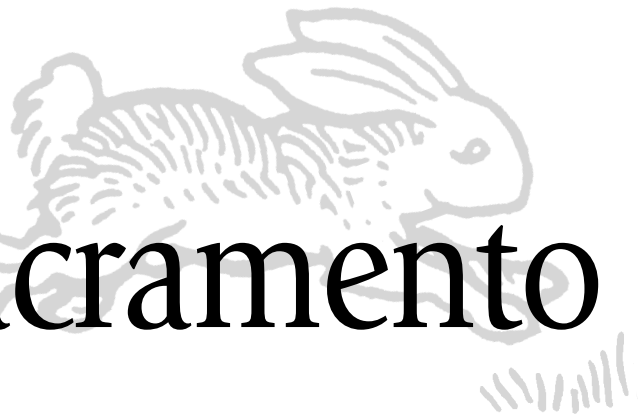


All Ears in Sacramento



Number 31
Late Spring 2006

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HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

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Beating the Summertime Blues: *How to Add a Little Spice to a Bored Bunny's Life*

The summer doldrums are almost upon us — and it's not just us humans that get grumpy when the temperatures spike in the Sacramento Valley. Our four-legged friends, who are unable to shed their fur coats, spend most of their days staying quiet and reserving energy. They may be more irritable, and you're likely to notice less bunny hopping and more sulking. This drop in activity (and spirits) is normal, but also preventable to some degree. With just a little effort on your part, you can perk up your brooding bunny and restore a little "hop" in his hips. Here's what we recommend.

A Change of Scenery

Some (okay... most) rabbits seem to dislike having their living areas rearranged. They are creatures of habit, and if you move a litterbox or relocate a cage to another side of the room, you're likely to get an irritated "thump" for your troubles. But what about relocating your rabbit to a new spot, just for a little while? At our house, all three of our bunnies have been making nightly trips to the front yard, just as the sun dips below the horizon, since the weather warmed up. We carry them outside and let them frolic in a big ex-pen for an hour or so, munching on the lawn, basking in the evening breeze and watching the bustle of the neighborhood. It's amazing what a difference this new little ritual has made in the demeanor



Quincy gets ready to shake off those summertime blues!

of all three rabbits (see page 4 for complete story). Plus, nearly all of our neighbors have made a point to stop by and visit with the rabbits. It gives us an opportunity to do a little socializing of our own — not to mention educate others about what great animal companions rabbits are.

Introduce a New Food

How about tickling your rabbit's taste buds with a new treat? Sacramento Farmer's Markets are in full swing this time of year, and you may find some vegetables that you hadn't ever thought of offering. Try beet tops, bok choy, collard greens, endive, pea pods (the flat

continued on page 2

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Summertime Blues *continued from page 1*

ones), radish tops or watercress. If you enjoy nature walks, keep an eye out for open fields where you can pick wild dandelion leaves (just wash them well, and don't take them from a park or other place where pesticides might have been used).

If your bunny is used to a particular schedule (snacks in the morning and dinner at night, for instance), try interrupting his day with a special fresh snack. And by all means, "think outside the green"! Rabbits love to eat fruit, too, and if given in moderation, many unusual fruits can provide a fun pick-me up for a bored rabbit. Try offering a piece of banana, a few dried cranberries, or bits of cold



cut-up apple, melon, pineapple or papaya. Some rabbits even like blueberries!

Trying a New Toy

Particularly if your rabbit is home alone much of the day, he should have a toy (or three or four) to play with. There are some wonderful toys made especially for rabbits available online, or you can look for small cat toys such as wire balls with bells in the center, at your local grocery store or pet supply store. Many toys made for human infants are bunny-friendly — such as the plastic keys on a keyring made for teething babies. You can also get creative and make your own toys. Pick up a small mini-bale of alfalfa or some other type of hay your rabbit doesn't typically eat, and stuff a bit inside a tube sock and tie it closed. If your bunny lives in a cage, try suspending the hay-filled sock from the ceiling of the cage. Voila, an instant punching bag (seriously — some rabbits will really get into this).

Small, untreated wicker baskets are also fun to chew, as are cardboard toilet paper rolls.

