Rabbit Advocates needs you...

No matter how big or small, all contributions, talents, welcome

Rabbit Advocates needs help all year long. Homes for wonderful companion pet rabbits are in short supply and adoptive and foster homes are a constant need. So are donations to support the organization and the medical fund to help pet rabbits and their caretakers. Help comes in many different ways, from small, consistent contributions to large monetary donations.

In this issue of The Rabbit Advocate, we turn the spotlight on people who have quietly and consistently helped the organization. Their motivations are very different, but their help is always appreciated.

Anonymous

One evening Anonymous looked out her bedroom window and in a wooded area adjacent to her home, saw a flash of white moving under a tree. At first she didn’t know what she was seeing, but soon learned that the ghostly little creature was a domestic pet rabbit. Soon, there were two rabbits and then two adult rabbits with four baby bunnies. And then the neighborhood cats and dogs showed up.

They were so adorable, Anonymous says. There were multiple litters and the babies bounced around under the trees. One adult rabbit was so friendly that it took food from her hand. The babies disappeared, no doubt victim to all types of predator animals. It may be the circle of life but it broke Anonymous’ heart.

Neighbors were not happy about the rabbits and just wanted them gone. Anonymous put up signs around the neighborhood because it was clear the parents were someone’s pets. No one claimed the rabbits and Anonymous never learned where they came from. While she does not want to be named so that her neighbors are unaware of her actions, Anonymous stepped up and called Rabbit Advocates.

Volunteers came to the neighborhood and caught the rabbits. They were eventually adopted by a family and Anonymous is happy the rabbits found a forever home. She loves animals, she says, and enjoys reading the Rabbit Advocate newsletter. She sends money multiple times a year, always wishing to remain Anonymous.

Pat and Karen Stelter

In early 2000, Pat and Karen Stelter lived in Northeast Portland. On President’s Day, Karen looked outside and noticed a rabbit running along the fence and then sitting underneath the family car. They didn’t see it anymore that day, so they ventured off to the movies as planned. The following day, Pat lured the rabbit inside their home by offering it Cheerios. Clearly, the rabbit had been someone’s pet.

The couple posted flyers around the neighborhood, thinking that the rabbit had mistakenly become loose from its hutch. One person even came to look at the rabbit, but it was not her missing bunny. Karen admits she knew little about rabbits, but before long she had him neutered by a local veterinarian and named him American Beauty (after the movie they saw the day he came to their home), “AB” for short. Karen found Rabbit Advocates just about the time Rabbit Advocates was incorporating as a non-profit organization, and she said she appreciates the mission to educate people about house rabbits. “I talk about rabbits as house pets all the time,” Karen says. Her conversations reinforce the Rabbit Advocate mission and help introduce people to the world of companion rabbits.

A.B. caught on the coffee table and on camera nibbling a natural fiber coaster. Photo by Pat & Karen Stelter

continued on page 2
The Stelters called AB their “genius bunny” because he was “always one step ahead of us,” Karen says. Over the nine years they had AB, they tried to bond him with another rabbit, but he did not seem interested. AB was all kinds of things, Karen says: funny, smart, and even devious when he wanted to be.

Today, Pat and Karen are living with their fourth and fifth house rabbits. All have been adopted from rescue groups, including the Oregon Humane Society (with help from Rabbit Advocate volunteers) and Greenhill Humane Society in Eugene.

“We have a great admiration for the folks who got Rabbit Advocates started,” Karen said. Emotionally, they can’t foster rabbits, and allergies prevent them from taking in larger numbers of rabbits. So Pat and Karen help where they can by purchasing BBB hay and donating money and items to garage sales. “Rabbit Advocates is one of our highest priorities for charitable giving,” Karen said, “and we mostly give to animal charities. The mission is deserving of support.”

**Cherrie Champie and Kat Slinde**

It’s all for the bunnies and it all started many years ago with Henri.

One day years ago, a black bunny showed up in the yard, and he was named Henri. Soon Sophie, as Cherrie Champie and Kat Slinde called Henri’s mate, showed up too. The bunnies stayed in the neighborhood, a quiet, wooded street in Portland, through the summer and winter, and as Cherrie and Kat studied the rabbits’ movements and behaviors, they began to feed the rabbits.

