Fall seems to be the perfect time to think about our lives and take stock of all the things we have around us. Those who share our lives with rabbits think about our long-eared friends all the time, of course, but this season prompts introspection, including what our pets give to us. A few Rabbit Advocate volunteers offered what they are thankful for, as we enter this season of quiet reflection.

Always I’m thankful for rabbits. They were love at first sight 17 years ago and still are. There’s nothing like petting soft rabbit fur. They are amazing role models for us humans: gentle, social, amazing caregivers to each other, humorous, energetic, curious, food lovers who enjoy their own space resting alone. I’m thankful for Valerie Madison and Joan Gilbert of Rabbit Advocates. Not only do they do extensive care for rabbits, they’re also amazingly compassionate in reaching out to other humans, especially those in pain. They mentor, introduce people to new experiences, and teach medical techniques and treatments. Valerie offered burial for my first rabbit and a “Dawn” rose plant atop his grave. It was one of the nicest things anyone has ever done for me. Recently Joan reached out to a very sick rabbit who passed on and offered a foster rabbit to the heart-broken caregiver. I’m thankful for all the gentle, caring people who love rabbits. They’re both a breath of fresh air from the loud, busy world and are a rare treat to be around.

- Dawn Ivesane-Curell

I am grateful to my rabbits, past and present, for bringing out more compassion, patience and staying power in me than I knew I possessed, as well as providing joy and stress relief simply by being their rabbit selves.

- Mary Thompson

I am so thankful to Rabbit Advocates for teaching me so many things about caring for my sweet Twinklenose Bunny during the seven short years he shared and blessed my life. His loving presence completed my life by adding joy to every day. I feel fortunate to have made so many acquaintances and even a few true friends through the love and acceptance offered us at the Rabbit Advocate meetings and gatherings. Twinklenose and I so enjoyed it when he was able to be a ‘therapy bunny’ to folks at the Care Center on Division Street. Thank you for giving Twinklenose and me a place to come and play! If it were not for your amazing Medical Fund I would have become pretty discouraged at times, what with his ongoing veterinarian expenses. He was very much loved through it all. He ate our Bunny’s Best Bites hay up until the end when he could no longer. He enjoyed his Oxbow pellets and thrived on organic cilantro. He was one spoiled bunny!

- Marlena Sweet

I am incredibly grateful for my too-short time with Suzie and Amelia, two of the best bunnies ever! They taught me so much about rabbit care and love. I thank Rabbit Advocates for the wonderful friends I’ve made over the years. I’m also grateful for the opportunities Rabbit Advocates has given me to teach people about rabbit care and to groom rabbits at Outreaches; to raise funds for our Medical Fund through Outreaches and hay sales; and to develop educational materials and website pages for fostering, adoptions, hay packing, and Outreaches.

- Elizabeth Olson

Lagomorphs appreciate Us!

As one of the four people who answer our Rabbit Advocate public Helpline, I have met and rescued many, many rabbits who have come from challenging situations. Ones left in a dark garage or hutch with few visitors, ones with moldy water bottles and no hay, ones dumped in an area with coyotes searching for lunch, and ones left in a shelter in a cage for a year.

continued on page 2
I have seen how excited the rabbits are to be leaving places like that, and taste their first bite of parsley or their first romp around a living room. And how they do binkies or teeth purr or lick when they suddenly have somebody to hold and pet them. Yes bunnies appreciate us as much as we do them!  

~ Joan Gilbert

Whenever I think of Kai, my heart swells with love. I just adore this little boy! I am so grateful for Dr. Surrency who brought my attention to him and to Dr. Burgess who performed his leg amputation. When I heard that there was a two-month old bunny with a badly infected broken leg who needed help, I knew he would be mine and that I would be the one to help him heal. The healing works both ways, I can’t be anything but happy when I’m around Kai. His three-legged wiggle movements, hilarious expressions and satellite-sized ears draw everyone to him, wanting to know more about this beautiful bunny.  

~ Tonie Young

I am so grateful to live in a place and time where good veterinary care for my pet rabbits is available. I know we are spoiled here in the Portland area. I do not take this expertise for granted and I appreciate the kindness, guidance and professional experience of the veterinarians who have taken care of my pets. Thank you Dr. Burgess, Dr. Wilson, Dr. Ramsell, Dr. Nell, Dr. Surrency, and Dr. Doernack.

~ Leann Bleakney

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~ Leann Bleakney

E. Cuniculi common in rabbits

Prompt diagnosis, treatment relieves symptoms

By Dr. Melinda Surrency

Sudden onset of symptoms related to Encephalitozoon cuniculi (E. cuniculi) can be scary for rabbit caretakers. Rabbits may very suddenly develop head tilt or rear leg paralysis. Sometimes a symptom may be more subtle like chronic bladder incontinence. But the more you learn about this parasite, the more you will understand how to recognize symptoms and how to ask for help for your rabbit.

E. cuniculi is a parasite that settles in the rabbit’s brain, kidney, liver or lungs. It is a strange parasite and is more closely related to fungi than to protozoans or animals. It gets its energy from the host’s cells it infects and is not a choosy parasite. It can infect guinea pigs, squirrels, rats, mice, dogs, rabbits and even people.

