The USDA Commends the Hedgehog Welfare Society

The HWS considers it very important to understand the USDA regulations pertaining to keeping and licensing exotic animals. Board members communicate with the USDA to ensure that we are fully informed on issues covered in The Animal Welfare Act. In the process of building bridges and putting to rest important licensing questions, Dr. Raymond Flynn, DVM, Assistant Regional Director; Western Region, Animal Care wrote the following, in an excerpt from one of his letters to Vicki McLean, our Chief Organizing Officer:

"Please allow me to express my gratitude for the ongoing efforts of the Hedgehog Welfare Society. USDA Animal Care recognizes that hedgehogs are a special-needs animals, and that not everyone is qualified to own and care for such unique and wonderful creatures. The HWS provides a valuable safety net for those situations in which an uninformed owner or breeder finds themselves unprepared to meet the challenges of exotic animal husbandry."

We want to share Dr. Flynn’s appreciation with all of our members and rescuers. For more information about USDA licensing requirements and procedures, please see the articles written by Vicki McLean and Janet Ernst on page 14.

HWS Achieves Federal Tax Exempt Status

Vicki McLean, HWS Chief Organizing Officer

One of the Hedgehog Welfare Society’s highlights during 2003 was the Internal Revenue Service recognition of the HWS as a tax exempt organization. This means that contributions to the HWS can be used as an exemption against income taxes. This determination isn’t necessary to operate, but it helps potential contributors make the most out of the money they have available to spend on charitable causes. The exemption is retroactive to October 11, 2002 when the HWS was incorporated.

The Internal Revenue Code provides a number of regulations that allow various types of organizations to be tax exempt. At its most basic level, the tax exemption is to provide tax relief to organizations doing work the government would otherwise need to do to ensure the health and welfare of its citizens and their concerns. Qualifying activities include such things as the relief of poverty, the advancement of religion, the advancement of science and the promotion of education. USDA Animal Care recognizes that hedgehogs are a special-needs animals, and that not everyone is qualified to own and care for such unique and wonderful creatures. The HWS provides a valuable safety net for those situations in which an uninformed owner or breeder finds themselves unprepared to meet the challenges of exotic animal husbandry."
Linda Edwards, Kitchener, Ontario

My husband Gary and I have shared our lives with hedgehogs since 1997. Shortly after adopting our third “personal” hedgehog, we encountered our first rescue situation. We didn’t realize at the time that we were “rescuing” these three hedgehogs, we just knew that they had to be removed from the deplorable conditions in which they were kept. Nothing could have prepared us for the heart-wrenching and detrimental effects of neglect and abuse. Buck, Rosita and their daughter Daisy were covered in their own filth and infested with mites. Their long, twisted nails painfully and permanently deformed their delicate feet. Rosita self-mutilated her chest several times in response to the noise and stress of her environment and it took two years of our gentle, loving care for Buck to muster up enough trust and courage to reveal his beautiful face.

Since that time we have orchestrated many rescues, but making few placements due to concerns of unsociability, emotional fragility or ill health. Most rescues make their “forever home” here with us. One such special little hedgehog, Shadow, compelled us to make a firm commitment to hedgehog rescue and it was then that we officially evolved into “Hedgehog Heights Rescue”. Part of our mission is to actively seek out hedgehogs needing rescue, which initially involved registering with local Humane Societies, pet stores and veterinary clinics as a hedgehog rescue station. Our daily routine is to check the classifieds and we regularly “make the rounds” of local pet stores monitoring hedgehog care. We are not shy in asking to handle and examine their hedgehogs in order to inspect them for health concerns and to ensure genders are being housed separately. We also take this opportunity to educate pet stores and provide them with a dependable, knowledgeable resource.

On one such routine visit just two weeks before Christmas, I dropped by a local large pet chain. Most of the young clerks know me by now so when I asked to see their two hedgehogs, there was no suspicion or hesitation. There were two young male hedgehogs in the showcase, approximately seven to eight weeks of age: a feisty dark-eyed cinnamon and a gentler, more passive “standard”, who we now know as “Nicholas”. As I picked up Nicholas, he appeared very fragile and weak. He immediately uncurled in my palm, gazing up toward my face and capturing my heart. I initially thought he was so calm because of his gentle disposition, but within a few seconds, the diarrhea he presented indicated more than that. He was also a very sick little boy. Under closer scrutiny, I could see his right eye was recessed, inflamed and appeared covered with mucous. I informed the clerk, as well as store management that this hedgehog was ill and needed immediate veterinary attention. I was assured that this would be arranged. I diligently followed-up on a daily basis for the next week with phone calls and “surprise” visits. By week’s end, it became evident that Nicholas had still

continued on page 3

HWS Achieves Federal Tax Exempt Status continued

Nicholas
A Rescue Story

of health and social welfare. The HWS falls under a very broad and indistinct category of charitable giving in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Animal welfare organizations tend to fall into this group. Because of the possibility of misuse of a tax exempt organization, the IRS requires rigorous documentation on the proposed activities of an organization. Organizations such as private foundations are scrutinized even more carefully than an animal welfare organization. Further, lobbying for government action must constitute only a small part of an organization’s activities. Sales of products must meet rigid criteria to be used as a source of revenue for a 501(c)(3) organization. Ruby’s Rescue Shop meets these rigid requirements. In keeping with the Paperwork Reduction Act, the HWS assembled a volume of information pertaining to our activities, plans and fund-raising efforts.

The Internal Revenue Code limits the form a tax exempt organization can take. The HWS chose to become a non-profit corporation for public benefit in the State of Oregon. On October 11, 2002, the HWS was incorporated with a Board of Directors, by-laws and rules for the conduct of business. One criteria of filing for tax exemption is that our incorporation papers must include a provision that upon dissolution, all funds will be passed to another organization exempt under 501(c)(3). This protects contributors from a Board of Directors dissolving the corporation and absconding with our vast resources. As an Oregon Corporation, we are also responsible to the Oregon Department of Justice (DOJ) Charitable Trust Division. To protect the public, the DOJ monitors non-profit corporations through annual filings of activities.

The Hedgehog Welfare Society is proud of the cooperative effort of its Board of Directors that resulted in an immediate and unchallenged acceptance by the IRS of the organization as a non-profit tax exempt entity. We passed with flying colors and look forward to many years of meeting the needs of our hedgehog companions for protection, health and welfare.
Nicholas - A Rescue Story continued

not received personal and appropriate veterinary care. I was angry and now determined to remove him from the store immediately to provide him with the care he so desperately needed and deserved. According to store policy, they were now prohibited from selling me a sick animal, so my offer to purchase him outright was emphatically declined. I then offered to take him home, nurse him to health and return him to the store once he improved. This request was also denied. I refused to accept this little hedgehog's bleak destiny. I knew I had to act quickly and calmly in carefully planning a strategy to free him without jeopardizing his safety. I couldn't do it alone. Although my solitary voice was falling upon deaf ears, I could hear in the distance the choir of hundreds of list members and organizations offering their support. This is where the hearts of ALL hedgehog organizations beat as one.

Gary was well aware of my frustration and failure in having Nicholas released to my care. He was also well aware of the gravity of Nicholas' situation and knew time was critical. Nicholas could die! By Friday, Gary said “OK… that's enough… let's go get him”. We arrived at the store, immediately proceeding to the showcase only to find BOTH hedgehogs were gone! When we asked the clerk if she knew anything about them, she referred us to the manager. As we approached him, he was already shaking his head “NO”. We knew we were in for a battle! Gary very confidently introduced himself, and calmly said “we’re here to get the hedgehog and we’re not paying for him”. I knew Gary was doing the right thing, yet inside I was trembling with fear, not knowing the ramification of his words. Our mission here was not just to rescue Nicholas, but also to make it clear that this type of neglect was unacceptable for any animal, it should never happen again and we would do everything we could to ensure that it didn’t. Gary explained that although we understood the manager’s dilemma of veterinary costs far exceeding the price of the hedgehog, it did not excuse him from depriving a sick animal from necessary and appropriate treatment. Gary explained in detail who we are, what we do and why we do it. He emphasized the fact that we belong to an international community of hedgehog enthusiasts who are monitoring and supporting our efforts in rescuing Nicholas. My contribution to this drama was telling the manager that I wasn’t going to leave the store until I could see for myself that Nicholas was safe. The manager looked at us, I think realizing how genuine we were in our concerns for this little hedgehog, and knew in his heart that this was “the right thing to do”. Then just like a movie set to fast-forward, “Nicholas Darby” came out of “nowhere” and was presented to me in a little cardboard box. It took a few seconds for me to fully realize what had just happened. Gary looked at me and said "he wants you to have him, take him... he's yours".

After only one week in our care with appropriate veterinary treatment, Nicholas' intestinal problems had completely resolved. His eye is still “miniature”, however no infection remains and although there is no sight in that eye, there are no indications for removal. We have carefully chosen his names to be reflective of his existence thus far. The name Nicholas, is Greek meaning “Victory of the People”. That's exactly what this was - a joint effort and victory for us all! We chose his second name, “Darby”, which is Gaelic meaning “Free Man”, to reflect the exhilaration and intense emotion as we walked (no... actually we “ran”) out of the store, freeing him at last. Through this ordeal, Nicholas has managed to retain his gentle, sweet character and is happily sharing the Edwards' hedge room with the rest of his new family. He is a pure joy and delight!

If Nicholas could speak for himself, I’m sure he’d first want to thank you ALL for helping him and holding him close in your prayers and thoughts while taking this journey with him. And his advice to you would be “Don’t EVER be afraid to speak up for us when we cannot speak for ourselves. You are braver than you know.” And finally... a little advice to pet stores: “Don’t EVER underestimate the power of those “crazy hedgehog people”!

Now if all the good that has come out of this potentially devastating situation weren’t enough to put a smile on your face... keep smiling, because it is only the beginning. By leaving our contact information and care sheets with the store, we are not only assured that they have the necessary information at hand to competently care for their hedgehogs, but they will also pass that information on to their clients; they know they can call us for help and advice at any time, as well as refer their clients to us; we have been contacted by a local large-animal rescue who would like to work in conjunction with us; we were instrumental in rescuing a 10 week old cockatiel with a broken wing from the same store; through our contacts with the various aviary rescues we have made very important contacts inside some of the major large chain stores who have agreed to keep a watchful eye on the hedgies; we have made a very important contact alerting us of a small-animal auction and they have agreed to rescue all hedgehogs on our behalf.

