



HARELINES



Volume 14 Number 1 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

Winter 2010

How to Make a Comfortable Environment for a Bun with Mobility Problems

By Sue Zimmerman

Throughout the years, we have had more than a few bunnies in our home with mobility problems in their limbs. Mobility problems in your rabbit can be caused by many different things, such as injury, illness, old age, or arthritis. Here are some tricks that Keith and I have used to make a more comfortable living environment for some of our less mobile rabbits.

Several years ago our pet rabbit, Jessica, (who now waits for us at "the bridge") developed poor mobility in her back legs as a result of e-cuniculi. One of the first things that we did to make things easier on Jessie was to modify her litter box. We cut out



the front section of the litter box so that the lip was very low to the ground. This allowed her to easily move or scoot in and out of the litter box without having to hop. This works very well for senior buns with or without mobility issues.

It is always a good idea to provide a nice soft surface on



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the floor of your bunny's living quarters. We like to use a natural fiber rug such as cotton or jute. My new favorite rugs are the 100% cotton chenille ones (available at www.target.com). These are soft and thick and easy to wash and rather inexpensive to replace. Make sure the rugs that you use have no rubber or any other kind of backing on them.

As Jessie's condition worsened, we had to make more modifications to her living environment. Jess began to completely drag her back legs behind her and could no longer make it to her litter box. She was becoming incontinent and we needed to keep both her and her living quarters as clean and dry as possible.

We like to line the bottom of the bunny pen with a nice soft piece of fleece; the kind that looks like lamb's wool. You can purchase this at the fabric store in large

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Visit the House Rabbit Society at <http://www.rabbit.org> and the Buckeye House Rabbit Society at <http://www.ohare.org>

THE BUCKEYE HRS RESPECTS YOUR PRIVACY

We know our members value their privacy and that's why we never, ever, sell our mailing list or distribute it to any other party. All of our members' information is held in the strictest confidence.

Special Thanks to:

Sara Gambrell, for her generous gift in memory of her beloved Vaysh bunny.

Cathy Montiegel, for her kind donation in tribute to **Sylvester**.

Gary and Sue Embree, for the huge carton of chew rings, grass balls, and grass mats that are providing hours and hours of fun for our foster rabbits.

Annette Tait, for donating an exquisite art-accessory bag for our second Spring Raffle. See page 11 for details.

Pam Loch's 5th grade students, who once again honored their teacher with generous holiday donations to the Buckeye HRS!

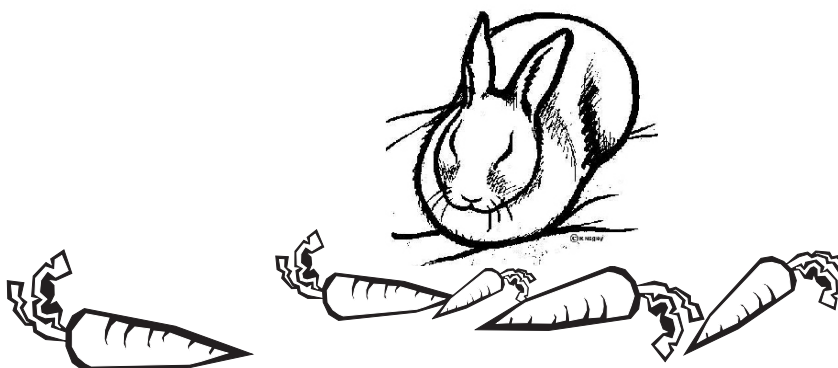
The following members, whose monetary and in-kind donations allow us to meet our ongoing fostering and educational goals:

Jim and Laura Gills, Doris Wishner, Linda Gardner, Bonita and John Chilcote, Christopher Rouse, Brooke Rini, the Fleischer family, the Sollenberger family, Bonnie Hagerman, Pat Wolanski, Janet Reed, Didi and Ashley Thomason, Tracy Soltesz and Harold Chittum, Gary Savage, Michael Romanik, Christa Billerman and Fayaz Bhanji, Sidelia Reyna, Judy O'Neil.

Janet Schandorsky, for volunteering every Sunday in Keith and Sue Zimmerman's foster home. She helps with cleaning and, most importantly, socializing the foster buns. Janet has helped many rabbits overcome shyness and get used to being handled. Thank you so much for your time and commitment, Janet!

Our new and continuing Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors! This program would not be possible without your compassion and generosity. We wish we could acknowledge each of you individually!

