New HWS Website Up and Running !!!
By Linda Woodring

I am sure many of you have tried to look something up on the Hedgehog Welfare Society website in the past and found that either the information was not there, or it said it was there and the links didn't work. We have been trying to redo the site for several years but seem to have run into nothing but roadblocks, specifically with web designers who were "giving us a break" or "a friend of a friend of a friend" who put us at the bottom of the pile when they were prioritizing.

Well, we finally found a gold mine by the name of Brian Platz, a web designer in Oregon who is a friend of Vicki McLean, one of our Board members. Brian and I pretty much worked around the clock for two weeks and, I'm happy to say, our beautiful new website is now up, running and fully functional! The site includes lots of pictures of our adorable kids.

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Hopefully everyone will enjoy those as well as the information. Please check it out at www.hedgehogwelfare.org.

The home page has our mission statement and information on our 501(c)3 status. The link to our newsletter section has all of our newsletters as well as an index to search for articles by author or subject. There is also a link for making donations to HWS as well as a link for Ruby’s Rescue Shop. Although this is not functioning at this writing, we hope that Ruby’s Rescue Shop will reopen soon.

The website includes six drop-down tabs. The first is the About tab where you can find information on our Board members, the HWS bylaws, information on getting HWS financial information, an application for membership, a media area which has a story about the Texas rescue (this will be expanded later), and a link to Phileas Hogg II’s blog site.

From the Resources tab, you can access information telling you where it is illegal to own a hedgehog, another link to the newsletters, search for a hedge-friendly vet from our veterinarian list, fill out an adoption application, find an HWS rescue contact in your area, find information on relinquishment of a hedgehog as well as information about USDA licensing.

In the Health/Education section you can access the vet list, fill out an application for vet funding for a rescue, or fill out forms for our Mortality Study or Jaw Tumor Study. There are also links to hedgehog care sheets (in English and Spanish), FAQ sheets, info on caring for a hedgehog with WHS including a video on massage techniques, and information on getting health insurance for your hedgehog.

From the Links tab you can find information on upcoming and past hedgehog shows, fund-raising events, shopping links, links to animal communicators, as well as links to The International Hedgehog Association, The Hedgehog Registry, The Hedgehog Breeders Alliance, and some links for general hedgehog care, hedgehog colors and what is involved if you’d like to show your hedgehog.

The Hedgie Fun tab is just that—fun things to do that are hedgehog related such as Phileas Hogg’s blog, adopting a virtual hedge for your class and the HWS Photo Album.

On the Contact page you can find our snail mail and e-mail addresses.

We hope you really like the new site and use it as a valuable tool for caring for your hedgehog. If you have anything you would like to see on the site, please either send the information to me personally at hedgiemom@comcast.net or to our HWS e-mail info@hedgehogwelfare.org and we will do our best to get it on the site.

Any information contained in this newsletter is for informational purposes only and is not intended as a replacement for veterinary care if your hedgehog is sick or injured. The HWS cannot be held liable for any information contained in this newsletter.
Ever look up at the sky and wonder what kind of cloud that is? Well, as a certified severe weather spotter in Will County, Illinois, Linda could tell you. Want to know what happened at the last North Wheatland Township Homeowners Association meeting? As secretary, Linda could provide you with that information. As Vice-Chief Volunteer Officer of HWS Linda took on the task of getting our new web site built (see article in this newsletter) in addition to being the primary person who monitors the incoming emails and inquiries to our HWS mailbox. Linda also volunteers for the Naperville, Illinois police department as a badged civilian.

Linda was badged in 2008. To get her badge, Linda went through nine months of training which included riding in all 10 beats of the police district with already badged members, doing a ride-a-long with a police officer, observing in the 911 center, learning to be proficient in using the radio, learning how to properly direct traffic and set up flares at an accident scenes, and learning the phonetic alphabet and the 10-codes that are used in radio transmissions. Also before being badged, Linda had to pass three certification tests given by CRW (Community Radio Watch) Board members as well as passing a LEADS certification test for use of the radio. Badged civilians must work a minimum of 60 hours per year.

