



CASCADE SUMMIT

NEWS FROM CASCADE FERRET NETWORK VOL. 7 ISSUE 1 / WINTER, 2006

Network Status Update

Who We Are

The Cascade Ferret Network (CFN) is different from traditional ferret shelters: instead of housing the ferrets in a single place, the CFN depends upon a network of qualified foster homes, each of which cares for only a few ferrets at a time. This network approach to sheltering ensures our foster ferrets receive the highest possible quality of care. You can reach the CFN at (503) 231-0887 or www.cascadeferret.org



Ferrets

During October, November and December of 2005, CFN took in 11 ferrets and found new homes for 13 ferrets, three of which were through referrals. Sadly, four long time shelter ferrets left us for the rainbow bridge. Ricochet finally succumbed to his long battle with insulinoma and inflammatory bowel disease. Midge's medications were no longer effective in controlling her low blood sugar and she was euthanized. Pluto's heart disease finally took its toll and Kitkat had to be euthanized on Christmas Eve when she went into a severe hypoglycemic seizure. No surgical procedures were needed during the last 3 months of 2005, but eleven lupron injections were given to shelter ferrets in order to

alleviate symptoms of adrenal disease. There are currently 25 ferrets in the foster network.

Ferrets 2005

During 2005, CFN took in a total of 35 ferrets and found new homes for 47 shelter ferrets and 17 referral ferrets; resulting in a total of 64 ferrets finding new homes through CFN. Fifteen shelter ferrets passed away during 2005.

Financial

Income from donations, the sale of merchandise, adoption fees and boarding services help to pay for the veterinary costs of the Cascade Ferret Network. The CFN relies on contributions to pay for food, bedding, litter and other expenses such as phone and utility bills.

The following is a preliminary summary of the revenue and expenses for CFN during the 4th quarter of 2005 and also a summary of the grand totals for 2005.

4th quarter 2005

Revenue

Adoption fees.....	\$633
Donations (Cash).....	\$4,760
Frosty Ferret Frolic.....	\$817
<u>Merchandise profit.....</u>	<u>\$205</u>
TOTAL.....	\$6,364

Expenses

Vet/medical costs.....	\$3,635
<u>Other.....</u>	<u>\$592</u>
TOTAL.....	\$4,227

For 2005

Revenue

Adoption fees.....	\$1,853
Donations (Cash).....	\$12,853
Event Gross.....	\$5,483
<u>Merchandise profit.....</u>	<u>\$2,511</u>
TOTAL.....	\$23,275

Expenses

Vet/medical costs.....	\$13,760
<u>Other.....</u>	<u>\$2,468</u>
TOTAL.....	\$16,228

Helping Hands

Volunteers

The backbone of the Cascade Ferret Network is our team of devoted volunteers. The CFN's high standard of ferret care is only possible because of our foster parents and volunteers.

One of the most rewarding ways to help out the CFN is to provide foster care for CFN ferrets. A foster parent takes one or more ferrets into their home and cares for them as their own pets, but the CFN takes care of their medical costs and provides a cage as well as other accessories. Some foster ferrets are short-term residents who need a little extra time to recover from surgery or receive their vaccinations before they are placed into a permanent home. Other foster ferrets need extra attention to recover from a neglectful or abusive past -- these kids need anything from extra feedings each day to lots of handling and love to get them past problem behavior. (i.e. biting)

Another way to help out is to volunteer. There are lots and lots of opportunities for those who would like to contribute their time. Whether it's helping out at public events or assisting the organization to help it run more smoothly, ALL CFN volunteers are greatly needed and very much appreciated!

Donations

The Cascade Ferret Network is a 501(C)(3) non-profit corporation, so your donations may be tax deductible. Donations towards the veterinary bill can be made directly to Southwest Animal Hospital. Call them at (503) 643-2137. Their address is: 6139 SW Murray Blvd, Beaverton, OR 97008.

Donation Acknowledgement

CFN is grateful to all the individuals that made financial donations during October, November and December



of 2005. The following individuals made generous donations of cash to CFN during the 4th quarter of 2005: *Colleen Spivey, Laura Satterfield, Zack Watson, Beverly Muhlhauser, Rebecca Bogorad, Janet Terrell, Tony Petrarca, Dale Micherone, Floyd Carley, Sally Filler, Katie Daniels, Kent Mecham, Shelby Hartmann, Gwen Steinbach, and Kelli Carlson.* Several donors work for companies (*Nike, PGE, Microsoft*) that have matching funds programs so that their donations to CFN was increased by 50-100%; thank you go to *Ross & Jennifer Bachman, Keeli Adams, and Bryan & Nancy Lipsey.* Others donate via payroll deductions through *United Way*, thank you go to *Andrew & Ingrid Heckt.* Another thoughtful donor, *Jeff Mulcaster,* wrote a year's worth of monthly post dated checks to CFN. In addition to Jeff Mulcaster's generous monthly donations, after reading about Duncan in the newsletter, Jeff paid for Duncan's surgery! Two other notable donations came during the 4th quarter of 2005. A generous donation from *CanCon Enterprises Ltd.* and for the 4th year in a row, CFN was the recipient of a \$1,000 check from the *Mugs & Lacy Charitable Trust!*

