

THE RABBIT ADVOCATE

Greetings from the President

By Betty Bussey, President of the Rabbit Advocate Board of Directors

Wow, it's almost our 10th year anniversary of the formation of the Rabbit Advocates. Look what we've accomplished so far.

I recently spoke with Mary Huey, founding Rabbit Advocate president and current vice president, and she shared with me that more than 10 years ago rabbits at the Oregon Humane Society were housed on a small shelf in front of a window (think hot summer sun) located in the small dog area (think barking dogs). This was upgraded and moved into a small supply closet which was renovated (thanks to several OHS employees and Petco) and eventually turned into what the shelter offers today, the Small Animal Room.

It was from the work of a small group of dedicated shelter volunteers that the Rabbit Advocates was formed. In looking back over our 10 years as an independent, non-profit organization, we have so many people to thank but we especially look to the original group who met in the halls of OHS and then started Rabbit Advocates – Mary Huey, Kem Sypher, Erin Ford, Mary Thompson, Joan Gilbert, and Leann Bleakney (as well as a few others). This group of devotees, with the support of others, has been instrumental in helping to form a group of more than 100 volunteers!

Volunteers are the backbone of our organization. Without our volunteers—you—we could not continue helping the rabbits, educating the public or helping each other. Our volunteers can be found packing hay for Bunny's Best Bites, volunteering at our monthly outreaches, communicating on Facebook, picking up calls from the telephone helpline, answering emails and fostering and transporting rabbits. There are so many aspects to our activities as a group of volunteers and we truly admire each and every one of you and are so extremely thankful for your service. I know there are many areas that I haven't mentioned. And if I did this article would be too long!

There are another group of volunteers that sometimes go unnoticed that I would like to mention. This group of good folks is the Board of Directors. They not only devote many hours to volunteering on behalf of rabbits, but they also devote three hours per month to board meetings, and also do other administrative tasks for the organization. The Board of Directors is where "the buck stops." If no one else can be found to step up and do the job, then that responsibility falls on a board director. If an emergency arises, they can be found meeting during the evening hours. They give it their all. Let me

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There is no need to hide money to take care of your pet rabbits. Instead, design a pet trust so that you know their care has been secured. Photo by Kem Sypher.

Pet trusts: Including rabbits in your estate plan

By Sarah Yasutake

All of us with rabbits, and other types of companion animals, have made a commitment to care for those animals for their entire lives. But what if something happens to us—what if we are incapacitated or die before our companion animals have lived out their lifespans? Ideally, our animals will continue to be cared for the same way that we cared for them. But without a binding legal plan in place, there is no way to be certain that Thumper will continue to be fed plenty of fresh hay, or that he won't be sent outside to live in a hutch. To find out what kinds of legal protections we can provide for our animals, I spoke with Holly Anne Gibbons, a Waldport, Oregon, estate-planning attorney who specializes in creating individualized estate plans for people with companion animals. She talked to me about pet trusts and other estate-planning devices that people can use to make sure that someone takes good care of their animals when they are no longer able to do so.

What is a pet trust?

A pet trust is a way to financially protect your critters after your death. The trust gives legal protection to the animal, who is the beneficiary of the trust.

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introduce each and every one of them:

Mary Huey – Mary was an original founder of Rabbit Advocates in 1998 and served as the first board president when Rabbit Advocates incorporated as an independent organization in 2002. OHS recently honored Mary for volunteering at the shelter for 20 years! When asked why she volunteers and keeps on volunteering Mary told me: “bottom line... it is about the rabbits, often one at a time! Because they are so misunderstood by the general population and no other group was helping them, it has become a mission of mine to help them and educate others about them. Personally, I have met many wonderful rabbit lovers who are following this mission and who have become friends. Rabbit people are the best!” Mary is our voice of experience and she has helped many a rabbit as well as many new board presidents. Among many other things, Mary continues to take the helpline calls, make veterinary appointments and care for her personal and foster rabbits. Thank you Mary from all of us and the rabbits!

Kem Sypher – Remember the rabbit stealing the cookie from a plate? Yes, that was Kem’s famous picture with his darling rabbit Desdemona! Kem is one of the original volunteers and has been the treasurer for 10 years! Wow, all those spreadsheets, checks, and tax filing. That’s a handful. When asked why he volunteers, he says he volunteers to feel worthwhile and give back to the community. He thinks the Rabbit Advocates have come a long way but we have a long way to go in continuing to educate the public. He enjoys volunteering at the Oregon Humane Society as well and especially enjoys working with the youth as they are more understanding and compassionate than adults. He loves rabbits but also loves all animals and is committed to the Wolf Haven, a non-profit sanctuary in Washington state. Kem recently received his pin from OHS celebrating 10 years of volunteering at the shelter.