Linda is also a graduate from the Citizen’s Police Academy, a 15 week course that explores a different aspect of the police department every week. She learned about gangs, drugs, computer fraud, the K-9 unit, crime scene investigation (including learning how to lift fingerprints and make molds of footprints in the dirt), as well as learning to do traffic stops. She even went to the shooting range and learned to shoot the Glock guns that the officers use.

As badged civilians the CRW members act as extra eyes and ears for the police department. They do regular beat patrols, work overnight security at community events, and handle traffic and crowd control during

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Naperville’s parades and other special events. Linda has also been trained and certified to work in the 911 center as the liaison between the CRW people on duty and the 911 police dispatchers.

Linda was thrilled to recently receive the bronze President’s Volunteer Service Award for her work with the Naperville police department. She loves her signed letter from President Obama! Congratulations Linda!!!!!!

Ingebretsen's of Minneapolis Carries Hedgehog Items

Ingebretsen’s, which describes itself as “a general store for all things Scandinavian,” has been a Minneapolis establishment since 1921. What began as the Model Meat Market on East Lake Street now includes a Scandinavian deli, needlework shop, gifts, art by Scandinavian and Scandinavian-American artists, classes, and events.

It is always possible to find a few decorative hedgehog items at Ingebretsen’s, since hedgehogs are part of the Scandinavian landscape.

In addition to the wonderful hedgehog night light shown here, a recent search of Ingebretsen’s online catalog revealed a number of hedgehog themed items including Christmas tree ornaments, mobiles, rubber stamps, key rings, napkin and/or letter holders, baby onesies, a crystal hedgehog and an unusual, handmade, three-dimensional Proongily paper die-cut hedgehog.

You can access Ingebretsen’s online catalog at: http://www.ingebretsens.com/
A thin blond hedgehog came into Gina’s rescue in Houston a couple of years ago. A college student was caught with a pet in his dorm room, his mom said “don’t look at me” and off to the rescue station he went. We do not know anything about how he was treated before he came to Gina’s but his extreme hyperactivity seems similar to some of the behavior exhibited by PTSD hedgehogs. He seldom balls up but seldom sits still – hence the nickname “Speedy.” Gina is a high school biology teacher who usually keeps hedgies in the classroom but this boy was too wiggly for kids to handle safely without dropping him. Since only experienced hedgehog people were capable of safely handling him, he was classified as “special needs” and kept in her home.

When I finally talked my husband, Quentin, into a second hedgehog, we took Q-ball over to Gina’s to see which hedgies would get along together best. All “meetings” were in a neutral area, a big empty C&C playpen. No actual contact was to be allowed. Both Gina and I were watching closely, ready to grab a hedgehog if needed. A small, timid pinto male was the first candidate. He snapped shut like a clam, hissing and thrashing around wildly. Speedy took one look at Q-ball and his body language said, “I can’t take you but I can outrun you!” He headed to the farthest corner. After observing how five different hedgies reacted to each other, Speedy seemed to be the best fit for our household. He moved to our house in September 2009. Although we don’t know his exact age, the vet’s best guesstimate was that he was two years old at the time of his adoption.

Quentin and I really TRIED to find a different name, a “real” name for Speedy. Many were tried but just did not seem to fit. We finally registered him as Hermes, a god of speed. If we had used Mercury, people would have asked if the next hedgehog would be named Ford or Mars! But, try as we might, Hermes just would not stick! So Hermes “Speedy” Becker became his official registered name.
alert, jumping and hissing at the smallest sound or movement. After about 2 months of nightly lap time, he calmed down enough to tolerate normal background noise and minor movement but he was still on high alert. After several more months, he actually fell asleep in my lap! Now when I get up to do something and set his snuggle bag on the chair, he will just look up and go back to sleep. He'll sleep on my lap for an hour or two.

