My Experience at Puppy Bowl

By Jennifer Smith

I first received word about hedgehogs being needed in Puppy Bowl through Facebook. Donnasue Graesser had posted, asking for rescued hedgehogs to be a part of the filming. I jumped at the chance. I live in central Maryland and I was able to make the drive up to New York for the filming. I decided to take Valkyrie with me, as she is my bravest girl and doesn’t mind people or sounds. I thought she would also have a good story to tell as she is missing one of her back legs due to improper care by a former owner. The Hedgehog Welfare Society helped take care of her and gave her proper veterinary care after this trauma. I am glad to have her in my home today.

The initial filming for Puppy Bowl coincided with Hurricane Sandy, so filming was moved to the next weekend. We had to change our hotel reservations, and my friend Charity was unable to make it the following weekend. I still had a hotel room, so I offered to take her girls, Bella and Pokie, with me. We stayed at Eventi, a hotel that is pet-friendly. When we got to New York, a young man in a suit saw the hedgehogs’ carry cases and wanted to peek inside. I told him I had hedgehogs with me and he was very excited. I

Continued on page 2
took out Pokie for him to see. His mother said I had made his day; it was his Bar Mitzvah that day. I took the girls inside to the front desk and set their carry cases next to me. When I told the concierge my name, he also became excited and asked if I had brought the hedgehogs with me. I brought Pokie out again and everyone in the immediate vicinity started taking pictures—guests and staff alike! The next day, at checkout, I found out the concierge had emailed Pokie’s picture to the hotel’s main office, as these were their first hedgehog guests! Apparently they had had dogs, cats, birds, even penguins but these were their first hedgehogs!

I headed off to the studio and arrived at 10:30 A.M. Unfortunately I’d gone to the wrong studio. I called Max Brumby, the contact for Animal Planet/Puppy Bowl and he told me the correct address. I pulled up in front of the studio half an hour late, I dropped off the hedgehogs in their carry cases to the waiting Puppy Bowl volunteers outside, then ran back to try to find parking.

When I cam back to the studio, a veterinarian and a cluster of helpers were gathered around Bella, Pokie and Valkyrie. The vet was checking the three of them to make sure they were in good health as well as verifying who was who. The helpers were cooing over the girls and saying how cute they were. All offered to help carry them around with me. Six hedgehogs were already on the set and I had brought three more. A third of the cheerleaders were brought by me!

Two helpers carried Bella and Pokie while I held Valkyrie. We waited in what they called the green room. There were two small playpens with absorbent pads laid down for the hedgies to run around in if we wanted. Mostly everyone just held on their hedgies. A huge television was set up on one wall and showed a live feed of what was happening in the room next door. A small stage was set up to look like a football field. Crew members were moving the cameras around and adjusting the Puppy Bowl blimp.

The other hedgehogs had already done something called “hero shots.” A staff person explained that they were similar to head shot photographs of football players.
Continued from page 2

with their name underneath the photo. I needed to take Bella, Pokie and Valkyrie to get their pictures done. We went upstairs and waited. I was introduced to two women whose nametags said they were from *Parade Magazine*. I honestly didn’t think anything of it at the time! I just held Valkyrie in my lap and talked to them about her missing leg.

One of the helpers said we had to go back downstairs and we ended up going into the stage area with the cameras and lights. A man I assumed to be the director asked, "Who let the owners in the stage area?" The helpers and I scurried out back to the green room with the hedgies.

They were about to begin filming and explained what they wanted. The other owners and I stood around and talked nervously. I noticed a man with a large video camera, and later heard from someone that *Buzzfeed* was there! The helpers passed out tutus for the hedgehogs to try to wear. I tried to put one on Valkyrie and showed a helper how to do it. But Valkyrie had a hard time keeping it on without her back leg to keep it there. None of the hedgehogs were able to keep their tutus on and in the end they were filmed without them.

Finally, they called for five hedgehogs to go up on the stage. After that, they would take the rest. I handed the girls off to some helpers and made sure to remember who I gave them to in case of problems. Unfortunately, Valkyrie bit the thumb of one of them! Valkyrie has a low threshold for being handled and she had reached it! We put the girls in snuggie sacks and watched them go off to the stage area. No owners were allowed on stage.

