Hedgehog Causes Internet Sensation!

Intercut Productions is an award-winning film production company based in Northwest Arkansas. The company specializes in commercials, highlight reels, music videos, audition tapes, short films, and event coverage as well as corporate training and show reels. Zak Heald, filmmaker, producer, and owner of Intercut Productions, has spent the last three years working on all these types of films as well as news stories with websites such as HoolplaHa.com. In 2003, at the Little Rock International Film Festival, Zak won an award for best cinematographer.

This fall, Zak teamed up with Bill and P.J. Mattus of Arkansas Hedgehog Rescue to create a video for HoolplaHa.com. The plan was to film a cute, inspiring story about a rescued hedgehog. Kayak was the first and only applicant for the starring hedgehog role. The resulting film about this tiny hedgehog went viral, racking up 30,000 Internet viewings within hours of its October debut. By the end of the week, more than sixty Internet sites from the U.S., Canada, Ireland, the United Kingdom and Australia had links to Kayak’s video.

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Kayak relaxes with his teddy bear. Used with permission.

Stories about Kayak appeared in Buzzfeed, the Huffington Post, Fox News, msnNOW, eWallstreeter, BiTe in Canada, Closer in the U.K., the Daily Edge in Ireland, and the World News Press as well as many other news programs. THV 11 (the CBS Affiliate in Little Rock, Arkansas) interviewed Bill and P J Mattus and mentioned the Hedgehog Welfare Society. They even provided a link to HWS on their website at


http://www.christmas-graphics-plus.com/
Kayak’s Story

By P.J. Mattus

A young man stood at our front door, “I’m Zak and I’m here to video a hedgehog.” While he proceeded to bring in his equipment and set it up, I thought back over the events of the past year. How our lives were changed by a special little guy named Kayak.

One year ago, I was contacted by a man. He said that his hedgehog had babies, and one of them was very sick and couldn’t stand. He wasn’t able to take care of the baby and was going to have it put to sleep. I asked him to bring the baby to me. I immediately made an appointment with our vet for the next morning.

It was a very cold, rainy October night. My husband and I met the man at a gas station. He pulled out a small fish tank with wood chips and a pitiful creature inside. I reached in, scooped him up and placed him inside a warm hedgehog cuddle bag, leaving everything else behind.

When we got home, we started by making sure he was warm enough. I had a heating pad on my lap and we warmed a towel in the dryer. We could tell he was very small and was unable to stand on his own. We syringe fed him Pedialyte and Hills A/D. Once he tasted the Hills A/D, he gobbled up as much as we would let him have. We didn’t want to shock his body by giving him too much at one time, so we fed him small amounts every few hours, throughout the night.

The next morning, when we uncovered him on the examination table, our wonderful vet, Dr. Hawley, couldn’t help but utter a heartfelt “Awwww” and scoop him up into her arms. I’ve never loved a vet more than at that moment. He weighed only 64 grams – and that’s after being fed. She prescribed antibiotics, gave him subcutaneous fluids, and changed the name on his chart from “baby hedgehog” to “Kayak”.

For the next several days, we continued to feed Kayak every few hours and give him subcutaneous fluids. Two days later, we brought him back to Dr. Hawley, 20 grams heavier and with a shine of hope in his eyes. Although he still couldn’t stand on his own, we could all tell that he was improving. He was fighting, and so were we. She prescribed more antibiotics and an anti-inflammatory. Thankfully, I no longer had to give him fluids subcutaneously.

About this time, we started giving him mealworms, the recently shed ones that were soft and white. He was hooked and would lunge for them with great gusto! We discovered that he could walk a little now, if he was supported. So we would do a sort of physical therapy, where he would walk while we held him, hand over hand over hand. Twelve days after coming to us, we felt he had improved enough for his first Carolina Storm Bucket Wheel. It has become his favorite thing in the world.

And now, one year later, a young man is in my living room asking me questions about this amazing little hedgehog. What has he taught us? Why do we rescue? Then I take him to meet his very first hedgehog. Kayak wakes up very grumpy. He’s gotten used to the easy life of a hedgehog. Sleeping all day, cuddles and snacks with Mom and Dad, then running every night. I think it’s the running he likes best.
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Zak takes the video of Kayak doing what Kayak does best – being adorable. He runs around the living room floor. We take him outside in the grass. He proudly wears his orange “Super Kayak” cape and shows off his skills – running in his wheel, playing with his skateboard, tubing. Watching him, I wonder if he even remembers being sick.

