Eastern States Hedgehog Show *DelMarVa HEDGIE CON* — June 28 — 30, 2013

By Sheila A. Thomas-Dempsey

Billie Brown, of *B and K Worms*, and I met in 2012 to discuss putting on a Delaware, Maryland and Virginia area Eastern States Hedgehog Show, hence "DelMarVa" which is a regional acronym for the area. Our main goal was to educate, of course, and to have a lot of fun while raising money for hedgehog charities. Something that was important to both of us was to try to bring together different hedgehog groups. We have the HWS and the IHA and now there is a strong presence on Facebook for the HWS and a group called "Hedgehog Happenings."

I sent invitations to some media contacts and was thrilled that *Small Animal Channel's* Mary Lou Zarbock did two articles about the show. I was also very happy when I learned that *BuzzFeed.com* was sending a reporter. Let me tell you, though, I was "over the moon" when I found out that THREE *BuzzFeed* reporters were coming! I was interviewed by our local paper, *The Maryland Independent*, a couple of weeks prior to the event and was told that a feature article might or might not appear depending on space. At the last minute I found out that we were featured in the *Weekender* section that came out on the same Friday that the show started (if anyone would like a copy email me at HappyHedge@gmail.com). Since then we have also been interviewed by *CHAT Magazine* which is published in the United Kingdom! That article appeared in the August 23rd issue.

We have also been contacted by an African Hedgehog group in England requesting more information on the Eastern States Hedgehog Show, a traditional "Square Pugs Show." I am continuing to communicate with the lady but of course I also put her in touch with the Honorable Naomi Wikane, Judge of the first "Square Pugs Show" and the HWS's own Hedgehog Whisperer!

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On June 28th Billie and her husband hosted a Meet & Greet. I hear the food was great! It was planned by Billie and the chef was her sister who owns a catering company in Delaware. I was a bit late and missed some of it but true to my nature I did get dessert!

Several of us worked late into the night to make Saturday run smoothly and then found ourselves up early to start on the first and longest day of the show. The lady who had been chosen as our Show Secretary had to bow out due to family obligations, so Billie jumped in with the caveat that she didn't have to do any public speaking. I am NOT a public speaker either and I've never liked it. Despite pleading with a number of folks to do it, I ended up with the job. No one was more surprised than me to discover that I enjoyed it after all! One of the several times Murfi (my wife, not my hedgehog - HWS joke) visited she was shocked to find me up there. She says I did a good job, but I think she is just biased!

Regardless of many invites to pre-register their hedgehogs, only a few people did so therefore on Saturday we were quite astonished to find exactly how many hedgehogs were going to be entered in the conformation show. Combined for the two days, we had 41 hedgehogs entered in the conformation events. Saturday's Best In Show was awarded to Miss Scarlett (Guardian Margaret Campbell) and Reserve Best In Show went to Gandalf (Guardian Christy Gagne, one of our Facebook friends). On Sunday Miss Scarlett took Best In Show once again with Reserve Best In Show going to Brian (Guardians John & Dale Nastuk).

Martina Weihs-Werner was the presiding Judge on Saturday and for the difficult decisions she encountered she was able to consult with Sunday's presiding Judge, Teresa Johnson and visiting Judge Laurel Sedgwick. On Sunday Martina and Teresa flipped positions and Laurel continued to consult. On Saturday Teresa had to bow out of decision consulting when her own huggies were on the table.

As I mentioned earlier, Sunday's conformation show was a bit more casual and Teresa indulged Billie and I a bit. Ginger, the Tenrec, was given Honorary Hedgehog Status and earned a blue ribbon. Billie's "Wild Milwaukee Hedgehog" (a whole other story for another time!) took 2nd place in the Juvenile Male Standard color against John and Dale Nastuk's Brian, who took 1st.

BuzzFeed.com reporters helped with judging the Square Pogs Show.

