Hedgehog Welfare Society Receives Grant

By Deb Weaver

We are pleased to announce that we have received a $500 grant from the Petco Foundation to continue our educational mission. This is the second time HWS has received a grant from the Foundation.

The mission of the Petco Foundation is to raise the quality of life for pets and people who love and need them. The Petco Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation that supports other IRS (Internal Revenue Service) designated non-profit pet related groups as well as municipal and governmental agencies and educational institutions involved in animal causes.

HWS gratefully thanks the Petco Foundation for this grant!
Pecking Order Among Hedgehogs

By Elaine Becker

Hedgehogs have a "pecking order" as do many animals, including humans (remember junior high?). It can be determined without fighting --especially among females or males of very different sizes. One can easily size up the other by smell and sight.

When we were planning to adopt our second hedgeie, we took our first one with us to see who got along. I didn't realize how much of an Alpha my timid little snuggler had become by being an "only" hedgeie until I saw other hedgeies' reactions to him!

We introduced each in neutral territory -- a big C&C cage that none of the hedgehogs had ever been in was placed on a bed to make it easy to reach into. We set the hedgehogs down at the same time, facing each other, but not too close. The reactions were amazing! Q-ball never made any aggressive moves or noises, just curiously sniffed at them. A small male snapped shut and thrashed around hissing in terror! Nope, I couldn't adopt him - he'd have to live in fear! He ended up at the Houston Arboretum, his own territory. Speedy sized up Q-ball and said (with body language) "I can't take you, but I can outrun you" and headed in the other direction!

We also tried a female. We did not know if she'd ever been bred or had even met a male. She slammed her skirts down, raised her quills, turned her back and started growling. We think she knew all about males and wanted no part of that. We wanted to see if that was her reaction to all males, so we took out Q-ball and put in Speedy. She charged at him with her visor quills lowered (like a rhino) and her teeth snapping! Again, Speedy lived up to his name and ran!

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Elizabeth did NOT act like that or she would never have gotten close enough to bite QE2.

One month later, I took these same four hedgehogs to the Colorado hedgehog show ’09. They were all loose in my folks’ backyard lawn. Mom and I supervised to make sure no one got too close to anyone else. As predicted, all the males headed toward the female and she went away from them. But the big surprise was that the only male who sang to her was the tiny terrified guy - and he tried to attack the much larger Q-ball! We kept grabbing them when they’d get too close and I finally put Q-ball into a wire pen. Again—big surprise -- once he was no longer pursuing the girl, she came over to the wire and sang to him! She had just been playing hard to get while she sized up all the males and then decided he was the best choice!

Hedgehog bookends by M. Myhre. Used with permission.
Grammy Arya

By Kitty Farrington

“Four years and eleven months.” “Four years and eleven months.” “Four years and eleven months.” I repeat these words like a mantra every time I walk by Grammy Arya’s cage. I check on her about every two hours when I’m at home. At lunchtime, and before she takes her Metacam, I feed her mealies one by one because she gets choked when she tries to gobble down a whole bowl. I watch her chew each one and swallow before I place the other one in front of her. She sometimes ignores the mealie and I have to repeatedly show her where it is with my finger. “Do you not want to eat him?” I ask as I search the box for one that’s more plump and appetizing.

At four years and eleven months, Grammie Arya is certainly not the oldest living African Hedgehog on record but she is the oldest in our care. Her right eye is clouded and she appears to be unable to see from it. She hasn’t wheeled in four or five months. She takes Metacam daily because she stops eating and becomes lethargic when she doesn’t get it. However, she still walks around and sniffs eagerly when placed on the floor or in grass. She usually wriggles vigorously to get away when held. She almost always eats her soggy baby cats’ kibble and her peeled, washed chickie sticks. She never potties anywhere but in the corner of her cage.