With heartfelt appreciation to “Hedgehog Welfare Society”, “The Twink Fund” and individual contributors who helped us make this “miracle” happen, THANK YOU! 🐹
Heidi vs. The Spider

Laura Ledet, Puyallup, WA

Last month, we began a series of articles on unusual medical cases in hedgehogs. This month, our “zebra” is a spider.

Last summer as I was going in to do my daily check on all the hedgies, I noticed that my sweet little rescue, Heidi, had not eaten her food the night before. Alarmed, since she is a rather rotund girl who always eats everything, I immediately took her out of her bed. To my horror, I discovered that her genitals and parts of her legs and face horribly inflamed with areas of obvious necrotic tissue.

We immediately raced her to our veterinarian, giving her a dose of Benadryl on the way. Dr. DuPrez examined Heidi and diagnosed an extreme reaction to insect bites, which she was almost certain was from some sort of spider. The treatment she prescribed was oral Baytril and Amoxicillin, a wash with Chlorhexiderm twice daily, as well as daily debridement of the dead tissue that was sloughing off at what I would consider an alarming rate. We also continued the Benadryl for the following 3 days, twice daily. In addition to these treatments, we used an herbal oral detoxification tincture twice daily to help aid Heidi’s body in ridding itself of the toxin. Thanks to Julie Haynes, who shared with me her experiences and photographs of her hedgehog Lucky who had suffered a spider bite, I learned that cutting into the bite sites can actually help to spread the venom, causing even more damage. I made certain that our veterinarian did not make the same mistake hers did. (Thank you Julie!!)

We really believed Heidi was going to die. Having read so many horror stories about spider bites, which often lead to death, we were agonizing over what was happening to our sweet Heidi. As luck would have it however, (or perhaps it was the prayer from so many of our hedgehog friends), within 24 hours after treatment began, Heidi’s wounds were only one-quarter the original size, and within just a very few more days all traces were gone. Surprisingly, the worst areas healed the quickest, leaving only the tiny one on her face to be the last one to go. To this day, I view what happened as nothing short of a miracle.

Needless to say, we cleaned and searched her cage and the entire room for spiders and never found the culprit. Perhaps she ate him, who knows? We are just thankful that she survived and that none of the other hedgehogs were bitten up as well. I made certain that our veterinarian did not make the same mistake hers did. (Thank you Julie!!)

ADDENDUM to December 2003 Newsletter; “A Case of Hypothyroidism”

Jennifer Plombon, Minneapolis, MN

The previous newsletter contained an article “A Case of Hypothyroidism,” in which I noted that either a HIGH level of TSH (5.5-6) or a LOW level of TSH (below 0.4) could indicate hypothyroidism. People were puzzled by this; following is the explanation.

If TSH levels are too high, it may indicate that the body is producing extra TSH in an attempt to induce the production of other thyroid hormones, which are sensed as too low (a hypothyroid condition). If TSH levels are too low, it may mean that not enough TSH is being produced, and thus other thyroid hormones are also too low (again, a hypothyroid condition.) Hope this clears thing up! 👍

There were almost 200 attendees, the majority of whom were law students, and the majority of whom we devoutly hope will incorporate animal law precepts into their law practices. Many of the speakers were lawyers who are at the forefront of setting and creating animal protection laws and cases. Many other speakers were involved in animal welfare agencies such as the Humane Society of the United States, the Paw Project, the Great Ape Project, Pasado’s Safe Haven, the National Anti-Vivisection Society, the Animal Welfare Institute, Born Free USA, the New South Wales (Australia) Young Lawyers Animal Rights Committee, ALIVE, and Defenders of Wildlife, as well as a physicians’ organization, Americans for Medical Advancement and Europeans for Medical Advancement.

One common thread to the discussions and talks was the difference in animal law and regulation between states and localities. It is often difficult to wade through the regulations specific to local areas, or even to find them. We were given some suggestions on how to search for these regulations and will present the information as we find it, for your edification.

Over the next several months, the HWS Newsletter will contain articles by our three attendees, describing the presentations they attended and the learning experience obtained.

---

Legal Status of Hedgehogs in the State of Georgia

Jennifer Plombon, Minneapolis, MN

First in a series of informational articles offering hedgehog guardians a way to access regulations regarding hedgehog ownership throughout the country.

Because they are exotic (i.e., non-native) species, the presence and ownership of African Hedgehogs is regulated in many areas of the U.S. The areas we are currently aware of in which African Hedgehogs are regulated include New York City; Fairfax County, VA; and the states of Arizona, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Maine, Pennsylvania and Vermont. Each area has unique regulations and penalties for non-compliance, and it’s often difficult to find precise wording in state and local codes that defines the regulations and penalties clearly. Fortunately (in the sense of more precise wording) for our Southern friends, it is relatively easy to find, read and understand the regulations in the state of Georgia. Thus, we will cover GA first. Unfortunately, as you will soon see, it is very difficult to own hedgehogs in GA in a manner that we (and probably our pet hedgehogs) would prefer or choose.

One difficulty with finding the appropriate regulations for any area is determining which agencies are involved; it may be Fish & Game, it may be the DNR (Dept. of Natural Resources), it may be local farm organizations, it may be the wildlife agencies. There is little consistency. Many people believe that if the USDA does not prohibit hedgehog ownership or breeding in a specific area it is then legal to proceed. This is a false assumption, which creates risk for hedgehogs in these areas. The USDA is a Federal Agency; it does not enforce, or even always have knowledge of, local (state, county, city, and borough) laws. These laws are enforced by the local agencies involved; the federal government does not regulate this area of law and has left it to individual states to decide how to handle wildlife in their boundaries. The USDA will not protect you if the local authorities decide to seize your pets; claiming “The USDA says I can breed hedgehogs here” does not confer any legal protection whatsoever on you or your hedgehogs.

The entire lengthy GA Code referring to regulation of animals can be found at http://tinyurl.com/yqoan.

---

Important information regarding newsletter copies

The HWS is a charitable organization, and there is no fee to join. The free benefits are many and include a quarterly online newsletter. The newsletter is free for anyone to download and read or print. We do offer a hardcopy service, which has been mailing paper copies of the newsletter to any HWS members who request it. Unfortunately, with an increasing number of members requesting paper copies, and a large and well-packed newsletter, the cost of printing and mailing them out has become high, and we have decided the funds that we currently allocate to cover newsletter mailings could be more useful in helping with veterinary bills and supplies.

Starting AFTER the June 2004 issue (June’s mailing will be free,) the HWS will charge a small fee to print and mail newsletters to members who request them. This fee will cover only the cost of printing, envelopes, and postage; it is not a fundraiser. The method for paying the fee will be described in the next newsletter; this gives our members several months to decide if they wish to request paper newsletter copies, or to determine if they are able to download the newsletter.
Legal Status of Hedgehogs in the State of Georgia continued

The regulations were written to protect the animals and people of the state of Georgia. We know how tame and charming African Hedgehogs can be, and can’t imagine any harm they might cause to GA. However, the recent outbreak of Monkey Pox (found in pet Prairie Dogs and pet Gambian Rats) in the U.S. demonstrated how easily a foreign disease can find its way into an area through exotic or “wild” pets. The Code states:

27-5-1 G*** CODE SECTION ***
12/03/01 ***27-5-1***
The General Assembly finds and declares that it is in the public interest to ensure the public health, safety, and welfare by strictly regulating in this state the importation, transportation, sale, transfer, and possession of those wild animals which pose a possibility of:

1. Harmful competition for wildlife;
2. The introduction of a disease or pest harmful to wildlife;
3. Problems of enforcing laws and regulations relative to wildlife;
4. Threatening wildlife or other natural resources; or
5. Endangering the physical safety of human beings …

… The importation, transportation, sale, transfer, and possession of wild animals are privileges not to be granted unless it can be clearly demonstrated that such actions can be accomplished in a manner that does not pose unnecessary risk to Georgia’s wildlife and other natural resources or to the citizens of and visitors to this state. For these reasons, the General Assembly further finds and declares that only certain wild animals may be held for scientific or educational purposes, for public exhibition, or as pets and may only be lawfully held when the requirements of this chapter are met …

(a) The following animals are considered to be inherently dangerous to human beings and are subject to the license or permit and insurance requirements provided for in subsection (f) of Code Section 27-5-4: (1) Class Mammalia: (B) Order Insectivora (shrews, moles, etc.) -- All species; [including hedgehogs]

Failure to follow the permitting or regulatory process will result in penalties which may include seizure and destruction of the animals, at the State’s discretion:

The General Assembly further finds and declares that any wild animal for which a license or permit, or both, is required under the provisions of this chapter and for which no such license or permit, or both, has been obtained is a nuisance and is contraband and is subject to seizure by any peace officer authorized to enforce this chapter …

27-5-9
(a) Authorized personnel of the department may seize any wild animal regulated by this chapter pursuant to an administrative order or an emergency administrative order issued by the department.

27-5-10
(a) The commissioner may authorize the disposal of any wild animal regulated by this chapter which has escaped and been recaptured or any wild animal which has been seized under this title. Such disposal shall be in the manner determined by the commissioner to be in the best interest of the state and shall not be in violation of this title, provided that no such disposal shall be made until there has been a final adjudication of any civil or administrative proceeding commenced by any person authorized to do so by this title.

The State sets the “proper” housing, display, care and transportation requirements, some of which may not be the accommodations we would wish for pets. Specifically, they may not live in one’s home, but must be housed in a separate facility, which will be inspected by the State:

(e) The department shall have the authority, based upon the standards set forth in Code continued on page 7

The Boston Pog Party

June 26th, 2004 • Arlington, MA

- International Hedgehog Olympics
- Seminars by Hedgehog veterinarians and researchers
- Costume Contest
- Hedgehogabilia Vendors
- Silent Auction
- Carnival and Art Show
- Boston area arranged tour

Special guest speakers include veterinarian Dr. Susan Harrington of the Randolph Animal Hospital, with others to be announced. Two new events this year include a Carnival and Art Show. Special sight seeing around Boston is scheduled for the 27th. We hope to see you there!