HELP CFN AND SAVE A TREE

The *Cascade Summit* newsletter is being offered in an electronic format (Adobe Acrobat) with color photos. If you are willing to give up getting a hard copy sent to you, please let us know and give us your email address. We will notify you via email when the next issue of the newsletter is available online. The CFN will keep all email addresses private and never provide the list to any other organization for any reason.

Event Reports

Frosty Ferret Frolic December 4th, 2006



The annual winter fund-raiser has been a tradition of CFN; and facing the challenge of not having a central facility to hold the event we packed up our stuff and headed out to the Oregon Humane Society. The Frosty Ferret Frolic had all of the traditional fund-raising amenities from the vet checks, to the silent auction, to shelter ferrets in a playpen ready to meet visitors.



There was an informative speech about Aleutian Disease by Dr. Sarah Willcox, and we even convinced Santa to come to be available for photo opportunities. Having the Frosty Ferret Frolic at the Oregon Humane Society was a new and excitingly successful achievement.



We would like to thank everyone who contributed their time, donated their merchandise and crafts, and of course everyone who came and supported the CFN!



A very big thanks to volunteers at the FFF: Kelli Carlson, Katrina Ramsell, Julie Tench, Elayne Barclay, Jennifer Fresta, Lavon Grahn, Kitty Mackey, Heather Daniels, Tammi & Nathan Ortega, Steve Baron, Teresa Kaminski, Deb Taylor, Marilu Chamberlain & Gary Stallworth, Mike Darnell & Darlene Johnson, Raychel Swallow, April & Damon Gallaty, Carla Almaraz, Cheree Williams, Heidi Mackenzie, Sandy Streit, Sarah Willcox DVM, Meg Frey DVM and Mark Burgess DVM.



Thank you to the following contributors: Southwest Animal Hospital, Kitty Mackey, Erin McNeil, Sally Filler, Hyper-fur Ferrets' Products, Ferret.com, Ferret Depot, Superpet, Wysong Corp and Hills/Science Diet.

Thanks to the veterinarians who provided ferret health checks at the event: Dr. Mark Burgess and Dr. Katrina Ramsell of Southwest Animal Hospital; Dr. Meg Frey and Dr. Sarah Willcox of Bob Grove's Lake Oswego Veterinary Clinic.



Ferret Champions

To be a champion can mean more than one thing. A champion can be an advocate or defender, or someone that does battle for another's honor. A champion can also be someone that shows marked superiority. In this column I am going to focus on a person that is a ferret champion in all of these respects. The champion in this issue of the Cascade Summit is

Carla Almaraz



I first met Carla not long after I became addicted to ferrets. It must have been in the early 1990's. We had recently taken in our first "second-hand" ferret, Kiva, (our previous ferrets had been purchased as kits from the pet store) and had our first ferret emergency. Kiva swallowed a bunch of pencil erasers and had to have emergency surgery to remove the blockage from her intestines. We almost lost her, but I credit Carla in a large part with her survival. She cared enough to call us to see how Kiva was doing and gave us advice on getting her to eat soup when she refused to eat anything and was dying. That is how Carla is, always willing to go the extra mile to help a ferret in dire straits.

Carla first entered the world of ferret ownership in the fall of 1988 when her husband saw some ferrets in a pet store and asked her to go back to look at them. She said, "We

came home with a light silver male Marshall Farm ferret we named Jocko. He got the name from a character in a TV commercial for "non-stop" batteries. The second ferret came along just one month later when I reached in to pet a ferret in a pet store, another ferret ran up my sleeve. Tillie lived to be 9.5 years old, one of my longest-lived ferrets. I have no idea why we got our first ferret as we already had two dogs (Sultan and Brandi), one cat (Sassy), two dwarf tegu lizards, and two tarantulas at the time. It was an impulse purchase, but it was not a mistake. We will never have any more lizards or dogs, maybe a tarantula, and do have another cat (Boomer), but we will ALWAYS have ferrets. They are in my blood."