Shortly after Speedy's adoption, we went to the October 2009 Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show where Speedy won his first ribbons! Quentin accompanied us to the November 2009 Dallas show and saw Speedy earn his next win.

Speedy always hits the ground running. I usually have to catch him mid-air because he runs off the edge of the show table. He even won honorable mention in a costume contest for being the fastest at getting out of his costume. The first time I put him in a runaround ball, he took off running and smacked into a wall. He stepped back, shook his head and started to shift his weight. He immediately figured out how to steer and took off again, this time navigating around obstacles like a pro!

Q-ball made no menacing moves toward any of the hedgehogs he met at Gina's. But once he realized Speedy was not just a visitor and had moved into “his” territory, Q-ball resented him and did his best to let me know that. Once while outside, he managed to grab Speedy's flank in his teeth, dragging the poor guy along when I tried to pull him off. So Speedy had a healthy respect for the Old Man. When Q-ball crossed the bridge in July 2010, it took about three weeks for his scent to fade enough for Speedy to realize that he was now the Alpha Male. He started going into Q-ball's area in the yard and scent marking over Q-ball's marks. He didn't change his eating or wheeling habits--but he started to bulk up to defend turf, instead of staying slim to run away. The alpha male “buffalo hump” he grew may have cost Speedy a few points at shows but he continued to win many more ribbons.

The extra bulk did not slow him down much. He got the overall Gold Medal for the athletic competition at the October 2010 Milwaukee Rendezvous. His estimated age was more than three years old at that time, so he was what you could call an “active senior.” For the first event, the Sprint (10 feet of hamster track) Speedy took off quickly for a commanding lead then stopped an inch from the finish line! He ran back to the start line, turned around and ran back to the finish line – finally crossing this it time and still coming in first! He ran off the end of the track, scouted around the ballroom, headed through the door and tried to get on the elevator. This set the pace for the rest of the games. He would be running around the ballroom between events, yet he still won the Marathon! On top of the athletic events, Speedy won more conformation ribbons too.

Speedy was quite healthy until early 2011. I noticed that, after years of chomping his food quickly, he was chewing his kibble too carefully. I got the same clue from Q-ball at the same age when he began losing his teeth. Although Speedy’s teeth were OK, he had a tumor on the roof of his mouth! The vet was able to remove it but had to take a back molar and part of his soft palate. ouch Speedy is strictly a dry kibbles and fresh bug eater so he got nothing but mealies while he healed and we anxiously awaited the lab results.

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BENIGN!

The relief was huge. However, losing that tooth was just the first of many. The poor guy is now down to about half his teeth. But he still will eat only kibbles and bugs. Now he just sits down by his dish and chews carefully.

At the Eastern States Hedgehog Show in July 2011, Speedy gained enough points to qualify as a Permanent Grand Champion! He is one of only four living PGC’s and that makes him Hedgehog Royalty and in line for the throne. Speedy also helped at the show by teaching other hedgies how to use a runaround ball and presenting a TP tubing demo. This was filmed by John Nastuk and posted on You Tube. It may be viewed at

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_oN02NApzSl&feature=related

At the October 2011 Rocky Mountain Hedgehog Show, Speedy won even more ribbons and points, as well as a promotion to Colonel in the Hedgehog Military. His point total was finally confirmed. Recently he received his Permanent Grand Champion ribbon in the mail, followed shortly thereafter with a promotion in the Hedgehog Military to Brigadier General. He is now formally known as Brigadier General Prince Hermes “Speedy” Becker, United Hedgehog Army. Quite a change from being an unwanted dorm pet!
The Steiff Company of Giengen, Germany, has been making plush toys since 1880 when seamstress, Margarete Steiff, discovered a pattern for a small felt elephant in a fashion magazine. She made eight little elephants to be used as pincushions and Christmas gifts. The elephants were so well received that Miss Steiff’s sewing workshop gradually evolved into a factory for felt animals and toys. The company’s first catalog, issued in 1892, featured monkeys, donkeys, horses, camels, pigs, mice, dogs, cats, rabbits and giraffes in addition to elephants. It was another sixty years before hedgehogs finally joined the Steiff Collection.