For more information and to register: www.bostonpog.org
E-mail: info@bostonpog.org
Legal Status of Hedgehogs in the State of Georgia continued

Section 27-5-6, to determine if the necessary facilities, conditions, and standards prescribed by this chapter are sufficient for safety to the public and for the humane handling, care, confinement, and transportation of the wild animal for which application for a permit or license, or both, has been received. The department shall be authorized to make such determinations by inspecting the facilities of the permit or license holder. Following such determination, the department also has the authority to condition the license or permit so that the standards and intent of this chapter are met...

(5) Facilities for holding or exhibiting wild animals must be completely separated from a residence and meet specifications for humane handling, care, and confinement as provided in Code Section 27-5-6.

There is no wording specifically for keeping hedgehogs solely as pets; they are either approved in the use of a “business,” (i.e., breeding and selling) or as exhibition animals:

(b) Wild animal licenses will be issued only to persons engaged in the wholesale or retail wild animal business or persons exhibiting wild animals to the public. Wild animal permits will be issued at no cost and only to persons for scientific or educational purposes...

The offspring of the permitted animals are not covered indefinitely. It appears that at the cited age, progeny must be removed from the State or that permits must be obtained for these new animals:

(g) Any license or permit issued in accordance with this chapter shall be valid only for the species and numbers of wild animals referenced on the application and the license or permit. The license or permit to hold a female wild animal shall cover her progeny only while the progeny are physically dependent upon her or until her progeny are two months of age, whichever period is longer. It shall also be unlawful to transfer any license or permit issued by the department from one person to another person.

Progeny cannot be given, sold, or transferred to other GA State residents who are not licensed or permitted to have them, and disposition of the animals must be recorded and the records scrutinized:

(c) It shall be unlawful for any person to sell, transfer, deliver, or surrender a wild animal listed in Code Section 27-5-5 or specified by the board by regulation to any other person unless that other person holds a license or permit issued pursuant to this chapter for such wild animal or is exempt from the requirement for such a permit or license by the provisions of subsection (d) of this Code section.

(j) It shall be unlawful for any person holding a license or permit pursuant to this chapter to import, purchase, transport, sell, or transfer any wild animal and fail to record in a record book, within 24 hours after the completion of such a transaction, the date, place, manner, and names and addresses of all persons involved in such a transaction. It shall also be unlawful to fail to maintain such records for a period of 12 months or to fail to provide the department access to such records during all regular business hours.

Rather than choosing to breed or sell hedgehogs, (placing them under the “wholesale or retail wild animal business” regulations and requiring licensing by the USDA), one may “exhibit” them. Requirements for exhibition require that your animals be on display to the public for a significant period of time throughout the year:

(e) Any licenses issued by the department to any person for public exhibition purposes shall be conditioned so that the person operating a wild animal exhibition in a transient facility shall make the facility open to the public for a reasonable period of time and for reasonable hours of the day, depending upon the nature of the exhibition.

The following requirements must be met to be licensed or permitted; note that the State requires necessary licensing by the USDA:

(k) Wild animal licenses shall not be issued unless the following conditions are met:

(1) The applicant must be at least 18 years of age;

(2) Applicants requesting a license for mammals must obtain a license from the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service of the United States Department of Agriculture or provide written documentation that the applicant is exempt from such requirements;

(3) Applicants must submit documentation verifying that the proposed construction of facilities and the holding of wild animals is not prohibited by county or municipal ordinances;

(4) The applicant must obtain required business licenses; and

(5) Facilities for holding or exhibiting wild animals must be completely separated from a residence and meet specifications for humane handling, care, and confinement as provided in Code Section 27-5-6.

Liability insurance is required:

Liability insurance is required for the possession of any wild animal that is classified as being inherently dangerous to people in subsection (a) of Code Section 27-5-5 or as required by regulation of the board. Prior to the issuance of a wild animal license or permit for animals classified as being inherently dangerous to people, any applicant other than a governmental agency or university research facility must provide proof of liability insurance from a company licensed to do business in this state or an unauthorized insurer if permitted by Chapter 5 of Title 33...

... Liability insurance is not required for wild animals that are not considered to be inherently dangerous to people.

One might wish to cite the last line above for exemption from liability insurance; however,
Checking in with the Vet Staff: Wound Care for Hedgehogs

Kim Scea, Trenton, Ontario

Wounds are something we hope to never face with our hedgehogs, but, unfortunately, accidents happen. There are two basic types of wounds that you might encounter with your hedgehog: Topical and Invasive. Topical wounds are just surface abrasions and do not penetrate deeply. Invasive wounds, as the name suggests, “invade” the body. They penetrate deeply and are normally quite severe.

The goal for topical wounds is to have them dry up and heal. When these wounds stay moist, they do not heal in good time or properly. So, don’t keep a surface wound covered with a bandage, or coated with an oil-based ointment. Both of these will keep the area moist and slow down healing. For a topical wound that is “moist,” the goal is to dry it up:

1. If dirt or foreign bodies are in the wound, the wound needs to be flushed out. For flushing, use sterile water or sterile 0.9% saline, either of which are available from veterinarians and most drug stores. Distilled or tap water may be used if nothing else is available.

2. The area should be patted dry with a very absorbent product. Just pat it dry, do not rub it; do it as if you were touching someone with a sunburn. Household products with great absorbency include facial tissues, paper towels, or toilet paper. Do not use cotton balls, because they leave fiber threads on the wound.

3. Apply hydrogen peroxide, let it fizz, then pat dry. Apply the hydrogen peroxide no more than 2 times a day, and finish by flushing the area with sterile water or sterile 0.9% saline. Hydrogen peroxide on the wound draws all the oxygen away from the tissue, thus allowing the drying effect to begin much more quickly. [Editor’s note: It is safer, less harmful to tissue, and thus recommended that you dilute the hydrogen peroxide by one half with sterile water or sterile 0.9% saline.]

4. Continually check the wound area. As the scab forms, make sure the area under the scab does not become moist. Many times the area under the scab has some bacteria in it. The protective covering of the scab makes a great bacterial breeding ground and abscesses may form. If the area under the scab is moist, use diluted hydrogen peroxide to soak the scab off. As the hydrogen peroxide works it softens the scab, so that you can gently rub it off. Then begin the process again, using diluted hydrogen peroxide to dry up the area. As always, check with your veterinarian to determine the proper course for treatment of any wound. If the wound appears red and/or swollen, it could be infected and should be brought to the immediate attention of your veterinarian.

My advice is to NEVER use alcohol on a wound. This is horribly painful, especially to an animal that doesn’t understand what you are doing to it. Alcohol can also kill some tissue cells.

Invasive wounds can be much more difficult to deal with, and should immediately be brought to the attention of a veterinarian. The veterinarian will first flush the wound, using a syringe without a needle. Also very handy is a teat cannula; this is a plastic nozzle tip that can be placed on the end of the syringe. This tip allows for much finer work, and can be used to find out how deep the wound is.

The flushing liquid, which should be 0.9% sterile saline or sterile water, is drawn into the syringe, and the cannula placed on the wound. While flushing out the wound, other questions may be answered: How deep does it go? Are there any side pockets inside the wound (extra holes under the skin that connect with the main hole)? Significant force should not be applied on the plunger of the syringe, because the pressure of the fluid in the wound can be very painful. Rather, a steady, gentle stream of liquid should freely run out of the wound to flush out any foreign material.

The wound must heal by “second intention” (from the inside out). Invasive wounds should be kept moist at all times. The wound can be kept moist with oil-based ointments, but NOT with anything that contains cortisone! Remember that the ointment will warm up and liquefy within the wound due to body temperature. Oil-based liquid could seep out and stain any fabric near the wound. If you have the hedgie on your couch, your shirt, or your pants, the ointment seeping out may stain the fabric.

Make sure to keep the invasive wound clean, open and moist, and the wound should heal nicely. Your veterinarian may also want to prescribe oral antibiotics as part of the wound treatment regimen. Again, be sure to work with your veterinarian, and your hedgie should be good as new in no time!
Naomi Wikane, Schoharie, NY

I started the New Year with weeding and straightening up my file cabinets and found this postcard. It was purchased at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City in 1979 when I was there and saw the Greek Art of the Aegean Islands exhibit. This is a terracotta statuette of a hedgehog holding a bowl. It was found at Chalandriani on Syros in 1899 and is now part of the collection at the National Museum in Athens. It is from the Cycladic period dating about 2300 – 2100 B.C. Although not especially ‘brainy’ they have ‘derived’ features (specializations) such as their spines and rolling-up, both as anti-predator mechanisms. And they show well-developed care of their young.

Hedgehogs originally spread from Asia to Europe, Africa and North America (where the population became extinct). In the 19th century British settlers introduced them to New Zealand. I don’t find complete agreement from the books I have read, but there are at least 14 species of spiny hedgehogs. Differences include color, size of ears, body size, number of toes, length of legs, diet, and hibernation habits (or lack thereof).

Thus we come to our dear hedgies as they live in our homes today. Researching past postings on the internet hedgie lists, I find the probability that during the 1980’s there were a few hedgehogs imported to Alaska and that Pat Storer had imported some in the late 1980’s. Then Z.G. Standing Bear wrote the following in a posting on HedgehogWorld, Oct. 19, 2002:

According to Richard Stubbs, a USDA licensed dealer (Class B), he was living in Lagos, Nigeria in 1991 operating an animal export business which mainly involved exporting reptiles to New York City and Miami into the wholesale pet trade. Several men from Kano, Nigeria approached him with a box full of African hedgehogs from their area and asked if he would like to buy quantities of them for export since they were very plentiful in northern Nigeria, Benin and southern Niger (and were overrunning the towns there, being a nuisance, overpopulating and in many cases starving to death). Stubbs reported that he bought 2,000 of them for 50 cents each and air-shipped them via Air Nigeria to New York City. He said they sold successfully in the wholesale market so, over the few years he and several other exporters shipped some 75,000 hedgehogs to NYC and Miami. However in 1994 he said that the USDA stopped animal imports from all countries with hoof and mouth disease, and so he and other importers closed up shop and returned to the USA (where he continues his reptile importing business). As far as I can tell these imports made up the bulk of pet hedgehogs brought into North America.