In fact at one time Carla had 16 ferrets in her home, but currently she has four pet ferrets (all adopted through CFN) and one foster ferret. When asked what she enjoys the most about having ferrets in her home, Carla said, "The most enjoyable aspect to being owned by ferrets is their persistence. 'Where there's a way, there's a will' accurately describes a ferret. This results in me having to figure out ways to outsmart a ferret. While this seems like an easy task, it isn't! For instance, ferret-proofing your household isn't a one-time event. It needs to happen every time your ferret is out. And even with the most diligent ferret-proofing, there will still be times when you will say 'Riker, *how* did you get up there!'"

I asked Carla what she enjoys least about ferrets as companion animals, she stated, "I believe that most people would say the least favorite thing is saying goodbye to a beloved pet. While I agonize whenever I have to make that decision, I know that both of us have benefited from the relationship, no matter how long or how short. So to answer the question, for me the least favorite thing is, humm,

well, there isn't! I think that's why I still find ferrets to be the perfect pet for me. They are portable, they are quiet, and they are fun to be around!"

When asked what she thought was the biggest challenge associated with having ferrets as pets, Carla said, "Well, after being owned by 32 ferrets over the last 18 years, I still love finding out what each individual ferret likes and dislikes. Every ferret I meet has a different personality, a different smell, different games, different ticklish places, etc. I find it challenging and stimulating to find out exactly what makes *that* ferret "tick." Sometimes food is the way to their heart or it's playing a certain game. It's never the same thing twice. Since ferrets can't tell me what they like and since they require stimulation to thrive, it's a challenge for me to figure out their unique wants!"

I asked Carla to share one of her favorite ferret stories, "I took two of my ferrets to the veterinarian (many years ago in another state) for an examination. While waiting for the vet, I let the two ferrets explore the room. Rommel went over to a cabinet and rolled over on his back. With Riker standing about 4 feet away, Rommel used his front paws to flip open the door. Riker stopped what he was doing and just stared at what Rommel just accomplished. Rommel proceeded to go into the cabinet, something that couldn't be done at my house because I have magnets on the doors. Riker must have been duly impressed by his younger "brother" because Riker walked up to the cabinet, rolled over on his back, and flipped open the door of the other cabinet. I started laughing so hard that the staff came in to see what was up!"

Carla has been involved with the Cascade Ferret Network from day one. She said, "I got involved with the CFN because I wanted to pour my time and money into a ferret



shelter that valued a ferret as an individual pet and not as a commodity. I am currently a foster parent and have been since the CFN was founded. I also assist with fund-raising events, served on the Board of Directors, and assisted with the paperwork required for becoming a tax-exempt 501(C)(3) organization."

"The best part about being involved with the CFN is doing something for an organization that puts the welfare and needs of the ferrets ahead of making money. The CFN is an organization built on ethics and principles. It is an organization that can be counted on to do the right thing every time and, for that, I am proud of it!"

"The least enjoyable thing is that I can't spend as much time as I would like helping CFN. Like almost everyone, I have a lot of projects going on which take away from the time I should donate to the organization."

Carla said the following about providing foster care for CFN ferrets, "I'm a foster parent to ferrets that have very few or no other options. I've had ferrets so long and have seen so many medical conditions that I can deal with virtually any situation, such as expressing a bladder, daily injections of medications or fluids, and hand feeding multiple times per day. As such, foster ferrets that come into my home stay here until they pass away. There are always a number of these ferrets in the shelter at any one time, and I would love to take in them all. But just like the CFN, I know my limits and will not bring in more animals than I can provide proper care for at any one time."

I hope CFN will be blessed with Carla and other Ferret Champions like her for many years to come! If you want to become a Ferret Champion, contact CFN (ferret@cascadeferret.org or 503-231-0887) about volunteering.

Ferret Story Updates

Each issue of the Cascade Summit features the stories of a few shelter ferrets. In this first issue of 2006 we wanted to look back and give updates on the ferrets featured during 2005.



Ione was featured as needing a sponsor in the winter issue of the Cascade Summit. She was found as a stray with very strange health problems (a fever, abnormally high heart rate, not eating, anemic, and neurological problems). We were unable to figure out what was causing her problems and she gradually improved enough that she was playing and eating normally again. Happily Ione went to a wonderful home up in Washington along with another CFN ferret, Becket, in April.



Ruby was in the spotlight at the beginning of 2005 to try to find her a new home. Ruby, being an albino, in addition to having had adrenal disease and two surgeries in her past, was in the 'hard to place' category of shelter ferrets. Luckily it didn't take Ruby long to find someone that appreciated her attributes and she was adopted in early 2005.