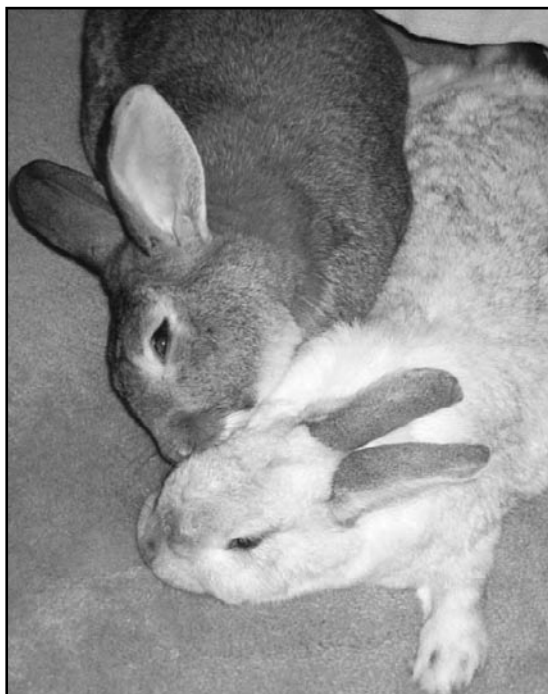
You might have to try several different toys before you find the one that sparks your rabbit's interest. But frankly, half the fun is trying to figure out what kind of doodad is going to capture his attention. Be creative!

Introduce a New Friend!

Last but not least ... if your bunny is solo, please consider adopting a companion for him or her. Bored bunnies have more health problems and more behavioral problems. Giving your pet a companion of his or her own is the most wonderful gift you can offer. He'll be happier, and you'll have twice the fun and enjoyment. For more information about finding the perfect companion for the bunny you already have, call the Sacramento House Rabbit Society or stop by one of our monthly adoption days to chat with our friendly and knowledgeable volunteers.

— Kirsten Macintyre

Chestnut and Abby beat the summertime blues by munching on a grape leaf and smooching.



Rabbits Available for Adoption



Zelda and Bisquit (a girl and a boy) are friendly, bunnies with great litterbox habits.



Buttercup is a shy adult female lop with lots of love. She loves to explore. She needs a quiet home with no dogs or cats.



Finley and Phoebe are cuddly sisters who enjoy sitting on your lap while you brush them.



Junior is an active young boy with lots of personality. He loves bananas!



Penny and Piper are mom and daughter. They love to run and play and would like to be adopted together to an adult home.



Sweetie and Little Bigwig are a bonded brother and sister. They are friendly to people, dogs and cats.



Casey is a very sweet boy who would make a good match for a mellow female.

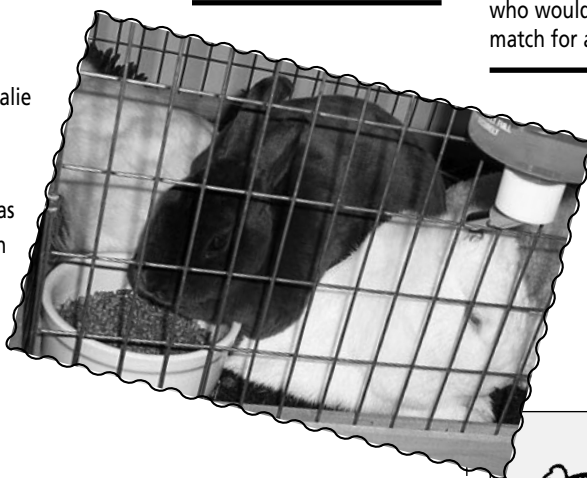


Cinnamon is an adventurous girl who loves to explore and be petted.

Recent Adoptions

Midnight (an adoption day guest from Sacramento City Shelter) was adopted by Natalie DelPorto as a friend for her bunny Jack.

Spike (aka Mr. Bunny) was adopted by Theresa Brennan and has a new friend, Cherry, who likes to keep close tabs on him!



Hoppy Gilmore is a young active and playful boy.

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 a copy of *The House Rabbit Handbook*.