I know there are mixed opinions as to whether we should have hedgies as pets and continue to breed them. All I can say is that they have made a huge positive impact on my life and I love having them.
From the vet

Dr. Burgess at www.swanimalhospital.com

Mark Burgess, DVM Southwest Animal Hospital / Exotic Animal Practice

Here's a little article on diet, a common problem we deal with in hedgehogs. As with most exotic pets, diet is often a major source of problems for captive hedgehogs. Most of the problems arise from an owner's attempt to formulate a "home made" diet. Nutrition is a complex subject, and formulating a balanced diet is a difficult chore even for a professional nutritionist. The average owner will have a hard time creating a safe formula even with "advice" from websites, etc.

The simplest approach to diet is to use a well formulated commercial food as the basis for the diet; this will have a guaranteed vitamin and mineral balance, and a known amount of protein and fat. Hedgehogs are insect eaters by nature, and in the wild eat mostly beetles. They are ravenous eaters and will often be willing to eat foods that aren't healthy for them, such as seeds & nuts. They can also consume large volumes of food and easily become obese, a very common problem in captivity. Obesity can shorten your hedgehog's life and increase cancer risk, which is another major problem in this species.

What to feed, then? A few insects can be offered, but the commercially available crickets and mealworms tend to be very calcium deficient, unless properly "gutloaded" for 2-3 days with a special food before being fed to the hedgehog. Mineral powders sprinkled on the insects do not reliably correct the calcium/phosphorous levels in the insect, and powders can be quite dangerous to use, due to high risk of overdosage. In general it's best to limit the number of crickets or mealworms to an occasional treat, and then their poor mineral content isn't a problem. Earthworms, silkworms (available online), and slugs (or snails) are more nutritionally balanced and can be used more liberally.*

But the best diet overall is a high protein, low fat insectivore or carnivore diet... such as Pretty Pets Hedgehog maintenance diet, or other hedgehog diets.** A good hedgehog food is a dry kibble, with NO treats such as fruits or nuts in it; the protein level should be 28-32% and the fat level no higher than 5-7%. A good substitute if hedgehog food isn't available is Hills W/D feline, which is a very low fat cat food, 7% fat.

If the hedgehog doesn't exercise a lot, you may need to restrict feedings to avoid obesity. Use NO supplements in the diet; the commercial food already contains a balanced load of vitamins and minerals, and adding more may cause overdoses. Hedgehogs are cute and fun little pets; proper diet can help ensure a long and happy life for your spiny/furry friend! 🐾

---

*Editor's note: commercially available slugs or snails only, please. The risk of pesticides, bacteria, or other dangerous "additions" to wild-caught slugs, snails, AND insects makes their use far too risky.

**Editor's note: we've noticed that Pretty Pets is "almost" universally unpopular with our hedgehogs. Other good hedgehog foods to try are Spike's Delite, Brisky's Old Mill, and a visit to http://tinyurl.com/ptoe will give complete nutritional information for a wide selection of hedgehog and cat foods.

---

A Phrase You Generally Don’t Hear About A Hedgehog

The Story of Mama Cass McLean

Yolanda McLean, Kingston, MA

It was actually just a little over 2 years ago that I drove through a snowstorm after work to visit a family about taking their hedgehogs. I had been looking through ASPCA Petfinder.com site when I came across their ad explaining that they had two hedgehogs, one male (Sonic), one female (Precious), that were being ignored. I called the phone number listed and reached the mother who said she would appreciate if I could foster them until a good home could be found. It was odd actually, I had just lost Tawni and thought I would never take in another rescued or relinquished hedgehog again.

It was a story I had heard before. She had bought the two hedgehogs from a pet store in the center of her town for her son and daughter. They were kept in large cages with abundant toys, hidey spots, and good diets, but recently, with her daughter thinking about sports and her son preferring video games, neither animal was getting the attention they deserved or needed. I was told that Sonic had a good temperament but that Precious was grumpy. When I met them both, she was almost accurate. The little boy was a love and the little (well, big) girl was huffy. That day, I couldn't fit both cages in my modest-sized car and so I left, promising to be back that weekend with a larger vehicle.

When I returned a few days later, only Precious was there. When I asked where the little boy was, the mother said she had sold him to someone that called shortly after I had gone. Precious was there though, and she said she knew nobody would buy such an angry animal.

---

continued on page 11
Meanwhile, I had received numerous calls from a local animal therapy group. The person who contacted me explained the program and how their goal was to help abused and neglected children learn to trust. The woman I’ll call “Ann” said she was looking to adopt a slightly unsocial hedgehog that would ball up, but that within a few minutes, would be curious enough to check out the surroundings. She assured me that the children would not have direct contact, but could watch the transition of the shy animal slowly become familiar and then comfortable with his/her surroundings.

While driving with a certain grumpy girl on the seat next to me, I recalled the conversation with Ann from the therapy group and wondered if it would be a match. I wasn’t quite sold on the idea, but I figured I would check all their credentials, references, and their licenses. If things checked out, I could help and Precious could find a good caretaker and help children at the same time. It seemed like a win-win situation. That night at home, my significant other, Alex, made a remark that Precious was quite the full-figured girl. I agreed and added that I didn’t think she was fond of her name—whenever we said it, she would hiss, pop, and make a growl sound I had never heard before. Alex looked at her and said, “I think we should call her Mama Cass (after one of the female singers of the group The Mamas and The Papas who was known for her full-figured ness)”. The name stuck.

It took about a week to find out everything. Ann had all the appropriate licenses; her USDA license had a clean record, and the veterinarian I contacted gave her a stellar recommendation. When Mama Cass and I visited Ann’s home, where all the animals were kept, everything was clean and, most importantly, all the animals were friendly and seemed healthy. I sat with her and went over the HWS care sheets and my adoption application, which included a standard clause that stated if for whatever reason Ann couldn’t or wasn’t caring for Cass appropriately, Cass would come back to me. I helped her set up both a cage and a play area and gave her a list of items to pick up before Mama Cass could come to live with her. I also gave her a list of appropriate weight management foods since Cass could stand to lose a few grams. Two weeks after I picked up Cass, she went to her new home. It was a Monday and I should have been thrilled, but for some reason, I had an odd feeling in the bottom of my stomach. When I told Alex about it later, he chalked it up to separation anxiety.

The next day the feeling was still there, so I called Ann to see how things were going. We had been talking for a few moments when Ann mentioned that she actually wasn’t sure Cass would work out as she seemed too friendly. Talk about generally not hearing that phrase when talking about a hedgehog! I asked her to explain and Ann mentioned that she had a few colleagues over the previous night. They had formed a circle, as they would with the kids, and put Cass in the center. She did ball up immediately, but within seconds it seemed, a little brown nose started appearing. I excused myself and asked, “that’s a bad thing?” Her response was that she was hoping for a hedgehog that would stay balled up for a minimum of five minutes. Ann said they would try a “dry-run” again and time the amount of time it would take Cass to unball. I thought it a little odd, but I guess it made some sense considering they were trying to show that it takes time to build trust.

We talked a little longer and I was surprised when Ann asked whether or not Cass was pregnant. I responded that there were no signs that indicated Cass was going to be a mom and asked why she would think such a thing. Ann just said that she was a large girl and since she had been in a home with a male hedgehog, she was curious of the possibility. I assured her that I had taken Cass to my own vet for examination and that Mama Cass was indeed just in need of a diet. Ann sounded convinced and she agreed to take Cass to her own vet. Our phone conversation ended with my reiteration that...
The Story of Mama Cass

continued

if she needed anything at all, to please not hesitate to call. I also mentioned that if Cass was not what they were looking for, that I could come and pick her up anytime.

Thursday I called again as a follow-up to ask about the vet appointment. Ann mentioned that she hadn’t gotten around to making one yet and, “Oh by the way, what do you do if a hedgehog’s belly and feet are cold?” After picking my jaw up off the floor, which at this point seemed to be becoming a trend, I asked instead of vellux and a hedgie-bag the

Quills & Comfort Update

Judie Peters, Bluffton, SC

With the promise of spring on the horizon, there is no better time to pause and remember our many quilled friends who have crossed the Bridge this past winter. And with the passing of each quilly loved one, the HWS Circle of Light unites in spirit to symbolically light a hedgehog’s way into eternity. At the request of the hedgehog’s guardian, members of the Circle of Light commemorate a hedgehog’s life by each lighting a candle at the same time of day or night wherever they might be on the planet. With the energy and spirituality of many loving souls simultaneously joined in a moment in time, each hedgehog’s life is celebrated and remembered with love and joy. Carol Fish Kregear organized the Circle of Light in 2002 and posts Circle meeting times, as well as the hedgies to be honored, on the HWS Yahoo e-mail list. Anyone can request a Circle of Light by simply posting a request on the HWS e-mail list. The most recent Circles have been held as follows:

December 27, 2003
Shezam (guardians Dawn W and Veronica)
Wendy (guardians Sondra and Donnasue)
Mr. Owens (guardian Sandra)
Talisman, Annie, Sugar (chinchilla) (guardian Dawn W)
Keiko and her sister (guardian Lin)
Heidi, Lily and Sweet Pea (guardians Laura and Michelle)
Nox and Allie (guardian Kerri)
Isipho (guardian Paul E.)

January 11, 2004
Snowball (guardian Sandra)
Princess Miranda Pearl (guardians Jeanne, Merle and Bonnie)
Spinkles (guardians Linda and Gary)
Yasmina (guardian Gioia)
Yul (guardian Kathleen)
Lucee Luu (guardian Jeanne)
LeeLoo (guardian Darcie)
Trent (guardian Dawn)
Har Har (cat) (guardian Bonnie)
Daisy (guardian KD)
Canni’s son and Shezam and Vanilla Bean’s son (guardian Veronica)

Cass into the therapy group, and it seemed like my gut-instinct was accurate. By the time I got home, I was in tears. After sitting, and then pacing, for a while, I made the decision that I was going to exercise the clause to take Cass back. I called Ann immediately wondering how I was going to word everything, but got an answering machine. Over the next few days I got the answering machine at least a dozen more times.