Zest has been in the network since 2000. She was featured in the spring issue of the newsletter to try to finally find her a forever home. Her longtime cage mate had recently passed away and we thought now someone might be willing to adopt her. Zest is currently in a foster home and is about 5 years old. She recently had surgery for insulinomas and is doing well. She has been placed on a medication for Inflammatory Bowel Disease, diagnosed from a biopsy taken during her surgical procedure. Zest could use a sponsor to help pay for her long term medication.



Pluto was featured as needing a sponsor in the spring issue of the Cascade Summit. He arrived in 2002 with a large group of ferrets, most of which were eventually adopted. Early in 2005 the vet found that Pluto had a heart problem and needed to be placed on lifelong medications to help his heart work better. Pluto was immediately sponsored by Valarie and Scott Walker. They were willing to adopt him as well, but Pluto was aggressive with other ferrets and they wanted a buddy for their current ferret, Hershey, so Pluto stayed at the



shelter with his cage mate Kitkat. In September Pluto went to live in Canada as a foster ferret with the former network coordinator. He was still hauling around his stuffed animals at first, but then he started to become less and less active and have more and more problems coughing. His heart condition was starting to impact his quality of life. He continued to go downhill gradually, and eventually he passed in late October. His friend, Kitkat, was with him until the end.



Duncan was featured as a ferret needing a sponsor in the 3rd issue of the newsletter last year. Poor Duncan was in bad shape when he arrived as a stray at CFN. He was bald and was having problems urinating, both strong indications of adrenal disease. Within days, and before he could get in for surgery, his urinary tract became blocked and he could not urinate. An emergency procedure was required to place a catheter into his bladder until his surgery could be done. He came through surgery fine, grew in a full coat of hair, put on weight and has started enjoying life again. Duncan was very lucky to find an extremely generous sponsor who paid for his entire surgery! CFN is very grateful to Jeff Mulcaster for his generous donation. Duncan's luck continued and he was recently adopted into a new forever home!



Zoey was featured in the summer issue of the Cascade Summit as a ferret needing some extra help finding a new home. She is a mid-aged sprite that was turned into CFN needing adrenal surgery. She recovered from the surgical procedure just fine, but most people will not consider a ferret of her age and health history for adoption. Luckily for Zoey, Clyde Prince read about her in the newsletter and called CFN right before the former network coordinator was poised to leave for Canada with Zoey as a foster ferret. He wanted to adopt Zoey, but couldn't do it until he moved back to Oregon within a short period of time. Zoey is now in a different foster home in Portland awaiting her new owner's retrieval, which should take place shortly.



Maggie was featured as a ferret in need of a forever home in the most recent issue of the newsletter. She hasn't been adopted yet, but she is enjoying life in her foster home where she has a playmate that adores her. She also acquired another admirer in the form of a sponsor. Maggie was sponsored by Peter Muhlhauser of Australia in the form of a Christmas present from his daughter, Beverly.



Kitkat was in the fall issue of the Cascade Summit as a ferret in need of a sponsor. She came to CFN in the fall of 2002 with a large group of ferrets. She recently had insulinoma surgery, but within a few months was back on medication for low blood sugar. She needed a sponsor to help pay for her medication. Kitkat did get a sponsor soon after the newsletter came out. Floyd Carley, who has given CFN a substantial amount of financial support over the years, sponsored Kitkat in December. Kitkat moved to Canada with the former network coordinator of CFN along with her remaining cage mate, Pluto. Pluto died about a month after the move, but Kitkat was friends with all the other ferrets in the foster home, so she had companions to snuggle with. Sadly, at 3:00 in the morning of Christmas Eve, Kitkat began to have violent seizures. She had been showing more and more signs of her low blood sugar condition, but we had always been able to pull her back with a little corn syrup and A/D soup, and a recent increase in her medications seemed to help. On this morning there was no pulling her out, and we could not leave her to suffer, and so we took her to an emergency vet clinic (Vancouver Animal Emergency Clinic -- they were very nice and ferret knowledgeable) and helped her over the Rainbow Bridge. Kitkat was loved by us and her cage mates, and we all miss her sweet and gentle presence.



Health Matters

Respiratory Disease in the Ferret Part I

Katrina D. Ramsell Ph.D, DVM

Ferrets, like dogs, cats and other creatures are susceptible to various respiratory tract infections and diseases. Although respiratory ailments are observed less commonly than many other diseases in ferrets, they can be serious and life threatening if not treated appropriately. In addition to infections, inhalation of food and other substances, environmental irritants or allergens, trauma, foreign bodies, and systemic diseases, such as heart failure and cancer can cause abnormal conditions affecting the respiratory system.