As always, the **Monks Copy Shop** of downtown Columbus, for their discount on printing our newsletter.





Times Seven

By David Sharpe

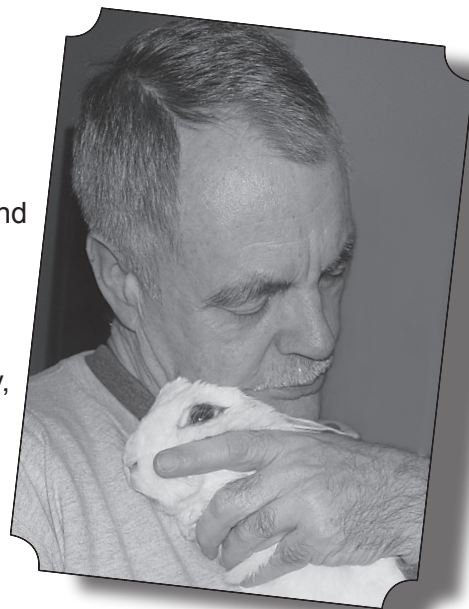
For a single moment, my beloved rabbit and I crossed paths in a way I hadn't imagined. On my birthday in December, I realized that Whitby and I were both sixty. Or to view it from another angle, we were both eight and a half.

How so? Using round figures, if a human lives seventy years and a rabbit lives ten, a rabbit lives seven times faster than a human. Whitby, in calendar years, was eight and a half. In rabbit years, that's sixty. Myself? My sixty years, if I were a rabbit, would measure eight and a half years on the calendar.

For that one special day, my rabbit and I were the same age. Every day since then, Whitby has become seven days older.

Is this only arithmetic? To better understand your companion friend, imagine the time your rabbit is feeling. If you are an hour late when your rabbit expects to be fed (and we all know how accurate rabbits are about routine), your rabbit has waited seven hours! If you are away for a whole day at work or wherever, consider why your companion is so happy to see you when you return -- you have been away seven days.

An hour on your lap is seven hours. The love you give is multiplied by seven. Any love lost, is lost by seven.



Rags to Riches: Anise's Tale

By Buckeye HRS Fosterer Michele Roth Kerley
(This is the first entry in our new occasional series.)



After arriving at the shelter I couldn't believe my eyes. In the corner of a cold stainless steel cage sat a dull, matted, black-furred rabbit with big, scared, lost eyes. I couldn't wait to get her out of there.

Once I got her home and started to evaluate her, I noticed the condition of her ears; they were dreadful. Almost every inch of the inside of her ears was covered in thick scabs caused by ear-mites. I couldn't help but tear up right then. I immediately took her to the vet. While she was under anesthesia to be spayed, they scraped and treated her ears. When I picked her up, I found out she also had worms and the vet gave me medicine to treat her. By the time Anise was finished with her medicines, she was a new bunny. She put on some weight (no more worms!), her ears healed (surprisingly leaving no scars) and her fur became a luxurious, shiny black. The entire time she was with me she was as sweet as can be, even though she obviously had every right to be cold and cautious.

I can't begin to tell you the joy I felt talking to her adopted family not even a week after she joined their home and finding out she had free run of her own room already and had shown her appreciation with sporadic binkies! She's the reason and a great reminder why I'm part of such a wonderful organization.



*How to Make a Comfortable Environment
for a Bun with Mobility Problems
Cont'd.*

sheets and sometimes in the pet sections at retail stores. The fleece does a good job at wicking the moisture away and helps to keep the surface nice and dry. It also provides a soft surface for bunny to scoot around on. It is helpful to have a few sheets of fleece on hand so that you can quickly replace the soiled one with a clean one.

Combining a sheet of fleece with a waterproof material underneath is what seems to work the best when dealing with an incontinent and immobile bunny. It is easier to clean, more sanitary and keeps the bottom surface of the floor dry. At first I used disposable underpads to line the bottom of Jessie's pen and a sheet of fleece over the top. However, the cost of the underpads can get very expensive. Another



wonderful absorbent material is the reusable underpads. They are designed to wick away moisture and can hold a great amount of liquid. Reusable pads are washable and a cost-saving alternative to the disposable ones. The pads come in different sizes too. (I purchased my underpads from www.bhmedwear.com)

Someone suggested that we try putting a waterproof mattress pad under the fleece. This works very

well, but you need to cut all the elastic off of the edges so that it stays flat. The mattress pads are also washable and reusable.