Monday came around after what seemed like the longest weekend in history. I was at work wondering how I was ever going to get in touch with Ann again. Was it an insane thought to just show up and knock on her door? I didn’t have to do that though. That afternoon I received a phone call. It was Ann and she wasn’t in hysterics, but I knew immediately something was wrong.

Ann said that Cass was curled in a tight ball, not making a sound. She said that she had tried to uncurl her by putting her in water but that it hadn’t worked. Ann then said that she had decided that Cass was indeed too friendly to keep in the program and that she could arrange to take Cass to a shelter if I wanted. I’m not sure how I remained civil, but I told Ann to get all of Cass’ things and I would do my best but that I may just have to end up sending it by mail.

I arrived at Ann’s home in record time. I ran up the driveway, which was no easy feat since it had snowed again the night before and I couldn’t drive up it. I banged on the door for several minutes before Ann came to it. She led me into the kitchen and said that she had put Cass in a basket with all her blankets and that if I could bring the basket back, it would be appreciated. I told her I would do my best but that I may just have to send Cass warm thoughts.

After checking on Cass and placing a hand warmer in the basket under her, I asked to see where her cage was. When Ann led me into the room, it was apparent she had moved the cage. It was now under an ajar window. I asked her why she had moved it, and she said she thought it was a better place and that it hadn’t worked. Ann then said that she had decided that Cass was indeed too friendly to keep in the program and that she could arrange to take Cass to a shelter if I wanted. I’m not sure how I remained civil, but I told Ann to get all of Cass’ things and that I was leaving work to pick her up. I hung up the phone, told my boss I had to leave and peeled out of the parking garage. While driving, I kept sending Cass warm thoughts.

I arrived at Ann’s home in record time. I ran up the driveway, which was no easy feat since it had snowed again the night before and I couldn’t drive up it. I banged on the door for several minutes before Ann came to it. She led me into the kitchen and said that she had put Cass in a basket with all her blankets and that if I could bring the basket back, it would be appreciated. I told her I would do my best but that I may just have to end up sending it by mail.

After checking on Cass and placing a hand warmer in the basket under her, I asked to see where her cage was. When Ann led me into the room, it was apparent she had moved the cage. It was now under an ajar window. I asked her why she had moved it, and she said she thought it was a better place and that the window was open to let the smell from the rabbits and guinea pigs out. On top of that, it was a completely different set-up than I had left her with. The cage was smaller, instead of vellux and a hedgie-bag the
The Story of Mama Cass
continued

bedding was cedar, and Cass had a dish filled with mealworms and what looked like Friskies Cat Food instead of the weight maintenance mix I had provided.

I left the room and started to gather the bags of Cass’ things to take to the car. I reached for a second basket and asked her if I could just switch the items to another bag so that I wouldn’t have to return two baskets. I wasn’t ready for her answer.

Ann looked at me and said, “Actually, this is ‘Al’. I thought you could take him and find him a good home too. I’ve talked to my colleagues, and we don’t think we want to use hedgehogs at the moment.” She lifted the top of the basket. Inside was a small albino hedgehog. I asked where she had gotten ‘Al’ and was told that a neighbor had dropped him off the day after I left Cass. I asked her why she hadn’t mentioned that she had another hedgehog, and she said she didn’t think of it. On the verge of being furious, I grabbed the bags of their belongings and the two baskets. I didn’t want to make a second trip up to the house for fear of saying something not-so-nice things. I left Ann’s house a little over a week after having thought I found Cass a good home, with two hedgehogs needing good homes instead of one.

I made it home about three and a half hours later and unloaded everything. Having made sure they would be okay in their respective baskets, I went into the hedgehog room and moved Switch’s cage into my room so I could quarantine Cass and Al. I set up two sterilites and made sure that amongst other things, they each had a warm heat disk to snuggle on and then went to get them.

Cass had come around considering I had the hand warmer under her as well as the heat in the car cranked as high as it would go. Al seemed fine. He was actually dying to get out of the basket. I picked him up, looked at his belly, and realized that ‘Al’ was an ‘Allie’. I shook my head and put her in her new digs.

Alex came home and I filled him in. He asked to see the new little albino girl whom I refused to call ‘Al’ or ‘Allie’. We put her on the living room floor, and she zoomed around so fast, neither of us thought we would catch her. I was finally able to grab her, and as Alex stood scratching his head, he named her Storm.

That night after having settled down a bit myself, I went into the hedgehog room and picked Cass up. I looked at her little face, plump body, and her one ear (which I have to admit is one of my favorite things about her) and kissed her forehead. I promised her that she now had a permanent home with me, after all she was such a nice hedgehog… Cass is still with me. She is a little over 4 years old and has slowed down considerably. She has traded in her wheeling for snuggling on any lap she can and is still one of the sweetest hedgehogs I’ve ever had the pleasure of loving. People have met her at the Boston Pog Party, she’s had her picture in the newspaper several times, and most recently, she was featured on the New England Cable News Network for part of their PetRock 2003 segment.

Storm, the lucky little girl, was eventually adopted by list member Kerri Lemotte. But that’s a whole other story…

Storm Update

Kerri Lemotte, Abington, MA

“We put [Storm] on the living room floor and she zoomed around so fast, neither of us thought we would catch her. I was finally able to grab her and, as Alex stood scratching his head, he named her Storm.”

This begins where Yolanda’s story (A Phrase You Generally Don’t Hear About A Hedgehog: The Story of Mama Cass McLean) ends. I contacted Yolanda via email regarding a hedgehog she had for adoption. After exchanging several emails and talking on the phone, we planed to meet: Yolanda, Susan Goetcheus, myself, and Storm.

It was a Sunday afternoon when Yo and Susan brought Storm to my house. After the standard small talk, we got down to business and I was properly introduced to Storm. Storm was the total polar-opposite of my then sole hedgehog, Nox. She was friendly with new people and she was very active. Unlike Nox, she did not ball up and huff when introduced to new environments and to new people.

Previously known as Al (short for Albino), Storm is the quintessence of life. She is not a hedgehog who fancies cuddling and belly rubs. She has a wild spirit that is visible in her constant need to be mobile. Named after the X-Men character because of her snowy white quills, her name has even more significance. Literally, she is a storm – a total and utter whirlwind of energy and life.

She is long and lean – the ‘runner’ shape – and that is what she does best: run. Not content to run solely on her wheel, she loves to climb and explore as well. She is up to greet me at night when I arrive home from work, when she expects time to have full reign of the living room. Always one to think outside of the box (and poop outside of the litter-box) her energy and her independence are her strongest characteristics.

The first sentence of this article describes Storm perfectly. In the end, what began as an awkward and dreadful situation for Yolanda (and hedgies) turned out to be a good situation. Both Cass and Storm found forever homes and I found great friends, both human and hedge.
The US Department of Agriculture, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Animal Care Division (USDA) regulates the licensing of facilities handling animals for sale and exhibition through the Animal Welfare Act (AWA, or Act). The purpose of the Act is stated in the public policy statement written into the AWA by our Legislature. It states basically that its purpose is “to insure that animals intended for use in research facilities or for exhibition purposes or for use as pets are provided humane care and treatment; to assure the humane treatment of animals during transportation in commerce; and to protect the owners of animals from the theft of their animals by preventing the sale or use of animals which have been stolen.” The Act also states it will regulate commerce without putting a burden on it.

At the outset, I think it is important to note that rescue sites do not, in and of themselves, need to be licensed unless they are engaging in an activity that needs a license; that is, selling, dealing or exhibiting. Dr. Raymond Flynn, Assistant Regional Director of the Western Region of Animal Care states that, “Defining rescue is beyond my purview, as this term is not a subject of the Act and regulations.” In other words, it is your activity with animals rather than what you call yourself that is the deciding factor as to whether you must be licensed.

There are three licenses outlined in the AWA. They are designated Class “A” (breeder), Class “B” (dealer) and Class “C (exhibitor).” Having hedgehog babies is not prohibited under the Act. Dr. Flynn states, “So long as no compensation of any kind is involved, hedgehogs may change hands without triggering a requirement for a license or one-time exemption.”

If you are the lucky recipient of a package of little hedgehog babies as a result of hedgehogs being housed together at a pet store, you may feel you must sell one or more of the surprise babies. If you wish to sell a baby hedgehog, then you are subject to the Act and either be licensed or apply for a one-time exemption. If you would like, instead, to keep your hedgehog babies or give one or two of them to your best friends, you do not have to become licensed.

The one-time exemption that Dr. Flynn mentions here is not discussed in the Act. He states that, “USDA, Animal Care does not feel that the granting of exemptions for such de minimus activity vitiates the intent of the Animal Welfare Act.” If you find yourself in this situation, you need to contact your regional office. They will ask you for the number of babies, the circumstances of their birth, the time period in which you are planning to sell them and perhaps other pertinent questions. They will issue you a letter stating you may sell those particular babies. There is no fee for this. If you use this alternative to licensing, do not expect to use it more than once. This is not a fix to avoid licensing.

If you decide, like Jan, to go ahead and get your license you will want to decide what type of license you need. The USDA does not offer more than one license to any one person. Instead, it will license you in the class based upon what you are doing most frequently. For example, I am licensed Class “C” because my primary goal in becoming licensed is to take my hedgehogs into schools and homeless shelters to discuss such issues as responsible pet ownership, animal care and hedgehog natural history. If I wish to breed one of my couples occasionally, I may sell the babies without consequence. Jan, on the other hand, chose a different class, because her primary activity is different.

The application is identical no matter what license you are seeking. The difference is how your license cost is determined. All applicants must pay an initial fee. You must have a contract with a veterinarian for services, have a “Veterinary Plan of Care” outlining plans for emergency care, euthanasia, check-ups and other particulars of care. The contracted veterinarian must inspect your premises and animals each year and sign that they have done so. After you apply, the inspector will come to your home to approve the arrangements you have made for your animals. After you receive your license, the surprise inspections are the most unnerving, since from time to time even the most meticulous person has an off day.

