

Paws-It!

Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter



Volume 14 Issue 1

The Importance of Volunteers!



Although you may not know it, volunteering for just an hour or two a week helps animal shelters to a great extent! Just like all other shelters, our Ferret Shelter needs lots of people to commit to loving and caring for all our wonderful fuzzies. Whether its playing with them, clipping nails, giving baths, changing bedding, or hanging up hammocks; it all makes our friendly critters happier. Not only do the ferrets benefit, but you learn quite a lot also!

I just started volunteering at the Shelter, and I realized how much you could learn from helping there. I've learned so much about ferrets in just a few days! By volunteering, you learn about everything that can happen to ferrets, how playful they are, and how much attention they really need. They are not high maintenance pets if you know how to deal with their daily needs. Volunteering at the Shelter has taught me how much they need to play, sleep, eat, drink, and be handled each day. It has been a great experience, and I plan on dedicating lots of time to the lil' critters.

At this time, there are a few volunteers at the Shelter each day, committing a few hours to the ferrets' care. If

Written by Kirsten Bayless

we had more people willing to volunteer, then the work needing to be done each day would go faster and be easier for all. Since there are currently around 40 ferrets at the Shelter, there is a lot to be done for each and every ferret. If you come volunteer, there will be more attention for all the fuzzies, and each one can be loved on and cared for. You have no idea how much the ferrets love getting attention that's not from their normal every day siblings and buddies. Come spend a day at the Shelter, and help love the critters! They will love you for it, and so will the other volunteers!



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Did you call me?

How to Contact Us!

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Shelter Email:
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Website:
<http://washingtonferret.org>

What's New?

General Update:

Our Shelter is loving all the new volunteers! Thank you so much for stopping by & lending a hand! The ferrets have literally been worn out by the time we close the doors on Saturdays. If you're interested in volunteering, please see our website for information, hours & paperwork. You're also welcome to stop by between 10am & 4pm on any Saturday.

Flea Season:

'Tis the season for fleas! Be sure all your furry critters, and especially your ferrets, are protected against fleas & ticks. Flea bites in large quantities can cause anemia in ferrets, so it is very important that they are kept safe from fleas. Over the counter flea products like Frontline or Advantage

can be purchased at your local pet store. Your veterinarian can also recommend a flea regimen for your entire fur-family!

Achoo:

Ferrets can catch and pass on influenza. If you're feeling a little under the weather, be sure to wash your hands frequently and stay away from the ferrets if at all possible. If not, make sure to keep them away from your face, keep your hands clean and watch them carefully for signs of runny noses, dehydration and/or appetite decrease. If they start displaying any of the above symptoms, be sure to get them into your vet right away. This is also your friendly reminder to get your flu shot!

Car Wash:

Would you like to help arrange WFRS'

First Annual Car Wash? Our wonderful PR Director needs your help! Contact Phil Vasquez at vdphil6@msn.com for more information.

Thank You:

A huge THANK YOU goes out to the VSC & Pet's Choice for July's First Annual Charity Auction benefiting our Shelter. We raised a considerable amount of much-needed money and were able to pay our vet bill down a bit.

Happy Tales:

Would you like to share your experience adopting, fostering or sponsoring a ferret? We'd love to hear from you!! Please send your story & a picture or two to washingtonferret@yahoo.com & we'll get it posted right away!

The Therapeutic Properties of Ferrets ...

When I attempt to clarify what it is that is so compelling about living with a ferret, I am reminded of that credit card commercial in which specific costs for a particular activity are listed one by one, culminating in the final overall cost--"priceless." Ultimately, that is the way I feel about the sum of costs and inconvenience involved in living with ferrets: the therapy of the overall process is "priceless."