In 1900, Steiff began partnering with companies to create mascots as souvenirs and collectables. The company worked with Michelin Tires to create the famous “Tire Man” in felt and later collaborated with the Walt Disney Company to produce Mickey and Minnie Mouse dolls. In 1949, animated film maker Ferdinand Diehl created a hedgehog couple, Mecki and Micki, as mascots for HorZu, a popular German magazine which covers radio and television news. Mecki and Micki also starred in a *Puppentrickfilm* (a short film created with stop-action animation) made by Diehl and his brother, Hermann. In 1951, Steiff negotiated exclusive rights to produce toy versions of the hedgehogs. Soon the hedgehogs were popular commercial icons as well known to Germans as characters like Speedy Alka-Seltzer or the Pillsbury Doughboy are known to Americans.

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While most Steiff animals are identified by a button in the ear and a yellow ear tag, Mecki and Micki wear red rubber bracelets on their left wrists. The traditional Steiff button and yellow tag hang from the bracelets. Additional tags on the chest of each doll include the doll’s name and the phrase “nach Diehl-Film” (from the Diehl film). The reverse side of the tag bears the words “Redaktionsigel von HorZu” (the editor of HorZu).

Mecki is the head of the Steiff hedgehog family. His hair is made of long, spikey mohair and he has a manly patch of long mohair on his chest. He is attired in a red plaid shirt, brown felt vest with leather buttons, black felt shoes, and gray canvas pants patched with bits of red and blue felt and belted with a piece of rope. The largest version of the Mecki doll carries a wooden pipe tucked into the waistband of his trousers.

Mecki's significant other, Micki, also has a mohair wig and chest patch. She is colorfully attired in a blouse of blue and black checked cotton fabric, a red and black checked skirt, a red and white polka dot bandana and a white apron. The largest version of Micki has a large wooden soup spoon tucked into the waistband of her apron.

The couple have two children: a son, Macki, and a daughter, Mucki. The boy is attired in short gray trousers, a red checkered shirt, and a vest of brown felt. His sister wears a simple red dress with a red checked apron. Both wear black felt shoes.

During the mid-sixties four cousins were added to the Steiff hedgehog family. They included Alp and Alpo who wore Alpine-style costumes, Fuba who wore a soccer uniform, and Monti who was dressed as a handyman. Manufactured for only a few years, the hedgehog cousins are quite rare.

Steiff has also produced some more realistic looking plush hedgehogs. Joggi Igel, or Joggi Hedgehog, was manufactured from 1966 through 2002. Like most Steiff creations, he was available in several sizes, in his case, models were available in sizes 6, 10 and 17 centimeters tall. Rather than standing upright on his back legs as Mecki and his family do, Joggi appears to be standing on all four legs. He is actually lying on his flat felt tummy. He has pink felt ears, and a tan and brown muzzle. His eyes and nose are black beads.

Sources:


The Adventures of Francesca and Nyaria Bennett
by Cyndy Bennett

Nyaria posing with wolf blankie  Francesca

Little Frannie, Head of Security & Super Spy on the Jolly SeaPog

Francesca  Nyaria
The HWS Board is very proud to announce that our newly designed web site is up and fully functional. Please check it out at

www.hedgehogwelfare.org

I need to thank Board member Linda Woodring who spent hundreds of hours working with our past and current web designers to get our site up and running.

Be sure to check out her article about the site in this issue of the newsletter.

New this issue is a column that I’ll pen called Volunteer Spotlight. I’m hoping to find Hedgehog Welfare members doing “unusual” volunteer work. I’m kicking my column off by spotlighting Board member Linda Woodring. If you’re doing something a bit out of the norm volunteer wise, contact me privately at deborah.weaver@marquette.edu and let me know what you’re involved in.

Think I’ll end this column with a quote from Henry David Thoreau that I like. He wrote:

If one advances confidently in the direction of his dreams, and endeavors to live the life which he has imagined, he will meet with a success unexpected in common hours.