Erin Ford – Part of Erin’s busy volunteer schedule includes volunteering on the helpline, organizing the monthly volunteer meetings, fostering rabbits, and directing and organizing special events, including our recent Fall Fest. She also makes jewelry and donates some of her profits to Rabbit Advocates. When asked why she volunteers, she says: “I volunteer because we are the only ones to stand up for the rabbits here in Portland. If not us, then who? The need is great. But, it’s more than

that, being a Rabbit Advocate volunteer isn’t just something I do, it’s part of who I am. “ Thanks Erin – I’m glad you’re here! She was one of the original group, too.

Joan Gilbert – Joan does so much and keeps doing more! Joan never says no to any project. She is active in every area - fostering, keeping track of the volunteer roster, answering calls on the helpline. Also one of the original group and when asked why she volunteers she says: “I love the feeling of saving an animal from peril, or improving his life; I have made many Rabbit Advocate friends whose goals and values are similar to mine. It’s nice to see the enthusiasm some have when they discover what good pets house rabbits make.” Thanks for being a great board director!

Shannon Phillips – Shannon is new to the board and we are really glad to have her join us. Her gentle nature with animals carries over to the human population, too. Her knowledge of medical issues really helps the board make decisions. Shannon does see some sad animal stories but her positive attitude takes over and her response is “there are a lot that we can help and I concentrate on those.” Asked why she volunteers and she says: “I volunteer because I want to educate rabbit parents on how to take the best possible care of their buns. That way their rabbits can live longer, happier lives and they can enjoy their pets even more. I also like reaching out to people who haven’t been around rabbits so that they can see what amazing animals they are!” Thanks for joining the board, Shannon.

Cherrie Champie – Cherrie is new to the board, too, and I’ve already grown to rely on her so much that I’ve been known to call her “the life saver.” And boy is she. Cherrie is just always there when needed. And I know Dawn will agree, she is one of the best hay packers there ever was! You’ll probably see her driving around town in her Subaru delivering hay, foster home surprises and whatever else is needed. Cherrie, why do you volunteer? “I’ve always wanted to volunteer but my career was long hours and lots of travel. I started volunteering at OHS last February and wished I had more volunteer time. My wish came true when I retired last June. No stress from work and an unbelievable sensation of doing something that truly gives me satisfaction is priceless. I am very happy as I am driving down the road on my way to deliver BBB or transporting a bun for a vet visit. It’s all because I fell in love in February 2006 when I rescued “Henri” out of our

neighborhood. That one act of kindness on my part has transformed my life and I will always be doing all I can to help out and love on a bunny.” Cherrie also received her one year pin with OHS and has already logged in over 300 hours!

Dr. Katrina Ramsell is our veterinarian on the board. Her clients (the humans) praise her for her compassion and her willingness to work beyond conventional work hours and places to help her patients (the rabbits). The board relies on her to help with the tough medical questions. She has to sort through a lot of emails, but she’s there when we need her. Thank you, Dr. Ramsell, for fulfilling such an essential role on the board!

Betty Bussey – My job as board president is to make sure everything gets done, everyone’s happy, and that we keep organized! (Sounds like my regular life!) My Rabbit Advocate career started with my joining the hay packing crew because Kem went around a general meeting asking: “what could we do to help RA”? I really didn’t know, so I just quietly said “I can pack hay.” I met Dawn in doing so and along with her encouragement I ended up on the Board. I have learned a lot – a lot about people and rabbits. Why do I volunteer? Because I just really like being around other people who have a common interest and sharing their knowledge about rabbits as pets. I really don’t know what I would be doing if not volunteering for Rabbit Advocates. I guess I’d have a really clean house!

I again thank you for your many hours, all of you — Rabbit Advocate volunteers and the board of directors! You are all a great bunch and I’m glad I’m part of a wonderful group!



Betty Bussey, Rabbit Advocate board president, adopted Cinnabun from the Oregon Humane Society in 2009. Photo by Craig Bussey.