Living in a rural southern community as we do, we do not have access to cutting edge medical diagnostic equipment that bigger city vets have. There are only two or three vets in our area who will treat hedgehogs and only one has prior experience. Therefore, we don’t really know if Grammy Arya has cancer, tumors or is merely suffering from the effects of old age. Most of my information is gathered from personal observation. Some days Arya is a little unsteady on her feet. Some nights she eats a lot more than others. Since she started on the Metacam, she doesn’t make the little squeaky, moaning noises in her sleep any more. Those noises made me worry that she was in pain. Now she sleeps peacefully under her pigloo with her little head tucked underneath her. I know this because I see it ten to fifteen times a day.

Sometimes I worry that I’m being selfish in keeping Arya here with us. Sometimes when I look in her eyes she seems so tired that I’m sure she is ready to give up. I was thinking these sorts of things two nights ago when Arya got mad because her treat bowl was empty and in her way. I watched as she flipped it up into her water bowl with her nose and went back to eating from her soggy kibble bowl. “Who am I to make such a decision about the life of another creature?” I asked myself as I turned out the light and went to sleep.
I’m very excited to announce the arrival of the newest member of my family - - Wally! He’s dreamboat cute and just a dolly. Getting ready for Wally got me to thinking about the rest of my kids over the years and I thought I’d share them with you in this column.

My first was Gracie. Her mom, and the first litter of kids (two sisters), were sweet, sweet, sweet. When my friend said she had another litter, and did I want a girl, I said yes. If hedgehog family’s have “black sheep”, Gracie was the black sheep! She was a cranky, standoffish hedgeie - - who ended up being nick named “Gracie The Diva” by Teresa Johnson. She called all the shots in our family and tolerated no foolishness from me.

Next came Grover, whom many of you knew. He was a very sweet boy (expect during the hormonal surge during his “teen years”) who grew to be close to 1,800 grams. Many years ago at a show in Detroit while I was working the confirmation show, someone asked to hold him. He spent the rest of the day being passed around the room being held and hugged to his heart’s content! Grover left me just short of his 4 th birthday.

Grover’s niece Gabby came next. She was a sweet girlie who was very timid. She left us all too soon with a sinus tumor at 17 months.

Molly Dolly Snickerdoodles Sassy Pants Show Queen Permanent IHA Grand Champion Weaver was next to arrive on my doorstep (she started out simply as Molly). She was a beautiful apricot girl, who never ever raised a quill, not even at the vet’s. She was full of spunk, never stopped moving, and had the longest legs I’ve ever seen on a hedgie. Molly made it to 4 ½ - - full of attitude right to the end.

Greta came to live with me when Molly was 2. She was a quiet girl who enjoyed quietly spending time cuddled up with Molly. Going to the vet was entirely a different matter however, she threw the biggest hissy fits of any of my kids. Early one morning while I was holding her, Greta died due to complications from pneumonia (which is why I always chime in on our chat groups about getting treatment for respiratory issues right away).

Samantha came to me at 6 weeks. When I brought her home Molly and Greta were not overwhelmed with love for her! One night I had all three on the sofa with me, and told the girls to “watch Sammie” (I was going to step in to the other room for a minute). Before I could leave, Greta turned around and stuck her head between the sofa cushions and Molly gave me a look that definitely said “Mom, I don’t want to watch the baby!” It all made me laugh. Sammie is still with me and will have her 5 th birthday in August. She’s a tough grumpy lady, who is perfectly content with her own company.

Millie traveled from a show in Denver to Milwaukee with a carrier full of baby girls. She was Sammie’s niece. She was a terrific snuggler, both with me and Sammie. I could go up to her cage and whisper “Millie, Millie, Millie” and she’d poke her nose out between the cage grids and give me a kiss. She was a great lover of her kibble, and would routinely get up throughout the day and grab a snack.

Banner from thegraphicsfairy.com
Murfi and Sheila’s Wedding!

By Murfi Jackson and Sheila Dempsey

Murfi and Sheila were married on March 1, 2013 in a civil ceremony at the Charles County Courthouse in La Plata, Maryland. The marriage took place on their 15th anniversary as a couple.

Same sex marriage became legal in Maryland on January 1, 2013.

