. often called the 'silent killer'
16. a leafy vegetable that should never be fed to rabbits

DOWN

1. the number of teeth in a rabbit's mouth
2. medicine used to treat gas (hint: frequently used for babies)
3. the number of eye colours typically found in rabbits
11. the minimum number of hours of exercise rabbits need each day
13. every female rabbit should undergo this procedure
14. a rabbit breed that is also a common bush
15. a trait often used to describe house rabbits



Renew your VRRRA membership for 2010!

Membership to VRRRA expires each year on December 31st. One-year membership costs \$10 and includes quarterly newsletters.

Please support the work we do by continuing to be a yearly member. You can renew on our website through PayPal (Visa/MC), or by sending in a cheque with the form below. Please make cheques payable to Vancouver Rabbit Rescue & Advocacy. The rabbits thank you!



Please mail this form to:
VRRRA
PO Box 45039, Dunbar RPO
Vancouver, BC V6S 2M8

☐ Single year membership \$10 ☐ Donation: \$ _____

Name Date

Address

City Province Postal Code

Telephone Email



2010 VRRRA Calendar "Rabbits, Naturally"

This year's theme, "Rabbits, Naturally" features house rabbits being their rabbitiness: periscoping, playing, hiding etc.

Visit the website for more information and to order.