When my son first brought home a "found" ferret in September of 2003, I was ambivalent about this creature at best. We already had a very easy-to-live with companionable 9-year-old chocolate lab and we had recently said farewell to 14 years with an equally agreeable tiger-stripe kitty. A ferret (despite the fact that he slept literally the entire first 3 days, leading to the name "Sandman") looked to me like potential work, and I was not happy to find out—after checking out a few library books—that I was right. Ferrets

are mischievous creatures who get into everything, chew on unpleasant, potentially harmful things like rubber, electric cords, and soap. They steal little objects and hide them. They are able to get into any opening at least 2" wide, and can very successfully hide themselves. They are good climbers, finding ways to get at houseplants, which they like to turn over and de-pot. In addition to these not very appealing traits, they are vulnerable to extremes of heat and cold—and can catch human colds and flu as well as dog and cat diseases like distemper and rabies. On many levels, it seemed to me, they were not the most desirable of creatures to have as pets. The costs for supplies and for a veterinarian were considerable as well, especially since there are no "ferret" veterinarians on Vashon, where we live.

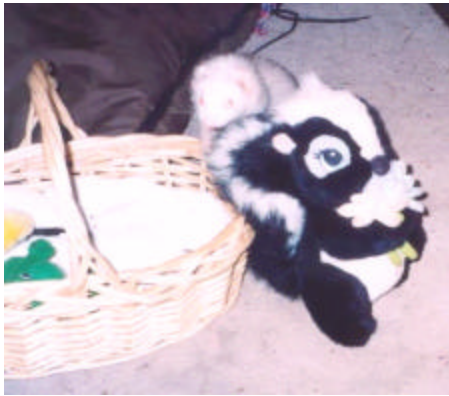
Within the first few weeks I experienced the "hidden" costs of trying to incorporate Sandman into our lives. My houseplants decreased by 2/3rds, because I did not know how clever a



Written by: Shelley Calabrese



ferret can be when determined to be somewhere he wants to be. My previously dusty, but otherwise clean, floor corners were subject to spur-of-the-moment deposits by a ferret who couldn't be bothered to remember where the litter box was. My cupboards were invaded, rummaged through, and rearranged. One of our supplies' drawers even became a ferret condo. My husband's work bag, tightly zipped, was invaded and his rather large rubber work gloves were somehow stolen! (Later we found a hole in the lower corner of the bag, but it did not seem large enough for the gloves to travel through...) Various other small objects—a calculator, a pen, a beanie baby, a package of Top Ramen soup, etc. simply disappeared. I worried about Sandman's equally mysterious disappearances under the couch or in the cupboards. I worried about the



hazards of electrical wires and the open back of my refrigerator. As I had read more than once, having a ferret is like having a perpetual 2-year-old. One must be constantly vigilant when a ferret is awake, or be absolutely sure his surroundings are ferret-proof.

Because of the above, I knew we had an important decision to make about Sandman—either to find a good ferret-savvy home for him, or begin learning how to live in a healthy relationship with him. I am so glad we made the latter choice. Or, it was probably made for us, because within the first three days, I knew I was probably “hooked.” And that is the indefinable thing that still baffles me. With the troubles, mischief, potential problems and “parenting” anxieties, what is it that makes these beings so appealing? Why is it we adopted a second ferret, named

Jasmine, from the WFRS in March 2004? Why opt for double trouble?

Sandman is a laid-back sable boy. When he was quite young, I spent lots of time getting to know him by singing to him, favoring songs that had the word “Sandman” in them (I know parts of 3 songs with this word). Our play consisted of my chasing him behind bookshelves and chairs. Jasmine, a DEW, is a different kind of energy entirely. She is deaf, yet somehow seems to “hear” everything she needs to, so I often forget she is deaf. She has always reminded me of a dandelion that has gone to seed—she is a wispy, delicate, white puff of a thing, yet she is very bold. My husband noted that she was aptly named, having a pleasant (truthfully) fragrance. Her play with me consists of her chasing me as much as me chasing her—she is entirely fearless. Sandman and Jasmine are very different beings, but they get along very well. When they are up and playing together, it is like being in the midst of a miniature stampede, punctuated by a variety of sounds—squeaks (Jasmine vocalizes when she plays) and other “Darth Vader” type noises dominating.