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 12
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
 Arden PetCo
 1878 Arden Way

September 9
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
 Fair Oaks PetCo
 8840 Madison Avenue

October 14
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
 Folsom PetCo
 855 E. Bidwell Street

November 11
10:00 am – 3:00 pm
 Arden PetCo
 1878 Arden Way



**Do You Enjoy...
 All Ears in
 Sacramento?**

Then pass it on! Help us spread the word about proper rabbit care, and about bunnies in need.

Once you've enjoyed this issue, please give it to a doctor's office, a school, a community center, or anywhere else that it can be picked up and read by others.

How Do You Say



Harley is still enjoying his evenings outside with his human buddy Alex

Years ago, I used to be very active in the House Rabbit Society as a fosterer and educator. But over the past decade, my life has changed course — I married, had two children and took on a high-stress job — and I have had to cut back significantly on the time I give to HRS.

Yet even with my reduced participation, I've found that there is always more

to learn about bunnies. A few months ago, I wrote an article for *All Ears in Sacramento* about how I came across the amazing opportunity to rescue a wild baby bunny while on a business trip. I was humbled and amazed to learn such an important lesson about rescue work. Little did I know, another lesson was just around the corner.

In addition to Austin (who I wrote about in the Fall 2005 article), I have a bonded pair of rabbits, Harley and Cindy. Though his mate is younger, Harley is nearly a decade old and is showing signs of his age. I have been mentally preparing myself for the inevitable for months.

One morning in April, I found Harley lying on his side and unable to get up. I choked back tears, because I've seen this before in geriatric rabbits. I called my vet and could only get a 3 p.m. appointment. Since Harley didn't appear to be any pain, I booked it and hoped for the best. Perhaps, I thought, he'd only "slept on it funny" (yes, I knew it was wishful thinking).

By midday, Harley hadn't improved. I drove him to the veterinarian's office with a heavy

heart. I checked in an hour early, and told the receptionist I wanted to spend some time with my bunny on the expansive front lawn of the office. She nodded sympathetically, and I took the carrier outside.

I set Harley in a patch of clover and let him sniff the air. It was a picture-perfect spring afternoon, with a slight breeze blowing, and birds were twittering in the trees. I'd brought his favorite snack — banana — and he munched happily, seemingly contemplating his peaceful surroundings. When he was done, he licked his chops, and ever so slowly ... hopped a few feet. I stared in amazement. He stopped, sniffing the air again. It was as though I could see the energy wafting into his lungs. He looked back at me, and then hopped a few more feet.

He still had a bit of a geriatric limp, but he was moving! I was in awe. A half hour later, I tried to explain this transformation to the doctor, who smiled knowingly. Could it be that a simple change of scenery was enough to kick-start my bunny's flagging spirits?

I had thought that it was the end of the road for Harley, but in fact it wasn't. I ended up bringing him home with a prescription for arthritis meds and a commitment to spend at least an hour per day on our front lawn with him. It's been a few days now as I write this, and I've seen a world of change in him. He's still elderly, but his sudden will to live is amazing. This bunny who couldn't bring himself to stand up will now sit up on his haunches when I get home, in anticipation of being carried out to play on the grass. As I come home from work each night and put the key in the lock, I have a slight twinge of fear that I'll find my little guy has gone to sleep. But when the door opens and I see him smiling up at me, I have a flood of joy at the thought of having one more night with him.

Goodbye?

I know my time with Harley is limited, but even if I'm granted only two weeks of these evenings together, it's a precious gift. I sit next to him and nuzzle his neck as he munches our grass, thinking about the many years we have had together. I gaze into his eyes and I think that I'm really the one who is receiving the gift of more time. How lucky we are to know these creatures as we do.

Author's Note: As of mid-July, Harley is still going strong and seems happier than ever. Our other two rabbits are also reaping the benefits from nightly front yard jaunts!