Rabbit Advocates rally to aid Little Bunny Foo Foo

By Shannon Phillips

A few days after Christmas last year, Little Bunny Foo Foo was surrendered at the Oregon Humane Society. While his owners loved him deeply, they were not financially able to pay for his medical needs, which were tremendous. His teeth were so improperly aligned and misshapen they did not line up and meet properly to wear themselves to appropriate lengths. The malocclusion was so severe that he could not eat or groom himself. His previous owners had to syringe feed him to keep him alive. They had surrendered him to the shelter in the hopes that staff veterinarians could care for him and treat his malocclusion.



Before his surgery, Little Bunny Foo Foo's teeth were so overgrown they hurt his cheek. Photo by Shannon Phillips.

I am a member of the Oregon Humane Society medical team. Dr. Hedge, one of the staff veterinarians who frequently sees our rabbit cases, asked me to take radiographs of his skull. Little Bunny Foo Foo's molar and incisor teeth were overgrown and misaligned. One of his incisors had begun to grow into his cheek, creating a sore. Were Little Bunny Foo Foo a larger rabbit, Dr. Hedge may have been comfortable anesthetizing him and trimming his teeth. But he is so small that he only weighs two or three pounds, so we knew it would be difficult to get instruments into that tiny mouth. None of the doctors on staff at the shelter felt comfortable enough to attempt dental procedures.

This is where the Rabbit Advocates stepped in.

On Dec. 28, 2011, I asked the Rabbit Advocates for both a foster home and for donations to the medical fund for his care. Volunteer Paula Buchert, who has three bunnies of her own but had never fostered one before, agreed to foster him. A few days later I drove with Paula and Little Bunny Foo Foo to see

Dr. Mark Burgess at Southwest Animal Hospital. Rabbit Advocates Mary Huey and Mary Thompson came to the appointment with us.

Dr. Burgess examined the little patient and decided he was cooperative enough to trim his incisors without the use of anesthesia to make him sleepy. Little Bunny Foo Foo sat perfectly still for him while Dr. Burgess trimmed his incisors. His molars were overgrown as well, so Dr. Burgess trimmed them at the same time he neutered Little Bunny Foo Foo. His molars, while overgrown, were not maloccluded so once trimmed, they could line up properly and wear down normally.

The Rabbit Advocate medical committee decided that if possible, extracting his incisors would be preferred over frequent need to trim these front teeth, since they were maloccluded and would never meet properly. Together with Paula, his foster home, we agreed that Little Bunny Foo Foo would be happier without the monthly vet visits that trimming the maloccluded incisors would require. Just to test this decision we waited four weeks and, sure enough, his teeth were already in need of a trim. Volunteer Cherrie Champie drove our little patient to his neuter appointment and he returned to his foster home both neutered and free of his incisors.

Days later, Paula reported that Little Bunny Foo Foo was gobbling food, including hay which had been very difficult for him to eat before. Paula said he capably groomed himself, which his overgrown teeth had not allowed him to do. With all they had been through together in treating Little Bunny Foo Foo, Paula decided to adopt him. How could she have resisted?

I am not sure what would have happened to Little Bunny Foo Foo had Paula not taken him in and had many people not donated money to the medical fund to help him. Without the careful attention of Dr. Burgess,



Now Little Bunny Foo Foo is thriving in his adoptive home. Photo by Anna Soens.

Little Bunny Foo Foo would never have had his dental needs assessed and his life would have been short and difficult. Today, Little Bunny Foo Foo is in a permanent, adoptive home and enjoys his life.

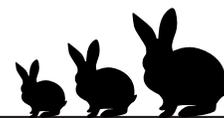
How to help more rabbits like this one

The medical fund helps offset the costs of spaying and neutering pet rabbits and other medical expenses. Here's how you can contribute to the medical fund:

DONATE MONEY — Rabbit Advocates accepts tax deductible donations in any amount. Use the online donation feature on our web site at www.rabbitadvocates.org to contribute securely with a credit card or through Paypal. Checks can be sent directly to: Rabbit Advocates, P.O. Box 14235, Portland, OR 97293-0235. If you would like your donation to go to the Medical Fund, please write "Medical Fund" on your check.

SPONSOR A RABBIT — Rabbit Advocate volunteers care for many rabbits with medical issues requiring ongoing vet care or major surgeries and medications. All rabbits are in individual foster homes and all expenses, including medical treatments, are paid by the foster person. Most of these special needs rabbits are unadoptable because of their medical problems and will remain in foster care for their lifetimes. The Rabbit Advocate website (www.rabbitadvocates.org) now features a way to help sponsor the ongoing care of these special needs rabbits. Donations are gratefully accepted online with a credit card or through Paypal. All donations are tax deductible. Sponsor names will be gratefully acknowledged on our web site unless the sponsor would prefer to remain anonymous.