Kayak finishes the video shoot with a bath and cuddles with a new friend. As Zak packs up to leave, I think to myself, “What HAS he taught us-all of us? Why DO we rescue?” And then I smile – because I know...
Why Do We Love the Hedgehog?

By Pippa McAndrew

This article comes to us from Pippa McAndrew of Hedgehog Homes, a unique enterprise in England which builds high quality shelters for hedgehogs. These are small wooden houses which people can place in their gardens to provide a comfortable nesting place for wild hedgehogs in the area. The houses are available in several attractive styles including Colonial, Gypsy, Suburban, Stable, Bijou, Autumn Ark, and Hideout. In addition to homes, other items are available including dry hedgehog food, T shirts, bird products and hedgehog-sized wooden coffins. You can visit their website at http://hedgehoghomes.com/home.html

Let's face it. They can't be all that clean, since they spend their time grubbing about in hedges and under sheds. They frequently suffer infestations of mites, and they happily chomp away on a diet that would make any schoolgirl squirm. Caterpillars, worms, beetles, and it gets worse, snails and slugs. They're even partial to the odd fallen nestling or blind baby shrew.

Yet we adore them. Those of a sentimental nature coo and aah when they see Erinaceus Europaeus bumbling across the lawn in the moonlight. An Indian file of baby furze-pigs, scuttling fearfully in the wake of mummy on their short legs, leaves the impressionable weak at the knees.

It hasn't always been that way. Far from it. Shakespeare didn't help matters by grouping the harmless beast alongside the squirmy and the venomous:

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedgehogs, not be seen;
Newts and blindworms, do no wrong;
Come not near our Fairy Queen.

They are, in truth, a creature much maligned.

It was commonly believed in the Middle Ages that they drank milk from cows' udders during the night. A farmer with a cow that had dropped off its yield wouldn't think of blaming illness, poor diet or old age. 'The blessed
hedge-pigs,' that's what infallibly caused it. The same story was still current in the late twentieth century in my somewhat backwater part of East Anglia.

They were the very devil for eating chickens' eggs too. If they were found asleep in the morning in a henhouse or nesting box - quite a natural retreat for them, considering the darkness and comparative warmth - they were only there for the eggs. If one was broken it didn't register that the hen might have cracked it herself by flapping about in alarm when the hedgehog lumbered into her comfort zone. Onto the midden heap went the spiny one, or into the oven. Rolled in clay and baked, his spines broke away with the clay, and he was a tasty additive to a rich soup.

As might be expected, Parliament soon got in on the act. In 1566 an Act was passed which placed a three penny price on every poor hedgehog's head. Not surprisingly they were killed by the thousand.

Long before that time even, they were the subject of malicious and misinformed myth and conjecture. Pliny the Elder was positive that the (non-climbing) hedgehog scaled trees to knock down apples, which it would then roll upon, sticking them onto its spines and carrying them off to its lair. Pliny the Elder got other things wrong, mind. He organised a scientific expedition to inspect Vesuvius that coincided with its eruption in 79AD. No more Pliny.

Four centuries earlier Aristotle had been telling tall tales about hedgehogs in their travels being at the mercy of the wind. The wind/hedgehog pairing was one that obviously stuck in the mind, for in the thirteenth century Albertus Magnus would have it that hedgehogs spent time each sleepy dawn, arranging their nests so that the entrance faced away from the current draught. He carried the "wind" analogy to extremes when he thrust upon us the contention that the hedgehog had two anal passages!

The change in our attitudes towards these creatures appears to have coincided with industrialisation. Since the town-dwellers no longer kept cows and hens, the vilification hedgehogs had suffered no longer mattered so much. It has often been said that the urban population suffers from an overly sentimental attitude to wild animals, while the countryman just gets on with killing them. It is quite likely that the newly townified factory hand felt a considerable longing for the open fields and freedom he had left behind. The hedgehog may have come to epitomise the old life, being the only free creature from his old days the slaves to the machines ever came across.

By Victorian times, the displeasure felt against the hedgehog was largely dissipated. They had become, after all, "the gardener's friend," keeping down slugs and snails that otherwise would make enragingly short work of plants and vegetables.

The endearment for hedgehogs was nowhere more apparent than in a word that gained popularity in Victorian times: urchin. Beforehand it had been a dialect term for either a young hedgehog or all hedgehogs, just as girl and boy can be used. It now became affectionately attached to ragged and often mischievous children. Hedgehogs, hand-in-hand with street scamps, had become the much-maligned naughty puppies of romantic hearts, paving the way for the creation of the helpful and houseproud Mrs Tiggy-Winkle in 1905.
The love affair has gone from strength to strength, and now that the very survival of the beast is under threat, it has become an active rather than a passive emotion. People are taking a stand. Maybe they're not (yet) going around with banners and forming picket lines, but the movement to protect the hedgehog is demonstrably swelling.