“One of the most wonderful things that ever happened was when I offered Henri a piece of carrot and for the first time he licked my hand, and that warm lick on my hand created a bond forever,” Cherrie says. “The bottom line is we are passionate about rabbits and want to share that love and appreciation with others.”

Kat bought all the books on rabbits she could find. She grew frustrated that there was a huge gap between the information in the books on animal husbandry and the realities of living with a house rabbit. Much support was provided by Henri’s exotic pet vets at SW Animal Hospital. They also turned to Rabbit Advocates and began to fill in the gaps of their knowledge—and at the same time they are helping fill in the gaps of other people’s knowledge.

Kat and Cherrie dedicate tremendous amounts of time to Rabbit Advocates projects. They are consistent volunteers at the Oregon Humane Society (OHS) in the Small Animal Room working with the animals and potential adopters. They travel once a month to Creswell, Oregon, to spend a day grooming and loving on the rabbits at the Red Barn Rabbit Rescue. This small and private rescue organization is headed up by a mother-daughter team, and they care for both shelter (adoptable) and sanctuary rabbits.

Their friends and fellow volunteers marvel at their boundless energy. Kat explains that they make it a priority to donate to a handful of animal groups with a focus on companion rabbits. The Rabbit Advocate meetings, outreaches and hay packing events, as well as shifts at OHS and trips to Creswell are put on the calendar first. Other donations are pre-determined and budgeted. Their friends know the agencies and bunnies are a priority and respect those commitments. Kat emphasized that all non-profit organizations benefit if volunteer time and donations are given consistently but every little bit helps.

They see their work as seeds, planted in the fertile soil of people’s attitudes and behavior. “You never know what your actions will produce,” Kat says, “but we have discovered we can make a big difference for the rabbits and for the people who want to learn more about them.” They particularly enjoy Rabbit Advocate outreaches at Petco because so many people bring in their pet bunnies, and they are often rabbits the two helped care for at OHS.

Time spent volunteering flies when you love animals, the two point out. Lately they’ve been teaching a youth volunteer class on small animals at OHS. Kat and Cherrie experience the rewards of young people learning about small animals. “Being able to share the joy of small animals with people is amazing,” Kat says. “When the connection with small animals, with the rabbits, clicks for people, you see it in them and that’s why we do what we do,” Cherrie says. “The bottom line is we are passionate about rabbits and want to share that love and appreciation with others.”

**Matt and Lisa Freeland**

Matt and Lisa Freeland love animals. Their home is graced with beautiful animal-focused artwork and they have adopted a formerly stray neighborhood cat.

Matt and Lisa Freeland are self-described “animal people.” When Persephone, their beautiful harlequin lop rabbit, came into their lives, they already shared their home with a dog and two cats. When Lisa found Persephone at the Oregon Humane Society, the bunny had been adopted—and returned—twice. Lisa knew Persephone needed a forever home and was committed to giving
the rabbit the stable environment she deserved.

About eight years ago, Lisa was a volunteer at the shelter and spent time walking dogs. But she was in the small animal room the day that Persephone was surrendered at the shelter for the second time. A Rabbit Advocate volunteer was in the small animal room that day and helped answer Lisa’s questions. Lisa took Persephone home immediately. Matt said he dislikes the thought of animals in cages, so Persephone never used hers. Instead, she lived in the couple’s home office.

As Persephone grew accustomed to her new home, Matt and Lisa noticed changes in her appearance and behavior. When Lisa brought her home, Persephone’s general appearance was poor, it was clear the rabbit had been through a lot. In fact, she didn’t have much hair on her ears. After a couple of months in the Freeland home, Persephone developed black spots on her ears. Fearing illness or infection, Lisa took Persephone to the doctor. The black spots turned out not to be a health problem but a sign of improved health: the hair was growing back on her ears.

The office was Persephone’s hub, but she was allowed in other parts of the house as well. Persephone wanted it that way and chewed through not just one but two baby gates that were erected to keep her confined to the office. The second baby gate with a huge hole remained in the doorway. Once she made her wishes clear, Persephone was respectful to the rest of the house and considered the office her main home. She was playful and had a great sense of humor, Lisa says.

