



The Hedgehog Welfare Society



TO PROTECT THE WELL-BEING OF PET HEDGEHOGS THROUGH RESCUE, RESEARCH AND EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE WHO CARE FOR THEM NEWSLETTER #16, MAY/JUN 2005

The Hedgehog Welfare Society
Yale University Station, PO Box 206603
New Haven CT 06520-6603
www.hedgehogwelfare.org

HWS Committees/Contacts

Advocacy – Pet Store/USDA Liaisons
Jennifer Plombon, Stephanie Hyne
advohws@aol.com

Rescue Coordination

Laura Ledet, Yolanda McLean
rescue@hedgehogwelfare.org

Health Research and Education

Linda Fine, Gioia Kerlin
health@hedgehogwelfare.org

Rescue Care Packages

Heather Johnson stormypetrel@comcast.net
Jennifer Plombon advohws@aol.com

Quills and Comfort

Judie Peters
judie@quillsandcomfort.com
Carol Fish Kregar
carol@quillsandcomfort.com

HWS Administration

Public Relations

Donnasue Graesser, Tonya Thomas
public_relations@hedgehogwelfare.org

HWS Donations and Store Items

Donnasue Graesser
donnasue.graesser@aya.yale.edu

Website Additions/Deletions/Corrections

Aimee Hassler, Janelle Zorko
webmaster@hedgehogwelfare.org

Newsletter

Kathleen Knudsen
newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org

Finance

Donnasue Graesser, Treasurer
donnasue.graesser@aya.yale.edu

Membership

Kerri LeMotte
onceuponabluemoon@hotmail.com



by *Donnasue Graesser, North Windham, CT*

New hedgehog guardians often come to the Yahoo hedgehog lists looking for advice on how to care for the most recent addition to their family. There are definitely some more common questions that are posed by newcomers to the wonderful world of hedgies. In this column each month, we hope to answer some of these more typical quilly questions by drawing on the collective wisdom of the hedgehog community. This month our featured question focuses on hedgehog cohabitation. If you would like to submit a Frequently Asked Quilly Question for a future newsletter, please contact the newsletter committee.

FAQQ: Do hedgehogs get along? Can my hedgehogs share a cage?

Old wisdom: Some of the earlier versions of “hedgehog how-to” books advised us that hedgehogs are solitary critters, preferring to live alone.

New wisdom: It depends.

It is difficult for some of us to believe that all hedgehogs prefer a companionless existence, especially those of us who peek in on our hedgehogs each morning to see them curled up like yin and yang. So, we asked this

quilly question to the hedgehog yahoo lists, and over 20 hedgehog guardians chimed in. There are many issues to take into account when deciding whether or not to house hedgehogs together. The following is an attempt to condense years of collective experience into an answer to this frequently asked question.

Common Guidelines for Hedgehog Cohabitation

- 1) **The Golden Rule:** Unless you are prepared for babies, intact male hedgehogs absolutely cannot cohabit with intact female hedgehogs.
- 2) It is possible to house female hedgehogs together, and many female hedgehogs seem to enjoy having roomies.
- 3) Although some young males can live together quite peacefully, as they grow older intact (non-neutered) males tend to either fight or display dominance behavior towards each other.
- 4) Whenever housing any hedgehogs (other than littermates) together, be sure to introduce them gradually, and monitor their interactions closely.

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- 5) Cohabiting hedgies need plenty of extra space and adequate food and water accessibility. Be sure to supply enough bags and wheels to go around. Monitor to see how they share.
- 6) New hedgies should undergo a quarantine period before they are introduced to others. Otherwise, they could pass along mites or other contagious infections to the entire herd.

No Fraternizing!

Lori Keller said it best: “Non-neutered boys seem to have only one thing on their minds. Unless you want babies, no fraternizing.” If your boy hedgehog has a functional penis, he will function with it! Hedgehogs procreate quite easily, and boy only has to meet girl for a few minutes, and 35 days later – baby makes three, or four, or eight. The number one rule of hedge-habitation is that boys and girls should not share cages unless (a) the boy is neutered or (b) your intention is to make baby hedgehogs.

Girlfriends

Most guardians of girls reported that their female hedgehogs cohabit quite peacefully. In fact, some girls seem to enjoy their cagemates, and miss them dearly when they are separated.