— Kirsten Macintyre

BOOK REVIEW:

***When Only the Love Remains* by Emily Margaret Stuparyk**

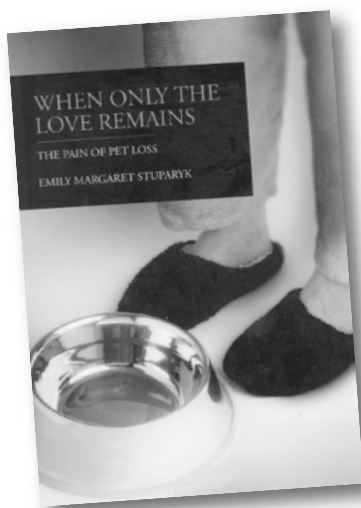
In 2001, when I was mourning the death of a very dear rabbit companion, Yosemite HRS chapter manager Jan Davidson sent me a copy of a small book along with a note of sympathy. Heavy with grief, I took a while to open it, but when I did, I was surprised at how much it helped me through the healing process. Although there are many books about dealing with death, there are few that address pet loss specifically—and this is the only one I know of that was written about a rabbit.

Emily Margaret Stuparyk is a Canadian author who lost her own beloved bunny, a mini rex named Poochie. To get through her sorrow, she began to write poetry after Poochie's sudden death. Later, she compiled the poems, along with a wonderful introductory essay, into a book called "When Only the Love Remains." Even someone who isn't a big fan of poetry (like me) can appreciate and relate to the wonderful sentiments expressed on these pages.

Stuparyk's writing captures all the stages of grief - denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. For someone who is experiencing this pain on their own, it's comforting and validating to read the words of another person who has also known love and loss, and who has worked her way through the pain. No matter where you are in the grieving process, you'll find your thoughts echoed somewhere in these pages, and along with it, you'll find comfort.

I highly recommend this book as a shoulder to lean on in time of need. It may not stop the tears, but it's a wonderful tool to help those left behind to move through the grieving process find brighter days ahead.

— KM



Stall Pellets vs. Wood Stove Pellets

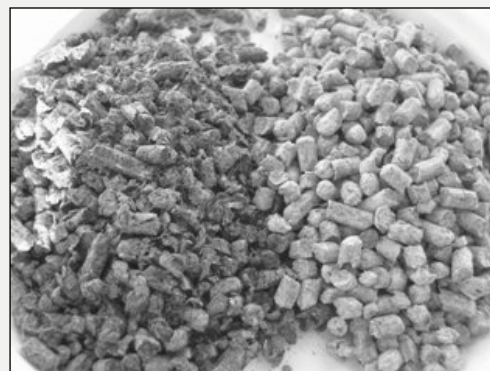
It's that time of year when the wood stove pellet supply dries up and we are left to wonder exactly what to use for bunny litterboxes. One alternative is stall pellets.

Stall pellets are a type of bedding available at most feed stores for use in horse stalls. They were suggested to me by Sheldon Feed when I found out they were out of wood stove pellets and told the staff what I used them for. Since stall pellets are still 100% wood, with no additives, I decided to give them a try. I purchased Mallard Creek brand for \$4.35 per bag. Each bag weighs around 30 lbs. The consistency is similar to wood stove pellets, but there is also a portion that is crumbled up. It looks like it would be softer on the bunny's feet.

I've been using them for two weeks and haven't had any of my bunnies even seem to notice the difference. I put a layer of hay completely over the pellets, so unless they dig down through that, they will remain happily oblivious to the change. If you have a real digger, or don't cover the pellets with hay, I think they would be messier because of the crumbled pieces.

They are slightly higher in price than what I was purchasing at Home Depot, but they are available year round and the feed store loads them into your vehicle for you. They weigh less too, so they are easier to unload at home. You should be able to purchase them at most feed stores. Just make sure that the brand you buy is 100% wood, with no additives.