Respiratory diseases are frequently localized to the upper or lower respiratory tract. The upper respiratory system includes the nose, nasal passages, sinuses, larynx, and trachea. Sneezing, discharge from the eyes or nose, and open-mouthed breathing are all signs of an upper respiratory ailment. Diseases of the lower respiratory tract affect the primary bronchi and the rest of the lung tissues. Labored breathing, coughing, wheezing, and respiratory crackles are signs associated with diseases involving the lower respiratory tract. Healthy ferrets should have cold, slightly wet noses and should have a resting respiratory rate around 35 breaths per minute.

General respiratory conditions

Sinusitis

Ferrets can suffer from “sinusitis”, which is a condition where the sinus passages are inflamed and sometimes infected. Signs of sinusitis can include a decreased appetite, nasal discharge, sneezing, noisy breathing, and sometimes open-mouthed breathing. Allergies and an infection at the root of an upper canine tooth can both cause sinusitis in ferrets. Although I recently diagnosed a ferret with a cryptococcus-induced sinusitis, fungal infections rarely cause respiratory disease in ferrets. A ferret showing symptoms indicative of sinusitis should be examined by a veterinarian.

Bronchitis

Bronchitis is sometimes diagnosed in ferrets. Viruses, bacteria, allergens, and inhaled irritants are common causes of bronchitis. Cigarette smoke, scented litters, and wood shavings with aromatic oils should be avoided. Blankets and hammocks in a ferret’s cage should preferably be washed in a detergent free of scents and dyes. Bedding should be washed frequently to prevent accumulation of urine, feces, dust, and other debris, and cages should be cleaned and thoroughly rinsed on a regular basis. Cages should be properly ventilated to help prevent buildup of toxic, noxious odors (such as ammonia from urine), and air filters can help remove dust and other unwanted particles from the air. If you have ferrets that sporadically sneeze, wheeze, cough, or have watery discharge from the eyes or nose, you should examine the environment for a potential cause of irritation and remove the culprit if it is found. If no source of irritation is found and your ferret’s illness is not resolving, or especially if it is getting progressively worse, then your ferret should be seen by a veterinarian and appropriate diagnostic tests should be done.

Treatment of bronchitis initially involves identifying and removing the source of irritation, but medical therapy may be necessary to give your ferret some relief, especially if no cause for the condition can be found.

Pneumonia

Pneumonia is rarely diagnosed in ferrets, but it can be serious if a ferret does suffer from the condition. Ferrets that are immunosuppressed (such as those with canine distemper, human influenza virus, or Aleutian disease virus) are more susceptible to pneumonia. Several types of bacteria can cause pneumonia in ferrets, and secondary bacterial infections can be life-threatening. Ferrets can also acquire a type of pneumonia called “aspiration pneumonia” from inhaling food, medications, or other substances, and this condition is often secondary to another disease known as megaesophagus (a disease where the esophagus does not push food into the stomach appropriately). Signs of pneumonia include lethargy, labored or difficult breathing, discharge from the nose, fever, and sometimes coughing. Ferrets with pneumonia occasionally die suddenly without showing previous signs of illness. X-rays are helpful in determining if a ferret has pneumonia, and blood tests can further indicate if an infection is present. Ferrets with pneumonia require supportive care and usually require hospitalization with antibiotics and supplemental fluids.

Systemic diseases associated with respiratory conditions

Cardiac Disease

Cardiac (heart) disease is common in ferrets, and middle-aged to older ferrets with respiratory difficulty frequently have underlying heart disease that has progressed to heart failure. Congestive heart failure



often results in fluid accumulation in the chest and/or abdominal cavity as well as various tissues and organs. Fluid in and around the lungs can make breathing difficult, as can pressure on the diaphragm. Ferrets with advanced stages of congestive heart failure are often lethargic, have labored breathing, and have poor appetites. Although the disease cannot be reversed or cured, there are medications that can control the symptoms, at least for a period of time, and greatly improve your ferret's quality of life.

Lymphoma

Lymphoma is a type of cancer frequently observed in ferrets. Adult (lymphocytic) lymphoma is most common in older ferrets and is usually associated with enlargement of peripheral, abdominal, and/or thoracic lymph nodes. Juvenile (thymic) lymphoma is a type of cancer that affects young ferrets primarily less than two years of age and is associated with a cancerous thymus that enlarges and interferes with lung expansion and breathing. Signs of juvenile lymphoma usually come on quite quickly, and obvious signs of debilitation may not be observed before the ferret becomes critically ill. Ferrets with symptoms of difficulty breathing and lethargy should be taken to a veterinarian immediately. Lymphoma is extremely difficult to cure, and the most realistic goal of treatment is to put the cancer into remission for a period of time.