Now I find that one of the best times of my day is the early morning before work when we are all up together, me putting out fresh food and cleaning litter boxes (or in the vicinity of the litter boxes), while Sandman and Jasmine

scamper and leap and beep and play. And, over and over I ask myself... What is it that has made them so essential to my day and well-being?

We have long known that animals in general are good therapy for people and contribute to longer, healthier lives. But what is it about ferrets in particular? I have been thinking about it for almost a year now, and the closest I can come is that it is wonderful to be able to see and participate in the expression of pure joy in being alive which they embody so well. They are such “clear” beings—they sleep (and they sleep wonderfully, looking unimaginably cozy), eat and play—that’s all they do, yet they are somehow a distillation of pure “beingness,” the expression of a simple gladness in being alive. I am so grateful to have discovered this topsy-turvy, but joyous, ferret world, and the realization that “costs” can’t be calculated where the experience is “priceless.”



At the Bridge ... We would like to remember those fuzzies who brought us so much joy... Their time with us was too short.

Cara & Jeff said goodbye to their old girl, Trouble. She was very much loved and was lucky to have found her way to them. She was fortunate to spend very little time in the Shelter and got a home with them quickly after arriving.

Little Zoe, a Shelter girl, crossed the Bridge to be with Trouble on her journey. She battled anorexia, adrenal disease and depression for a long time. Her little body just couldn’t take any more.

Megan & Geoff let their old boy, Ozzy, go after many, many medical problems caused his quality of life to diminish. He was a crotchety old, bald man to the end, and is missed like crazy.

Iris and Richie also made the journey over the bridge this past month. They were Shelter kids that struggled with their new environments, losing their fight in the

end.

Sugar arrived in Lorayne’s care in horrendous shape. Bald and very pitiful looking, Lorayne cared for Sugar and nursed her through some tough times. Sugar’s body shut-down despite all the TLC and passed away in Lorayne’s arms.

BJ passed leaving Hella & Dave heartbroken. He was a wonderful little boy that had a long & happy life with Hella.

Sweet Waffles left Angie & family recently. He became overly stressed while boarding, and although we all did everything we could, he took a turn for the worse and they had to let him go. Sincere condolences to them.

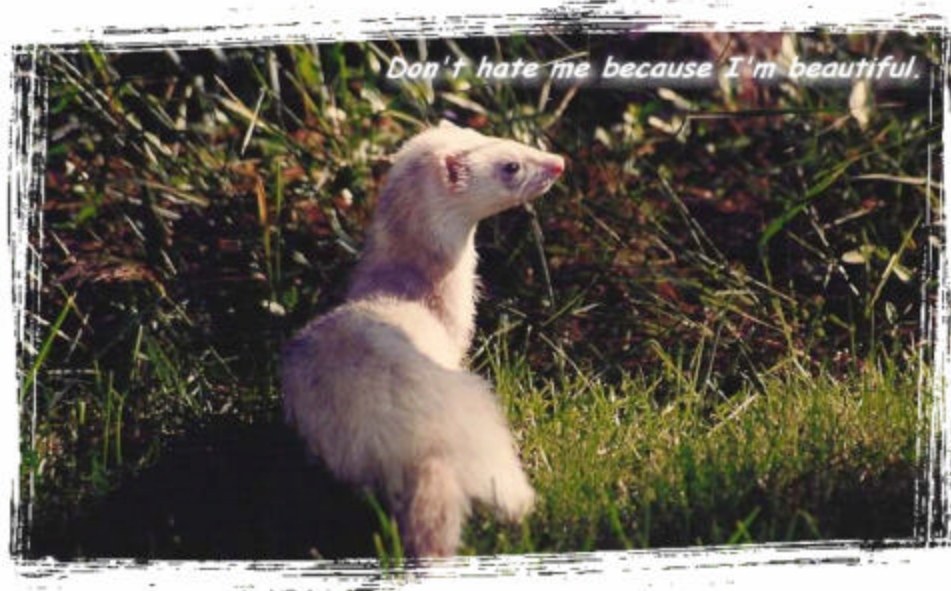
Bob and Phil let dear Taz go when his prostate made it impossible for him to urinate. He was a special boy who finally got out of the Shelter and into a *real*

home. Thank you both for giving him some happy time in his last few weeks.