May each of you meet with many successes this spring!
My name is Dianne Kavalar. It is my pleasure to introduce my hedgehog, Spike Mon Hérisson, one of God’s tiny creatures. Occasionally he attends services or book club discussions at Wauwatosa Presbyterian Church in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. Never fear, he is not out in the open or on the run. He is secured at my side and only comes out when I bring him out for an introduction or short visit with someone in church. He even takes a bath before he comes!

Spike Mon Hérisson was born in November of 2009. He is an adult male hedgehog weighing in at just under 350 grams. This sweet little gift from God was born and raised here in Wisconsin. He is a great companion! He and I diligently visit many adults in the Greater Milwaukee Area on a regular basis at their request. Spike has brought comfort and joy in some unique way to each individual we have visited. The benefits of a hedgehog visit vary. My hedgehog can elicit verbal and physical communication, positive awareness, interesting conversation, friendship, love and eager anticipation of his next visit.

Naomi, 95 years old, calls and asks about us at least once every week. During our visits, Naomi sits in her chair and holds Spike in his little sack with the top rolled down so she can watch him settle in. She talks to him continuously. He doesn’t even judge her when she calls him Sparkie by mistake.

Last October I asked if she would like to babysit for him while I attended several lectures and enjoyed mingling at a convention. Naomi and Spike had dinner together, dining near each other so she could watch the little guy consume his own vegetables, food and water. She adores taking care of him for me—even if it is just while I run to the store for her or run another errand. She is already counting the days until the Milwaukee Midwest Hedgehog Show on April 16th. She will not be able to attend but she will be babysitting Spike in the evening.

Francis, a retired physician and formerly avid tennis player who now has Parkinson’s disease. Francis used to hold Spike but now he is under hospice care at home and his medication does not give him much relief. We sit and chat in his room with its hospital bed. The conversation flows and Spike brings smiles and happy memories of past experiences since we first became neighbors. All the while Spike is patiently waiting for a stroke or token glance. A visit like this is very important to someone who is homebound and bedridden.

Nancy, an Operation Freedom Army Veteran, has some current health issues. I met Nancy while visiting another woman veteran. Both ladies have service dogs in training. Nancy quickly abandoned her dog and asked if she could go to a couch and rest with Spike. She studied him and held him close, just resting with him for well over an hour. When it was time for us to leave, she did not want to give him back or go to dinner. Spike allows her to relax and escape from her worries for a brief time.

Helen Kavalar, my Mother, will turn 90-years-old this coming December seventh! What can I say? My mother can hold my hedgehog in her lap or in her hands for two hours and still complain, “You’re going already?!”. When we speak on the phone she always wants to know what my hedgehog is doing and if he is coming with me to visit.

Other caretakers and residents from my Mother’s former residence often ask about Spike Mon Hérisson and want to know when he is coming to visit. If such a small creature can continue to bring great pleasure and comfort to so many, I don’t have to ask myself WHY God created hedgehogs.

http://etc.usf.edu/clipart/
Eight Reasons Why Porcupines are Not Hedgehogs

If you live in North America and own a hedgehog, chances are you have heard your pet referred to as a porcupine more than once. Most likely you can explain that hedgehogs are not porcupines. If not, here is a handy list of reasons why hedgehogs and porcupines are not the same:

1. Hedgehogs living in North America are generally of the small “African Pygmy” variety and average five to eight inches in length. The average adult New World Porcupine, on the other hand, is thirty-nine inches long!

2. Adult pet hedgehogs weigh in at 255—540 grams (or 9—19 ounces). Adult porcupines in North America are much heavier, they usually weigh about 26 pounds although some males can top 33 pounds!!

3. Both animals are covered with quills and both have quill-free furry tummies. Hedgehogs have 5,000—7,000 quills! But porcupines have more than THIRTY THOUSAND!! ...AND porcupine quills are barbed!