If you are breeding your hedgehog couples and selling the babies, you must have a Class “A” license. There is no exception. If you are doing this, you will want to get your packet from the USDA. This is the most straightforward of the licenses. If you have baby hedgehogs and sell them, you must be licensed or use the one-time exemption. If you have babies more than once, the one-time exemption is no longer an option. A Class “B” license will be the appropriate choice if your primary activity is acquiring hedgehogs and selling them to someone else. This is the requirement that can cause rescue centers to be in violation of the licensing law if not addressed carefully. Dr. Flynn reiterates, “The sale of one or more hedgehogs to any party, for use as a pet, is a regulated activity under the AWA which

continued on page 15
Licensing Your Rescue
continued

requires a Dealer license. If a member of HWS rescues a hedgehog and subsequently places that hedgehog with another party, the member may not accept any compensation of any kind from the recipient, unless the former holds a Dealer license. A ‘donation’ from the recipient to the HWS member would be viewed as a regulated sale under the AWA."

It is acceptable to charge a rescue fee based upon the actual cost to you of such items as food and vet bills; however, you walk a very thin line. Dr. Flynn states, “Animal Care has unfortunately encountered situations in which animals have been ‘given away’ to avoid the licensing requirements attendant upon sales – while an unusually high boarding charge or veterinary fee (such as for procuring a health certificate) was imposed. For such reasons, we try to forsake blanket statements and examine such situations on an individual basis.” It would be unwise to charge a “rescue fee” including the cost of the purchase of the hedgehog from a pet store. Any person wanting to take advantage of this concept needs to be sure the costs are well documented and the charge for the hedgehog is quite small. The Act itself does not make exceptions for “rescue fees.” We do not meet the definition of “Shelters” as does the Humane Society, and we are not exempt from any licensing provisions. Charging rescue fees if you are unlicensed is a slippery slope. Although retail pet stores are excluded from licensing in general, once a store sells an exotic animal such as a hedgehog they are no longer considered a pet store under the AWA. They become a Dealer subject to Class “B” licensure.

A Class “C” license is for exhibitors. The AWA states, “The term ‘exhibitor’ means any person (public or private) exhibiting any animals, which were purchased in commerce or the intended distribution of which affects commerce or will affect commerce...and such term includes carnivals, circuses and zoos exhibiting such animals whether operated for profit or not.” The line between not exhibiting and exhibiting that needs a license is a gray one. To determine if you need a Class “C” license, Dr. Flynn states that, “Animal owners may show their pets to friends, coworkers, classmates and incidental contacts...without meeting the definition of Exhibitor. Organized activity, as evidenced by such acts as the appearance of animals in a dramatic play, providing school educational programs, staging recurrent on-site tours of an animal facility, charging admission, having open hours, housing regulated mammals next to a gift shop as a ‘draw’, or otherwise providing animal viewing to the general public, all constitute exhibition... Sometimes the lines can be indistinct.”

The AWA contains enough gray areas that it is wise to ask your regional licensing office if you have questions about whether or not you need to be licensed. If you plan to charge a “rescue fee” it is also wise to find out for sure how your regional office and inspector will view your activity. The AWA has stiff civil penalties for engaging in a regulated activity without a license. The civil penalty is $2,500 per day for each and every day the violation continues. It isn’t a far step to find yourself being served with a civil penalty if a disgruntled “customer” reports you.

One final caveat is that although we’ve taken special care to be sure we understand the requirements of the AWA before preparing this article, the USDA, not the HWS, regulates commerce of animals and it alone decides whether you are engaging in a covered activity. Before choosing to accept money or donations for animals without a license, be very, very careful.

Whose Tat is That?

Write to donnasue.graesser@aya.yale.edu if you would like to play “Who’s Tat is That?”

We will feature a new tattoo in every newsletter. Points will accumulate each quarter and the winner will be announced in December of 2004. Special prizes will be awarded.

5 points for submitting a picture of your tattoo to be featured.

4 points for being the first to correctly identify the person with the ink.

2 points for everyone else correctly identifying the person with the ink.

This month’s tattoo belongs to someone who
is an old list member, but also new.
She has new babies in her life, both hedgies and the human type.

If you know just who this is,
You will win this tattoo quiz.

Last month’s tattoo belonged to Elana Adler (5 points)

First to guess correctly: Jan Ernst (4 points)
Other correct guesses: Teresa Johnson (2 points)
Becoming USDA licensed: It’s easier than you think!

Jan Ernst, Port St. Lucie, Florida

For several years I have thought about getting a license from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) but kept putting it off because I believed it was very difficult to do. Last fall I decided to take the plunge and found out it is not hard at all. I called the Eastern Division, because I live in Florida, and asked for a licensing packet to be sent to me.

When the packet arrived I found that there were two forms to fill out (one for me, and one for my veterinarian). Also in the packet are a booklet that explains all about what is required to get a license and a pamphlet for dealers and researchers. I filled out the pre-licensing form, wrote a check for $10.00 to cover the fee, and mailed it on October 10th. I then called my vet and asked if he would be willing to come out, look at my hedgies, and fill out a licensing form. He agreed and we scheduled an appointment. He came, looked at my hedgies, pronounced them in good health, and filled out the form. With that done, only the inspection was left.

I have to admit that I am a worrier, so I started worrying about whether I would do everything right in order to pass the inspection. I called the USDA office, got the name and phone number of my inspector, called her, and asked my questions: Did my hedgies need to be in a room of their own? No they could be anywhere in the house. What kind of container did the food and soiled liners have to be in? Containers that had closed lids. Medications had to be kept closed and all those that had expired had to be thrown out. How clean did my house have to be? Did I have to pass the “white glove test”? (This was my biggest worry since I didn’t know when she was coming. Could I keep the house immaculate every day for weeks or months, no clutter etc., until it was time for my unannounced inspection?! Yikes!) The answer: No it didn’t have to pass the white glove test. They just look at how clean the hedgies and their immediate surrounding are. She understood the house might not be picture perfect. Whew, that was a relief! My hedgies are usually cleaned first thing in the morning.

I made sure everything was in order and waited for the inspections. The first inspection was scheduled by appointment on November 3th, 2003. My inspector came, looked at my hedgies and my set-up, answered any questions I had about filling out the hedge reports, and read over the form my vet had filled out. My inspector found everything in order with no violations and passed me. I was licensed! Yay! Now came more waiting. My forms would go through official channels, my check for $30.00 would be cashed and then my inspector would make an unannounced visit to inspect my hedgies again. I was excited and found the waiting hard, but I wasn’t worried any more. I knew the requirements and they were easy to keep.

The inspection again went fine and that’s where I am now. My inspector will come again sometime after my mom leaves in April and do another unannounced inspection. After that inspections will continue at least once a year for as long as I have my license. Although I don’t need a license to continue hedgie rescue, I want to be able to educate and possibly breed small scale, and it feels wonderful to know that I meet all of the USDA requirements and have my Class A license. Most importantly, it wasn’t at all difficult to become licensed. So if you’ve been thinking of getting licensed, but are dragging your heels, go ahead! Send for the licensing packet and get your license.

USDA Western Region USDA, APHIS, AC
2150 Centre Avenue, Building B
Fort Collins, Co. 80526
Telephone: (970) 494-7478
Fax: (970) 494-7460

USDA Eastern Region USDA, APHIS, AC
920 Main Campus Drive, Suite 200
Raleigh, NC 27606
Telephone: (919) 716-5532
Fax: (919) 716-5696

A question for the pogs?
Do you have a question you would like to ask the pogs?

Favorite Rescue Story?
Do you have a favorite rescue story you would like to share?

Favorite Photo(s)?
Do you have a favorite photo of your quilly master(s)?

Please send it/them to us either electronically at newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org

or via snail-mail to
HWS Newsletter c/o Kathleen Knudsen
P.O. Box 70408, Seattle WA 98107

Submissions for the Newsletter Welcomed!
Recently, one of our members, Sandra, asked for advice after an unusual reaction was observed in her hedgehog, Snowball, during a bath (“The Dreaded Bath,” as I’m sure all our hedgies would quickly correct us!) Snowball did have some medical problems (a tumor on his leg), but this reaction seemed unusual:

“Last night, my DH was giving Snowball a nice bath, when suddenly Snowy began to react very badly. He kept opening his mouth and his breathing kept going weird. DH got really scared and said, “I think we might lose him.” I don’t know what happened exactly; I know Snowy HATES baths and usually gets all upset, but I’ve never seen him react this way.

DH wrapped him a towel to dry him and kept petting him and saying it would be alright. We held him near a space heater to warm him up and he finally seemed to calm down.

Snowy then sat on my lap and curled up in a fetal position. His breathing was way too fast and he seemed to want to go to sleep. We put him in his house with a fresh towel and some paper towels (he likes to tear them up) and I put six or seven mealworms in his bowl along with his food.

We were so afraid he would cross during the night, but he seemed his old self this morning

Sandra”

Fortunately, Paul (the WebGnome), a member in Denmark who cares for European hedgehogs, read about Snowball’s problem and posted his answer:

“Dear Sandra

I understand this has upset you, but if he’s fine now, no harm was done. This is what probably has happened:

It sounds like the water might have been a bit too warm.

Normal body temp in HHs (at least the European wild HHs, (Erin. Eur.) is 35.3 degrees Celsius, + or - 0.5 degrees [NOTE: this is 95.5 degrees Fahrenheit, with which Americans are more familiar.] This means that the water, when bathing a healthy hedgehog, with a NORMAL body temperature must NEVER be over 34.8 degrees Celsius [or 94.6 degrees Fahrenheit].

Never bathe a HH in water that is warmer than the HH’s ACTUAL body temperature.

It’s better to use water with a temperature that is 10 degrees Celsius lower than the HH’s actual body temperature [or water at approximately 78 degrees Fahrenheit; lukewarm to your skin] than water that is 1-2 degrees Celsius HIGHER than the hedge’s actual body temperature.”