— Susan King



Two brands of stall pellets

Run for the Buns 2006

Silent Auction Donor List

*A huge thanks to everyone
who donated!*

Pet Prints Photography (Vacaville)
Crest Theatre
Earthstone Jewelry (Sacramento)
Kirsten Macintyre
The Gifted Penguin (Woodland)
Jill Walker
The Way Within (Sacramento)
Margaret Batterman
Acorn Veterinary Clinic (Davis)
Discovery Museum (Sacramento)
Artist Laura Harling
Luna/Cliff Bars (Sacramento)
Fleet Feet Sports (Davis)
Le Grande Confectionary (Sacramento)
Sacramento Magazine (Sacramento)
Shari's Berries (Roseville)
Mike Atkinson-Meyers
Sharon Sampsel
American Family Chiropractic (Sacramento)
Robyn Naymick
Amy Singleton
Mychelle Crown
The Avid Reader (Davis)
Abigail Z.
Mary Argo, Animal Communicator (Sacramento)
Renu
Lavender Fanatic-Cris De Cuyper
Monica Nainstein
The Naturalist Store (Davis)
Fila (Sacramento)
Naked Thread-Holly Ober (Davis)
Fur Friendz (Woodland)
Latitudes Restaurant (Auburn)
Susan King
Lazaro
Healthy Habits (Sacramento)
Terry Lutz
Lucy
The Flea Market Home & Garden Furnishings (Sac)
East Sac. Pet Pals (Sacramento)

This year's annual SHRS fundraiser was held on March 28 at Healthy Habits Yoga and Fitness Studio in midtown Sacramento. Over the past few years, our once-a-year blowout has grown more and more impressive, but this year's event was truly an evening to remember!

For the first time, we held a community event—a fun run/walk called “Run for the Buns,” in conjunction with a silent auction and a Chocolate Spa Party afterwards. Participants could sign up to either run or walk midtown courses of different distances (a 1k, 5k or 10k noncompetitive “race”). Though it was a drizzly evening, our supporters were still “hopping” to participate. Most wore bunny ears as they made their way along the course in midtown... it was a sight to behold!

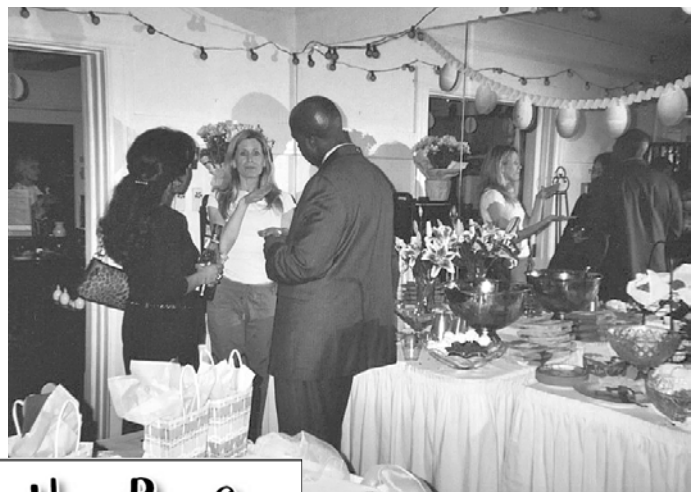
More than 30 runners participated (which exceeded our expectations, considering this is the first year we've held a fun run). The Run for the Buns will be part of our annual fundraiser from now on.

The silent auction was filled with many wonderful items and services that were donated by local businesses. These items made up a great part of the overall proceeds, and we extend our thanks to all the generous



Left: Tireless volunteer Susan King took time out to bid on some goodies!

Below: Rose Zahnn chats with guests



and **Run for the Buns**
Chocolate Spa Party!



merchants who supported our cause. We were also lucky to secure the participation of various local vendors, including a pet communicator, a massage therapist, and a jewelry maker. We thoroughly enjoyed the variety! Healthy Habits also provided “Easter eggs” for sale, each of which held gift certificates for free Healthy Habits classes, candy, and rabbit facts and trivia on a piece of paper, fortune-cookie style. Rose Zahnn, the owner of Healthy Habits, provided a wonderful chocolate fountain with strawberries, and the snack tables were packed with delicious food and wine. The entire event raised over \$3,000 — that is roughly \$1,000 more than we raised last year! Our proceeds went to fund two worthy “pet causes” (see below for details).