I do not tell you this to scare you, only to demonstrate how common the parasite is.

This parasite can be transmitted in a number of ways, including through urine and through injecting or inhaling spores. Commonly it is transferred from mother to babies before birth. You might have seen a very young rabbit with head tilt or with cataracts in its eyes. Likely that rabbit was born with E. cuniculi.

Symptoms may never show despite exposure

The parasite can live a long time outside of a host so it may be impossible for you to figure out how a rabbit was exposed to the parasite. Many rabbits have the parasite and suffer no ill effects. They may have the parasite their whole lives and not show symptoms. Other times rabbits live long, healthy lives and as they grow older, symptoms appear. Symptoms can range from abrupt tilting of the head or an inability to keep balance and remain upright. More subtle symptoms include strange leg postures or gradual hind end weakness or paralysis. Urinary  

continued on page 6
Even when symptoms are mild, treatment still helpful

By Kat Slinde

Neither of our rabbits Beauregard nor Alfie have the severely twisted neck that people associate with ear infections or E. cuniculi.

However, Beauregard’s balance is compromised and he has seizures during which his little face scrunches up, he scratches and then rolls uncontrollably. He is on a three-part treatment of Panacur for the E. cuniculi, Metacam for pain, and acupuncture. It is possible he will need these treatments for the rest of his life. His mobility and quality of life has greatly improved. The frequency of his seizures has been reduced with the acupuncture treatments.

Alfie is a tiny dwarf bunny who weighs less than two pounds. When he arrived at our house all he could do was look down at the floor and his feet. His little ears pointed forward together like a little horn. Within several weeks of starting treatment of Panacur, his head was upright, he could sit up for treats and he can run his little sprints. After he finished the initial round of Panacur, he had a relapse. Today he is back on Panacur. While he’ll always be a little stiff through the head, neck, and shoulders, his head is up, he is again sitting up for treats and performing his sprints. He may also need a life-long, pulsed treatment with Panacur in which he is on the medication for 30 days and then off it for 10 days.

Maybe one day there will be a cure.
FOR BUNNIES

1. Bunny Bytes Umbrella. This 8 inch tall umbrella, made of willow, seagrass, palm flowers, and pumpkin, is perfect for chasing those rainy-day blues away. $9.99, bunnybytes.com

2. Rose Petals. Shower your bunny with fragrant and tasty rose petals. Chemical and pesticide free. $4.29 for 2 oz., bunnybytes.com

3. Cup o' Joe. Why not share a cup of coffee with your bunny? The “mug” is made of seagrass, and the “coffee” is sweet orchard grass. It even comes with two Bunny Biscotti. $4.99, bunnybytes.com

4. Holiday Binky Sack. Give your bunny a delightful treat with this bag full of dried willow leaves. The cotton sack is for you, not your bunny, but your bunny will love the willow leaves and the mini willow ring toy that come with it. $6.95, store. binkybunny.com

5. Beco Bowl. These eco-friendly food bowls are made from a plant-fiber plastic which is durable and dishwasher safe. Available in three bunny-friendly sizes with dipped sides that make eating more comfortable. $4.25–$9.25, store. binkybunny.com

6. Tunnel Haven. This is a cardboard tunnel that is over 5 feet long and can be stretched and twisted all sorts of ways to make your bunny a burrow-like playground. $18.95, store.binkybunny.com

7. Starmark Clicker. If you’re thinking about clicker-training your rabbit, this gentle-sounding clicker is the tool you need. $3.99, rabbit.org/shop

8. Willow Wreath. Rabbits love willow, and these will be devoured quickly. Better stock up! $3, www.etsy.com/shop/ElvisParsleyStore

FOR BUNNY LOVERS

9. 2015 Arthur Court Bunny Ornament. Arthur Court creates a new, collectible bunny ornament every year. This year’s ornament features a “Jolly Jester Bunny” made from cast aluminum and hanging from a red silk ribbon. $29, busybunny.com
10. **Happy Hoppers Grocery Tote Bag.** Artist Ellen Jareckie has a “Happy Hopper” collection of sweet bunny-themed illustrations that are available on a variety of products, including this grocery tote. $18.99, house-mouse.com

11. **Bunny Butt Cell Case.** Available for iPhone and Samsung Galaxy phones, this cell phone case features an adorable drawing of a fluffy bunny tail. $28.54, redbubble.com

12. **Litographs Peter Rabbit T-Shirt.** Litographs t-shirts feature designs created out of the words of classic books. In this case, the words are from Peter Rabbit and other Beatrix Potter tales. $34.00, litographs.com

13. **Some Bunny Necklace.** Dallas Pridgen makes a variety of rabbit-themed bracelets, pins, and necklaces, including this hand-made sterling silver bunny-faced necklace. $68, dallaspridgenjewelry.com

14. **Crazy Rumors Leaping Bunny Lip Balm.** Crazy Rumors makes a variety of vegan and cruelty-free lip balms, but for every tube of this plum-apricot flavored balm sold, they donate 50 cents to the Leaping Bunny program. $3.99, crazyrumors.com

15. **Bunny Night Light.** This porcelain “Still of the Night Light” glows softly and also makes a nice decoration. $12.99, modcloth.com

16. **“Furry Up, We’re Dreaming” Shoes.** Every bunny lover would love to walk around with a pair of sleeping bunnies on her toes. $54.99, modcloth.com

17. **Sign of the Times.** SS Bunny Imports features fantastic signs with bunny themes. Do you have a guard rabbit? You can post a warning! Is your home a binky zone? There’s a sign for that too! (Photo by Kem Sypher) www.etsy.com/shop/SSBunnyImports

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*Gift Guide researched, compiled and written by Sarah Yasutake*
incontinence can be a symptom, as can be eye twitching or difficulty chewing.