It is difficult to watch when bunny becomes less mobile. I hope that some of these tips are useful to you in providing a clean, comfortable, and safe environment for your bunny.



Farewell to Patty

We're very sad to announce the passing of Patty, long-time sanctuary rabbit in the care of Keith and Sue Zimmerman of Fremont. Patty was a most special bunny and we invite you to read Keith's touching tribute to her on our website -- <http://ohare.org/need/sanctuary/sanctuaryrabbits.htm#patty>



Richland, the Brave Little Rabbit

By Karen Salvagno

Around Halloween, an email came in that a caring and compassionate person had found a rabbit in the middle of the road in a rural area of Richland County. They loved animals but had never owned a rabbit and weren't sure what to do with him. Luckily, I had room, so I took him in.

Richland was brought to my house. He was an adorable mini lop. At first glance it was obvious that he had damage to his ear, and the base of his ear and back of his head had a large abscess. Little did we know that there was so much more to this.

I immediately made a vet appointment and took Richland in a couple of days later. The vet found that the wounds were old and that it was more than likely a dog or coyote attack that this little guy had survived. We found out that most of his ear was abscessed along with the back of his head. He also had a large abscess down the front of his face from his forehead to his nose. His left eye, which was the same side as his damaged ear, also had a corneal ulcer. Surgery was scheduled for the next day. The abscesses were removed and the wounds flushed as best as possible.

For the next month, I had to give Richland antibiotic shots twice a day, every day. His wounds had to be flushed with Novalsan once a day. I also had to administer two kinds of eye drops twice a day. Once a week we went to the vet and Richland had to be put under anesthesia and his abscesses cleaned out again. Poor Richland was one angry rabbit with all this poking and prodding and flushing.

Finally, after a month, his abscesses had cleared up. We were so happy. Unfortunately, a membrane had formed around his corneal ulcer

and that had stopped the healing. So Richland had to have another surgery to remove the membrane. His eye was stitched shut for two weeks and special eye drops had to be put in his eye for a few days. After the two weeks, the stitches were removed and only a small gray area remained in his eye. The vet pronounced Richland well again!

With so many surgeries and vet visits, his medical expenses were understandably quite high. Any donations to help pay for Richland's costs would be greatly appreciated.

After his unexpected life outdoors and his month-and-a-half ordeal with vet visits and a lot of medical care at home, Richland is now a much happier bunny. He enjoys pets and attention. He is healthy and ready to go to his new forever home, where he won't have to worry about dogs or coyotes attacking him again.

To adopt Richland, please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhrs-sue@ohare.org) – 419-355-8433.





Introducing Rabbits To Each Other

Reprinted with permission from the Columbus HRS

Rabbits are naturally social animals, who generally are happiest when they have a fellow rabbit to cuddle and play with. But introducing rabbits can be very tricky, and establishing a firm friendship between them (the process known as bonding) can take weeks, or even months. While some rabbits fall in love at first sight and become a pair within a matter of days, bondings typically take several weeks, and you should be prepared to spend hours chaperoning bunny dates.

Preliminary Considerations

Only try to bond rabbits who are spayed or neutered. Wait at least two weeks after the spay/neuter surgery before introducing the rabbits to ensure that the incision has healed and that hormones have had a chance to die down. Male-female bonds are usually the easiest to establish. If you have adopted a second rabbit, do not put the newly adopted rabbit right into the resident rabbit's home territory. Fighting is likely, and it can result in serious—perhaps life-threatening—injuries.

The Bonding Process

The key principle of bonding is that the introduction and get-acquainted process take place in “neutral territory,” that is, a space that's not familiar to either rabbit.

Bonding strategies vary, but most experts recommend that your rabbits live side-by-side in separate cages or pens for a couple weeks before you let them meet in a common space. Inducing a little stress before bringing rabbits together makes them less likely to fight. For this reason, many experts recommend preceding the first several bunny dates with car rides. Put your bunnies in their separate carriers and drive around with them for 10-20 minutes. Or put



the bunnies in the back seat of the car with a litterbox full of fresh hay; by the end of the car ride, the bunnies will be huddled together in the litterbox. The theory is that this artificially-induced togetherness will make the bunnies realize that snuggling is really pleasant and they will be more ready to snuggle when they're not stressed. When you've returned from your car ride, put the bunnies in a neutral space. This space should not be so big that the bunnies can completely ignore each other and it should not have places to hide. Make sure that you are in the space with them so that you can intervene immediately at the first sign of aggression. Wear gloves or have a towel ready to stop any serious fighting. Put two hay-filled litterboxes in the space, along with some toys, and perhaps spread some hay and veggies on the floor. Allow the bunnies to sniff, but not circle, each other (circling quickly leads to fighting). For at least the first few dates, don't allow them to chase or to mount each other and, except for the car rides, don't let them get