Snowball recovered from his bath and we are now all much wiser about the perils of overheating hedgies! Unfortunately, Snowball *did* Cross the Bridge at a later date. Sandra wrote a touching eulogy for him which I’d like to share with you:

“Little Snowball has crossed the Rainbow Bridge. His daddy and I decided yesterday that he needed our help, so last night we went to see our wonderful vet, who was so kind and gentle.

Snowy had a very peaceful passing with both parents holding him and petting him. I know that all our beloved pets were waiting for him on the other side, and that he is free from the tumor and the discomfort that plagued him on this side.

Right through the holidays, he was a feisty little beastie. He ate many, many mealworms, climbed on mommy’s lap (and peed on her!), used his little snout to push both parents around, and spent lots of time napping inside his hedge-hut. He was still able to eat and drink happily up until yesterday, when he told us his bag was packed and he wanted to go.

We are both feeling rather sad today, but relieved that his leg has been restored to wholeness and he is happy in Hog Heaven.

Please add Snowy to the Circle of Light.

I want to thank all of you for your kindness and love as well. You have been a great source of comfort to me and to Snowball.

With love, Sandra”
The next question posed was

"My wheel is often dirty and smelly, and the "stuff" on it makes the wheel both slippery and hard on my feetsies. What have your care persons found to be the best way to clean the wheel and keep it from being slippery?"

Here are the answers:

• FROM SKEEZIX PLOMBON:

"Well, dear pogs, as you know, when we are running happily on our wheel, anything we might excrete is supposed to go flying off into the universe, and be left behind as we run merrily away. However, for some reason of physics, the "stuff" seems to come back at us, hopefully landing on the wheel, but unfortunately, occasionally on our heads (tsk)! Since it seems to appear quite suddenly under our feetsies, we have no choice but to run on it and grind it into the wheel. This "stuff" is what makes the wheel slippery; that, and the fact that they are often made of a rather slippery plastic or metal. "My" care person has stuck bathtub decals on my wheel, of various colors and designs depending on the wheel, and these help quite a bit with traction. She finds them at Wal-Mart. They stick on very well if the wheel is washed well first (with Dawn – cuts grease) and wiped off with rubbing alcohol.

Then, when she washes my wheel, she always washes it in Dawn dishwashing liquid, to cut the grease and stuff and keep the wheel nice and clean."

• FROM POOG McLEAN:

Answer: This is an area where humans are a bit slow, like they are sometimes, you know. We run so fast to get away from our poop and find food. Then the faster we run the more we run into our poop. Mom says she wishes we could "free range" whatever that is, so we wouldn’t have to get our feetsies poopied.

About the wheel. It depends on the wheel. My wheel is wonderful because poop doesn’t stick to it very well. It is a soft-surface plastic bucket made by some nice, smart folks in North Carolina (I think Skeezix knows them). Pigglit has a big problem though and is sure to win the poopy wheel contest when it comes up. Mom takes his wheel out and scrubs it and lets it sit a half hour in Clorox solution. Then it’s nice and white again. Pigglit gets to run through the water in the sink and get his feet scrubbed with a nice soft brush.

That’s good for him, but I don’t like water any better than Hawgy Goldbutt. Keep it in the gullet please. What are you doing in your wheel to make it slippery? I’d think a daily lining of vellux or something might make it a little less slippery and might be easy to pull out and wash. But we haven’t had that problem here so I can’t add much more on the slippery thingy.

• FROM SCABBWIUG ARATA:

Hey, watch it, princess!!! I like sliding around in a nice well-seasoned wheel, adds to the challenge!!!!
Will Your Hedgehog Have a Home?

Vicki McLean,
Salem, OR

The topic of this article is one we hope none of us will ever face. Our hedgehogs only live a few years. We’ll outlive them. Won’t we?

Unfortunately, in an uncertain world we may not be here to take care of our animal companions. Do you know who will take care of them if you become incapacitated, or if you are in a fatal accident? If not, it is time to think about where your little ones will go and who will care for them. In the worst scenario, it might be several days before someone thinks of your pets at home with no food or water. There are a number of things we can do to be sure our pets are cared for.

• Pick a guardian
Find someone who will be willing to care for your pet. If you do not know someone, you can ask an organization such as HWS to place your pet in a loving home. But whether you want a friend to take your beloved hedgehog, or whether you feel you must leave him/her in the care of an organization, make those plans in advance. Be sure that the organization will be placing your pet in a setting you would want for him.

• Make formal arrangements
A Will can provide information about who cares for your hedgehog. But don’t rely only upon the Will. Wills are only effective if you die. Wills must be administered through the courts. We all know how quickly our courts move. Who will care for your hedgehog while the Will is going through the legal process? What if you are incapacitated for a long period of time instead? The Will isn’t even effective.

• Seek legal advice
If you want to be sure the costs of your pet are covered, trusts and other arrangements can be made to be sure the pet’s needs are met. Trusts can cover the costs of your pet even if you are still alive. Allow your executor or administrator enough flexibility in the trust document to be sure that changing circumstances don’t tie his or her hands so much that he/she cannot meet the pets needs.

• Check up periodically
Be sure that the person or the organization that has agreed to take care of your pet can still do so. Sometimes circumstances change for people and they can no longer take on the responsibility of an animal.

• Understand alternatives
The Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS) has an excellent kit one can request, free of charge, to help pet guardians work through this problem. Just go to their website, www.hsus.org and click on “Pets,” then on “Pet Care,” then on “Providing for Your Pet’s Future Without You.”

• In case of fire
Don’t forget to list the number of pets you have in your home and their location on your front window! If you use a sticker offered by the HSUS, make clear that the listing of pets is recent by adding a date. Firemen have too often risked their lives for animals no longer in the home. An alternative is to handwrite your listing clearly and date it so there is no question pets are in the home. If you would want HWS to place your hedgehog in a loving rescue site near you in case you should no longer be able to take care of your pet, arrangements need to be made for notifying us of the need for a placement, transporting the animal to the chosen rescue site and any other specifics that need to be identified. However, this option is available for those of you whose family would be unwilling to give long-term care to your pet.

We hope none of you ever need to use this information, but if you do, we can help you.
Hedgehogs, Skunks, and Mealies under the Sun at the Suncoast Hedgehog Show
St. Pete Beach, Florida

Donnasue Graesser reporting from St. Petersburg, FL

Shonda Statini recently forwarded a message to one of the Internet lists. Within her message, she posed the following question about her husband, Roger: “How many men can go somewhere and eat live mealworms and have the women think he is the neatest guy around? Only at a hedgie show that is where!”

Roger had his opportunity to impress the ladies this past January. Flocks of hedgehogs and their people descended upon St. Pete Beach, Florida for The Suncoast Hedgehog Show. In a word: WOW! Jeanne Stanoch and Linda Cassell did a superb job of putting on a very impressive event for both hedgies and humans.

My son, Simon, and I arrived on Friday morning. Jeanne was such an excellent hostess that she picked up all the air travelers at the airport herself! Amy Kartage and I flew in at about the same time on the same airline, so Jeanne picked us both up together. Amy is a name I have heard on the e-mail lists for a long time, but I had never met her in person. I was glad to get to share that ride with Amy, because we were able to hang out for a while at the hotel, take a walk on the beach, and get to know each other a little better.

During the course of the afternoon we met up with Juanita Byers, Sherry Songhurst, Frannie North, Su Morrison, Jane Kuta, Brenda Sandoval, Pat Storm, and Kari Espelien. The bulk of the group headed to Linda Cassell’s house for dinner, but a few of us stayed close to the hotel and had a nice dinner at a local restaurant: myself, Simon, Amy, Juanita, and Jane Kuta and her adorable 4 year old daughter, Amanda. Jane and Amanda shared with all of us some Christmas Crackers, complete with loud snapping noises, paper crowns, riddles, and a toy. But, these toys were special! Really nice quality Gordon Frasier hedgie figurines. Thanks Jane! Those crackers were one of the highlights of my weekend. Parallel good times were had by all in both dinner-groups.

After our red-eye flight, Simon and I were exhausted and headed back to our room, which had been upgraded to a deluxe suite. It would have been perfect for hedgies, as it had a totally separate living room where they would have stayed in style! Unfortunately, I didn’t think I could handle both a one-year-old baby and hedgies on the plane, so I opted to bring Simon. He enjoyed the suite as much as the hedgies would have, and explored every inch of it.

The next day was the International Hedgehog Olympic Gym-Bar-E (IHOG). Deb Kirksey’s McKinnon and Pat Storm’s Fantasia took the overall gold for the boys and girls respectively! Fortunately, for Fantasia, Pinky and Nell were not around to give her a run for her money. During the seminar, Bonnie Stubbins shared with all of us her physical therapy routines that she practices with Punky the hedgehog. The show also offered vacation photos of the hedgehog attendees relaxing in a hammock. The photos were special and totally precious.

continued on page 21
We spent most of the day at the HWS vendor table. But, thanks to Elana Adler, who was an incredible help with both Simon and the table, I was able to mingle a bit with new and old hedgie friends.

It seemed the star of the show that day was not a hedgehog at all, but a skunk named Molly, who came along with Bridget and Jeff Straszheim. I’m sure passers-by were just astonished at the room full of hedgehogs, and a skunk!

Saturday’s events were followed by another long walk on the beach, this time with a larger group. It was a bit too chilly for the BBQ “under the stars,” but we all enjoyed the BBQ under the roof of the banquet room, along with the charity auction. The auction proceeds were split amongst three hedgehog charities: A Spiny Place Hedgehog Rescue, the Twinkfund, and the Hedgehog Welfare Society. As is becoming customary at hedgehog shows, the auction proceeds were raised by “dollars for worm eating.” Sherry Songhurst stepped up to the plate again and ate some sort of a worm. However, I think Lance must relinquish his title of “King of the worm-eaters” to Shonda’s husband, Roger Evangelesta. Roger ate a bunch of LIVE mealies and even let them wiggle around on his tongue for the photo opportunity. Roger, you are going to be a tough act to follow.

Simon’s favorite part of the weekend (other than meeting Molly the skunk) was the Saturday late-night dip in the wonderful, WARM, pool at the hotel, with Elana, Amy, and Amanda Kuta. We stayed in the pool for an hour, until we looked like pickles, and Simon cried when we had to get out.