The hedgehogs showed up on the television screen and the owners all ran over to point out our babies. Valkyrie nosed a small purple football and then ran behind the goal post. Bella made a break for the players’ entrance to hide. Pokie saw one of the cameras and went to investigate, even when it backed away from her. The first group of hedgehogs were all girls. Then they added the rest, which included boys. I was nervous about boys mixing with girls but I saw no attempted matings. One Egyptian hedgehog was very excited to see the ladies, however, and chased Valkyrie and Bella around for a bit. Another hedgehog was in a scared ball and Valkyrie tried to hid underneath him.

The crew had put up cardboard panels to try and get the hedgehogs into a smaller space. Finally it became a small box on the field so the hedgies were close to each other. Then, that was it. Snuggie sacks and hedgehogs were brought back into the green
Continued from page 3

room and we all had to sort through what belonged to whom. Bella, Pokie and Valkyrie were then escorted upstairs to take their “hero shots” which proved to be a little tricky as Bella did not want to look at the camera; she wanted to look at the back drop. Valkyrie and Pokie were more laid back and just sort of sat there. An animal advocate was there eating lunch and making sure the hedgies were being treated with the best care. After that I was given a free Puppy Bowl t-shirt and helped back to my car. It was one o’clock at that point. After two hours of filming, photos and chatting, we were done! We drove back to Maryland that day.

It was a great experience and I would definitely do it again! I look forward to watching the girls on the small screen and telling my friends and family about it all.

Jennifer Smith and Valkyrie. Used with permission.

Valkyrie in pink. Used with permission.
It seems hard to believe, but, on February second, it was once again time for The Hedgehog Welfare Society's annual Hedgehog Day Wheel-a-Thon. This is always our biggest fund-raiser for the year, and this one was no exception. This year we had eighteen teams participating, and I am proud to say that we collected a record amount of pledges totaling $4300. Once again, Larry Thomason was leading the charge with over $1000 in pledges. Thanks to all the people who participated this year--Elaine Becker, Margaret Campbell, Tammy Christopher, Sheila Dempsey, Nancy Denny, Amanda Dunham, Laura Dunklee, Kitty Farrington and Kim White, Lisa Ann Kueter, Heather Marshall, Christine Matarese, Jill Olson, Autumn Ouelette, Colleen Regan, Jennifer Smith, Larry Tomason, Deb Weaver, Kim White and myself.

Every year we also try to give prizes to the participants for all the work they put into it, so I would also like to take this opportunity to thank those who donated prizes--Elaine Becker, Cindy DeLaRosa, Laura Dunklee, Linda Edwards, Kitty Farrington, Kimberly Goertzen, Kim Groves, Julie Meyers-Rocco, Jennifer Plombo, Nicole Sparshu, Naomi Wikane, Tina Winchell, and Dawn Wrobel.

Thank you everyone for making this the biggest Wheel-a-Thon ever!
Behind the Scenes at Puppy Bowl IX

By Elaine Becker

When the Hedgehog Welfare Society put out a call for rescued hedgehogs to be cheerleaders in this year’s Puppy Bowl, many of us came, bringing our little quilled friends from nearby and far away. Filming was moved from 11-2 on 26th St. (lower Manhattan) to 11-11 on 56th (midtown) thanks to Hurricane Sandy. Driving was a bit tricky because many roads were still closed AND 6th Ave was blocked off for the Veterans Day parade. Happily, I have a friend in NYC, so I was able to come into town the night before and stay uptown for free. I made sure to fill my tank in PA before heading into the damaged area and had enough to get back to PA line before needing to refill. The last thing I wanted to have happen is getting stranded without gas and no way to keep the hedgies warm once the hand warmers were used up!

Continued on page 7

Hedwig held by Elaine Becker. Used with permission.

Speedy. Courtesy of Elaine Becker. Used with permission.
Continued from page 6

I drove up from Virginia with my three rescued hedgehogs: Speedy, QE2 & Hedwig. It was quite an adventure and I only wish I’d gotten more time to visit with other hedgie people and answer more questions from the reporters. It was only a half day of shooting, so it was a bit rushed. I had my hands full with multiple hedgehogs and carriers, so I may not have been as coherent about answering questions as I should have been. Sadly, I don’t have any pictures because once I had a moment to try to take a picture, my camera didn’t work!