Colds and Flu

With the cold and flu season well under way, many people are probably wondering if their ferrets can catch their cold or the flu. Although ferrets can contract human influenza, there is no evidence to indicate that ferrets can be infected by the human rhinovirus, which is a common cause of human colds. A variety of viruses cause the human

“cold”. People frequently believe they have a cold when they actually have a mild case of the flu or a bacterial sinus infection. Rarely do people actually know exactly what type of bacteria or virus is causing their flu-like symptoms. Therefore, although it may be technically correct to say that your ferret cannot catch your cold, if you have the symptoms of a cold or the flu, you should assume your ferret is able to contract your illness.

Human Influenza

Human influenza virus is a common viral cause of respiratory disease in pet ferrets. It is a virus from the family Orthomyxoviridae, and there are several strains of the virus that can infect ferrets. Ferrets contract the flu when exposed to people or other ferrets infected with the influenza virus, and ferrets can transmit the flu to people. Transmission occurs by inhalation of aerosolized droplets and occurs for a few days from the time a ferret spikes a fever.

Influenza results in mostly upper respiratory symptoms in both ferrets and people. In addition to a fever that lasts about 48 hours, sneezing, watery eyes, nasal discharge (clear to mucoid and yellowish-green), lethargy, and a decreased appetite are all signs of influenza in ferrets. Signs of influenza are usually mild in older ferrets, but some strains of the virus can cause more serious disease and result in pneumonia. Ferrets with simultaneous diseases are usually more severely affected. Very young ferrets often develop a much more serious upper respiratory tract infection than adult ferrets and they can die from mucus obstructing their lower airway.

Influenza is usually diagnosed based on a ferret's symptoms and history of exposure. Treatment of influenza usually consists of supportive care at home,

but severely ill ferrets may require hospitalization. Supplemental feedings and/or fluids may be needed for ferrets that don't eat or drink adequately on their own. Antibiotics may be necessary to prevent secondary bacterial infections. If your ferret displays symptoms indicative of a cold or the flu, never give over-the-counter medications unless your veterinarian specifically recommends them.

You should seek veterinary care for your ferret if symptoms seem severe or if they persist for more than a few days. Reducing your ferret's exposure to the influenza virus in addition to providing a clean, sanitary environment will help prevent your ferret from catching the flu. If you have a cold or the flu, wash your hands frequently, especially before handling your ferret. Don't kiss, sneeze, or cough on your ferret while you are ill.

~Part II Continued in next issue.

CFN Foster Parents

Thanks to the following individuals that provided foster care from October to December:

- Kelli Carlson:** Irish, Quincy
- Karen Kloeck:** Truffle & Candy
- Debi Currier:** Tempest & Calaban
- Jennifer Fresta:** Mr. Green Jeans, Padme & Anakin, Olympus
- Katie Hanson:** Barnaby & Bartholomew
- Carla Almaraz:** Tattletail
- Jennifer Johnston & Mike Guarino:** Lita
- Lavon Grah:** Ricochet, Possum, Zima, Sophie, Duncan, Big Bear, Enya, Zoey, Hobo, Elliot
- Darlene Johnson & Mike Darnell:** Midge, Baxter
- Rebecca Bogorad:** Natasha
- Chris & Amy Christian:** Zest
- Katie Poppe:** Maggie
- Marilou Chamberlain:** Captain & Tennile
- Elayne Barclay:** Kitkat, Willow, Pluto, Hillary, Boomer & Mindy



Quality of Life

Enrichment: Experience Novelty for the First Time, Part II By Bob Church*

The most important aspect of novelty is not that the object or situation IS new, but that the ferret REACTS as if it is new. Old toys can be removed for a week, laundered, placed outdoors, rubbed in potting soil, or even dipped in various scented waters. Bedding can be frequently laundered, or occasionally perfumed with cooking extracts, such as vanilla, or liquid smoke (or even your favorite perfume). Sections of the ferret's cage can be washed with various scents, or bedding or toys from a dog or cat can be placed inside. The point is novelty can take just a few moments each day, yet it can potentially make a tremendous positive impact on a ferret's life.

Novelty is NOT just new objects, but also new situations. Living in a cage and running around the front room eventually becomes as familiar as the interior of the cage itself. You could allow the ferrets in another room, or better yet, take them outdoors. A romp in the park, a visit to the backyard, even a walk along a lakeshore can introduce a high degree of novelty into a ferret's life. In many cases, situational novelty is far better than object novelty because so many senses, as well as the ferret's brain, are stimulated. I have taken one of those circular Plexiglas play enclosures outdoors and placed it around grass clumps and tree stumps. The point is that new environments are complex situations that challenge the ferret's mental abilities and sensory organs.

There is a final aspect of novelty that should be discussed. Novelty isn't just new situations (taking the ferret to the park), or new objects (toys), but also personal

interactions. Play is itself a novel situation because each moment is unscripted and random. Periodic visits from a healthy, vaccinated ferret owned by a friend are a great source of novelty. Not just other ferrets, but play with a human is perhaps the most novel situation of all, especially if the ferret owner takes the time to make sure each play period is somewhat different than the last. I have found it quite effective to vary the types of play from day to day, ending it with a quieting down grooming period. Varied play, especially vigorous, spirited play, is a very novel experience.

Novelty is important, but if done each day at the same time, it becomes scripted and loses some of its, well, novelty. The trick to making ANY enrichment program more effective is to randomly vary the time and place of the enrichment. Adding random variability to an enrichment program is the subject of the next post.

* Reprinted from the Ferret Mailing List, June 2003

Opportunities

My name is Jennifer Brown and I live in Redmond (Seattle), Washington. I have two adorable 7 yr. old ferrets, Sasha & Snowball, whom I adopted from the Kansas City Ferret Shelter in Missouri. Because of my passion for ferrets and my never-ending desire to share and learn as much valuable information about ferret care and ownership as possible, I have recently taken on the role of Organizer of the brand new Washington Ferret Lovers (WAFL) meet-up group. Here's the link: [www.http://ferret.meetup.com/216](http://ferret.meetup.com/216)

The purpose of WAFL is to provide a fun and rewarding environment for ferret owners, potential ferret owners, and ferret enthusiasts to gather in the greater Seattle, WA area and share our ferret knowledge and experiences. In addition to in-person meetings, the WAFL meet-up site message board will provide yet another avenue for sharing information and networking opportunities. One of the goals I have for the WAFL monthly meetings is to present a guest speaker on occasion, which could be a ferret knowledgeable veterinarian, shelter operator, or a lay individual with valuable, credible information to share about a specific ferret-related topic. I would also like to hold other fun and beneficial ferret-type events that would provide additional educational and fund raising opportunities so if anyone has any ideas, PLEASE send them my way!

I believe it is essential that all of us work together toward the common goal of ensuring the highest quality of life for EVERY ferret so your support of WAFL is greatly appreciated and valued!

PLEASE do not hesitate to contact me with any thoughts, comments, concerns, ideas, etc. you may have which will help make WAFL a FANTASTIC FERRET success! I'm excited to see that, in less than 48 hrs. after it's "birth", the WAFL has nearly a dozen new members! So please consider joining WAFL even if you are not local so that you can be kept up-to-date on all of the ferret happenings here in Seattle.

THANK YOU again, in advance, for your support and encouragement. I look forward to seeing you at a meet-up in the future! Warmest Regards,
Jennifer Brown, Flyinirish@hotmail.com

CFN Ferret Sponsors

Thanks to the following individuals that provided financial support for shelter ferrets

Anna Wellborn & Mike Eadie (Possum)
Floyd Carley (Kitkat)
Clyde Prince (Hillary, Zima)
Crystal Johnston (Natasha)
Brent & Erin Forgeron (Midge)
Peter Muhlhausler (Maggie)
Valarie and Scott Walker (Pluto)
Rebecca Bogorad (Willow)
Arlene Nelson (Ricochet)
Laura Satterfield (Willow, Duncan)
Kathleen Pallari (Barnaby & Bart, Irish)
Jeff Mulcaster (Duncan)
Fran Harris (Tattletail)
Jan Chandler (Elliot)
Fiona Merrill (Sophie)
Zack Watson (Olympus)



Ferret Stories

Each quarter we'll relate the tale of a ferret or two who overcame adversity to find a better life. We would also love to have updates on ferrets once they have found a home, so send us photos and stories!



Hobo's Story

Hobo was left in a pet carrier to die. Luckily for Hobo that didn't happen, and a person between homes himself noticed the pet carrier left on the sidewalk with a pathetic looking ferret huddled inside. He had ferrets in his life before and he could tell this guy was in very bad shape and needed help immediately. Even though he didn't have a phone of his own, he managed to contact CFN and arrange for Hobo to get into our care and to the vet quickly. If it weren't for his efforts, it is unlikely Hobo would have survived very long. Dr. Ramsell found that Hobo was emaciated with very pale gums indicating anemia. He was squinting his left eye and she found that it had a big ulcer on it. She also detected a heart murmur which may be a temporary situation caused by his poor condition. In addition the poor guy had fleas and ear mites. Hobo was only about two years old when he arrived in late November. He has shown some improvement, but still needs medical

treatment. He may never be healthy enough to be adopted, but he is lucky to be in the care of an experienced foster home and is getting a lot of TLC. Hobo could use a sponsor to help pay for his medical treatment. If you sponsor Hobo, in return you will receive photos of Hobo and updates on how he is doing. If you are interested in sponsoring Hobo, send the CFN a note and a check for \$60 or go to the CFN web page and follow the instructions to sponsor him online. Like all contributions to the CFN, your sponsorship is tax deductible!



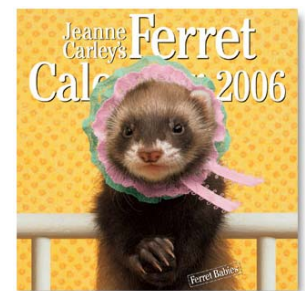
Violet and Daffodil's Story

This pair of sprites is referred to as "the flower girls" by their new foster home because of their names and sweet personalities (both are reported to be quite free with kisses). Violet and Daffodil were abandoned on the doorstep of Multnomah County Animal Services in early February. They look like they are about 3 years old and appear to have had very limited playtime in their past life, since they both exhibited hind leg

weakness, had trouble negotiating the ramp in their cage and didn't seem to know what a hammock was for. They have learned quickly enough and are now taking full advantage of their improved living conditions. The only thing they are missing is a forever home in which they can spend the rest of their life together. If you think you can provide the flower girls with a forever home, please contact CFN at 503-231-0887 or ferret@cascadeferret.org

Jeanne Carley's Ferret Calendar 2006

There are several ferret calendars available these days, but the best and original one is done by Jeanne Carley, a devoted ferret advocate. Besides being the first and best ferret calendar, Jeanne's calendar also provides a way for shelters to make money to help ferrets because she allows shelters to buy the calendars at a discount for resale. Jeanne Carley's Ferret Calendar 2006 is now available through CFN. This year's calendar features baby ferrets! It's hard to imagine anything more adorable than ferrets, unless its baby ferrets. Check out the images for each month at: www.ferretcompany.com. The calendars can be purchased for \$14.95 (plus postage if shipped) from CFN with all proceeds going to shelter ferrets. Call or email for info on shipping or pick up.



~ CFN WISH LIST ~

- *Volunteers
- * Canned a/d
- *I.V. pump
- *Canned w/d
- *Litter
- *Bleach
- *Quarantine homes
- *Monetary donations
- *Quality digital camera
- *Foster homes
- *Gift certificates to office supply stores
- *Laundry detergent (scent & dye free)
- *Boxes of facial tissue

Cascade Ferret Network
PO Box 14884
Portland, OR 97293-0884

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 22, 9:30-6:00, & April 23, 9:30-5:00
Portland Exposition Center – E Hall
2060 N. Marine Drive
Portland, Oregon

STAY TUNED!
...FOR MORE INFO
ABOUT THE CFN
JULY 9TH, 2006
FUNDRAISING EVENT!



Northwest Pet & Companion Fair

Portland Exposition Center · April 22 & 23, 2006

Exhibits · Displays · Demonstrations · Pet Information
Entertainment · Activities · New Products · Pet Adoptions

This two-day event is a must-see for pet lovers, an expo where you can bring friends, family and your four-legged companions. There will be over 200 retail and non-profit groups offering many products, services and opportunities for pet adoption. You'll enjoy a variety of great educational and entertaining activities including: pet workshops and demonstrations, free samples, good buys, microchip clinic, contests and competitions.

The Cascade Ferret Network will be one of those booths for the 5th year in a row. CFN needs human and ferret volunteers to staff our booth both days of the event. We need people willing to commit to a 2-4 hour shift either day. If you volunteer you will get into the event for free (there is a \$7 admission fee) and before or after your shift, you can visit all the fun stuff going on. The light rail yellow line goes right to the expo center. Please note if you drive there is a fee for parking. CFN also needs help with set up the day before and break down after the event. If you would like to volunteer, please contact CFN at 503.231.0887 or ferret@cascaferret.org. To find out more about the event: <http://www.petfairs.com/>