Sunday was the actual double-show. I did stop in to listen to Tig and Sherry judge a few hedgehogs, but, unfortunately, I had to spend most of the time in the vendor room. And, reluctantly had to get ready to leave for the airport. My wonderful weekend with hedge people was extended when Amy was able to switch to the same flight as us, and we chatted and chatted all the way to Charlotte, until we had to run and catch our connecting flights.

What an incredible show experience! But, don’t take my word for it. Here are a few show reports from other attendees.

Kari Espelien, who traveled in from Colorado, glows: “I thought Jeanne did a great job on the show. We all know how stressful putting on a show can be and she pulled it off with style. Hanging out at her house on Sunday after the show was too much fun! One of my favorite parts of the show was meeting Bonnie and Merl Stubbins. They were both so wonderful and Bonnie’s physical therapy demo with Punky was great!”

Teresa Johnson, who made a LONG trip to the show from Maryland by way of New Jersey (don’t ask), also has several fond memories: “Meeting Molly was only superseded by getting to hold Molly and having her hug me! But for me, the absolute best memory of all will be a comment made by judge Sherry Songhurst at the afternoon show. Adult Standard Females were called up, a tough class simply by the sheer numbers of competitors. Sherry carefully observed each and every little quilled lady and made her final four choices. Among them was Roxie from our own Homeward Bound Hedgies rescue gang. Now Roxie had come to us nearly 98% quill-less due to mites, poor nutrition and neglect. Sherry not realizing this, commented that she had a ‘beautiful and luxurious quill coat’. …That is better than any ribbon and we are so proud of our Roxie!

Shonda Statini says it all! “The best part of the whole weekend was being with people like myself who believe in the same thing and don’t think I am ‘weird’ for my passion of animals. That is what really lifted my spirits and something I truly needed!!!! I’m sure most of you know what I am talking about. My mom thinks I must be ‘on drugs’ and can’t respect how I feel towards my animals. People at work don’t really have a clue, and can’t respect how I feel towards my animals. People at work don’t really have a clue, and being with people like this day in and day out really gets to you after a while. But, …It was GREAT to have people respect me and what I do. And to be able to return the respect for what others do for our animal friends as well. It was a huge spirit lifter that weekend. Just what I needed!!!”

A big THANK YOU to Jeanne Stanoch and Linda Cassell for giving us all the opportunity to gather and learn together! 🐰
HWS, Year End Committee Reports: 2003

Member of the Committees of the Hedgehog Welfare Society have been very busy this past year! We would like to share with our members and other interested parties, a partial list of accomplishments made by the HWS on behalf of hedgehogs in the year 2003.

Advocacy Committee
(Co-chairs: Jennifer Plombon, Heather Johnson)

The committee maintained an up-to-date USDA contact list to assist others in reporting concerns to the USDA regarding pet stores or breeders. The committee assisted others in writing letters of complaint to the USDA, and created a template for others to use in writing such letters. Committee members also wrote letters to the USDA regarding situations of which they had first-hand knowledge, and assisted others in dealing effectively with pet store owners and managers to either improve situations in the pet store, or to release the hedgehog to a rescuer.

Care Packages Committee
(Co-chairs: Jennifer Plombon, Heather Johnson)

Since February, 2003, the HWS Rescue Care Packages Committee has shipped approximately 60 Care Packages, wheels, hats, food samples, and information packets to hedgehog rescuers throughout the U.S., Canada, and the U.K. Many of the items, such as food, wheels, and some fabrics, were donated. The Committee recently opened a FedEx account, which has allowed for less expensive and more convenient shipping, and easier tracking of packages.

Fundraising and Ruby's Rescue Shop
(Chairperson: Donnasue Graesser)

Ruby’s Rescue Shop continues to raise funds to support the educational and welfare activities of the Hedgehog Welfare Society. We have welcomed several new crafters to the store this year, and continue to add new items to the site.

Several specific fundraising projects have been held including the annual Wheelathon, Valentine greetings, cookbook sales, raffles at hedgehog shows, the European hedgehog adoption program, and hedgehog Christmas stockings. Each of these projects has been very successful, thanks to the HWS community.

(1) In 2003, the membership committee has implemented "new member packets" that are sent to all new members. These packets include information about HWS services, committee involvement, a shopping guide for hedgehog-friendly online sites, a sample newsletter, and a permanent membership card.

(2) We have enrolled approximately 50 new members in 2004. Our current membership stands at 346 members.

(3) In 2004, Aimee Hassler and Maurita Plouff have gotten the ASPCA petfinder.com site up and running. This site not only helps hedgehogs in need of homes, but has been an invaluable public relations tool, increasing exposure of the HWS and its goals.

(4) We have attended two major animal welfare events, The Animal Welfare Federation of NJ conference, and the PetRock Fest in Worcester, Massachusetts. At each of these events, we networked with other major animal welfare groups, and spread the word about the HWS and its mission.

(5) Articles highlighting the HWS have been written for the Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly, and the Finnish Hedgehog Society newsletter.

(6) We have been spotlighted on the rubberhedgehog.com site for several months.

(7) We have distributed information at three hedgehog shows: Niagara Falls, Denver, and Washington State. We have gotten many inquiries about membership following these shows.

Newsletter
(Donnasue Graesser reporting for Kathleen Knudsen)

The newsletter was published quarterly in 2003. We added several new columns including the Literary Hedgehog (Naomi Wikane), Checking in with the Vet Staff (Kim Scea), Hoofbeats medical cases (HWS members), and a series of Animal Law articles. Our June issue was devoted to informational articles by European Hedgehog Rehabilitation organizations. The newsletter continues to be available both online, and in hard copy via snail-mail by request. We send the newsletter via snail-mail to approximately 50 HWS members. Although up until this point, we have been able to send the newsletter free of charge (via funding from Ruby's Shop) the policy will change slightly in 2004.

Petfinder.com
(Organizers: Aimee Hassler, Maurita Plouff)

Since March, 2003, the HWS affiliated with the ASPCA petfinder.com web site as a rescue group. The HWS has a web site listed on petfinder.com, which has facilitated the adoption of nearly twenty hedgehogs across the nation including Nevada, Washington, Illinois, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. In addition to helping relinquished hedgehogs find homes, petfinder.com has offered additional opportunities to the HWS, including free
HWS, Year End Committee Reports: 2003 continued

subscriptions to several animal welfare publications, sample items from various pet-friendly companies, and several financial donations have been made through the petfinder.com site.

Rescue Committee
(Cochairs: Yolanda McLean, Laura Ledet)

In 2003, the HWS Rescue Contact List doubled its membership with the addition of 27 new Rescue Contacts. Although some states were already represented, there is now coverage in nine additional states (Arkansas, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming). Furthering our level of support for the members of the Rescue Contact List, an email discussion forum specific to the Contact List was established (hwsrescuecontacts@yahoooigroups.com) through Yahoogroups. Two forms (the Rescue Request Tracking Log and the Rescue Adoption Tracking Log) were created to assist in organizing phone calls, emails, and tracking the hedgehogs they take in, foster, and adopt out, to be used as each individual sees fit and are available through the yahoogroup hwsrescuecontacts page.

According to a recent survey, 175 hedgehogs have been helped by HWS members. 59 rescuers responded for an average of 3 hedgehogs per person. Definitions of a rescued hedgehog versus a relinquished hedgehog were authored this year and released to the HWS email and membership group for clarification as well as to help gauge potential rescue situations.

Quills and Comfort
(Organizers: Judie Peters, Carol Fish Kregear)

Quills and Comfort is a support service designed to provide comfort and solace to guardians who are experiencing the illness or passing of a beloved hedgehog. During 2003 a segment of Quills and Comfort, the Circle of Light, has been in full operation. Circle members commemorate the passing of a hedgehog, at the guardian’s request, by each simultaneously lighting a candle. Additionally in 2003, the Quills and Comfort web site was announced in the HWS Newsletter. The web site is under construction but currently features the graphic of a night sky strewn with shining stars. Each star is accompanied by the name of a hedgehog who has crossed over during the year. The web site will eventually feature a wide range of support services specifically developed to aid grieving hedgehog guardians.

Financial Report
(Donnasue Graesser)

The detailed financial report for 2003 will be submitted to the Oregon State Department of Justice, charitable organizations division.

Legal Status of Hedgehogs in the State of Georgia continued

a search of the Code does not provide wording stating that hedgehogs “are not considered to be inherently dangerous to people.” These regulations are and have been in effect since 1994; all animals owned prior to and after this time must be permitted:

(c) Any person who on July 1, 1994, possessed a wild animal for which a license or permit was not required prior to July 1, 1994, shall have until January 1, 1995, to apply for a fee-exempt permit, provided that the requirements of this chapter relating to insurance and humane handling, care, and confinement of wild animals are met. Such permits shall only be valid for wild animals possessed prior to July 1, 1994, and shall not authorize breeding, importation, sale, or transfer without specific authorization from the department.

There is much, much more to read in this GA Code. Any person contemplating owning hedgehogs in GA must be thoroughly familiar with all aspects of this Code. There are specifics relating to housing, to food, to veterinary care, to vehicles used for transportation, and other minute details. The fact one must keep in mind at all times is that there are severe penalties for failure to properly permit or license hedgehogs; penalties which could lead to the death of the animals.

One bright spot in this set of regulations is that one may carry a hedgehog or other regulated animal THROUGH the state, or even stay overnight, without penalty. If a trip through GA with one’s hedgehog(s) is a possibility, it would be wise to possess a copy of this regulation:

27-5-4 G *** CODE SECTION ***
12/03/01
(b) provided, further, that no such license or permit shall be required solely for the transportation of wild animals through this state where the animals remain in this state no more than 24 hours and are not sold or transferred while in this state.

Care must be taken in interpreting these laws. Interpretation of the law is the privilege and responsibility of the regulating agencies and lawyers; this article illustrates the extreme complexities of animal regulation at the state and local level. Every individual is responsible for researching, understanding, and following the law in their own states. ❧

What’s in store at Ruby’s Rescue Shop?
Check it out at www.hedgehogwelfare.org