in a litterbox together. If the rabbits start to fight, separate them immediately. Ideally, you'll arrange daily supervised dates for your rabbits. Start with meetings of at least 20 minutes (unless there's fighting) and increase the rabbits' time together as they grow more comfortable with each other. When you're confident that they won't hurt each other, you can leave them alone in their space—but stay within earshot to begin with, because your bunnies may act differently when you're not hovering over them. If the relationship seems to be going well, you can start leaving the rabbits alone unsupervised for longer periods of time, eventually letting them spend the night together in the neutral space.

Signs Of Progress

- If the bunnies seem comfortable being in the same space—even if they're not interacting (that is, if they're grooming themselves, eating, playing, or stretched out)—it's a sign of genuine progress.
- Eventually, one or both of the rabbits will present him/herself to the other for grooming.
- Grooming, snuggling, and sharing a litterbox are signs of a successful friendship. Do make sure that the relationship is firm before moving

the rabbits into non-neutral territory.

Steps Toward Bunny Love

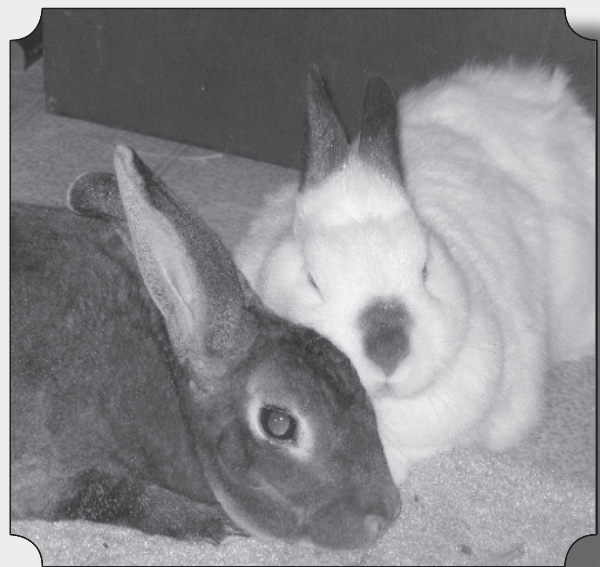
The bonding of Zoe, a three-year-old mini rex, with Alfie, a five-year-old Himalayan dwarf, illustrates some of the phases bunnies go through as they become friends.

“We're in this together.”

The stress of a car ride often makes rabbits, who might otherwise fight, turn to each other for comfort, and it makes fighting less likely once the buns are taken out of the car and put together for their first dates in neutral territory. Ideally, bunnies forced together in this way will find that they like to cuddle and will be more ready to do it voluntarily during their dates.

“Okay, we could hang out!”

When your rabbits start acting normally in neutral territory—eating, grooming themselves, stretching, lounging—it's a sign of progress, even if they aren't interacting. Giving your rabbits something pleasant to do during their date—a big plate of greens to munch, for example, will help make them enjoy being together.



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Somebunny Needs YOU!



Sylvester is quite a unique looking bunny with his stripes and two-toned face! He LOVES his free time and pellets. This handsome guy would make a great addition to your home. He has lots of love to give. Why not make an appointment to meet him? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhhs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**

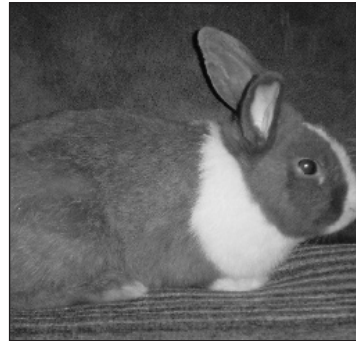


Have you ever wanted back into a time of innocence, when rabbits could be big and white and magic? This young lovely, born in spring '09, will take you there. Open your door to her, and come home to the land of **Honalee. Please contact Herta Rodina (bhhs-herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**