When we went to apply for our marriage license we thought that it might be awkward or that we might be treated differently. We are happy to say that everyone at the courthouse who knew why we were there, beginning on the day we applied for our license and going all the way through the day we married, treated us wonderfully and shared in our excitement and joy. It has made both of us even more proud to call Maryland and Charles County home.
Hedgehog Trivia: The Whimzees Hedgehogs

By M. Myhre

Whimzees, is a new line of dental chews for dogs. Made in Holland for Paragon Pet Products, the chews come in a variety of sizes and shapes. In addition to a traditional bone-shaped chew, six other shapes are available: crossbones (a shape similar to jacks), stix, ears (they resemble pig ears), toothbrushes, alligators and...wait for it...hedgehogs!! The hedgehog chews have a rather unique appearance. They are chubby and amiable, sort of a cross between a hedgehog and the Laughing Buddha.

According to the Whimzees website, shape is an important part of dental chews. Grooves help work the chew into the smaller spaces between dogs' teeth. Hollow shapes and spaces make it easier for the dog's teeth to grip the chew, and knobs improve blood flow through the gums and also curb halitosis, plague and tartar.

This product is made from six primary all-natural ingredients: Potato starch, glycerin, lecithin, powdered cellulose, malt extract and yeast. The chews are gluten free, a good source of B vitamins, minerals and amino acids, and they are easily digestible.

They are available in four all-natural colors: Green (alfalfa extract), orange (annatto extract), brown (malt extract) and white (calcium carbonate). Only the toothbrush-shaped Whimzees are available in white and then it's just the “toothpaste” on the brush.

Whimzees come in four different sizes: Xtra Small, Small, Medium and Large. However, not every shape is available in every size. The Hedgehogs, for example, are available in only two sizes—medium (for dogs weighing 20 to 40 pounds) and large (for dogs weighing 40 pounds or more).

You can visit the Whimzees website at http://www.whimzees.com/ It's available in English, Spanish and French and offers news, media and information about the company and their product. It also features the company’s Dogifesto accompanied by a photo of a dog balancing a Hedgehog chew on its nose. Whimzees also has a Facebook page displaying photos, feeding guidelines and the Dogifesto.
Hedgehogs Wearing Hats

Photos courtesy of Susan Bennett. A Hedgehogs Wearing Hats event will be held at the Eastern States Hedgehog Show this July.
More Hedgehogs Wearing Hats

A Visit to Auntie Naomi
By Cyndy Bennett

The Day was sunny and a little cool, but just the perfect day for travel. The Pogsville Hedgies had everything packed the night before. They were going to visit Auntie Naomi, The Doggies 3 and Kitties 2 today to learn about plants and flowers. They were all very excited because all their friends were going to meet them at Auntie Naomi’s House. All the hedgies, both young and old, were ready to leave at sunrise.

The Manly Hedgeboyz (no wimmens allowed) headed down the path to town followed by all the young ones. The Molly Girlz and Quilled Gentlemanz followed to help keep the young ones on the path. There were many different colored wild flowers along the path that the young ones picked to give to Auntie Naomi. Butterflies fluttered from flower to flower and sometimes landed on the noses or heads of the hedgies. Everyone laughed and talked as they continued down the path. Before long they came to the sign that pointed the way to town.

High up in the trees the Squirrels of the Bushy Tails called down to their friends and waved Hi. They leaped from branch to branch of the trees that lined the pathway. Some of the younger squirrel did fancy dives and twists has they leaped, showing off to their young friends below.

Mr. Blue Bird and his family flew into sight and called out greetings. They dipped and soared high into the air showing the young squirrels they could also perform acts of the fancies. They were the first to see Auntie Naomi’s yard where many of their friends were already waiting. They saw more friends coming in on carpets of the magic and some of them were racing and others showed off their carpet of the fancy skills. Hmmm...there were also a few new young friends they had not seen before. Could these be Dyson and Mariah Namid’s babies?