Judie Peters’ girls are the perfect example: “Twix was several months old when she selected baby Skittles to be her roomie. They lived in harmony for a couple of years, and then were joined by Dancer, a handicapped female, and her baby called Cupid, also female. The four girls lived together without problems and were all friends. They chose to sleep snuggled together – sometimes all four or sometimes with just their best buds. Oh, and those who knew Twix will remember that she was a major butt biter; she would bite any and all hedgies that crossed her path, except her roommates. She loved her roomies and never once attacked any of them.” Judie has continued to house her girls together with continued successful camaraderie.

Cindy DeLaRosa says that all her girl hedgehogs have always gotten along. Cindy housed her “Skinny Girls” (Meha, Amaris, and Lauren) together, and the three were fastidiously tidy. When they got up at night, they would shove each other trying to be the first one to make it to the litter box to poop. Zoey came into the mix and pooped everywhere! So, Cindy rearranged the girls

into two groups, separated by a grid. Meha was selected to share Zoey’s poop place. Poor Meha would go up to the grid and longingly watch the girls playing on the other side of the grid. She would stick her nose through, and Amaris and Lauren would come up and lick Meha’s lonely little nose. Meha missed her cubemates so much that Cindy finally opened up the grid. The girls lived happily ever after together, learning to tolerate Zoey’s messy habits.

After Cindy’s girls were reunited, they shared very spacious living quarters. Spacious enough that they ran laps around the cage instead of using wheels. They ran these laps together, as a group! I can just picture a herd of hedgegie girlies running circles together! Most of these girls were runner types, but poor teardrop-shaped Zoey would sometimes have to sit out a lap. But, she would not let her skinny friends get away from her – she would join them in the run of the next lap.

Although my hedgies have never run laps together, I have had at least 20 girls living here during the past almost 10 years now, and every single one of them has shared her cage with other girls at some point in time. It is a rare occasion that I find one of my girls sleeping alone. They really seem to enjoy snuggling and sleeping together, as well as playing together. This seems to be the most typical experience reported by guardians of girl hedgehogs. So, if you have two or more girl hedgies, I would suggest at least giving them the chance to share their space. It will most likely be a rewarding experience for your girls.

Girls Gone Wild

Most girls get along famously, but there are certainly many exceptions. Some little ladies just refuse to share their nest with anyone! The most common behaviors reported in these types of girls are dominance behaviors that resemble mating behaviors – usually manifested as mounting or butt biting. **Julie Hintz** tells us that all her female hedgehogs have gotten along except Punky, who “liked NO ONE that had fur, four legs, quills, or didn’t give her chicken.”

Just like human girlfriends, hedgies tend to have distinct personalities, and dynamic relationships. The most commonly reported “irreconcilable difference” between female hedgies was incompatible energy levels. Couch potatoes (or hedgegie-bag potatoes) don’t tend to do as well cohabiting with really active runners.

Maurita Plouff tells us that Portia and Coco were just too different for real bonding. “Coco is boundingly active and inquisitive, while Portia was timid and shy.”

Cheryl McCreary’s girls Lanfear and Holly never got along, due to personality conflicts. “When we got our second hedgehog, Lanfear, we tried housing her with our first one, Holly (both females). This was after they were lap introduced. They seemed to get along fine. Then we were woken for a few nights at five in the morning to them fighting. They would cuddle fine during the day, but living together never worked.” However, Cheryl’s other girls, Zanthia and Colette (mother and daughter) have similar runner-type personalities and get along well.

Julie Hintz describes her cohabiting girls: “Alma and Starr lived together really well. I often found Alma with her arm around Starr as if she were her mother.” Starr now cohabits with newcomer Olive, and “Starr is a little more mellow and sometimes wishes Olive wouldn’t run all over her, but they do OK together.”

Susan Goetcheus’s cover girls, Willa and Nell, share free roam space. “After the quarantine month was up, we put Willa in the free roam area and let her explore it by herself. Later, Nell arrived and sniffed curiously at the interloper. Willa didn’t like that much, and huffed at her. No fighting ensued, though, and Nell eventually went off and tubed for the rest of the evening. Both girls enjoy tubing, and they go their separate ways with their favorite tubes and don’t interact too much. Occasionally, one of them whacks the other with a tube, but we don’t think it’s on purpose...The only hedgegie that Nell ever got along with was Knarla Pog, and that was probably because each of them was zooming around so fast that she didn’t realize the other was there.”

Boys will be Boys

Although male hedgehogs tend to get along well together as young hoglets, most owners report that as males age they often engage in behavior which would be considered aggressive or dominating. Words frequently used to describe their behavior are “posturing” and “huffing” towards each other.