If your rabbit suffers from symptoms like this, please take the rabbit to your rabbit-savvy veterinarian.

There are tests your veterinarian can perform to see if your rabbit has been exposed to the E. cuniculi parasite. There are three tests, which measure different phases of the rabbit’s exposure to the parasite.

The first is called PCR, which can confirm that your pet is shedding spores. It should be noted that many infected rabbits do not continuously shed these spores so a negative result may not be a good indicator of active infection.

The second test is called ELISA titer, which measures the levels of antibodies to E. cuniculi present in the rabbit’s body. The titer may indicate exposure but not necessarily an active infection.

The third test is called C-reactive protein (CRP). This test can indicate an active systemic inflammation, but other generalized inflammatory processes like dental disease and chronic ear infections also can cause an increase in inflammatory response in the body.

So without one fool-proof test, how would you know whether or not your rabbit has E. cuniculi? In my practice, I look for the presence of clinical signs, which are symptoms I described earlier. Often I will then suggest the ELISA titer to see if it looks like there has been an exposure to E. cuniculi. As a final test I may want to run a CRP to look for inflammation in the body.

**Treatment**

If your rabbit is demonstrating symptoms and a test indicates it is warranted, your veterinarian may suggest treating the symptoms of E. cuniculi with several different drugs. The first line of defense is either albendazole or fenbendazole, both of which are anti-parasitic agents. These drugs will not completely eradicate the E. cuniculi parasite from your rabbit’s body, but they will keep it from growing and becoming stronger. The next thing I like to consider prescribing for my patients is a non-steroidal anti-inflammatory because it can decrease inflammation in the body. An anti-nausea medication may also be indicated if the rabbit has a head tilt or is unable to keep its balance to the point where it rolls.

There is no one right way to treat E. cuniculi. Many different strategies are often employed and each individual will respond differently. It is best to work with your veterinarian to determine the best course of treatment and remain diligent about monitoring for symptoms.

*Note: Dr. Surrency practices at the Hillsboro Veterinary Clinic. She is the President of the Rabbit Advocates Board of Directors.*

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**In The Next Issue**

A recap of Bunnypalooza, including the number of attendees, the money raised and the bunnies adopted. Thank you to Tonie Young, Theresa Brennan and the committee who made it possible.

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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

- Dr. Chris Wilson
  Beaverton Pet Clinic, Beaverton

- Dr. Mark Burgess
  Southwest Animal Hospital, Beaverton

- Dr. Sheri Schlorman
  Creswell Veterinary Hospital, Creswell

- Dr. Melinda Surrency
  Hillsboro Veterinary Clinic, Hillsboro

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

- Dr. Nell Ostermeier
  Lombard Animal Hospital, Portland

- 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.
The Rabbit Advocate Wish List ~ 2015

Here’s how you can make a difference in a bunny’s life!

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, P.O. 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.

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.

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 web site unless the sponsor would prefer to remain anonymous.

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.

Search or shop online

Rabbit Advocates is registered with GoodSearch.com, GoodShop.com and Amazon Smile. 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 or Amazon Smile, a donation will be made to our organization. It costs you nothing, but raises a small contribution for the Rabbit Advocates each year.

Shop at Fred Meyer

Fred Meyer, Inc., is donating $2.5 million per year to non-profit organizations in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington. Rabbit Advocates is now listed as one of the non-profit organizations eligible to receive donations. The donations are based on customer shopping patterns. To help direct donations to Rabbit Advocates, register your Fred Meyer rewards cards and follow the prompts to direct your donation to bunnies. This is part of the Fred Meyer community rewards program. If you have a Fred Meyer Rewards card, register it at www.fredmeyer.com/community rewards. Search for Rabbit Advocates by name or by the assigned non-profit number, 81975. Every time you shop and use your rewards card, Rabbit Advocates earns a small donation. The program does not change your earnings for rewards points or fuel points. But it will help Rabbit Advocates. If you do not have a Fred Meyer Rewards Card, pick one up today.
# Upcoming Meetings & Events 2015

## General Meetings

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3rd Sunday of the month  
3:30 pm – 5:30 pm  
Location: Humane Society for SW Washington, 1100 NE 192nd Ave., Vancouver, WA  
Meetings begin with a “Bunny Basics” Q & A session where we invite your questions about any aspect of rabbit care. The public is welcome!

## 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)

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## 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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