I’m not sure who all else was there. The only people on the list that I’d met before were Charity and Donnasue, and neither was there in person (Charity did send her Tumbleweed Bella). I did get a chance to talk to Donna and Ashley. I had not met them before. Ashley brought her long eared hedgehog, Henry. It was the first time I’d gotten to meet one in person! Donna Henry was there, with her boyfriend, son & daughter. I did have a chance to talk to Donna and her kids a bit about the Tumbleweed rescue during the "hero shots" upstairs and to Ashley and meet her long eared Henry after the shooting. But I didn’t get to talk to any of the other hedgie people. They had us spread around the outside edge of a good sized room with all the media people in the middle, milling around and taking pictures (still and moving). I’m glad Buzzfeed had such great coverage, helped make up for not getting pictures on my camera! Hedgehogs are in 19-40 seconds of the video and pictures #36-50:

Hedgehogs in the Nursery

By Kristen Bongard

Hedgehog decorations are the perfect addition to a nursery. What is cuter than a prickly critter peering out from crib sheets or wall decals? I am currently seven months pregnant with my first child and have been spending the past few weeks putting together her nursery. My plan: Sneak as many hedgehogs into my daughter’s nursery as possible!

There are a surprising number of options for hedgehog enthusiast parents to incorporate hedgehogs into their children’s rooms. The hedgehogs-for-babies trend seems to have popped up a few years ago, appearing as toys such as the Fisher-Price Miracles and Milestones Touch and Cuddle Hedgehog as early as 2007. In 2009, Gymboree introduced clothes featuring cute hedgehogs as part of their Forest Rascals Collection.

I have found my favorite nursery items hedgehogs at a variety of retailers. Ikea has an adorable book currently available called The Hedgehog Leaves Home. It features a European hedgehog’s adventures in the forest. Along with the book, Ike has a line of baby items including a stuffed hedgehog, a hedgehog duvet cover, a hedgehog quilt and matching rugs and curtains in a natural palate of colors. The items are from the Vandring series (Google translates Vandring to “hike” in English) and are available online and in stores.

Ikea as also hidden hedgehogs in their Barnslig (Google translation: “Childish”) series, which consists of brightly colored children’s toys, bedding and room décor. While hedgehogs are not as prominent in this series, the bright colors and variety of animals pictured would make for a fun and festive ambiance in your baby’s room.

Another great source for hedgehog items is Amazon, the online retail giant. A quick search of the term “hedgehog” in their
baby section returns more than 100 results. But there are a few that stand out among the crowd. The Felnsted Mobiles Nursery Hedgehog Family is a classy, artistic mobile that could hang in your child’s room for years. The mobile, with a brown mommy hedgehog and her three hoglets is decorative and will dance in even a slight breeze.

A different by equally take on the nursery mobile is the Kids Line Dena Happy Tree mobile. This mobile features an owl, a flower, a squirrel, and a blue hedgehog. It turns and plays Brahms’s Lullaby. It is part of the Dena Happy Tree line which includes a lamp, hamper, and an eight piece crib bedding set that comes in pink with pastel colored accents. An adorable product that matches the Dena Happy Tree mobile is the RoomMates Scroll Tree Peel and Stick Wall Decal MegaPack. This set of decals features yellow owls, a pastel blue hedgehog, and a pink squirrel sitting amongst a flowering, whimsical tree. Decals applu to any smooth surface and are designed to be easy to apply, reposition and remove. They are great for decorating walls without committing to paint, and would match a variety of wall colors.

Expecting a child is exciting and a little terrifying, but putting together her nursery has been nothing but fun. I can’t wait to see how it comes together and will share pictures of the results!
Recently Alice met Willem and Bram Egel, two hedgehog brothers from Holland, who moved to New York City to work for the laundry department at Kikkerland Designs. They were particularly attracted to the company because its name, Kikkerland, which translates to “Frog Land,” is a nickname for Holland.

Every day the two brothers jump into dryers filled with soggy, wet laundry. It is their responsibility to improve the circulation of heat and air through the wet laundry in the dryer. To accomplish this they must lift and separate the wet items to reduce static and drying time and to make the clothes, sheets and towels soft and fluffy.

Their work eliminates the need for chemically treated dryer sheets, making the laundry healthier for people and the environment because there is no risk of chemical residues being left on sheets and clothing or released into the air. This method of drying laundry is non-toxic and hypoallergenic—a definite advantage for those with sensitive skin.

Willem and Bram also make drying the laundry more economical because they are able to reduce drying time by as much as forty percent! People with busy lifestyles appreciate the brothers’ help in making this chore more efficient and convenient.