Sometimes, even males that seem to get along can surprise us with some aggressive, and even harmful, behavior. **Gioia Kerlin** experienced this with Pi and Suhail: “I had two boys who I thought were going to be

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good friends. I brought Pi home when he was about 5.5 weeks old, and within a short time he and Suhail (who was 8 months old at the time) were playing together in the playpen at night. At first, there was a little bit of mounting going on, but after two visits both boys would snuggle under my leg together, or in their little hidey house. They seemed absolutely fine until one day when I took them outside to play in the grass together. I put them in their carry bag, took them outside, and set them on the grass. Both went underneath their bag. For some reason, at that moment Suhail decided that Pi looked more like food than friend, and he head-butted his little buddy, knocked him over and latched onto Pi's wee footie. This all happened underneath the carry bag, so I didn't see it beginning to happen, but I heard Pi screaming, flipped the bag off of them, and batted Suhail away. Pi went to the emergency vet, but by the time we got there his wound was pretty much closed up already, so all the vet did was look at him and charge me \$100. So, boys don't play together around here at all anymore."

There are always exceptional cases. **Linda Dinga** has housed Sam and Quilliam together and has never seen any signs of fighting. She remind us, though, that they each have their own sleeping bag and wheel. **Robin Aguayo** has also kept males together during transportation with no significant problems. **Judie Peters'** Dasher and his son Buggy have lived together for over a year. "Buggy LOVES his dad. Both sleep snuggled together, although Dasher sometimes will get weary of Buggy's being glued to his side."

Don't give up altogether on housing males together. Maybe your two boys will be among the hedgies who enjoy male bonding.

Without Nuts

The exception to the "no fraternization" rule is neutered males. **Elana Adler**, **Deb Weaver**, and **Lori Keller** have neutered their male hedgies, and without exception, these males have lived with females and/or other neutered males with great success.

Deb Weaver shares her experiences after Grover was neutered for health reasons: "When Grover was 12 months, his 8-week-old niece, Gabby, joined the family. Grover and Gabby lived in the same room, but different cages, for about a month. We talked with **Carol Schultz**, an animal communicator. Gabby knew she came to us to live with Grover, but she wanted some time and space before the move. Grover was

ready, but Gabby wanted her own space, and she wanted Grover to back off! At the end of the second month they went into a playpen together with Mom watching like a hawk. They sniffed noses for a bit, then Grover got shy and dug under the pads to hide. Gabby ran around on top and played, using Grover like a speed bump. Finally she looked around and went over to the side of the pen and stuck her head under the pads. Grover came over and touched noses with her, and she dug under the pads to be near him. They both went back to their separate homes that night.

"The next night, back to the pen. Grover got in, went to a corner and huffed all up. Gabby went right up to him, gave a 'PFT' and the air went out of him. His quills came down, and Gabby was in charge from then on. A day or two later I moved them to a large cage together. They lived as a couple well, no fights. Every once in a while Grover would have to sleep in the litter box because he'd been banned from the bedroom for some reason that I was never able to fathom. They shared everything well and spent many hours cuddled in into a big quilly 'S.' Grover deeply grieved when Gabby died."

Elana Adler's neutered male, **Zimmer**, actually goes into a depression if left alone: "I had him on his own when some of my girls were at Kelly's and he was so sad. As soon as the ladies returned he charged at them, he was so glad to have company. He has never been aggressive, and I haven't heard a note of singling since his snip."

Making Introductions

The most important piece of advice when introducing cohabiting hedgehogs is to closely supervise initial visitations. A new friend might be a comfort to your hedgie or may be quite frightening. There is no way to know what their reaction will be, so they should be monitored closely so that they can be separated immediately if there is more huffing than snuggling. **Jan Ernst** tells us that she watched Daisy and Jasmine "with an eagle eye" when they first met, and **Deb Weaver** watched Gabby and Grover "like a hawk."

Lori Keller suggests gradual introduction: "If you want a better outcome, careful introduction is necessary and not all that difficult to implement. When a newbie is to be introduced to my herd, they first live in an adjoining corral where they can touch noses and see each other, but not physically interact any more than that. If all goes well, and it usually does, they eventually have

their corral opened to the larger one, and all hedgies can come and go freely between spaces. Almost without exception, a newbie chooses to cohab with the larger group in the larger areas."

Carol Fish Kregear has had five permanent free-roaming female residents, and various short-term guests, and as she has introduced new hedgies to her herd, "the established hedgehog was unhappy with the new arrival(s) but never hurt them, and over time, tolerance and friendship developed."