DONATE TIME TO BUNNY'S BEST BITES — Help raise money for the Rabbit Advocates' medical fund by joining other volunteers who mix and bag hay for Bunny's Best Bites, the Rabbit Advocates' own custom blend of hays. Hay packing parties take place at least once a month. For more information check the web site at www.rabbitadvocates.org.



Money is set aside for the sole purpose of providing for the animal's welfare, for as long as the animal is alive. You appoint a trustee who is legally bound to spend the trust money and care for the animal according to the guidelines in the trust. If there are still funds in the pet trust at the death of the last animal, then the remainder can go to wherever you choose, such as a charity.

What is the benefit of having a trust as opposed to a will?

First of all, I urge all of my clients with companion animals to talk with family and friends about whether they would be willing to care for or adopt their animals in the event of an emergency. For some people, simply having this conversation is enough to give them peace of mind that their animals will be cared for. Others may wish to take the additional step of naming someone in their will and providing a lump sum cash gift to that person for animal care costs.

It's important to know, however, that whether you have a will or you don't, if you simply name someone to care for your animal, it's not legally binding. Because animals are considered property under the law, after your death the person can do whatever they want with your animal. For example, if you give your animal to Sam at your death, along with a monetary gift, Sam can legally keep the cash and drop off your animal at the local shelter. However, because the provisions of a pet trust are legally enforceable, a pet trust removes the uncertainty of whether your instructions will be followed, and whether any funds set aside will actually be used to care for your animal.

What kinds of terms can a pet trust include?

A pet trust can be relatively simple. One example would be a trust funded with a \$20,000 life insurance policy, specifying that trustee Sam needs to make sure the animal is in a certain type of home, does not go outside, uses a specific veterinarian, for example, and Sam would be legally required to do all of those things.

Or a trust can be really extensive. One couple I've worked with has lots of different species of animals—rabbits, cats, and goldfish—and lots of them. So they have assigned individual "species coordinators" to oversee the management of all animals of a particular species throughout the duration of the trust. The species coordinator will

serve as consultant to a temporary caregiver and to the trustee, and will ensure the appropriateness of all prospective permanent homes and all transportation plans involving animals of that species.

It's important to have language in the pet trust that gives the animal's identifying characteristics. It's even better to have your animal microchipped, and to include the microchip number in the trust. Unfortunately, there are trustees of pet trusts who have gone out and gotten another animal that looks just like the first one, so that they can continue receiving financial benefits from the trust.

How should you choose designated caretakers for your animals?

It's important to choose someone who loves your animals. Also, make sure it's somebody who is generally responsible and is good with money. It's similar to choosing the person you would give guardianship to for your children.

There is also the possibility of hiring a professional fiduciary. If you go that route, I would suggest hiring somebody now. It won't go into effect until your death, but you'll know you trust them. You can also have a different trustee and caretaker—one trustee, one caretaker. That's a good way to have checks and balances. For example, if there's a medical emergency, the trustee will have to approve the caretaker's cost.

It's also important to name alternate trustees, in case the first person you name is unwilling or unable to serve as trustee at the time of your death. Otherwise the matter of finding a replacement trustee will go to the court, and you will incur additional fees and expenses.

How can people protect pet trusts from legal challenges?

If the pet trust is drafted well, it will withstand a legal challenge. Oregon has specific laws on the books allowing pet trusts.

The number one reason that pet trusts get challenged is that they are overfunded. It's hard to fund a pet trust with your entire estate and be able to pull it off without family members complaining. Funding it with a life insurance policy is a great way to do it.

I worked with an attorney who created a \$2 million

pet trust for someone who has four dogs. Because the \$2 million is a small portion of the person's entire estate, it probably will not be challenged. The client had to specify a lot of details about how the money will be spent to care for the dogs. For example, the caregiver will live in the dogs' home and feed them only homemade organic food.

What can people do to protect their animals in the case of temporary incapacity?

For estate planning in general, it's good to have a card that you carry around with you in your wallet giving permission for a specific person to go into your home and care for your animals in the event of an emergency. I offer my clients an emergency animal care card that is laminated and gives the animal caregiver's contact information and express permission for the caregiver to enter the client's house.