We were blessed with many quality vendors including the HWS's own John and Dale Nastuk, all the way from Canada. Soon I'll be sharing some pictures of John's creations that they entrusted me. I'll be shipping them (for the price of postage only), payment for the pieces can be made to John and Dale.
Saturday night's buffet dinner was so much fun! We had a live auction and there was some fierce bidding between my buddy Brig and Elaine Becker-Fischer's hubby Quentin. I won't mention any names (uh, Frances Price, Christina Price, Margaret Campbell, Chantell Thom but not me ~ LOL!) but a "Boogie Woogie Hedgehog Dance" complete with toilet paper tubes on heads was done in tribute to Elaine's hedgegie, Speedy, who recently crossed.

All in all, Billie and I sincerely hope everyone had a great time. We will be posting our grand total profit eventually but most importantly, we did make a profit and we will be making donations to hedgehog charities.

If you'd like to be notified of the next DelMarVa hedgehog show, please send an email to

Eastern.States.Hedgie.Show@gmail.com

and I'll add you to the list. We also have a Facebook page. Our website, EastCoastHedgehogShow.com, will be periodically updated.

Billie and I couldn't have done it all without our volunteers—Jennifer Smith, Elaine Becker-Fischer, Christine Matairese and her sister, Drew and Viki Young of Echo Woods, Susan Bennett, Margaret Campbell, Frances Price and her delightful daughters Christina and Hester. I hope I haven't forgotten anyone.

I would be remiss not to include our Door Poster contest that was won by Frances Price and Christina (creators) and roomies Erica Cole and Kayleigh Sherman. There were so many good entries that a second award was given to Teresa and Cliff Johnson.
The Eastern States Hedgehog Show
By Brig

My best friend of 30 years (yes it has been that long!) and I finally got to see each other after a lot of years. We had been talk'n on the phone, and facebook'n for a while and catching up. She had been telling me about her new critter passion that she's had for a few years now called Hedgehogs. I asked her what they looked like and she was telling me all about them and then sent me pictures of them. Now to this country hick, they look like little baby porkapines!! They’s real cute!! As we were talking about them she was tell'n me about the hedgehog show she and Billie were doing and I said I would like to come to that. She told me when to show up, so I did.

Well, let me tell you all the stuff that goes into putting on one of these shows!! Before hand, she was crazily trying to put stuff together for her own table, get everyone they could think of invited, get the space for the event room laid out the best way and all kinds of stuff like that. Miss Billie was up in Delaware doing different stuff, but just as busy.

Before the event began stuff had to be taken from Sheila and Murfi's house to the hotel. Then auction tables, freebie packs, and other organizing still had to be done. This is where I came in. Sheila did not know all the crazy-mad skills I had that could help her out with some of this. The fact that I don't sleep much helped. I was free labor to help with the "get it all there, set it up, watch it, help out at the other vendor's tables when it was their time to show, rustle people in off the street or where ever to come and check out the show and get some education on these critters, then to pack it down, load it, and get it all back home." Back home in Texas, we do things like this for our friends.

I really enjoyed the crazy weekend of the show, and all the back end parts of it too. I had a great time meet'n all the other hedgehog peeps and their critters. I learned a lot about them - how to and how NOT to pick them up, found out that like all other critters, they have all kinds of personalities! Some are like me ("not morning critters"), others are sweet all the time. They come in a lot of different shapes, colors and sizes. There was one littl’n the size of a hockey puck, and one big one the size of a nerf football, (just cut the points off the ends and that will be the size of it). They have special bags they snuggle in, special "hats" they like to chill in, and they own special wheels they like to run on, not like a hamster wheel either! Vendor Erica Cole of Needlework Hedgehogs was tell'n me about all the stuff she sews and sells, and how crucial it is that there ain’t no loose strings anywhere to be found. Did you know that a string, thread, even a piece of human hair can cause them to lose their limbs if it gets wrapped around any of them! I mean like fast, like in a couple ( 2 to 3 ) hours fast this can happen. I helped put a couple of posters together about this.

I met a lot of nice peoples, and some crazy peeps!! It was a good time. Sheila said that she, and her cohost Miss Billy, will put on another show the year after next and it will most likely be in or near Dover, Delaware. This gives them enough time to get everything together to put on another show. This one was in Southern Maryland. I hope that the Buzz Feed crew comes back out for the next one, they were some great peoples!!