At the time of the writing of this article, **Jan Ernst** was experimenting with two new roommates: "Reading about cohabiting hedgehogs prompted me to put Jasmine and Daisy together this evening. Jasmine is all for it. She keeps moving next to Daisy, but Daisy huffs and moves away. Jasmine follows - determined to make friends with Daisy. I'm keeping an eagle eye on them, just in case there is a problem. I'll put them in their own bins tonight and put them together a little every day for a while and see how things work out. I kind of feel sorry for Jasmine. She wants so badly to be Daisy's friend. At the moment they are side-by-side, one hedgie with albino quills flat and relaxed, and one hedgie with standard quills raised. I hope for Jasmine's sake that Daisy accepts her." *Update from Jan: "Jasmine wanted very much to be with another hedgie, but Daisy was having none of it. She is a very huffy girl who bites without warning, so she will be living alone. Jasmine is happily cohabiting with another hedgie in her forever home."*

As **Lori Keller** points out, "As time goes on, a lot changes with cohabiting hedgies. Different friendships develop, different interactions, new sleeping buddies. The more your hedgies interact with each other socially, the relationships are deeper and more rewarding to watch."

Space for two (or three or four)

It is of utmost importance that you provide ample space and adequate accessories for hedgies that live together. This means a sleeping/hidey spot for each hedgie (even if they love to snuggle, one hedgie may want privacy at some point in time), separate food dishes, and wheels for all. Many hedgies will share a wheel, but if they will not, then a wheel must be provided for each roomie.

One of the most remarkable hedgie enclosures that I have seen was at **Cindy**

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DeLaRosa's house. She had "cubes" made of a grid material that could be rearranged to create spaces of various sizes, depending on which hedgegies were living together. The set up allowed her to enlarge the living spaces as more hedgegies were added to the herd. It also allowed for a large enough space for that group of girls to run laps together!

My husband was amazed at the hedgegie room at Lori Keller's house. She has a large corral set up that is shared by many females and neutered males. Like Cindy's setup, the corrals can be rearranged to create larger spaces as the herd grows.

The photo accompanying this article is the corral of Daisy and Blossom, who live in luxury with Jennifer Plombon. You can see they have plenty of space, playthings, and two wheels.

Be sure to either have enough of everything to go around (sleeping bags, food dishes, wheels) or be sure to monitor your hedgegies closely to be sure they are sharing everything equitably.

Visitation Rights

Even if your hedgehogs don't get along well living together, they might still enjoy interaction during a communal playtime. Maurita Plouff incorporates communal playtime into the daily routine of her hedgehogs: "They all seem obsessed with one particular pillow; they like to get behind/under it, bite it, try to drag it around, and anoint with it. We'll see little shoving matches for who gets to be closest to the pillow but in a few minutes we'll find them in a little pog pile. Clearly, all three hedgegies are comfortable with each other."

The downside to cohabitation

At first consideration, cohabitation sounds like a peachy plan. Living together not only provides the benefits of companionship to our hedgegies, but also allows us to clean fewer cages. But, there are some possible negative aspects of cohabitation. It is more difficult to moderate the food intake of a

single individual. If a cagemate is gobbling up more than his/her fair share of kibble, it might not be very obvious that her roomie is not eating well. Also, if one hedgegie gets sick, as Lori tells us, "it's harder to tell which quilly butt is the one that let rip with the green nasty poo." And, if one hedgegie gets sick, you have to carefully monitor to be sure his or her roomies don't catch the bug.

Thanks to HWS members who contributed their experience and knowledge to answer this FAQQ:

Many thanks to the hedgehog community members who offered perspective on the cohabitation question: Elana Adler, Robin Aguayo, Cindy DeLaRosa, Linda Dinga, Laura Dunklee, Janet Ernst, Susan Goetcheus, Donnasue Graesser, Julie Hintz, Lori Keller, Gioia Kerlin, Carol Fish Kregear, Cheryl McCreary, Judie Peters, Jennifer Plombon, Maurita Plouff, and Deb Weaver.