Persephone, “Percy,” as the couple called her, is gone now, but the Freeland’s commitment to the Rabbit Advocates continues. They donate money several times a year and speak highly of their interaction with the organization’s volunteers. “I feel like I live vicariously through the Rabbit Advocates,” Lisa says. The couple’s love and respect for rabbits is shared by the organization. “The Rabbit Advocate mission speaks to us, and the organization’s volunteers helped us bring home a great creature that we loved and enjoyed. We want to support the people who share our values.”

A Rabbit Advocate volunteer was in the small animal room that day Lisa was at the Oregon Humane Society, and helped prepare Lisa to bring Persephone home. Lisa says Rabbit Advocate volunteers remained a resource and helped answer questions as they arose. That’s why, even though the Freelands don’t currently share their home with a rabbit, they continue to financially support the Rabbit Advocates. “It was a great experience working with the Rabbit Advocates,” Lisa says.
FOR BUNNIES

1. Bunnykins Bun-velope. Longtime readers of this newsletter might remember the Ugli Donut that was featured in a previous year’s gift guide. From the same manufacturer, we now have the “Bun-velope” pet carrier liner. Designed specifically for bunnies, the Bun-velope keeps bunnies comfortable in the carrier and also makes it easier to lift them out. $24.98, etsy.com/shop/thehareapparent

2. Rabbit Litterbox/Hay Feeder. This litterbox frame and hay feeder combo allows your bunny to munch on hay while in the litterbox without having to mix the hay with the litter. It comes with two plastic litter pans and has rubber feet to keep it lifted off the ground a bit. Best of all, the frame is made of untreated pine, so your bunny can nibble on it to his heart’s content! $65.00, etsy.com/shop/theblissfulbunny

3. Rabbit Activity Center. Made with non-toxic wood and dyes, this activity center has a lot to keep your bunny busy! Some bunnies will hop right on top of it, some will dive underneath, others will start bopping the toys or nibbling the legs. So much to do, so little time! $59.97, happyrabbittoys.com

4. The Relaxed Rabbit DVD. Maybe this belongs in the “gifts for bunny lovers section,” but the bunny is the ultimate recipient here! This 70-minute DVD from professional body worker Chandra Moira Beal teaches massage techniques that can help you strengthen your bond with your rabbit. $14.95, store.busybunny.com

5. Holiday Binky Bag. Filled with a blend of tasty bunny hays, dried willow leaves, and an assortment of treats and toys, this is one gift bag that no bunny will be able to resist. $14.25, store.binkybunny.com

6. Cran-Rose Mix. This healthy treat combines unsweetened cranberries, rosebuds, and hibiscus. As the manufacturer says, it’s like candy and flowers for your bunny! $10.95, store.binkybunny.com

7. Sisal Digging Box. Give your little digger an alternative to digging away at your rugs with this box. Constructed from solid pine, it has fifty sisal loops and is reversible. $29.00, etsy.com/shop/BunnyRabbitToys

Gift Guide researched, compiled and written by Sarah Yasutake
FOR BUNNY LOVERS

8. Rabbit Advocates Logo Sweatshirt. Brr, it’s cold outside, time to switch from RA t-shirts to RA sweatshirts! They are available in purple, grey and black in the crew neck style and black and pink in the hoodie style. T-shirts are also available, with either a solid or a tie-dye background. $20-$30 (sweatshirts), $14-$22 (t-shirts), contact Leann at lbleakney@gmail.com

9. Res-Q-Threads “Adopt Don’t Shop” T-Shirt. Spread the word about rescue with this shirt, featuring three sweet bunnies and an overturned shopping cart. Available for both men and women, this is a gift that gives twice—for each shirt sold, the manufacturer will donate $10 to the rescue group of your choice—including Rabbit Advocates! $28 (includes a $10 donation), resqthreads.com

10. “Bunny Poo” (Mango Papaya) Soy Candle. Okay, this candle isn’t actually made from bunny poo. It is, however, handmade by a mom of three rescue bunnies, and a percentage of each candle sale goes to a U.S. rabbit-rescue group. $9, etsy.com/shop/CountryRabbitCrafter