Mrs Tiggy-Winkle has certainly done her bit. By the way, the painfully beautifully illustrated (five-minute read) online version of the tale can be read via the link [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15137/15137-h/15137-h.htm](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15137/15137-h/15137-h.htm). She must have been part of what made us at Hedgehoghomes (Pippa, Simon and Janet and our helpers) contract the bug. We're very active ourselves in the cause. See what we're doing and what's on offer at our website ([http://hedgehoghomes.com/](http://hedgehoghomes.com/)), sign up for our free and definitely non-pushy newsletter at [Contact Us](http://hedgehoghomes.com/contact.html), and see our wonderful hedgehog homes products here:


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### Hedgehog Birthdays

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>November</th>
<th>December</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 14</td>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutella Dunham</td>
<td>Hedwig</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 25</td>
<td>Dec. 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shannon Matarese</td>
<td>Jesse Matarese</td>
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2014 Elections for the HWS Board of Directors

By Donnasue Graesser

It’s that time of year again to cast your ballots! The HWS holds elections for the Board of Directors every year. Board positions are held for two years, so there is turnover of several positions each year. Nominations for board positions will be held in November, and elections will be held in December. Both are open to all members of the HWS.

This year, the open positions are Advocacy Co-chair, Health and Education Co-chair, Public Relations Co-chair, and Vice Chief Volunteer Officer. We can always use more volunteers, so please nominate yourself or someone else if you are interested in running for one of these positions. We always welcome fresh input into the board.

All board members brainstorm ideas, discuss issues facing the HWS as an organization, vote on HWS policies, and represent the HWS to the public. More specific information about each of the open positions follows:

The Advocacy Co-chairs work together to advocate for hedgehogs in commercial facilities (usually pet stores or breeding operations) who are being kept in poor conditions. They assist members in contacting the USDA or other regulatory authorities to correct these situations.

The Health and Education Co-chairs work together to compile and disseminate hedgehog health information, provide advice on veterinary care, and support research into hedgehog health. They also are involved in bringing in educational speakers at hedgehog shows.

The Public Relations Co-chairs work together to raise public awareness of the HWS and its mission through hosting tables at hedgehog/pet events, interviews, writing articles, and other means.

The Vice Chief Volunteer Officer is a “jack of all trades”. She assists the Chief Volunteer Officer in the day-to-day administration of the HWS and it’s mission. She also oversees the HWS web-site.

Keep your eyes open on the HWS e-mail list and yahoo group for the call for nominations in November and the elections in December. If you are interested in nominating yourself or someone else for a board position, you can also do so via e-mail to info@hedgehogwelfare.org

Ballot Box courtesy of http://www.mycutegraphics.com/
Thoughts from the CVO
Deb Weaver

As 2013 winds to a close, I hope this newsletter finds each of you well and contented with your life. Perhaps the words written below by Max Lucado will help you reaffirm the importance of your life and of what might be.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I'd like to extend our best wishes to you and your families for 2014.

*************************************************** *********************************

Today I will make a difference. I will begin by controlling my thoughts. A person is the product of his thoughts. I want to be happy and hopeful. Therefore, I will have thoughts that are happy and hopeful. I refuse to be victimized by my circumstances. I will not let petty inconveniences such as stoplights, long lines, and traffic jams be my masters. I will avoid negativism and gossip. Optimism will be my companion, and victory will be my hallmark. Today I will make a difference. I will be grateful for the twenty-four hours that are before me. Time is a precious commodity. I refuse to allow what little time I have to be contaminated by self-pity, anxiety, or boredom. I will face this day with the joy of a child and the courage of a giant. I will drink each minute as though it is my last. When tomorrow comes, today will be gone forever. While it is here, I will use it. TODAY I WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE. For loving and giving. Today I will make a difference. I will not let past failures haunt me. Even though my life is scarred with mistakes, I refuse to rummage through my trash heap of failures. I will admit them. I will correct them. I will press on. Victoriously. No failure is fatal. It’s OK to stumble. I will get up. It’s OK to fail. I will rise again. Today I will make a difference. I will spend time with those I love. My spouse, my children, my family. A man can own the world but be poor for the lack of love. A man can own nothing and yet be wealthy in relationships. Today I will spend at least five minutes with the significant people in my world. Five quality minutes of talking or hugging or thanking or listening. Five undiluted minutes with my mate, children, and friends. Today I will make a difference. Even though my life is scarred with mistakes, I refuse to rummage through my trash heap of failure. I will admit them. I will correct them. I will press on. TODAY I WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Happy Holidays Everyone!
Have a Happy Hedgehog Holiday