Jennifer Plombon's luxury corral she set up for Daisy and Blossom



Hedgie Hero - Naomi Wikane

"Naomi - only writing her name puts a big smile on my face. She is one very special woman and a very dear friend. A hedgehogfriend - who is not "just" talking. She is so active making LOVELY things for the Ruby Store ...Naomi must have raised a LOT of money to help hedgehogs in need. And with an unselfish and caring heart. I have known Naomi for quite some years - and what she has done for the European Hedgehog rescue here in Denmark is AMAZING. Not to mention her support to me when I need good advise. I could go on and on.... Please pay Naomi a tribute and go crazy shopping in Ruby's Store. Naomi - thank you so much for your friendship over the years, and for my lavender sachet that is under my pillow and gives me sweet dreams." - Kis VanOosterhout, fellow grannie.

by Donnasue Graesser, North Windham, CT

This month we celebrate a Hedgie Hero who is dear to so many of us, Naomi Wikane. All of us are familiar with Naomi, the wonderful tales of her hedgies, her beautiful crafts, and her warm and generous heart. She always has a "welcome" for newcomers to the hedgie lists, a word of encouragement for someone who has lost a hedgie, sage advice for those with sick hedgies, ideas for hedgie fundraisers, and wonderful tales of Hobie, Meggie, and friends! Naomi is a lifelong friend to us humans, and a devoted caretaker to several lucky hedgies.

Naomi has a rich and interesting past. I have been lucky enough to read through a journal and photo album in which she chronicled the lives of her ancestors and herself. If you are ever so fortunate to visit with Naomi, don't miss out on reading through this masterpiece. And, be sure to spend some time oogling at the photos of her Dad - he had movie star good looks!

Naomi grew up in a family that loved and respected animals, both domesticated and wild. Animals have always been an important part of her life. She once even had the amazing experience of hugging a beaver! She tells us, "He lived in the wild but had access through a water channel into the home of the lady who ran a beaver preserve here in upstate New York. He came into her home and climbed on a chair, and I put my arms right around him!"

Naomi has lived her entire life in the picturesque farm country of Schoharie, New York. Naomi, her hedgies, and her cats live within a ten-mile radius of the land where her paternal ancestors came from Germany in the early 1700's. They purchased farmland from the Native American

Indians. Her family has always lived in the area and their names are carved into the stones (along with others) of the limestone church that became a Fort during the American Revolutionary War. "This area was called the Breadbasket of the Revolution because the fertile valley soil grew much of the wheat that fed our Continental Army. The area was raided and heavily burned by the British. We have reenactment's every year at the Fort and I wear my colonial costume."

Naomi grew up with the Beatrix Potter stories, and first met hedgies through these stories, in the characters of Mrs. Tiggywinkle and Mr. Pricklepin. She saw her first pet hedgie in the 1980's at a wildlife center and resolved that when it became possible for her to have a hedgehog, she would have one (or more!). That happened in 1998, and Naomi says that she will have hedgies, "as long as I can care for them." Naomi's hedgie family includes Pinnypin, Meggie, Hobie, and Buckwheat. Mr. Pricklepin, Mrs. Tiggywinkle, and Molly have all crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. Each of her hedgies is special in his or her own way, but Tiggywinkle was Naomi's cuddler and most gentle hedgehog, and a wonderful show-and-tell girl. The hedgies share Naomi with two wonderful cats, Maisie and Cedric. Maisie and Cedric both adopted Naomi. They each walked into her yard last year and asked to live there. What intuitive kitties to find their way to such a super caretaker and kitty-mom! It is remarkable to watch Naomi with her animals; she speaks to each one of them as if they are the most special being on the planet.

Before her retirement, Naomi was a Public Library Adult Services Consultant. Her career gave her the research and teaching skills that she continues to use in various

areas of her life, including (fortunately for all of us) the hedgie community. Naomi is a huge part of our hedgehog family. She was part of the early hedgehog organizations, and then the International Hedgehog Association. When the Hedgehog Welfare Society was formed she jumped in right away and got involved. Her list of contributions to the hedgehog community is extensive!

One of the primary ways that Naomi helps hedgies is through her wonderful crafts! All of us marvel at her beautiful creations. Countless hedgies have benefited from the sales of her handicrafts, which she has donated to silent auctions, Ruby's Rescue Shop, and hedgie care-packages. Naomi also sends fleece blankies to all newly rescued hedgehogs. She shares her love of books with us all through her "Literary Hedgehog" column in the HWS newsletter. She is the birthday-fairy, making us all feel special by remembering our birthdays on the yahoo lists. Her newest venture is coordinating the Healing Candle Ceremony which brings healing comfort to hedgies and humans alike (and sometimes our other pets too). Not to mention, Naomi's hedgies are founding members of the very important Molly Club and Quilled Gentlemen Club.

Hanging out with Naomi is like a little history lesson and a biography all rolled into one! She always has fun tidbits to share, including the story about the time she met Andy Rooney: "I met Andy Rooney a couple of years ago when I was trying on a hat in a shop in Cooperstown, NY. He evidently was watching me and when this voice said it (the hat) was becoming to me, I recognized it as his."