4. Porcupines can survive up to 15 years in the wild but our pampered little pets live 9 years at the most!

5. When our quilly pets are threatened they huff, click and roll up into a ball of quills. But threatened porcupines will assume a defensive pose with raised quills and may even charge their adversary, batting at them with their quill-laden tails!!

6. Hedgehogs dine on beetles, mealworms, chicky sticks and other goodies. Porcupines, on the other hand, are vegetarians. They eat foliage, bark, seeds, fruits, nuts, plant stems and berries!

7. The average hedgehog litter consists of four to eight tiny, adorable pink hoglets. Porcupine moms bear only one baby per pregnancy and they mate only once a year—usually in the fall.

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8. Hedgehogs hibernate when conditions become too cold. Porcupines may remain in their dens when it is cold but they do not hibernate.

Sources:

HWS Fund Raising Event

On April fourth Dawn Wrobel, Linda Woodring and her hedgehog Kenny held an HWS fundraiser at Tucker’s Doggie Delights in New Lenox, Illinois. Dawn, an animal communicator, donated half her proceedings at the event to the Hedgehog Welfare Society. Linda set up a table and talked to people about hedgehogs and the activities of the Society. The event brought in one hundred dollars for HWS.

Please let us know of any HWS fund-raising events in your neighborhood. You can contact us at: Newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org
This unusual picture book offers a re-telling of one of the lesser known tales by nineteenth century storytellers Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm. It concerns a wealthy farmer and his wife who have everything they want in life except children. One day, the distraught farmer declares, “I want a son even if he’s half a hedgehog!” This statement is too much for the fates to pass up. Lo and behold the following spring the farmer’s wife gives birth to a child who is a boy from the waist down and a hedgehog from the waist up! The stunned mother wraps her prickly infant in a thick quilt and names him Hans My Hedgehog.

HMH is a good boy and proves to be very helpful around the farm. The pigs adore him and follow him everywhere even into the magical forest, conveniently located near the farm. Others often become lost in the forest but not Hans.

One day Hans asks his father to saddle the biggest rooster on the farm. He flies off to the forest where he lives with his pigs. Every day the rooster carries him to the top of a tall tree to practice his fiddle.

Twice Hans meets lost kings in the forest and escorts them back to their castles. In exchange he asks each king to give him “the first thing that meets when you reach your palace.” Of course, both kings are met by their only daughters. When Hans learns that the first king failed to honor his promise, he and his merry band of pigs immediately head to the first king’s palace. As Hans plays his magical fiddle, pigs race through the palace upsetting the cooks, frightening the princess, and rooting in the treasury. In desperation the first king offers his daughter to Hans if he will just call off the pigs. Hans declines the offer.

At the second palace, the gate keeper immediately allows Hans to see the king. Bowing, the second king says, “A promise is a promise.” Stepping forward his brave daughter says, “And I have agreed.” Preparations for the wedding begin immediately. The king sends a carriage to fetch Hans’s parents. The cooks get busy and the seamstress sews a velvet suit for Hans. It’s a struggle to fit it over his quills but he manages. The illustration of Hans standing in contemporary Jockey shorts and tugging his velvet suit over his quilly head may be one of the most memorable parts of the book!

The wedding goes off without a hitch and Hans plays his fiddle at the reception. His music is so enchanting everyone grows teary. Birds fly through the palace windows to sing along. Then the music becomes magical and the palace walls begin to tremble. Soon Hans falls to the floor as his hedgehog skin crumples around him! As the princess helps him up she realizes that the curse has been broken. Before her stands “a goodly young man with a rare and wonderful smile for his new bride.”

The Elegance of the Hedgehog
Chapel in Wonderland (Part 1)
The Elegance of the Hedgehog
Chapel in Wonderland (Part 2)

Hello, Chapel. Fancy a game of cards?

FRED?!

Of course. Be warned, though—as you can see, I have a very good hand.

No thanks. You always beat me.

Off with his head! He’s an affront to pop music!

Yes, my dear. Excuse me while I execute the Bieber here.

All done! And please call me the Queen. Fancy some croquet?