This is **Pumpkin!** She is a very sweet young lady. Just look at her awesome blue/gray fur! What a beautiful bunny! Pumpkin enjoys playing with her toys and she especially loves to chomp on

hay. Wouldn't you love to make Pumpkin a member of your family? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhhs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Tazwell is one of the bunnies who was rescued from the Elyria overcrowding situation. He's from one of the last litters to be born there (Jan – Apr 2006). Taz is a little shy, he will need time with you to warm up and develop trust. He's on the small side, weighing roughly 4.0 lbs, his full-

grown weight. He loves his bamboo paper plate holders for chewing and is perfect with his litter box. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Dixie knows how to have a good time; whether it is tossing around her toys, chewing on her ball, or racing through her tunnel. When she is done, this adorable white bunny (with long white eye lashes), will sit for a

good petting and then stretch out in her box for a nice nap. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhhs-sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Every season will be a winning season with this Bengal striped bunny. **Henry** (named for the late Chris Henry) has excellent litter box habits and knows how to make the play. Make **Henry** a member of your team today. Whodey! **Please contact Michele Roth**

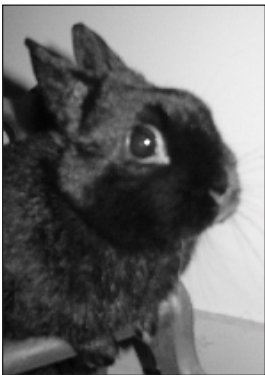
Kerley (bhhs-michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.



Chili and Chiqua came all the way to Ohio from a large rescue in New Mexico. **Chili** has dark chocolate-brown fur and a spicy personality. She also has one ear that lops down and the other that stands straight up. **Chiqua** is all black with velvety-soft fur and lots of curiosity. Make an appointment to meet them today! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (bhersue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Alfonso, a little mini-rex, gets so excited for his meals that he runs round and round frantically until he is fed. If you pick him up, however, he melts in your arms and nuzzles his face under your chin. He weighs about 3.5 lbs, is perfect with his litterbox, and eats a ton of hay for such a little guy. He also loves cruising through his miniature tunnels and boxes. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



You'll have a whale of a good time with this dwarf bunny. Many tales will be told of **Moby's** sweet nature and great litter box habits. At two pounds he's the catch of the day and will make an excellent addition to your family. **Please contact Michele Roth Kerley (bhers-michele@ohare.org) 859-261-0556.**



Kitty Kat is a dwarf-like bunny who is a little on the quiet side, although very friendly. She likes to be petted and sometimes doesn't mind being picked up. She packs a lot of hay and salad into her tiny, three-and-half-pound body, with rich chocolate-brown fur and one white paw. This little girl also wins a prize for being the best with her litterbox. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Adopted!

The Spicer family of Castalia, Ohio have welcomed **Chinni** into their home.♥ Congratulations go out to the Torres family on their adoption of **Kahlua**. They knew he was worth the travel time and they're enjoying the latest member of their family.♥ Two bunnies are twice as nice! Jon and Linda Garramone have adopted **Zac and Nessie (now Mia and Giovanni)**.♥ **Kelby** is soaking up loads of love and attention as she settles into her wonderful new home with Didi, Ashley, and family in Perrysburg.♥ **Napoleon** is finding his groove with Angie and Aaron and their multi-species home in Parkersburg.♥ **Anise (now Beauty)** is a very happy girl since her adoption. Congratulations to the Scotts on the newest member of their family.♥ Gregg Vogel has given **Maggie** a second chance by accepting her into his Cleveland home; she keeps **Scooter** company all day long.♥ **Ozzie** hit a home run with the Pasternacks of Rocky River and takes care of his girl, **Allie**, another Buckeye HRS graduate.♥ **Ramona** has a new bunny pal (another Buckeye HRS alum) and new parents Jennifer and Derek in South Euclid. ♥ **Saffron Patch and Peppermint Pattie (formerly Frankie and Jessie)** have a new lease on life -- and their own bedroom -- with Nasike and Wes in Munroe Falls.



*Introducing Rabbits To Each Other
Cont'd.*

“Won’t you groom me?”

When one rabbit approaches another with head bowed, a posture known as presenting, s/he is asking to be groomed. The question is who’s going to break down and start the grooming ritual?

“That’s more like it!”

When one bunny grooms the other, the relationship has taken a major step forward. The only problem is that sometimes one bunny does all the grooming! The other bun will naturally want a turn, and frustration can lead to nips and bites. You can help move your buns through this impasse by dabbing something tasty on the top of their heads—a splash of plain apple juice, for example, or pureed banana.