I hope to see all y'all at the next show!! Bring all your hedgies and T-rexes ( don't tell Sheila, but I like them the best, cause they can't poke you that hard!!). We gonna have a fun time!!
From Rescue to Diva in One Weekend

By Margaret Campbell

Miss Scarlett is a rescue who came to live with us on Memorial Day weekend, 2013. She was 8 weeks old. She was part of a litter whose mother was abandoned and luckily made her way to a North Carolina rescue.

This past June, I attended the Eastern States Hedgehog Show in Maryland. I took my “kids” Spartacus and Miss Scarlett with me. Little Miss Scarlett competed in the conformation show. Well, what a surprise! She won First Place, Grand Champion and Best in Show on Saturday!! Since there was a different judge on Sunday, I went ahead and entered her in the Sunday show. She won First Place, Grand Champion and Best in Show!!! I am so proud of her.

She was such a good little girl. She never raised a quill during the entire show. She is a Papillion, meaning she has two symmetrically matching pinto spots on each side. This little rescue has come a long way.
Be Aware of the Hazard of Loose Hairs and Threads

By Susan Bennett

Knowing the danger of loose hairs and threads we are always careful here, having two people with waist length hair. We inspect all liners and bags after every wash. Over this past weekend, we had one get by us and it got wrapped not around a toe, but above the entire foot.

My son had Piglet out the night before with no problems. The next morning he said there was a horrible smell coming from him. I checked, fearing a mouth tumor, and found his foot huge and in horrible condition. I went to my vet right away and was seen within 10 minutes of when I discovered it. Piglet was in surgery a few minutes later.

The hair was surgically removed and he was given injections of Baytril and Metacam. The foot was wrapped and I removed his wheel and litter box. The next night we went for a recheck and Piglet was un-bandaged. It looked a lot better but not great. He was given oral antibiotics. If the foot turns dark, I am to bring him in right away to have the dead tissue removed.

I’m very lucky to have my fantastic vet located close by. This is a prime example of why it’s very important to establish a good relationship with an excellent vet who sees exotics. An emergency is a poor time to speculate if your vet has the experience to put your hedgehog under, let alone do surgery.
Thoughts from the CVO

By Deb Weaver

I was in a situation lately with a group of people I hadn’t met before. Talk turned to family.

I’m single and I have no children. In addition, my entire nuclear family has been dead since my early 20’s. A woman across from me said “You’re not married? You don’t have children? Your life’s not worth anything”. Most people in the group gasped - - but not all, some shook their head in agreement.

This has actually happened to me many times over the years, and I’ve never had a good come-back for the person - - it usually renders me speechless. I am not a second class citizen because I’m single. Is “my life” really worth nothing because I walk the path alone? I don’t happen to think so.

I have filled my life with many years of extremely rewarding volunteer work, have a busy job that I love (most days!), have traveled around the world, have many hobbies, and have some very close and dear friends - - all of which have enriched my life and that I’ve enjoyed. And then let’s not forget my hedgehog children!

There’s really no end point to my musings above, just thinking out loud today.

Speaking of family, as I write this my Wally (whom I mentioned in the last newsletter) is now 12 weeks old and weighs 469 grams. He’s simply a doll and I love him to pieces. My 5 year old Samantha and he tolerate each other very well and she’s delighted not to be the only recipient of Mom’s forehead kisses.

Our HWS Board family also has grown recently. I’d like to offer my warm congratulations to Kristen and her husband Mike on the birth of their daughter Amelia (their first) and to Donnasue and her husband Carl on the birth of their daughter Maeve (their fourth). I see two future board members in the making!

Remember to be an active participant in your life, not a spectator.

Have a fabulous fall everyone!
Volunteer Spotlight - Michael Shafai

By Linda Woodring

This month we'd like to spotlight one of our newest and most active rescue people, Michael Shafai. Michael joined our rescue team about a year ago and has been one of our more active rescue facilities. He's located on the Jersey Shore in Neptune which is one of our busier areas for relinquishments and adoptions. Michael is always there when I call on him. He's taken in numerous rescues in the past year, makes sure they see a vet or are well-socialized, and then gets them over to one of our approved applicants when he feels they are ready. He continuously e-mails me with updates as to what's happening with rescues he takes in. I know that when I ask him to do something, it will be done without having to follow up on it.