Beth and Lori said goodbye to their sweet ferret kids, Kendler & Pip. Kendler had many wonderful years with Beth & Lori and he will be dearly missed. Pip was lucky enough to find her way to Beth & Lori’s wonderful care as well. She was babied throughout her elder years and couldn’t have asked for anything more.



Ferret Fotos:



Ferrets Seeking Homes ...

Adoptable Ferrets

Ares is a beautiful & soft light silver or dark-eyed white. She was spayed at our Shelter last month and now is ready to go to her new home!

Goliath is a huge, loveable hunk of a ferret. He was just neutered at our Shelter and is now ready to go home with a new family.

Sugar & Spice are young sable girls. They have fun, happy personalities and would love to go to a new home together.

Pelgia & Valentino are 3 year old sable girls. They have sweet temperaments and are already itching to get out of the Shelter. Come see them today!

Bonnie is a beautiful DEW girl. She is

much lighter than in her picture, as it was taken several years ago. Bonnie is a very personable girl and would be happy to join a group or just go home with you!

El Bandito is a chunky-monkey of a boy. He loves other ferrets and would do wonderfully in group. He has a sweet personality & loves to give kisses.

Jenna (f, silver/sable) is a sweet, older lady that is looking for a home. She has a gentle personality and would be a perfect "first ferret". Come meet this lovely girl today!

As the names imply, **Warp & Velocity** are spunky girls. They would play non-stop if you let them. Velocity can be a bit nippy, & would do best in a ferret-experienced home or one without small children.

Vincent & Garrett are two older dark sable boys. They're incredibly sweet and would love to go to a new home together.

Rocky & Bandit are both dark sable boys that are around a year old. They love other ferrets, playing and just need a new home.

Ranger (sable, m) & **Peaches** (albino, f) were just recently surrendered. They are both around 1-1.5 years old. Peaches has cataracts in both eyes and has limited vision. She may bite if scared. Ranger is a chubby cutie and is a sweetheart.

Cedar is a beautiful cinnamon ferret that was surrendered along with 3 other ferrets. He gets along great with others & would love a new buddy or two!

Pepper is an adorable black sable girl that was surrendered along with 3 other ferrets. She plays well with others and would love a home with other ferrets to play with.

Cirrus is a big sable boy that was surrendered along with 3 other ferrets. He gets along well with his buddies and would love a new home with other ferrets.

Surfer is a California dude with a fun personality. Surfer loves people and would like to go to a home where he can have a human all to himself!

Shadow is an adorable chocolate girl that would love a new home with other ferrets. She recently lost her buddy, and was then surrendered to us, so we'd love to see her get into a home quickly for her sake. She gets along well with others and is your typical happy ferret girl!

Spazz is a silly dark sable girl that would love a new home. She's been at the shelter for quite some time now. She gets along well with others, is healthy & all she needs now is a home! Won't you come meet her?

Rigby is a 2 1/2 year old, sable, female ferret that was purchased from a feed store in Arizona. Rigby is a classic looking ferret with a black mask that makes her look like a little bandit. She weighs under 2 pounds. She just recently had her shots. **Tess** is a 1 1/2 year old, sable, female ferret that was purchased from a Petco in Washington. Tess has a whiter face than Rigby and is a little larger but is still fairly small. Tess is also current on her shots although hers were a few months ago.

Fidget is a 2 year old blaze female that loves to jump & climb. Her buddy, **Sprite** is a 2 year old sable female. Both of them really enjoy playing outside and with cats (they previously

lived with a 17lb cat).

Frankie is a sensitive boy that is missing his family. He adores his temporary foster home and really lets loose with those crazy dances of his. **Sadie** is a feisty little thing. She's a busy-body through and through and would love to go home with her buddy, Frankie.