Auntie Naomi’s yard was filling up fast with guests from near and far. Auntie Naomi was sitting under the tree that is home to the Warner Town Mice. The Doggies 3 and Kitties 2 were talking to their friends as they arrived. The young Pogsville Hedgies ran up to Auntie Naomi and gave her all the pretty colored wild flowers they had picked just for her. Some of the Molly Girlz brought vases and filled them with water so the wild flowers could be arranged nicely and kept safe.

Dyson and Mariah Namid were showing off their babies to all their friends. Little Frannie helped Quigley into his chair of the wheels and pushed him right up to where Auntie Naomi was sitting. Nyarki found QEE in the crowded yard and they found a nice place to spread a fleecie and sit together. Eulalia found Vanilla Bean, Bindi, Lizzy, Grammie Arya, Prickle Pot, Prissquilla, Mary, Jesse, Ketchup, Melanie and Shannon all showing off new hats of the fancies. They were all excited about the up coming Birthday party and what to wear. Hazelnut, Nutella and Pistachio soon joined the group of Molly Girlz and they all sat down together. There was a large group of boys sitting around King

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Gromit making sure he was comfy and attending to his needs. Kirby was spreading out a fleecie to sit on with Mayo and he gave her a pretty pink flower to wear in her quills. Sammie took little Wally by the paw and made him sit down right by Auntie Naomi's feet.

The Moles of the Deep joined all their friends in the yard also. The Warner Town Mice sat up in the tree branches with the Blue Bird Family. Some of the Warner Town Mice sat right outside their windows. The Squirrels of the Bushy Tails sat both in the trees and on the ground. Mr Rabbit joined the group staying towards the back. All the friends from both near and far finally settled in to learn about gardens of the magics from Auntie Naomi.

Auntie Naomi greeted all her friends and welcomed them to her gardens. "I have many types of flowers and plants in my gardens. Did you know I have gardens of the magics?" The young ones sat with wide eyes full of wonder.

Auntie Naomi continued: "Flowers have their own language. It is simply called the language of flowers." Turning towards the gardens she waved her hand in the air. Soft music could be heard floating on the air. There were garden and tree fairies playing small instruments of music. Soon the daisies started to dance and the Lavender swayed to the beat. The crocus started to croak softly like small frogs. The Catnip started to purr and the Lily of the Valley, Comfrey, Bluebells and Coral Bells all started to ring each have their own sound. The Sunflowers had their pretty faces following the sun. Some of the Garden Fairies were taking pins from the Pin Cushion Flowers to pin together leaves and small wild flowers to be sewn together to make clothes. The Snow White Nectar Bush had flowers that were fluttering like Flutterbys in the breeze. The Shooting Stars nodded their heads with the music.

Auntie Naomi said, "If you listen closely to all my flowers they will tell their language. Should we all walk around to each of my gardens?" Everyone said yes and followed as Auntie Naomi led the way. The first flowers they saw were Pansies, they looked to be smiling and laughing as they whispered loving thoughts. Next they saw Honeysuckle and the bonds of love grew amongst the friends. Bluebells were next and they expressed much gratitude to all the visitors. The violets showed much loyalty, devotion and faithfulness.

The group walked some more and gathered around more flowers. Everyone was listening closely. They heard the Hydrangea Pinky Winky whisper perseverance is our language. The group of friends smiled as the flowers winked at them. Sweet Woodruff blushed and said we have the language of Humility. Geraniums smiled and said like many of you we have the language of True Friendship and comfort. The Clovers called out Think of Me!!! The Lady's Mantle smiled and said I speak of Comfort. The friends saw some more flowers that were creeping along the ground. The flowers called out we are Creeping Jennys and we like to move around.

The next group of flowers they came upon were the Black Eyed Susan that stood tall and stately. We speak of justice and their dark faces brightened up with smiles and they nodded their heads. At the feet of the Black Eyed Susans were small blue flowers. One called out Forget Me Not and then another called out remember me forever. Soon all the small blue flowers were
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taking turns calling out Forget Me Not or Remember Me Forever. Vanilla Bean said, "They must be Forget Me Nots." Everyone laughed. Next came some very shy flowers. The Doggies 3 and Kitties 2 had to encourage the flowers to talk. After some encouragement, the flowers blushed and said quietly we have the language of shyness and pleasures. The Doggies 3 and Kitties 2 said, "these flowers are Sweet Peas are they not just too cute?"