11. Diamond Tail Bunny Necklace. Is someone on your list hoping for diamonds this year? How about a sparkling diamond bunny tail? This 18k white gold bunny necklace is sold at Portland’s own Twist. $3800, twistonline.com

12. Vintage Charm Bracelet. This vintage brass bunny charm on a vintage brass chain provides a more affordable jewelry option which is every bit as cute as its diamond cousin. $12 or 2 for $20, etsy.com/shop/BrooklynCharm

13. Bunny Legwarmers. Available in two sizes, these pink or blue legwarmers with cute white bunnies hopping about would make a nice gift for a baby or young child. $10-12, hugglugs.com

14. The Tiny Little Book of Bunny Behaviour. Handmade in England, this beautifully illustrated book explains the basics behind binkies, chinning, loaﬁng, bunching, and more. To offset the cost of shipping, you can buy other bunny related items—they also sell lovely totes and journals with rabbit illustrations. $3.33, etsy.com/shop/LyndseyGreen

15. 2014 Missouri House Rabbit Society Calendar. This 12-month calendar features a different cute photo for each month. Proceeds benefit the Missouri House Rabbit Society and other rescue groups nationwide. $25 for one, discounts for purchasing more than one. hrsmostl.org
The Rabbit Advocate Wish List

Help us and help the rabbits
Rabbit Advocates depends on generous people like you, who give of themselves, their time and their resources. Please consider Rabbit Advocates during this time of the year. Here’s how you can help.

Donate
Rabbit Advocates accepts tax deductible donations in any amount. Use the online donation feature on our web site (www.rabbitadvocates.org) to contribute securely with a credit card or through Paypal. Checks can be sent directly to: Rabbit Advocates, PO Box 14235, Portland, OR 97293-0235. If you would like your donation to go to the Medical Fund, which offsets the costs of medical procedures and spay and neuter surgeries, please write “Medical Fund” on your check.

Adopt a rabbit
Give a forever home to one (or more!) of the many rabbits currently being fostered by Rabbit Advocate volunteers. Each adopted rabbit opens up a space for another rabbit in need. Adoptable rabbits are featured on our website: www.rabbitadvocates.org.

Foster a rabbit
Provide a temporary home for a rabbit in an emergency situation or for a rabbit that needs special care. For more information on how to foster a rabbit, contact foster care coordinator Karen Anderson at karanimal84@yahoo.com.

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 website unless the sponsor would prefer to remain anonymous.

Donate your car
The vehicle does not need to be in running condition, but it should be able to sell for at least $75 at public auction. All of the proceeds will go to the Rabbit Advocates and you will receive a donation receipt for your tax records. For more information, contact volunteer Chris Arends at carends44@comcast.net.

Wear the logo proudly
The Rabbit Advocates is proud to offer t-shirts (including the new tie dye shirts), sweatshirts, static-cling stickers and draw-string backpacks featuring our logo. For more information, contact volunteer Leann Bleakney at fbleakney@gmail.com

Search or shop online
Rabbit Advocates is registered with GoodSearch. com and GoodShop.com. Simply select Rabbit Advocates as your designated charity, and each time you conduct an internet search using GoodSearch.com or shop online using GoodShop.com, a donation will be made to our organization. It costs you nothing, but raises a small contribution for the Rabbit Advocates each year.

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.

Volunteer for OHS
Rabbit Advocates started as a group of Oregon Humane Society volunteers and the connection with the shelter remains strong. Rabbit Advocates volunteers are encouraged to spend time at the shelter, helping the rabbits in the Small Animal Room. For more information on how to volunteer for OHS, check the web site at www.oregonhumane.org.
## New Year’s Resolutions for Rabbits

*By Guin Boostrom, as dictated by Nutmeg and Cuddles*

With New Year’s just around the corner, I asked my bunnies, Nutmeg and Cuddles to come up with a list of New Year’s resolutions to share with our readers. As you can see below, I had to help them out a little bit:

1. **Eat more treats > Eat a healthy, balanced diet**
   While Nutmeg and Cuddles would like to think they’d do just fine on the all-raisin diet, we humans know better. A bunny’s diet should consist mostly of good quality hay, a small portion of hay-based commercial pellets (no nuts, seeds or mysterious colored bits), and handful or two a day of fresh vegetables. Fruits (especially dried fruits) should be fed very sparingly and only occasionally, if at all. Rabbits have very sensitive digestive systems and too much sugar can get their gut flora off balance and cause serious problems like GI stasis. For more information about healthy rabbit diets, visit the Rabbit Advocate website at: [http://rabbitadvocates.org/articles/health-diet/](http://rabbitadvocates.org/articles/health-diet/)

2. **Avoid the vet at all costs > Make a yearly well-rabbit vet appointment for a check-up (twice a year for bunnies 7 and older)**
   While Nutmeg and Cuddles may not like the car ride to the vet or the poking and prodding that happens at the vet’s office, we know that having regular well-rabbit visits is an important key to bunny health. When an emergency illness or injury does arise, it’s much better to already have a relationship with a veterinarian who has established a baseline of what is normal for your rabbits. At a well-rabbit visit, the vet can also alert you to potential problems that human caretakers may not be able to easily see, such as overgrown molars that might start causing a problem later.

3. **Lounge on the couch as much as possible > Get plenty of exercise**
   Just like humans, bunnies can get a little chubby and develop health problems if they get too little physical activity. Help your bunnies stay fit and lively by making sure they have plenty of space to hop, including plenty of out-of-cage time if they need to be in a cage while you are at work or school. You can also make sure your bunnies stay active by making sure they have a good supply of toys to toss, tear, scratch, bite and roll about, and by engaging them in active play. Many bunnies enjoy playing Follow the Leader, especially if they get to be the leader!

4. **Hide under the bed when we see the nail clippers come out > Get a nail trim every 4 to 6 weeks**
   Nutmeg and Cuddles do not approve of nail trims, but we know that it’s important to keep their nails short so that they don’t have trouble hopping or have their nails get caught in the carpet and break off. If you find it a challenge to trim your bunny’s nails, remember that Rabbit Advocates offers pawdicures at the Tigard Petco the second Sunday of every month.

5. **Bite electrical cords with impunity > Encourage the humans to save us from ourselves and keep electrical cords out of reach or covered with a cord protector.**
   Both Nutmeg and Cuddles find electrical cords absolutely irresistible for biting, no matter how many appropriate chew toys we provide. While you can certainly work with your bunnies to train them not to engage in destructive behaviors, some behaviors, like cord chewing are just so innate that taking measures to ensure that bunnies can’t get themselves into trouble is a good idea. Check out products like CritterCord ([www.crittercord.com](http://www.crittercord.com)) or check your local hardware store for flexible tubing that you can place over cords.

6. **Spend lots of time snuggling and getting head rubs from the humans**
   At last, a resolution that the bunnies and humans can agree on! We here at Rabbit Advocates wish you and your furry companions a wonderful holiday season and a happy, healthy New Year!

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

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

- **Dr. Ken DeReamer**
  Dr. Monica Pollock
  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.
Upcoming Meetings & Events 2014

**General Meetings**

3rd Sunday of the month  
3:30 pm – 5:30 pm

**Location:** Courtyard Manor Assisted Living, 6125 SE Division St., Portland

Meetings begin with a “Bunny Basics” Q & A session where we invite your questions about any aspect of rabbit care. The public is welcome!

**2014 Dates**

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Find us on Facebook: Rabbit Advocates

**Bunny’s Best Bites**

**Hay Packing Parties**

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](http://www.rabbitadvocates.org)

**First Saturday of the month, 10 am – 2 pm**

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Find us on Facebook: Rabbit Advocates

**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 (suggested donations of $5 for nail trims and $5 for light grooming are appreciated). Outreaches are held the second Sunday of each month from noon-3 pm at the Tigard Petco at 11705 SW Pacific Highway, Tigard, Oregon. For more information, see the Rabbit Advocate website at [www.rabbitadvocates.org](http://www.rabbitadvocates.org)

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