How much does it cost to create an estate plan that includes your companion animals?

A pet trust is usually created within a revocable living trust—it's a testamentary trust that doesn't go into effect until your death. A will without a pet trust from my office, where you can name a person to take your companion animal at your death, is a few hundred dollars. A revocable living trust is a bigger investment, as it provides numerous benefits outside the scope of this interview. Adding a pet trust to either a will or a trust incurs an additional fee that varies according to the complexity of the trust. Pet trusts can be relatively simple or extremely complex. There aren't a lot of attorneys drafting pet trusts, and prices vary among individual practitioners.

You could find something online and fill in the blanks, but that always makes me really nervous because do-it-yourself forms are very rarely state specific and therefore might not be enforceable. I would not suggest it to anyone.

Holly has an estate planning practice in Waldport, Oregon (www.hollygibbonslaw.com). She frequently works with clients from all over the state, and she would be happy to answer any questions or refer people to local attorneys who handle pet trusts. She can be reached by email at holly@hollygibbonslaw.com.

(Note: Some object to the word "pet" when used to describe companion animals, because it connotes notions of ownership. The Oregon statute governing trusts for companion animals is called the Pet Trust statute; for that reason I have used the term "pet trust" in this article.)

Profile of a real-life pet trust

You might think pet trusts are just for celebrities or the super-rich, but that's not true. A pet trust is for anyone who loves his or her companion animals and wants to make sure his or her animals are cared for after the person's death. Jenna and her spouse, Blake, are an example of ordinary people who have created a trust for their companion animals, including rabbits. Jenna explains: "We decided to create a trust for our animals because we were worried about what would happen to them if they should outlive us. Our problem was complicated by having many animals, of several different species, so there was no one person we could ask to take them all." Knowing that animals are treated as property under the law, Jenna and Blake wanted to make sure that they gave them every legal protection they possibly could. Also, they wanted to avoid the possibility that, without a trust, a court could order their animals to be seized until their estates had finished going through probate, which can be a lengthy process.

Another motivating factor for Jenna and Blake was that by creating a trust, they could ensure that their animals would never be denied necessary treatment or care for financial reasons. They didn't want to simply give a lump sum of cash to a caretaker, because, as Jenna says, "the temptation would have been too great to 'borrow' from it for personal reasons and never return it. So we wanted to give each caretaker an annual stipend, and have any additional monies provided on an as-needed basis." A trust was the only way to create this type of scenario, with somebody to oversee everything, including temporary care of the animals, placement of the animals in new homes, and disbursement of the funds to compensate caregivers.

Now that they have their trust in place, Jenna says that she definitely feels better knowing that her animals have legal protection. However, the trust has been in place for a few years, and she realizes that it already needs to be updated. She knows that people's situations change, and people who were willing and able to serve as caretakers when the trust was created might not be able to do it when the time comes that they are needed. "The very hardest part about all of this is finding the right people to help," Jenna explains. "There's not much to be done about that, though, except to keep looking; and at least we won't have to deal with the court stepping in and holding up the placement of the animals because of probate. That's a HUGE relief."

(Note: Jenna and Blake are real people, but their names are not as noted in this article. Their names have been changed out of respect for their privacy.)

Oregon Humane Society honors Rabbit Advocate volunteers

Awards banquet garners thanks for double dedication

Rabbit Advocate volunteers who also dedicate their time and energies to the animals at the Oregon Humane Society were recognized at the OHS annual banquet Feb. 22. The volunteers were among the many OHS honored with dinner at the Governor Hotel in downtown Portland. The annual dinner's theme for this year was the statement that "Volunteers are the Eighth Wonder of the World."

Kat Slinde and Cherrie Champie were presented the "Small and Mighty Award" for accumulating the most number of hours in the OHS Small Animal Room, where they greet the public and talk about adopting small animals, including rabbits, and socialize animals housed in the Small Animal Room.

Bobbi Waggoner won the "Shelter Support Award"

for dedicating significant amounts of her time to administrative tasks at the shelter.

Mary Huey was honored for more than 20 years of service at OHS and is one of only about 10 volunteers who have spent so many years dedicating time to the shelter.

Kem Sypher was honored for more than 10 years of service at OHS. He, Champie and Huey also serve on the Rabbit Advocate board of directors.