Naomi has diverse interests (outside of hedgies) and many talents: "My special interests and hobbies have varied somewhat,

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as I've gone through what I call the various stages of my life. So, I'm going to write about now - my retirement years in my later sixties. Living in an apartment with limited space and health issues has affected what I do. Books and reading have always been at the top of the list. And flower gardening. Local history too, and at this point in my life I'm spending lots of time doing behind the scenes volunteer professional work at our local Old Stone Fort Museum and Library. The computer and accompanying equipment is a big part of my days now and allows me to do things with my lifelong hobby of photography. I've done craft work all my life too (influenced young by family)."

"I now live in a small world. I used to travel, mostly in the New England area and a lot in Maine, the Atlantic Provinces of Canada, and New York City. With my husband (now deceased) I took a nine week tour west across Canada and returned through the US. I still travel but it is mostly within a fifty-mile radius of where I live. I used to deal in Early American antiques with my Dad. And, he and I raised and sold many kinds of Hens and Chicks and (sempervivum) plants to local garden centers. I used to hike and lead bird walks. I've always loved nature and still do. I used to do a lot. But not any more. My life is pretty quiet now and that is just fine. I'm contented."

"For a few years I did craft shows, and I've always felt joy when something I've made brings pleasure to the receiver. I've amassed quite a collection of hedgehog literature and try to share some of it in our HWS newsletter, and use it to answer questions on the yahoo e-mail lists. I've worked closely with the veterinary practice where I go to help them learn about hedgehogs. So many of you are able to travel to hedge shows and get-togethers. I'm just here at home and try to do all I can from this position. I've loved the visits from those of you who have journeyed here to see me. The hedgehog community is part of my everyday living. I would be very lonesome without it. It makes me feel wanted and loved and is one of the parts of my life that gives purpose to getting up in the morning. The hedge community is my family."

So many of us also consider Naomi more than a friend, but part of our family. Naomi has touched many lives, both hedge and human, in the hedgehog circles. Friends and Admirers share some special thoughts as to why Naomi is a hero to them:

Karen Johnson met Naomi several years ago at a hedge gathering in Massachusetts: "She had come down with a friend of hers and

was truly a very sweet person. I am a basket maker and she loved some of my baskets I brought to show. She had always wanted to have a Nantucket basket, and I had a couple. She bought the first one I ever made. They say never sell the first one you make, but Naomi loved it so much and was so excited, I couldn't not sell it to her. Some of you may have seen pictures from that day with Tiggy in the basket. My basket couldn't be in a better home and I always appreciate the praise and encouragement that Naomi always has."

Jennifer Plombon is impressed with Naomi's unlimited love for her animal companions: "She knows them, she knows their personalities, she talks with them, and hears what they say. I think it must be heaven to be one of her animal companions! But, she also helps OUR animal companions. She makes the most lovely lavender sachets for the care packages, which offer scented calm to upset hedges. She sends fleecies to rescues who need a hiding place of their very own, and she responds to every post needing help or reassurance. Our community could not do without Naomi. We are blessed to have her."

Tonya Thomas shares a love for "fur babies" with Naomi: "The love Naomi has for her Quill and Fur babies runs deeply. She is a kind and caring person to everyone she knows. We not only have our quill babies in common but we also have a love for our cat babies as well. Cats are like Hedges in that they are one of a kind! Thank you Naomi for being such a good friend!"

Deb Weaver expresses the many reasons for her admiration of Naomi: "It's been my sad misfortune never to have met Naomi face-to-face. We met on the Welfare list and started to correspond with each other. I've always admired what she does for the hedge community, despite her age (sorry Naomi!) and her health issues. Her work for Ruby's Rescue Shop is a wonderful addition to any home. Her life's contributions to this point, and her wide array of interests and activities still, make her someone I'd like to grow up to be!"

Jan Ernst considers Naomi a wonderful hedge friend: "She is one of the first people to call me when I need support, and always sends cards for birthdays and holidays. Her artistic talents bring me joy in the handmade items she has made for Ruby's Rescue Shop. I love her tote bags, lavender sachets, address labels and all of the other beautiful things she makes. She is a loving mom to her rescued hedges and cats and shows her love for others by keeping a birthday list and by organizing

healing candlelight ceremonies. I'm feel so blessed to have Naomi as one of my friends."