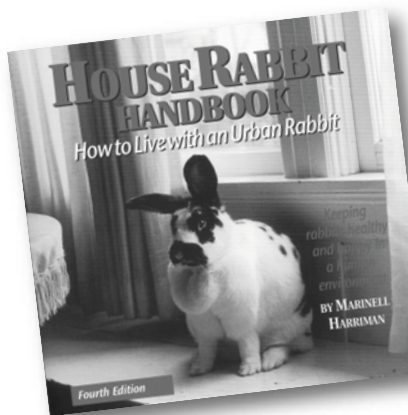
The event was so successful that we’re already looking ahead to next year’s fundraiser. Because we predict an even larger crowd, we’ll

need to move it to a larger venue, and we will hold it on a Saturday next time, so that more people can attend. We’re also giving thought to what other worthy projects could benefit from our fundraising efforts (one possibility is to create a spay and neuter voucher program for people who cannot afford to alter their rabbit. Such a program could have a profound effect on the rabbit overpopulation problem and would really help our local shelters). We’ll keep you posted on our plans as they progress!

A huge thank you to Rose Zahnn for her continued support of SHRS and incredible generosity to our rescue efforts. Many thanks to her staff as well for their support. And of course, we are so grateful for all of our SHRS volunteers who continue to donate their time, energy, and passion. We could not do it without you!

— Margaret-Rose Batterman

SHRS Fulfills Goal to Stock Libraries with Rabbit Handbook Fundraiser Proceeds also Benefit Best Friends Animal Society



This year our chapter was able to fulfill a longtime goal by using its annual fundraiser proceeds from the “Run for the Buns” to donate about 300 copies of the latest edition of the *House Rabbit Handbook*, written by Marinell Harriman, to 50 libraries in California.

The ability to fund this particular project was one of our goals for the fundraiser. The idea had been in the works for a while — I had heard of two other chapters of the House Rabbit Society, Wisconsin and Maryland, donating copies of the book to libraries in their states, and I thought it was an excellent way to promote public education about house rabbits and reach out to more people with the hope that these misunderstood creatures will have a better quality of life.

We hoped to donate the most recent edition of the book to every county library and branch that was interested in receiving a copy. Though it was a lofty goal — there are 58 counties in California, and many have multiple branches — we were able to do just that. Our final costs came to almost \$1,600 which is a significant amount considering we are such a small chapter.

In addition to our library donation project, we are pleased to announce that we were able to donate \$500 to the Best Friends Animal Society to help with expenses related to “the Great Bunny Rescue of 2006” in Reno, Nevada. Best Friends took the lead on this project, which involved the capture, rescue and rehabilitation of more than 1,000 rabbits who were living and breeding in one person’s backyard. Best Friends took responsibility for providing housing, food, healthcare, spay/neuters, and recruiting volunteers to maintain daily care for these precious and neglected creatures. Having faced our own large-scale rescue efforts in the Sacramento area, we know that this is a huge undertaking (physically, mentally and financially) and we wanted to assist in some way. **Please visit www.bestfriends.org for more information on this incredible rescue effort.**

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to SHRS this year! Our collective good deeds are possible because of the individual donations from our supporters. We appreciate everyone’s efforts and dedication to our dear rabbit friends.

— Margaret-Rose Batterman

Run for the Buns Runners

Stacy Jonaen
Deborah Rugue
Cynthia Connell
Linda Vang
Blia Vang
Olivia Huff
Talib Huff
Morgan Tancil
Evelyn Bryant
Jeanne Skondin
Joan Kosakoski
Kristen Hedenberg
Teresa Blanchard
Greg Hughes
Jamie Matsumoto
Kaye Lochridge
Karin Boston
Monique McWayne
Ed Montelongo
Kaye Bassett
Alexandra Ossa
Kathy Chance
David Chance
Toni Russamenti
Jennifer Robinson
Summer Kirkwood
Peter Hoffman
Melissa Caniglia
Wendy Johnson
Zoya



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 \$15. 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, \$15
- Please sign me up for both for \$30
- I have enclosed an additional donation of \$_____
- I would like to volunteer with SHRS (see choices to the right)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

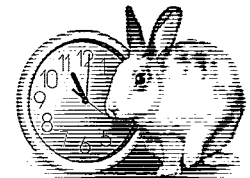
email address: _____

*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