Rabbit Advocates congratulates these dedicated volunteers for their service to both the rabbits and to the humane society. Rabbit Advocates encourages its volunteers to spend time at local humane societies. Rabbits in happy, permanent homes contribute to the Rabbit Advocate mission to improve the welfare of domestic rabbits.

Hop with Rabbit Advocates to the 11th Annual Northwest Pet Fair

- Join Rabbit Advocates as we celebrate our bunny companions at the Northwest Pet Fair, held Saturday, May 5, and Sunday, May 6, at the Portland Expo Center.
- Volunteers will have rabbit celebratory merchandise to sell as well as information about companion rabbits and their care. Hours both days are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Admission ranges from \$4 to \$8, depending on the age of the family members attending. Pets are also welcome to attend and a \$1 pet admission will be waived with the donation of a can of pet food.
- Parking for a fee is available at the Portland Expo Center or the Max Yellow Line stops at the Expo Center. The Expo Center is located at 2060 N. Marine Drive in Portland.

The Rabbit Advocate

The Rabbit Advocate is published three times a year.

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Secretary: Cherrie Champie

Treasurer: Kem Sypher

Joan Gilbert, Dr. Katrina Ramsell, Erin Ford, Shannon Phillips

Thank You to Our Vets!

We gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the following veterinarians and staffs for their services to our rescued rabbits:

**Dr. Katrina Ramsell
Northwest Exotic Pet Vet, and
Dr. Chris Wilson
Beaverton Pet Clinic, Beaverton**

**Dr. Mark Burgess and
Dr. Melinda Surrency
Southwest Animal Hospital,
Beaverton**

**Dr. Sheri Schlorman
Creswell Veterinary Hospital,
Creswell**

**Dr. Doug Ferro
Barclay Hills Animal Clinic,
Oregon City**

**Dr. Nell Ostermeier
Lombard Animal Hospital, Portland**

**Dr. Ross Weinstein
North Portland Veterinary Hospital,
Portland**

**Dr. Mary Blankenvoort and
Dr. Peter Davis
St. Johns Veterinary Clinic,
Portland**

**Dr. Rebecca Prull
NW Neighborhood Vet Hospital,
Portland**

**Dr. Ken DeReamer
Paws and Claws Pet Medical
Center, Troutdale
and Peninsula Dog and Cat Clinic,
Portland**

**Dr. Matt Fricke
McKenzie Animal Hospital,
Springfield**

*We'd love to add more names to this list!
Please call us at 503- 617-1625 if you are
a rabbit-savvy vet who is able to donate
services to help rescued rabbits.*

Five years, thousands of happy bunny tummies and hundreds of rabbits helped

Bunny's Best Bites needs volunteers

Bunny's Best Bites is the hand-crafted, gourmet-blend hay Rabbit Advocates sells as the principal fundraiser for its unique medical fund. Mixing and bagging the hay blend requires volunteer time and labor and Dawn Iveane-Curell, project manager, says the project needs more help.

The project began more than five years ago and each month volunteers gather to mix a blend of timothy, orchard, oat and rye grass hays. About 12 volunteers can put together 100 bags of hay, each of which is rapidly sold before the month's end. Ten pound bags of the hay blend cost \$12 each and profits go directly to the Rabbit Advocate medical fund, which offsets the costs of spaying and neutering pet rabbits as well as for other medical procedures. The medical fund uniquely has no requirement for a statement of need or residency. Applicants must have already incurred the expense to be offset and more information on the application process is available through the Rabbit Advocate website at www.rabbitadvocates.org.

Last year Bunny's Best Bites earned more than \$11,000 for the medical fund.

The project is a labor of love for those involved. Volunteers gather each month to blend together the different types of hay, bag the blend and make sure each bag weighs exactly 10 pounds. Hay is available for purchase around the Portland metro area, including the North Portland Veterinary Hospital and at Rabbit Advocate monthly meetings held at the Oregon Humane Society.

Iveane-Curell said she relies on a steady group of volunteers, including a volunteering web site called Hands on Portland. In February Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts lent a hand as well. Iveane-Curell's hope is to add more volunteers so that monthly production can be increased to 150 bags a month. Demand for the hay continually outstrips supply.

The job is a workout but is also rewarding. For more information about the project and how to volunteer, check the Rabbit Advocate's website at www.rabbitadvocates.org.



It takes at least a dozen volunteers to mix and bag the hay types to produce Bunny's Best Bites. Profits from sales of the hay mix go directly to the Rabbit Advocate medical fund. Photo by Dawn Iveane-Curell.