By Margaret Myhre

Founded in the summer of 2001, RubberHedgehog Rubber Stamps of Williamsburg, Ohio, is a pro-animal company that is dedicated to animals and animal lovers. Owner Sidelia Reyna named her business in honor of a sweet, playful African Pygmy Hedgehog known as Koosh. Frequently referred to as “the rubber hedgehog,” Koosh was able to produce a family of little hedgehogs before becoming ill with Squamous Cell Carcinoma in December of 1999. She survived surgery followed by four weeks of radiation but eventually her cancer returned. She passed away in 2000. Three of Koosh’s four children eventually died of the same type of Squamous Cell Carcinoma that killed their mother. Two of her grandchildren survive today. One of them, Xena, is pictured on the company’s website.

RubberHedgehog Rubber Stamps are available in two forms: Mounted and unmounted. Mounted stamps are mounted on a sturdy white maple hourglass shaped base designed to fit the user’s hand. The rubber side of the stamp is closely trimmed and deeply etched to make the best stamped impression possible. Unmounted stamps do not have a cushion or a wooden base. There are many ways to use unmounted rubber stamps including an acrylic block mounting system such as the EZ Mount System™.

The company’s stamps are not confined to hedgehog themes a huge range of animals including prehistoric animals and mythological creatures are represented as well as other non-animal subjects. Stamping accessories such as ink pads, stamp scrubbers, scissors and gift certificates are also available.

Rubberhedgehog supports pro-animal charities. Their website includes a form for requesting charitable donations on behalf of registered charities. While they may not be able to honor every request, they will consider all requests and will respond to those who provide an email address.

http://rubberhedgehog.com/

Continued on next page
The Literary Hedgehog

By Margaret Myhre

Diggy Takes His Pick

This small book from the Medici Society is a gentle Christmas story written by Racey Helps, the proprietor of an antiquarian book shop who sent illustrated stories to his small daughter while she was exiled to the British countryside during World War II. It has one of the most contrived endings in the history of children’s literature but is entertaining nevertheless.

Timothy Bun and his wife, Lettice, are small rabbits who like to entertain their friends Pinny Needlekin, a hedgehog, and Diggy Winks, a mole, during the Christmas holidays. Pinny promises the Buns that he will make sure that the hibernating Diggy is awake for this Christmas Eve.

On the appointed day Pinny heads for Diggy’s house carrying his umbrella. Unfortunately, instead of the expected rain there is a heavy snow, Pinny loses his bearings and can’t find his way to Diggy. To make matters worse, he is accosted by Mr. Cunningleigh-Sligh, a fox, who snatches Pinny’s umbrella and disappears.

By the time poor Pinny arrives at the Buns’ front door he is covered with snow and Timothy Bun believes he is a real live snowman! Luckily Lettice recognizes him at once and invites him to warm up by the fire while she brews a posset to drive out the cold. The mug of hot milk curdled with dandelion wine soothes Pinny while he relates the sad story of his encounter with the fox and his failure to awaken Diggy Winks.

While Pinny is warming up at the Bun home, Diggy magically awakens without Pinny’s assistance and dresses for the festivities, only to find that the front door of his underground burrow is blocked by snow. He begins the long, slow task of digging his way out.

Meanwhile, Lettice has prepared a Christmas pudding and placed it on a shelf near an open window. As luck would have it, Mr. Cunningleigh-Sligh, who is walking past the Bun home, hears the creak of the larder door, spots the pudding in the open window and steals it! He dashes some distance away before stopping to sample the pudding. He carefully sets the pudding on the ground and is astonished when it vanishes into the earth! Dropping Pinny’s umbrella, the fox dashes away fearing that he will vanish into the earth as well!

And what caused the pudding to fall through the earth??? Well, it seems that while Diggy was trapped inside his home and trying to dig his way out. Pinny and Timothy Bun were outside trying to dig their way in. They were just about to encounter one another when the pudding dropped into the hole, landing on Diggy’s head. After Diggy recovered from the shock of being crowned with a pudding, he noticed that his friends Pinny and Timothy had dropped into see him. So the three friends collected the pudding and the umbrella and headed off to the Bun home and their Christmas dinner! After which I am sure they all lived happily ever after.