Little Frannie and Quigley were standing by some Bleeding Hearts that started to glow brightly. The Doggies 3 and Kitties 2 started to giggle. They said together that only happens when there is true love near by. Little Frannie took Quigley's paw and smiled.

The next group of flowers had little flies of the fires racing fast amongst them. The little flies of the fires called out, "These are speedwell flowers. They make you go fast." That caught the attention of a few of the carpet of the magic racers in the group.

Cory Doggie said, "My all time favorite is the Lion of the Dandys that grow in the grass. Did you know that Lion of the Dandy fluff turns into fairies when it passes through pixie dust?" Then Cory Doggie ran through some Lion of the Dandys to make their fluff float into the air. Soon lots of the young friends were also making the fluff float into the air. Then everyone watched as it floated away...will any of the fluff go through Pixie Dust? We know not.

The Irises said we speak of wisdom and inspiration. If any of yous need wisdom or inspiration just sit near us and we will whisper to yous. The large Pink Pussy Willow cleared her throat and stated, as she smiled to all the mothers in the group, "I speak of Motherhood." Then she gave a special smile and nod to Mariah Namid.

After all the gardens were viewed the group of friends set up a large picnic lunch. They enjoyed the music by the fairy and flower band while other flowers danced. Together they put on a wonderful show that was enjoyed by all the friends while they ate their picnic lunch. After lunch many of the friends walked among the flowers listening closely. Others sat quietly or talked. Soon it was time to head back home. Fair thee well greetings were exchanged as friends departed.
The Medici Society Ltd. is a British company which supplies colorful, high-quality greeting cards to museum gift shops and other specialty stores. At one time the Society also produced a number of small, paperback children’s books featuring beautiful, full-page color illustrations. Featured authors and illustrators included Molly Brett, Ella Bruce, Audrey Tarrant and an individual with the unique name of Racey Helps.

Angus Clifford Racey Helps was born in Bristol, England, in 1913. He was raised in the small town of Chelvey in Somerset, where he was privately educated at a vicarage and later at the Bristol Cathedral School. He attended the West of England College of Art and had a business selling antiquarian books. Every night he would make up bedtime stories for his daughter, Anne. During World War II, when Anne was sent to live in the country, her father began writing his stories down, illustrating them and mailing them to his homesick daughter. When a publisher happened to read one of Helps’ hand-written, illustrated books, he invited Helps to come to London to discuss publication of his work. As a result, Helps contributed several stories which were published first by Collins, and later by the Medici Society. In 1970, Helps suffered a massive heart attack and died at his home in Barnstaple, Devon, England. He was 57 years old.

*Pinny’s Holiday* features Pinny Needlekin, a hedgehog, and his friend Ponsonby, a vole. One day the two companions attempt to call on their animal friends to invite them to a picnic. Unfortunately it seems that everyone, except Pinny and Ponsonby, is away on holiday. The two friends decide that they should go on holiday as well, but neither has any money. Finally they decide on an expense-free camping holiday and move into an old cider barrel on Primrose Hill. During the night a storm comes up and the cider barrel rolls down the hill and into the river with Pinny and Ponsonby still inside. After traveling some distance in the river, they are rescued by a friendly mother otter who serves them lunch and packs a picnic for their trip while her husband equips the barrel with a sail and a rudder.

They are happily rowing home against the tide, singing at the top of their lungs, when an angry heron with an extremely sharp-looking beak admonishes them for scaring the fish with their loud voices. Pinny and Ponsonby immediately apologize and offer the heron a sandwich before continuing, quietly, on their way. Eventually they encounter Ponsonby’s cousin Walter, who loans them a real boat for the trip home. On the way they meet all their friends who are also on holiday and have a wonderful time together.

*Pinny’s Holiday* has been translated into German, Danish and Finnish.