Rugrat is a cute dark sable girl. She and her brother play well with others and have been at the shelter for a long time. It's time to get a home of their own! **Lucifer**, despite his name, is a sweetheart! He's a big albino boy that loves his sister and most other ferrets. Come meet this happy pair!



Rocky is just the sweetest cuddle bug that loves her humans to the point of kissing them when asked to. She also gets along great with the family cat & other more mellow, quiet ferrets.

Apple is a sweet albino boy, that's around 3-4 years old. He was found wandering the streets, but we were unable to reunite him with his owner. He loves other ferrets and is a happy boy in general.

Mayhem is the big boy of this duo. He's 3-4 yrs old & has a cataract in one eye. **Mischief** is a five year old dark sable girl that's in good health. They get along well with other ferrets and are a happy couple of ferts.

Precious is a tiny silver girl & **Lucky** is a smaller chocolate boy. Both love to cuddle & need to stay together for their own well-being. They play well with others & would make an easy addition to any home.

Foster Ferrets

Note: We do not charge an adoption fee for our foster ferrets, though many of them will require a vet visit (or many!) in their golden years. The Shelter pro-

vides medical care and any medications that your foster ferret will need in exchange for a monthly donation to help cover your ferret's medical costs. Even just a few dollars, once a month, helps keep our foster program running, so that we are able to continue helping elderly/ill ferrets.

Pudge (dew, m) & **Pooh** (chocolate sable, m) are between 2 and 4 years old. They're happy kids who were spoiled rotten by their previous owners. They'd love to go to a new home soon! Pudge was recently diagnosed with adrenal disease and will need to return to the Shelter each month for a Lupron shot.

Hershey is a feisty little girl that only likes her buddy, Marshmallow. **Marshmallow** is a beautiful DEW boy that will need to come back to the shelter once a month for a Lupron shot.

Someone literally threw sweet **Oscar** in the garbage can! He came to us covered in fleas, had ear mites galore and he was missing most of his fur. He's since been treated for pests and started on Lupron. Oscar is now doing wonderfully and is beginning to grow in new fur. He will need to return to the Shelter each month for a Lupron shot, but otherwise, he's all set to go!

Mickey is a sweet boy that loves to snuggle. He was recently diagnosed with adrenal disease so will need to return to the Shelter once each month for a Lupron shot. His buddy, **Minnie**, is a feisty little girl with cataracts in both eyes. She is otherwise completely healthy & would love to go to any home with him.

Prince & Princess are wonderful ferrets. Princess has adrenal disease & will need to return to the Shelter once each month for a Lupron shot. They would make great "first" ferrets for someone.



Washington Ferret Rescue and Shelter
18724 Bothell Way NE
Bothell, WA 98011

We're on the Web!

www.washingtonferret.org

A 501(c)3 non-profit organization

Yes, I want to help Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter!

Enclosed is my donation of:

\$5.00

\$10.00

\$15.00

\$20.00

Other

Please make your donation payable to Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter (or WFRS) and mail to:

18724 Bothell Way NE

Bothell, WA 98011

Contributions are tax-deductible under 501(c)3 regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. Appropriate receipts will be mailed for your records.

Our Wish List:

Donations of time or money are always gladly accepted & appreciated!

Hammocks, Security Cubes—homemade or store bought, we can always use hanging sleep sacks of some sort.

Wood stove pellets for litter (found at Safeway, local hardware stores, the Grange, etc.)

Cages or carriers—clean or dirty, we don't care!

Volunteers to wash laundry, scoop boxes, scrub cages and cuddle ferrets.

More foster homes! Do you have room in your home for a few extra fuzzies for a few days/weeks? Do you have any medical training or are you interested in learning? Let us know!

Ferret Food (Mazuri, Totally Ferret, Marshalls & The Ferret Store's Superior Choice)

I am moving! Please see below:

Yes, I know of someone else who would like to receive the newsletters.

Please send one to the following:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:
