



# CASCADE SUMMIT

NEWS FROM CASCADE FERRET NETWORK VOL. 6 ISSUE 3 / SUMMER, 2005

## 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](http://www.cascadeferret.org)



### Ferrets

During April, May and June of 2005, CFN took in seven ferrets and found new homes for 18 ferrets, three of which were through referrals. Lindsey, Hattie and Zinc, all long time shelter residents, passed away during the 2nd quarter of 2005.

Veterinary procedures during April, May and June of 2005 included one dentistry. CFN traveled more than 920 miles during the 2nd quarter of 2005 in the course of transporting ferrets and educating the public. The CFN currently has 33 ferrets in the network, 24 of which are in foster homes.

### 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 2nd quarter of 2005.

#### 2nd quarter 2005

##### Revenue

Adoption fees.....	\$475
Boarding fees.....	\$125
Donations (Cash).....	\$2,566
Merchandise profit.....	\$905
<u>Open House Gross.....</u>	<u>\$3,627</u>
TOTAL.....	\$7,698

##### Expenses

Vet/medical costs.....	\$3,385
<u>Other.....</u>	<u>\$583</u>
TOTAL.....	\$3,968

## 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 and other equipment. 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 Acknowledgment

CFN is grateful to all the individuals who donated supplies during April, May and June of 2005. *Rebecca Bogorad* donated seven 5lb bags of Totally Ferret. *Petco* donated a lot of returned or slightly damaged items that CFN can resell, such as front pack carriers (still have LOTS of these if you might be interested). *Chris Ramsell* and *Malia Norris* donated household items for the moving sale.

The only item appreciated as much as the donation of time or supplies is the donation of money! The following individuals made generous donations of cash to CFN during the 2nd quarter of 2005: *Marla Blaney, Andrew & Ingrid Heckt, Rebecca Bogorad, Stan Boyes, Anna Wellborn & Mike Eadie, Ross & Jennifer Bachman, Keeli Adams, Jeff Mulcaster, and Bryan & Nancy Lipsey.* *Randy Klinckhardt* organized another successful raffle with all proceeds going to CFN. Several donors work for companies (Nike, PGE) that have matching funds programs. Their donations to CFN are increased by 50-100%.



## Event Reports

The CFN moving sale and open house event, "Cleaning out our Hidey-hole" June 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>, was a huge success. Elayne and Leonard found homes for lots of their personal items that they cannot take with them to Canada and at the same time, made several thousand dollars for CFN. Six ferrets went to new homes and CFN has a couple of new foster homes as a result of the event. The event would not have been possible without all of the volunteers that helped out: *Tony Petrarca, Sally Filler, Marianne Talbot, Jennifer Fresta, Steve Baran, Patti Riggert, Sandi Streit, Heather Christy, Becca Gucciardi, Alexis, Marla Blaney, Teresa Wickliffe, Carla Almaraz, Karen Johnson, Julie Tench, Kelli Carlson, Lavon Grahn, Rebecca Bogorad, Cherrie Westover and Dr. Katrina Ramsell.*

A special thanks to *Dr. Tye Wood* from Southwest Animal Hospital who helped out with ferret exams on Sunday June 19<sup>th</sup>.

Please note the companies listed below who donated items to CFN's Open House. Please take the opportunity to thank them with your business!

- \*University Compounding
- \*Southwest Animal Hospital
- \*Pet Samaritan Clinic
- \*North Portland Vet Hospital
- \*Marshall Pet Products
- \*Path Valley Farms
- \*Performance Foods (Totally Ferret)
- \*Hyper-fur Products (cheweasels)
- \*Doctors Fosters & Smith
- \*D&D Commodities (L'Avian)
- \*Lixit
- \*The Ferret Depot
- \*Hill's Pet Nutrition
- \*Absorption Corporation
- \*Caddis Pet Products
- \*The Ferret Store
- \*BowTie Inc (Ferrets magazine)
- \*Petco



## Shelter Status

The current Network Coordinator is officially going to be moving to Vancouver, BC in September. Dr. Katrina Ramsell has agreed to be the figurehead for CFN. She will work with other members of the Board of Directors to take on specific tasks formerly done by the Network Coordinator. CFN will continue, but on a much smaller scale. CFN will still provide referrals, rescues and advice as well as continuing the publication of the *Cascade Summit* newsletter.

We will continue to care for ferrets currently in the network and will still take in any ferret that was adopted through CFN if the owner can no longer care for the ferret. We will continue to take in ferrets when a foster home is available and to screen new homes for ferrets in the network. Until further notice, CFN will no longer be able to provide boarding for ferrets (except for foster ferrets). Those of you who have been boarding your ferrets with CFN have a few alternatives. There are several individuals who are very experienced with ferrets and willing to provide the same service, but the fee will be higher than at the CFN. The following individuals are recommended:

1. Royal Pet Treatment, SE Portland, 503-335-3885, can do home visits and overnights
2. Nancy White at Happy-Pup, SE Portland, 503-827-377, can do home visits or caring for ferret at her home

3. Sandy Striet, SW Portland, 503-293-4175, can care for ferrets at her home
4. You may also contact Jennifer Fresta at Southwest Animal Hospital (503-643-2137) to see if anyone she knows is available to pet sit. The
5. Oregon Ferret Shelter (503-557-8369) in Oregon City will board ferrets as well.

CFN will no longer be able to provide certain products for sale. We will continue to sell items that can easily be mailed, such as calendars, ferret pins, magnets, key chains, cheweasel products, etc. Things no longer available include: Path Valley Ferret food, rattle eggs, clear flexible tunnels and used cages.

## CFN Foster Parents

Thanks to the following individuals that provided foster care from April through June:

- Marla Blaney** (Amaretto)
- Lavon Grahn** (Possum, Petree, Zima, Chickadee & Sophie)
- Carla Almaraz** (Forest Gump & Tattletail)
- Karen Brecknock** (Midge)
- Karen Kloeck** (Truffle & Candy)
- Debi Currier** (Calaban, Tempest & Veela)
- Rebecca Bogorad** (Natasha)
- Katie Hanson** (Barnaby & Bartholomew)
- Jeanne Brumbaugh** (Io)
- Jennifer Fresta** (Mr. Green Jeans)
- Chris & Amy Christian** (Zest)





### Tribute to Amaretto

Before Amaretto came to the Cascade Ferret Network near the end of 2001, she was being used by a backyard breeder. These people just breed ferrets for money -- they don't play with them or socialize them properly. And so, when she arrived at the shelter at 4.5 years of age, she was a 'biter' and hadn't been spayed yet. After being spayed the shelter staff worked with her to help her learn that humans were her friends, and they didn't like being bitten. Amaretto made a lot of progress, but she always wanted more time outside of her cage to play. A volunteer had pity on her and decided to foster her and both of them have been very happy with the arrangement ever since. Amaretto's foster parent lost her Best Friend on July 29th after a long struggle with lymphoma and heart disease among other health problems. The following is written by Amaretto's foster parent:

"I knew when I saw her after I woke up that something had changed since last night. We cuddled for an hour or so on my bed. She lay on my chest and I rubbed her head and little bear ears. Later, she wouldn't eat her soup. I knew in my gut that, if I wanted to spare her the pain of extreme suffering, and if I wanted to be there for her, today was the day. In many ways, it was good. She was doing well even yesterday. She ate a bit of kibble and ran about a little. Lymphoma often causes sudden crashes in a ferret's health. Although she may have survived the weekend at the shelter while I was working out of town, she would have been suffering terribly by the time I got back for her. I took her to the shelter and arranged to re-schedule the doctor's appointment I had that afternoon. I held her in my arms and told her how much I loved her until her heart had stopped. Amaretto will be cremated, and then she will come home, and I will never

part with her again.

She was a pistol, a trooper. She had lymphoma, heart disease, inflammatory bowel disease, insulinoma, some skin issues, and possibly adrenal disease as well, and yet she hung in there and enjoyed herself for seven months after her diagnosis. I am infinitely grateful to her for letting me know when the time was right. I know it was the right thing to do, I am certain of it. Still there is so much pain from losing her, though I knew I would.



~Amaretto~

She was my wee pea, my daughter, my sister, and my best friend. We were so alike. We were hermits, but also yearned for attention. We both gave our affections to only a few. We were both grumpy and threw unreasonable emotional fits, constantly wanting our own way. Two peas in a pod, her and I. She can never, ever, be replaced, and I wouldn't want to. I saw in her the good, the intelligent and meaningful companionship, and great love that she had to offer, in a ferret everyone else had discarded or lost patience with. She used to love to dig and splash in the water dish. The first time I tried to bathe her, she screamed as though she were in pain, to try and manipulate me to stop. She was so smart, always plotting. She had the cutest, little, stubby, brown eyelashes. She would throw tantrums when she wanted out of

her cage. She liked to take the whole beanbag chair for herself, and sleep in it as a little ferret donut, or under it, and risk getting squished. She loved foamy fries and other little treats. When she slept she made these cute little noises Elayne dubbed, 'pathos noises.' She would grab a piece of kibble and run off with it to a good hiding place. She used to bite toes all the time, but we worked on it and by the end, she only bit annoying children, of which I secretly approved. I could go on and on. I wish I could do more than give her my love and a peaceful ending, but I think it was enough for her. I thank her for sharing these past two years with me. I have never felt a love for anyone of the sort I feel for her. Even if my memory of all the specific moments fades, even if I get Alzheimer's disease, the love for her will remain, though I might be weird and senile and unable to access it. For as long as I live, there will be love for the little, naughty ferret. She has changed me, and I am glad."

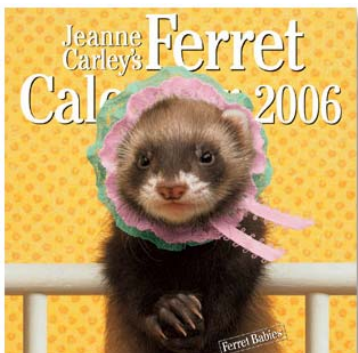
### Help CFN and Save a Tree

CFN expends a lot of time and energy and spends a lot of money copying and mailing the *Cascade Summit*. We will begin offering the newsletter 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 so we can let you know when and where the next issue of the newsletter is available online. This is the first issue we are offering via the web (and email notification), and so please let us know if you requested email notification, but received the newsletter delivered via regular mail. The CFN will keep all email addresses private and never provide the list to any other organization for any reason.



### 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. Because of the confusion with the different calendars produced by different people she has decided to change the name of her calendar to "Jeanne Carley's Ferret Calendar". 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 (we still have the 2005 calendar left too, available for \$7). This year's calendar features baby ferrets! It's hard to imagine anything more adorable than ferrets, unless its baby ferrets. Sunflower sables, a tiny sock-sized dreamer, a raucous school bus full of kits, and a toy chest trio are just a few of the delightful images in store for ferret lovers. Check out the images for each month at: [www.ferretcompany.com](http://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 Ferret Sponsors

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

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Anna Wellborn &amp; Mike Eadie</b> (Possum)   | <b>Laura Satterfield</b> (Zella, Lindsey) |
| <b>Kathleen Pallari</b> (Eowyn, Barnaby & Bart)  | <b>Clyde Prince</b> (Hillary, Zima)       |
| <b>Brent &amp; Erin Forgeron</b> (Eowyn & Midge) | <b>Tamara Schryver</b> (Twizler)          |
| <b>Jerry Zimm &amp; Jody Austin</b> (Gizmo)      | <b>Peter Muhlhausler</b> (Petree)         |
| <b>Rebecca Bogarad</b> ( Willow, & Spunky)       | <b>Arlene Nelson</b> (Ricochet)           |
| <b>Valerie and Scott Walker</b> (Pluto)          | <b>Kimberly Brown</b> (Bobbie Sue)        |
| <b>Jennifer Sargent</b> (Zima & Hattie)          | <b>Crystal Johnston</b> (Natasha)         |

### Health Matters

#### Financial Help for Veterinary Care

Providing needed veterinary care is often difficult for people to afford. CFN is constantly getting calls from people that can't afford the surgery their ferret needs. There are a few organizations that have programs to help in some situations. Listed below are some organizations that might be able to help.

*United Animal Nations* has a program called Lifeline ([www.uan.org](http://www.uan.org)). The mission of Lifeline is to help homeless or recently rescued animals suffering from life threatening conditions that require specific and immediate emergency veterinary care. The program will provide up to \$200 for treatment for situations that qualify.

*Help-A-Pet*, [www.help-a-pet.org](http://www.help-a-pet.org), is a nonprofit organization which provides financial assistance for the medical care of pets whose owners are unable to afford the expense. Their efforts focus on serving the elderly, the disabled and the working poor. Help-A-Pet spends an average of \$500 per pet. The majority of financial assistance goes toward surgeries. If your income falls below \$20,000 for an individual or \$40,000 for a family household (amounts vary depending upon the number of dependents), Help-A-Pet can accept your application for assistance.

*In Memory of Magic* is an organization devoted to bettering the lives of sick, injured and abused companion animals. They are dedicated to insure that no companion animal has to be euthanized simply because their caretaker is financially challenged. In Memory of Magic, [www.imom.org](http://www.imom.org), gives grants to low-income individuals or families for companion animal surgeries or chronic vet care.

*The Pet Fund*, [www.thepetfund.com](http://www.thepetfund.com), gives grants to animal caretakers with proven financial need for veterinary bills. They provide financial assistance to owners of domestic animals who need urgent veterinary care. The "triage" system for deciding which cases to fund is based on the stated financial need of the animal owner, the opinion of the treating veterinarian as to the medical necessity and urgency of the treatment needed, and the demonstrated capability of the animal owners to be responsible for their animals.

*Care Credit*, [www.carecredit.com](http://www.carecredit.com), can be used for vet procedures under \$600; they provide a no-interest three-month loan. However, the interest jumps to 22% after the three months are over. You must be able to demonstrate financial need.





**National Ferret Protection**

**USDA Requests Public Input From the International Ferret Congress web page (www.ferretcongress.com)**

In March of 2004, several ferret organizations sent a petition to the USDA requesting a revision in the requirements for housing and transport of ferrets for breeding farms, dealers and research institutions already under USDA control. The proposed changes would not apply to small breeders who sell privately; rather they would apply only to farms which breed ferrets for wholesale, their distributors, and the transport they use.

The USDA has accepted this petition, and has now requested public input. They ask 3 main questions (condensed here):

1. Should specific standards be implemented for the welfare of domestic ferrets? If yes, please explain what standards you believe are needed.
2. What specific problems have dealers, exhibitors, or research facilities had with the current handling, care, treatment, and transportation standards and how would ferret-specific standards eliminate them?
3. Should there be minimum age requirements for the transportation

of domestic ferrets, and, if so, what factors should be considered in determining those requirements?

The deadline for responding is October 4, 2005. You may respond via mail, email or on the USDA web site (via EDOCKET). It is URGENT that the USDA get a strong response from the ferret community to move forward with the development of new regulations!

For the full text of the request for input and how to respond, go to <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppd/raid/webrepor.html> and click on Recent Documents. Scroll down to Animal Welfare; Standards for Ferrets, Docket No. 04-088-1.

**Points to Make when Writing to the USDA**

**On the need for regulations:**

- \* kits now shipped too young to eat solid food resulting in failure to thrive, prolapsed rectum and other issues
- \* ferrets' need for frequent meals
- \* ferrets' sensitivity to temp extremes, especially high temps
- \* ferrets are intelligent complex animals thus there is a need for family/social groups to stay intact as long as possible to make good pets

**Suggested regulations:**

- \* minimum age of shipping 8 weeks by dental irruption so they can handle kibbled food
- \* altering incisions should be healed before shipping
- \* minimum cage size standards and opportunity for exercise and social interaction
- \* max length of time between offering food and water

**Other suggestions:**

- \* be polite and professional
- \* don't badmouth any breeders or stores!
- \* do use sad personal stories!

**Sample Letter:**

Dear APHIS Animal Care Experts,

I am writing in support of the petition to create ferret specific regulations to govern the handling, care, treatment and transportation of domestic ferrets. Such regulations are greatly needed and long overdue. Ferrets have become increasingly popular pets over the last couple of decades. As a result, there is increasing demand at pet stores to sell ferret kits, and thus increasing pressures on ferret farms to ship more kits early and quickly. Unfortunately, this is to the detriment of the animals. They are often taken from their mother and littermates at too young an age, spayed and neutered, and then shipped before surgical incisions are healed or they have the dentition to handle the kibbled food they are now forced to eat.

The key provision that should be part of these regulations is a minimum age of transport. A key way to determine this age is by dentition—by 8 weeks of age, the easily identified canines have erupted along with the molars necessary to eat kibble.

Other provisions should protect ferrets from extremes in temperatures, provide for frequent access to food and fresh water, allow for adequate space for exercise, and provide social interaction. As intelligent, curious animals, being stuck in a small cage all day with no opportunities to exercise, play and interact is like jail to them. Social interaction is especially important so that the animals will be well adjusted and make good pets. Too often ferrets end up in shelters because they have not learned how to interact with humans.

Linda Iroff  
Co-Director,  
International Ferret Congress



## WINDS OF CHANGE

Katrina D. Ramsell Ph.D, DVM  
President of the  
Cascade Ferret Network



As most of you know, many changes are taking place within the Cascade Ferret Network. We are losing our central facility as well as our keystone, Elayne Barclay. Although it may seem like a dark hour for the CFN, it is important for us to remember that changes provide new opportunities. It is also important for us to remember that organizations such as the CFN cannot rely upon one person to function. The backbone of the CFN is the summation of the foster parents, volunteers, sponsors, donors and board members. Elayne has done a phenomenal job building the CFN into what it is today, and it is up to us to maintain the high standards and quality of care that Elayne has established. The CFN is a network and we must all work together to ensure that this network continues to be successful.

I believe the CFN has many new opportunities ahead; opportunities that will be shared with several motivated and ambitious individuals. The board of directors is fantastic and eager to help the CFN thrive. Working closely by my side will be – Jennifer Fresta (Vice President), Julie Tench (Treasurer) and Katie Daniels (Secretary). With the new formation of several committees, we hope to

redistribute the responsibilities and duties to the committee heads who will in turn delegate responsibilities and solicit volunteers to help them perform and complete specific tasks and various projects. Kelli Carlson will be heading the Adoption Committee and Jennifer Fresta will be in charge of the foster ferrets. Lavon Grahm will be instrumental in helping with both the adoption and foster ferrets. Jennifer Fresta and I will handle the new arrivals. There is much to be done, and we will happily utilize anyone who is interested in helping the committees.

As a team, we will continually identify areas which are working well and those where improvements are needed. These continuous efforts will be made to encourage the CFN to operate in an organized and efficient manner. Although the CFN will continue to “Provide temporary homes and adoption opportunities for abandoned, abused, or otherwise homeless domestic ferrets”, we also want to emphasize public awareness and education to help current and future ferret owners provide quality care for their pets. CFN events are a necessity, as they provide many benefits to the CFN including: 1) Providing a source of income, 2) Attracting potential foster and adoption homes, 3) Providing a chance to educate the public, and 4) Allowing an opportunity for ferret lovers to hang out together.

This is an exciting time for the Cascade Ferret Network and I have a great deal of faith in the board members and the volunteers. Every category is critical – quarantine homes, foster homes, transporters, etc. We are all going to have to work together and utilize everyone’s individual strengths and talents. We will be depending greatly on each other, and the ones that depend on us the most are the ferrets. As the new president of the CFN, I am dedicated to do my best to ensure that this organization

continues to help save and improve the lives of domestic ferrets. Whether you are a human, a ferret, or any other living creature, life is the number one most valuable thing. It is not simply how long you live that is important, but rather the quality of life that is lived.

Tazhi, the first ferret I ever owned only lived to be 4, but she had a wonderful life and she was my little buddy. That little ferret changed my life forever. Tazhi helped me realize a passion I never knew existed and she determined my career. Most people have no idea that I went to vet school specifically so I could help ferrets. Some might ask why we put so much time and effort into trying to save or improve the life of an individual ferret. That’s when I think back to a story I heard in vet school. Although it is a story about starfish... it certainly applies to our beloved little weasels. I’d like to share it with you. This is why we are here....



### The Star Thrower



This story was inspired by the writing of Loren Eiseley. Loren was a very special person because he combined the best of two cultures. He was a scientist and a poet. From those two perspectives, he wrote insightfully and beautifully about the world and our role in it.

Once upon a time, there was a wise man, much like Eiseley himself, who used to go to the ocean to do his writing. He had the habit of walking along the beach before he began his work. One day he was walking along the shore; as he looked down the beach, he saw a human figure moving like a dancer. He smiled to himself to think of someone who would dance to the day, so he began to walk faster to catch up. As he got closer, he saw that it was a young man and the young man wasn't



dancing, but instead, he was reaching down to the shore, picking up something and very gently throwing it into the ocean.

As he got closer he called out, "Good morning! What are you doing?" The young man paused, looked up and replied, "Throwing Starfish into the ocean."  
"I guess I should have asked; why are you throwing Starfish into the ocean?"

"The sun is up and the tide is going out and if I don't throw them in they'll die."

"But young man, don't you realize that there are miles and miles of beach and Starfish all along it, you can't possibly make a difference!"

The young man listened politely, then bent down, picked up another Starfish and threw it into the sea, past the breaking waves. "It made a difference for that one."

His response surprised the man, he was upset, he didn't know how to reply, so instead he turned away and walked back to the cottage to begin his writings.

All day long as he wrote, the image of that young man haunted him; he tried to ignore it, but the vision persisted. Finally, late in the afternoon, he realized that he the scientist, he the poet, had missed the essential nature of the young man's actions. Because he realized that what the young man was doing was choosing not to be an observer in the universe and watch it pass by, but was choosing to be an actor in the universe and make a difference. He was embarrassed.

That night he went to bed, troubled. When morning came, he awoke knowing that he had to do something; so he got up, put on his clothes, went to the beach and found the young man; and with him spent the rest of the morning throwing Starfish into the ocean. You see, what the young man's actions represent is something that is special in each and every one of us.

We have all been gifted with the ability to make a difference. And if we can, like the young man, become aware of that gift, we gain through the strength of our vision the power to shape the future.

And that is your challenge, and that is my challenge. We have found our Starfish... we call them Ferrets. Every time we save a ferret and give it the comfort and happiness of being in a loving home, we not only make a difference to that ferret, but we make a difference to a person. When we throw our stars wisely and well, we change the future and make the world a more wonderful place.

#### Remember:

Vision without action is merely a dream  
Action without vision just passes time  
Vision with action can change the world

### Quality of Life

#### Enrichment: Caging: From Drags to Enrichment (Part F) By Bob Church\*

I've spent a considerable time discussing caging and caging conditions because it represents one of the most important aspects of a ferret's life. No other single factor, excepting diet perhaps, has such an impact on the ferret's short- and long-term health. Ferret owners HAVE to understand the negative impact of caging on ferrets in order to comprehend the importance of a vigorous enrichment program. The reason is obvious: it is clear ferret owners will cage ferrets. The only real solution is education to improve caging and reduce stress. It is extremely important to understand enrichment is NOT just to stimulate a ferret's mind. Enrichment also reduces frustration and boredom. It can help curtail aggression, or help to socialize ferrets unfamiliar with each other. It can help bond a ferret to their owner. Enrichment reduces stress, and clearly diminishes other stress-related diseases. Enrichment helps reduce the

types of stress that lead to the General Adaptation Syndrome (or its psycho behavioral counterpart, the Conservation-Withdrawal Syndrome) and ultimately if long-term, to some level of immune-system dysfunction. Enrichment--of all types--has been shown to reduce levels of adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH), a pituitary hormone associated with stress hormones such as glucocorticoids and corticosterones (here's one for you scientific types to consider: some of the side-effects of long-term steroid (glucocorticoid) use in humans include acne, aggression, and Cushing's Disease. Long-term stress in animals results in an elevation of both corticosteroids and glucocorticoids. Ferrets, for unknown reasons, can get tail acne (rat-tail) and suffer a high incidence of adrenal disease similar to, but NOT the same as, Cushing's Disease that can make them aggressive. Is it possible stress is an exacerbating or triggering factor in adrenal disease in ferrets? Even if it doesn't cause or worsen the disease, can a stress reduction help control symptoms or progress? Zoos around the world have incorporated enrichment programs into their animal welfare regimes, and most animal testing programs have legislated enrichment requirements into their testing protocols. There is NO doubt enrichment programs benefit members of the large-brained taxa, including our pet ferrets. Ferrets are unique as individuals. Stress that causes severe problems in one ferret may have little effect on another. In some cases, two ferrets may be affected equally, but one may show outward symptoms, and the other may not. Regardless of the impact or severity of stress, ALL ferrets, even those living in a free-roam situation, can benefit from enrichment.

\*Reprinted from the Ferret Mailing List from June 2003, this is the last part related to caging; the topic of enrichment in general will be continued in the next issue of the *Cascade Summit*



# 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!

## Duncan's story

Duncan was turned into the Bonnie Hayes Animal Shelter as a stray in late July. He was a pretty pathetic looking thing when I retrieved him, mostly hairless and when I picked him up, he was wet with urine around his urogenital opening, both sure signs of adrenal disease. Not being able to urinate is a serious symptom of adrenal disease so we needed to get him looked at as soon as possible by the shelter vet. Unfortunately she was out of town, so he waited a week or so before getting his exam. On the day of the exam, Dr. Ramsell was able to partially express his bladder and we decided to give him a lupron injection, start him on antibiotics for a bladder infection and get him scheduled for surgery as soon as possible. His surgery was set for 6 days later, but that evening Duncan became completely blocked and was unable to empty his bladder. A catheter had to be placed immediately. Luckily Dr. Ramsell was still at the clinic and the foster parent was able to bring him over for the procedure. Duncan left not long afterward a much happier ferret than when he arrived. He now had a tube inserted into his bladder allowing a continual dribble of urine to be eliminated. A continuous dribble of urine is hardly a charming feature, but Duncan more than makes up for the inconvenience with his happy-go-lucky personality. We hope Duncan's urination issues will be solved by surgery, but only time will tell. In the mean time he could use a sponsor to help pay for his veterinary care. In addition to the cost for his surgery he will need to continue on antibiotics and may need to get lupron injections in the future.

If you sponsor Duncan, in return you will receive a card with Duncan's history, a photo and updates on how he is doing. If you are interested in sponsoring Duncan, send the CFN a note and 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!

## Zoey's Story

Zoey is a very sweet and very chubby middle-aged sprite that needs a forever home. She was a stray found by her previous owners who kept her for about a year before they decided she no longer fit into their lives. She arrived in January of 2005 with a very sparse coat and was diagnosed with adrenal disease. She has had surgery, but her coat still isn't something to be envied by other ferrets, but she more than makes up for it by giving copious kisses to humans. In her last home Zoey lived with children, cats and dogs and she gets along ok with other ferrets, but doesn't seem to seek out their company. Zoey is from Marshall Farms.

~Duncan~



~Zoey~

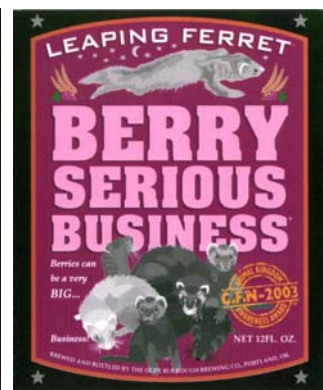
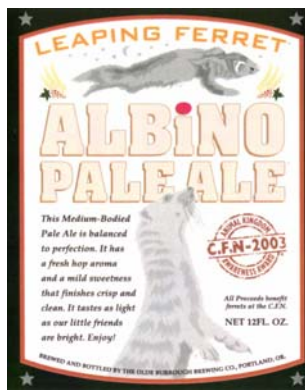
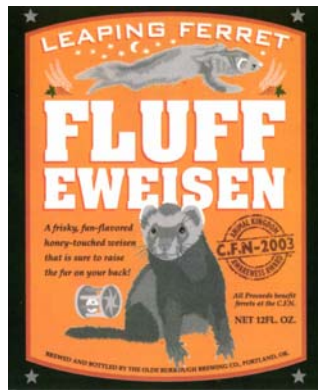
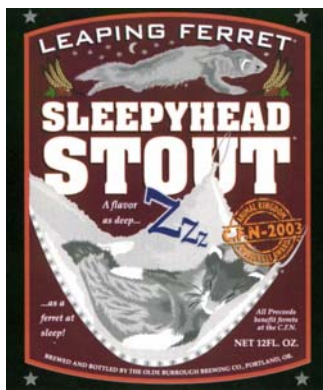






## For You Ferret Lovers Out There

- \*Ferret Art (many shirt designs and colors available) -- purchase through the CFN link to the Zazzle on-line store: [www.cascadeferret.org](http://www.cascadeferret.org) -- price depends upon shirt style ordered
- \*Erin Bishop's fantasy ferret designs T-shirts and cards
- \*Leaping Ferret Beer T-shirts
- \*Robo-ferret T-shirts
- \*Ferret design buttons, magnets, stickers and decals: 25¢ - \$2.50
- \*Custom button or magnet with your ferret's photo: \$5
- \*Ferret For Dummies, by Kim Shilling: \$20



## For Your Special Ferret Friends



- \*Handmade ferret tickler dangle toy: \$3
- \*Handmade hammocks and sleep sacks (very posh and custom orders are possible -- contact CFN): \$10 - \$30
- \*Brand new nail clippers: \$1 each
- \*Totally Ferret treats: \$2
- \*Cheweasels (chicken, carob, garden herb, molasses, banana, spice, raisin):
  - 3 for \$5
  - 4 for \$6
  - 6 for \$9
  - 12 for \$16.50
- \*Foamy Fries(original, garden herb, spice, raisin) \$4.50
- \*Nutristat: \$5
- \*Laxa-stat: \$5
- \*Tandem coupler (walk two ferrets with one leash): \$2
- \*Linatone (ferretone): 75¢ per ounce (bring your own container)



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

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## **Frosty Ferret Frolic** **Oregon Humane Society** **Sunday December 4** **1pm – 5pm**

Come one, come all; come have a ball,  
Join us for our festivities this fall!  
We need your support; please help our cause,  
The ferrets will think there's a real Ferret Claus.  
Come sun or rain, whatever the weather,  
Let's help some ferrets—let's do it together!!

## **Microchipping**

**September 25th, 10am-3pm**

**Sponsored by:**

**\*United Animal Nations, [www.uan.org](http://www.uan.org)**

**\*Furever Pets, 1902 NE Broadway, 503.282.4225**

United Animal Nations (UAN) is coming to Portland, OR in September to present an Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS) volunteer training workshop. Their EARS team consists of a nationwide network of thousands of volunteers who are trained to provide emergency sheltering for animals during disasters like hurricanes, floods, tornadoes and fires. They host about a dozen workshops all over the country every year, and this year they will be in Oregon!

The day after each workshop, UAN gives back to the hosting community by offering a low-cost microchip ID event for companion animals, including ferrets. UAN has stated that they have witnessed firsthand during their disaster responses how microchips save lives and quickly reunite pets with their caregivers... so they want animals in the community where they train their volunteers to be prepared. They have hosted seven highly successful microchip ID events nationwide so far this year - providing lifesaving permanent identification to hundreds of animals at an affordable cost of only \$20 -- including lifetime registration. This is an incredible deal! In addition, UAN will donate \$5 from each microchip sale to a local animal rescue group.