Some people have complained that Willem and Bram have not reduced drying time for their laundry, while other claim that the amount of static electricity in their dry laundry has actually increased after sessions with the brothers. Bram says that these discrepancies in their effectiveness can be explained by the quality and efficiency of the specific appliances they work in—“some dryers are better than others,” he insists! ¹

¹ The Egel brothers have received technical advice from the following source:

The Literary Hedgehog: The Mistmantle Chronicles

By Margaret Myhre

The Mistmantle Chronicles by Margaret McAllister is one of several series in children’s literature that feature animals in fantastic, and frequently medieval, settings. This particular series is often compared to Brian Jacques’ Redwall series which was very popular in the 1990s. In fact, some describe The Mistmantle Chronicles as a sort of preparatory step to Redwall with less complicated plots, fewer characters, and less use of confusing brogues and dialects. An interesting detail about this series, pointed out by reviewer Kristin Anderson, is that the author avoids having all the bad characters belong to one species and all the good characters belong to another. On the Island of Mistmantle every species has its share good and bad characters.

The series is illustrated by Oram Rayyan, a very talented artist whose appealing sketches decorate the beginning of each chapter in all five volumes of the series. His depiction of hedgehogs is particularly charming. Unfortunately, in volume four of the series, a major hedgehog character is repeatedly depicted as a mole!

Mistmantle is an enchanted island occupied by squirrels, otters, hedgehogs, and moles. The main character is Urchin, a red squirrel. As an infant, he was dropped on to the Island of Mistmantle by a passing seagull. He was rescued by a gray squirrel, Crispin, who serves as captain to King Brushen, a hedgehog. Urchin believes he is destined for greatness and, as his story wends through five volumes of adventures, he manages to achieve just that.

Here is a list of the titles in the series with a brief synopsis of each volume:

Urchin of the Riding Stars (2005): Urchin, the orphaned red squirrel, helps a group of animals as they defend their island against evil forces.

Urchin and the Heartstone (2006): The inhabitants of the Island of Mistmantle anticipate a time of peace following the coronation of Crispin the squirrel. Unfortunately the arrival of a delegation of Whitewings on a storm-ravaged ship delays the ceremony while sending Urchin on a perilous journey.

The Heir of Mistmantle (2007): Everyone gathers for the joyful celebration of the Naming Ceremony for Princess Catkin, the baby daughter of King Crispin and Queen Cedar. Unfortunately, the princess disappears the next day. Urchin and the brave captains search for her but come back empty-handed. Evidence points to Linty, an older squirrel who is mad with grief over the loss of her two children during the evil Husk’s reign.

Urchin and the Raven War (2008): After the swans of Swan Isle are attacked by vicious ravens. Urchin and the citizens of Mistmantle rush to assist them.

Urchin and the Rage Tide (2010): After years of peace and prosperity, the island of Mistmantle is threatened by tidal waves. Urchin attempts save endangered citizens while trying to prevent a reckless squirrel Mossberry, from taking over the kingdom.

Thoughts from the CVO

By Deb Weaver

Limelight is defined as a prominent or conspicuous position before the public.

Ever notice how some people can’t stand not being in the limelight?

I had a friend for many years that did many kind and generous things for people (myself included). However, he was always talking about what he had done for so-and-so, and anytime he could work his “good deeds” in to a conversation (no matter how long ago that deed had been done) he’d do so. He was certainly thanked by those he helped, but it got to a point where people would turn down his offers of help because there was too much baggage attached to the giving.

I’ve got another friend (we met in the second grade) who, even when we were kids, always “one upped” you. As a kid I always thought of it as “my sky is bluer” syndrome. When I talk with her today, this phrase still goes through my mind. Doesn’t matter what the topic - - she’s had something better, been somewhere more beautiful, or has found a better value.

In my workplace, there is someone who will take the credit for every project done. The credit is claimed for even the smallest of tasks done (well below his pay grade) and no thanks is given to those that actually did the work.


But I think the bigger issue is that they’re insecure. There’s something lacking in their deep inner self that drives them to “one up” others and constantly feel the need to put themselves in the limelight. As aggravating as it can be, it’s sad really. To spend one’s entire life not being able to realize the life affirming joy that comes back to you when you can encourage, empower, and celebrate those around you and their strengths and achievements.
CONGRATULATIONS, HEDGIE CHEERLEADERS !!!

MARCH
Mar. 29  Kirby Woodring
Mar. 29  Eulalia Bennett
Mar. 29  Mariah Wrobel

APRIL

DID WE MISS YOUR HEDGEHOG’S BIRTHDAY ?

Please submit your hedgehog’s name and birthday to:

Newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org