Since bonding involves considerable preparation, here are some helpful articles:

www.rabbit.org/journal/3-8/rabbits-in-the-plural.html

www.rabbit.org/faq/sections/introductions.html

www.ohare.org/vol1_2.htm#furred

www.rabbit.org/chapters/san-diego/behavior/bonding.html

www.rabbit.org/journal/4-4/tough-bonding.html



www.rabbit.org/chapters/san-diego/behavior/bonding-tips.html

www.rabbit.org/chapters/san-diego/behavior/expect.html

Holiday Raffle Results

And the winner is ... Paula Otter of Brunswick, OH. The five runners up, who each won a Funny Bunny Warning Sign by Pey Lu, the artist who donated the painting for our main prize, are: Clare Bozek, Stacie Hecht, Jane Mcleod, Ann Younger, Annette Tait. Congratulations to the winners and many thanks to all who supported the Buckeye HRS through the purchase of raffle tickets. Proceeds will allow us to make the future brighter for more needy bunnies in Ohio.





Spring Raffle to Benefit Buckeye HRS Foster Rabbits!

Shake off those winter blues and hop straight into spring with this one-of-a-kind, art-accessory bag. Scottish artist Annette Tait is once again generously donating a beautiful handbag for our second Spring Raffle. Inspired by Annette's rescue rabbit, Arabella is wearing her favorite huge-red-flowers-amid-foliage jumper. This is a beautiful 100% cotton with a visible twill type effect. It is very soft to the touch and the reds are a bright vibrant color.

When going on a special outing why not take your art-accessory bag with you? Arabella loves going out and meeting new admirers. When at home she loves to doze on a shelf while being admired by your house guests. She has delightful brown eyes and a sweet expression.

The bag is made of machine and hand-sewn parts. The straps are a strong black webbing. The sides are padded to give the body shape. The lining is a found soft cream cotton. A small pocket has been added which can hold a cell phone. The pocket is part of the same flower material. A small metal popper will keep the bag closed.

The edges are hand and machine sewn together with finished seams out. The base and chest are black felt and have a fleece insert for support. The face is hand painted in waterproof Gutta on a found white felt base. The legs have been drawn in with black fabric pen and machine stitched over. The plastic safety eyes are secured from inside.

Length approximately 11 inches x height 8 inches x depth 2.5 inches. Handle height from ears is approximately 5.5 inches.

Due to the small bits here and there this bag is not recommended for children under 3.

Of her handiwork, Annette says: "This bag has been lovingly made and has a few 'my gosh!'

and 'tut, tut' parts due to the hand sewing and sometimes erratic machine sewing. Arabella looks super in her bright flowers and I hope she will find a loving home and make you happy."

All proceeds will go directly to our foster program and will ensure that needy bunnies have a safe haven until they find the happiness of a permanent home. **Tickets cost \$1 each and you may buy as many as you wish. All entries must be postmarked no later than March 25, 2010.** Please include your phone number and email (if available) with your check or money order and indicate it's for the raffle. Mail your request to: Buckeye HRS, P.O. Box 5767, Athens, OH 45701. The lucky winner will be notified before Easter.



This exquisite bag is best viewed in color on our website at www.ohare.org/gifts-raffle.htm

Artist's Statement

I live in Scotland and am a member of Etsy for Animals. I am a proud rescue mum to two precious gentle rabbits. I also donate 20% from every pet portrait I do to the rescue of choice.

Annette Tait

www.dragonhouseofyuen.co.uk

Email: dhoy@lumison.co.uk



MEMBERSHIP FORM

Your \$33.00 annual membership in the Buckeye HRS includes:

- National membership (\$18.00) and 3-4 issues of the *House Rabbit Journal*
 - Local membership (\$15.00) and issues of Harelines
- If you are already a national member, your local fee is \$15.00

- I would like to donate \$_____ to help a foster rabbit (vet care, supplies)
- I would like to donate \$_____ in memory of _____.
The grieving family receives an acknowledgment of your gracious gesture.

I would like to volunteer to:

- Distribute information to vets
- Assist with mailing
- Help at Buckeye HRS booth at Pet Expos and fairs
- Other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____ Phone _____

E-mail address _____

Bunnies' names and special dates _____

Please make checks payable to:

Buckeye

House Rabbit Society

P.O. Box 5767

Athens, OH 45701

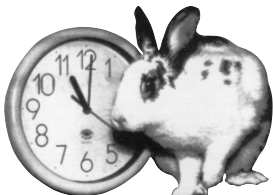
All donations are tax-deductible.



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Buy a bunny a little time...