KUDOS

RABBIT CHAMPION

Christine and Karen Stamper

RABBIT BENEFACTOR

Tom and Vicki Holechek
Evelyn Roeloffs

RABBIT RESCUER

Pam and Monte Wagner
Kevin and Julie Hawkins
Brian Baker and family
Mark Parker
Bob and Marie Sherman
Christopher and Constance Hawes
Todd and Sarah Baran
Mary Thompson
Sydney Thomson and Akana Ma
Keith and Elizabeth Olson

RABBIT SPONSOR

Lynne Trueblood
Lorraine Bushek
Bonnie and Dean McFadden
Betty Bussey

RABBIT FRIEND

Vanessa Esteves
Kathy Durbec-Smyth
Suzanne and Joseph Cooney
Nelie Vance
Jennifer Widjaja
Craig and Pamela Yoshida
Paula Buchert
C. Kwapinski
Leonard and Karen Lewis



Volunteers layer and mix four different types of hay to make the Bunny's Best Bites blend. Photo by Dawn Iveane-Curell.

VOLUNTEER PROFILE

Seventh Graders help bag hay for bunnies By Josh Stirnkorb and Dylan Lynn, volunteers

(Note: The Portland Public School district encourages its students to commit time and energy to volunteer activities. In February, Josh Stirnkorb and Dylan Lynn volunteered their time to help bag Bunny's Best Bites. Rabbit Advocates requires parental consent for any volunteers under the age of 18 and the submission of a waiver to allow the child to help with the project. More information is available on the Rabbit Advocate web site.)

On February 4, 2012, we volunteered to pack hay for Rabbit Advocates. As soon as we walked into the garage and saw the massive piles of hay bales lining the wall, we knew we would be working hard by the end of the day. It was cool at first, but quickly started to warm up as we layered, bagged, weighed, and tied the 100 10-pound bags of fresh hay. It was hard work, but the delicious food and friendly people helped to lighten the task.

Rabbit Advocates is a non-profit organization dedicated to caring for and teaching the public about the care of domestic rabbits. They also strive to place surrendered or abandoned rabbits into



Bags weigh exactly 10 pounds each and are then tied for transport. Photo by Dawn Iveane-Curell.

loving homes. They couldn't have said it better in their mission statement: "Our purpose is to promote the welfare of domestic rabbits." With every bag of hay we packed, it felt like we were helping rabbits everywhere.

We really had a great time volunteering for Rabbit Advocates. It felt good to know we were helping bunnies and having a lot of fun at the same time. It was really great to talk to all the other volunteers and eat delicious food too. It was an amazing experience and we can't wait to volunteer again.



Bunny's Best Bites needs more volunteers than the project now has. Photo by Dawn Iveane-Curell.





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Upcoming Meetings & Events 2012

General Meetings

Rabbit Advocates monthly meetings are held at the Oregon Humane Society, 1067 NE Columbia Blvd., the third Sunday of each month from 3:30-5:30 p.m. Meetings include a “bunny basics” question and answer session on bunny behavior and care. The public is welcome. Please park in the gravel parking lot just west of the shelter building.

April 22	Aug. 19
May 20	Sept. 16
June 17	Oct. 28
July 15	Nov. 18

 Find us on Facebook:
Rabbit Advocates

Bunny’s Best Bites

Hay Packing

Volunteers blend and bag different types of hay to create Bunny’s Best Bites, our own custom blend of hay. For more information about the hay parties, see the Rabbit Advocate website at www.rabbitadvocates.org.

2012 Dates

Saturday, April 7, 10am	Sunday, Sept., 2, 9am
Saturday, May 5, 10am	Saturday, Oct. 6, 10am
Sunday, June 3, 10am	Saturday, Nov. 3, 10am
Saturday, July 7, 9am	Sunday, Dec. 2, 10am
Saturday, Aug. 4, 9am	

Education & Adoption Outreaches

Rabbit Advocates sponsors educational events featuring adoptable foster rabbits along with tips on rabbit handling, diet, housing, health and general care. Experienced volunteers provide grooming and nail trimming services for rabbits (donations appreciated). Outreaches are held the second Sunday of each month from noon-3pm at the Tigard Petco, 11705 SW Pacific Highway, Tigard, Oregon 97223.



2012 Dates

April 15	July 8	October 14
May 13	August 12	November 11
June 10	September 9	December 9