Teresa Johnson has never met Naomi in person, yet, "I've had the pleasure of chatting with Naomi on line and reading her wonderful posts on the various hedge lists. Naomi came softly into the hedge community several years ago. Since then she has become a well-respected and much-loved friend to many, both hedge and human. Her knowledge of libraries and books has helped in research. Her selfless donation of time has given way to many beautifully crafted hedge items. I, rather my HedgeHerd, are proud recipients of two fabulous lavender pillows. One sits atop Roxie's pigloo and has been an essential aid to bringing calm and alleviating her 'day mares.' Since adding the pillow to her habitat, the frequency of her dreams and screams has dropped to near none. Naomi has always put the welfare of hedges first and foremost and truly is a hero!"

Finally, I would just like to share what an important person Naomi has been in my own life, and the life of my babies, both quilled-babies and diapered-babies! My son, Simon, does not have any living grandmothers, and "Nana Naomi" (along with a few other fellow grannies) gives me the peace to know that he will not miss out on the "grandma" experience. She treats him like he is her own grandson - "treat" being the operative word! She seems to have some "grandma intuition" in picking out the perfect gifts for Simon. She has given him many handmade gifts, crafted with love. He loves the carrot cookies at the "carrot barn" by her house, and she once sent him a big box with samples of every kind! She laughs when he insists on wearing the glasses from her stuffed hedgehog, even though he is sure to lose or break them. She introduced him to "birthday cake" ice cream. She has lots of sheep around her apartment. She carried him through an underground cave, and held onto him tight in the complete darkness. She doesn't argue with him when he wants to go barefoot outside. She is patient with him when mom is losing her mind in a restaurant because all Simon wants to eat is jelly packets! Best of all, Naomi helped to bring Darla into our lives. Simon still hasn't quite gotten over losing Pinky, or even Sweet Pea yet, but he has a new friend in Darla. Naomi made it possible to bring this incredible hedgehog into our family. I'm sure Simon will miss his biological grandmothers someday, but he will never want for the love and affection of a grandma. Every hedge should be so lucky to have a mom like Naomi, and every human kid should be so lucky to have a Nana like Naomi!"

Harinezumi Pet Hedgehogs in Japan

by Yumi Imamura, Kanagawa, Japan

Yumi Imamura is a new HWS member from Japan. She is guardian to a spoiled little hedgehog named Hodges. Yumi assures us that the myth that hedgehogs are eaten in Japan is false! They do not eat hedgehogs in Japan! Yet, she also tells us that information on the care of pet hedgehogs in Japan is scarce. She appreciates the HWS for the information and support she receives, even from across the globe.

In return, she shares some interesting information with us about pet hedgehogs in Japan...



The Japanese name for hedgehog is Harinezumi, meaning mouse with prickles. Therefore many people believe that hedgehog is a kind of mouse. My Hodges is from a pet store, but it is quite rare to find hedgehogs in most pet stores in Japan. I believe there are few breeders, but I'm not sure if they are commercial breeders or not.

We do not have good resources regarding how to care for pet hedgehogs. The only available Japanese book says that we should not communicate with our hedgehogs very often and restrict play time to very short time since it is very stressful for them. I think the book is out of date, which my vet assured me. (Thank goodness I have a very good vet!)

I heard that hedgehogs are becoming popular pets in Japan, but we are far behind from U.S. and other European countries when it comes to knowledge of them. We do need correct information in Japanese since most of us do not understand English well. I have never appreciated my English skill this much!

I truly thank HWS for providing latest information about hedgehogs. I am sure my little boy Hodges agrees with me!

Above all, I really respect your country working for all animals including hedgehogs. It is something we should learn, and I hope my country will be a better place for animals.

Again, I am really so happy to become a member of the HWS!!!



Yumi and Hodges

Circle of Light Memorial Ceremony held May 29, 2005

Mabel (guardian Jen)
DW (guardian Elana)
Rosy (guardian Jan)
Amaris (guardian Cindy)
Valentine (guardian Peggy)
Buddy (guardians Tonya & Rick)
Pinky (guardians Donnasue & Simon)
Portia (guardian Maurita)
Tico (guardian Tawana)
Lady Arrabella & HRH Quilliam
(guardian Gillian)
Deirdre (guardians Aimee & Jim)
Lillie, Hamlet & Pigglit (guardian Vicki)
Needles (guardians Linda & Gary)
Mia Bella (guardians Laura & Michelle)
Lauren (guardian Cindy)
Beetlejuice (guardian Dawn)
Tiptoe (guardians Ashley and Andrew)
Pearl, Nala, and unnamed little "brown
boy" (guardians Linda and Gary)
Charlotte (guardian Shelley)
Sniffles (guardian Jan)
Snowy the ferret (guardian Bridget)
Kiwi (guardians Dave and Joy)

Welcome new Rescue Contact List Members!