Michael is a single 28 year old who just likes to hang out with friends and watch sports when he's not hanging out with his hedgehogs. He's a graduate of Rutgers University with a BS in Civil and Environmental Engineering, and he works at a small engineering firm as a consultant. He's a season ticket holder for the Rutgers' football team and is also a big NY Yankees and Dallas Cowboys fan.

Michael first became interested in animals when he was 16 and got a job at the local Petco store. Before going off to college, he had a huge collection of snakes and lizards, and he became totally obsessed with animals. After graduating from college, he again got some reptiles, but a friend urged him to get something "cute". She recommended a sugar glider or chinchilla, but Michael decided that a hedgehog was appealing to him, and that idea never left his mind. Soon after that, he got his first hedgie, Pokey, and that started his love of hedgehogs. About a year later he adopted Lucy. Shortly after that he purchased a house and noticed that The Hedgehog Welfare Society had no rescues in the area, so he applied and was accepted as one of our Rescue Facilities. Right now Michael has five hedgehogs at his home, Pokey, Lucy, Pointy, Molly and Mr. Prickles. Molly and Mr. Prickles are rescues who could be adopted out to an experienced person but will most likely stay with Michael. He also is a dad to 12 snakes, 2 frogs, a lizard, a tarantula, countless beetles and roaches, and a kitten named Gizmo.

Thank you, Michael, for a job well-done!
HWS Loses Newsletter Reporter

Alice Myhre, a valued member of the HWS Newsletter staff, passed away quietly in her sleep on August fifth which was also her sixth birthday. Alice had survived two surgeries — one to remove a small tumor in her mouth in 2012 and a second surgery on April tenth of this year to remove a plasmacytoma.

She loved working on the newsletter and had written many articles. Her debut article, published in volume 43 (September/ October, 2009), described how she spent her summer vacation. In volume 46 (March/April 2010) she provided directions for sewing sleeping bags as well as writing and illustrating a touching letter about her pen pal Phoebe, a survivor of the Texas hedgehog rescue. A follow-up illustrated letter, published in volume 47 (May/June 2010), described Phoebe’s move from Texas to her adopted family in Canada.

By volume 52 (March/April 2011), Alice was writing about her adventures on a flying saucer and in volume 61 (September/ October 2012) she wrote about her experience at the HWS (Hedgehog Welfare Scouts) summer camp. Her final article, published in volume 64 (March/April, 2013) was an interview with the Willem and Bram Egel, a pair of Dutch hedgehogs who moved to New York to work for the laundry department at Kikkerland Designs. Alice’s photo with the Egel brothers appears on this page.

Alice was always available to write an article, interview a fellow hedgehog or pose for photographs. She will be sorely missed.
THE SAGA OF YOWIESAURUS

By Erin Iwamoto

The rare and relatively unknown Yowiesaurus has been spotted! But this endangered creature has found itself trapped within a cave of dinosaurs! Will she make it out alive?

Scanning her predicament, the Yowiesaurus has discovered that she is, indeed, surrounded on all sides!!
Nevertheless, the fearless Yowiesaurus plows her way through the Tyrannosaurus and Spinosaurus, barely avoiding certain death, only to find herself at cliff’s edge!

Undaunted, the Yowiesaurus scurries through the masses of dinosaurs, successfully defeating the feared Velociraptor in battle, only to confront yet another Tyrannosaurus!
But the Yowiesaurus is again blocked from escape!!!

Gathering her courage, the Yowiesaurus realizes that she must first defeat the Tyranosaurus, else escape will be futile.
The Yowiesaurus returns to the site of her original battle and bravely confronts the Tyrannosaurus.

The battle is close! Who will survive? Will the Tyrannosaurus triumph over the Yowiesaurus, sending the species into extinction?
The Yowiesaurus has found victory! Using her best traits, she has managed to topple the Tyrannosaurus in battle!

All other dinosaurs have fled, and the Yowiesaurus indulges in her spoils of war.
With the defeat of the Tyrannosaurus, a magical land bridge has appeared!!

The Yowiesaurus is finally able to escape to safety!!!