The HWS Rescue Committee is dedicated to helping hedgehogs-in-need find caring, knowledgeable homes and warm hearts; without the continued assistance of the dedicated HWS Rescue Contact List members, it would be an overwhelming task. The people on our Rescue Contact List continuously step up to the plate when it comes to taking in an unwanted hedgehog, being a leg in a hedgeie-train, rushing a sick animal to the vet, or simply pointing someone who wants to learn about hedgehogs in the right direction. It's inspiring the number of hours these people devote to the well being of our quilled companions.

Please join me in welcoming our newest team members:

Samantha Hightower of Oak Harbor, WA
Sherrice Waller of Katy, TX
Gioia Marie Kerlin of Tulsa, OK
Shelly Brouwer of Ledyard, CT
Erika Bragdon of Franklin, NH
Nicole Gendler-Martin of Albuquerque, NM

Sincerest thanks!

*Yolanda McLean, Chair and Rescue Coordinator,
Hedgehog Welfare Society, Rescue Committee*

Pog Profiles

This column introduces our readers to some of the wonderful hedgies with whom HWS members share their lives. Each "profilee" is given a list of 15 questions and chooses some of them to answer.

In this issue, we profile Deb Weaver's hedgies Grover and Gabby. Here are the bios Deb wrote for them:

Grover

Grover picked me (I had wanted a little girl) and came to live with me at just 6 weeks of age after his Mom kicked him from the nest box. He's a sweet boy, who likes to snuggle and get kisses from his Mom. At 1,000 grams he's a lot of pog to snuggle! He turned 3 at the end of January 2005.

Gabby

In March of 2004 Gabby was diagnosed with a cancerous tumor on the back of one of her sinuses. She fought the disease bravely until July 7th, 2004, when she could fight on no more. Gabby was a very independent thinker, and could be very stubborn at times. She enjoyed snuggling with her Grover, who (along with his Mom) still misses her daily. At only 16 months, her life ended much too soon.



The Questions

Q: Which recreational activities do you pursue?

A:

Grover: Chasing Gabby from the best snoozing spot on the sofa.

Gabby: Chasing Grover from the best snoozing spot on the sofa. Sometimes I like to get under him and flip him. It's great fun.

Grover: Hmm, I also enjoy a good dig a few times a week and when I was younger I used to enjoy a run on my wheel, I could really pound it!

Gabby: It should be noted that both Grover (Bronze Medal) and I (Silver Medal) are IHOG champions as well.

Q: Do you have a significant other?

A:

Grover: Of course! My beautiful Gabby.

Gabby: Certainly! My handsome Grover.

Grover: We both have pen-pals too, which is fun.

Q: What is your philosophy of life?

A:

Grover: Snooze, snack, snuggle with Mom, snooze, snack, snuggle with Gabby, snooze...

Gabby: All of us hedgies are here to help our humans reach a higher level. This life is just one stop in a grand adventure - and each adventure should be enjoyed to the fullest.

Q: Where is your favorite place?

A:

Grover: On top of Sherry-liners and under Sherry-blankies, snoozing.

Gabby: Snuggled on Mom's chest in a blankie. I also enjoy snuggling with Grover.

Grover: Yikes! I should have said snuggling with Gabby right off - I love doing that,

preferably under Sherry-blankies on our favorite spot on the sofa. I've also enjoyed traveling with Mom, I like seeing new places. The Niagara show was a great time.

Gabby: I'm more of a home-body, although I must say the outing to the Madison IHOG last May was wonderful, I really enjoyed myself.

Q: If your human caretaker quotes you in email messages, do you think your thoughts are communicated accurately?

A:

Grover: Well, I'm not nearly as messy as Mom and Gabby make me out to be, but otherwise yes.

Gabby: We've been working with Mom and her communication skills with us. There have been a few small successes with this (it certainly takes humans a long time to catch on, or perhaps just our human?). The three of us know each other very well.

Q: What piece of advice do you have for all human caretakers?

A:

Grover: Everyone needs someone to snuggle.

Gabby: All living creatures need to treat each other more gently.

Grover: And remember, all creatures have the ability to teach, learn, and communicate.

Gabby: We all shall meet again.

The Clubs

Hedgie fraternities and sororities? Believe it or not, hedgehogs have their own clubs! The three most popular are the Manly Hedgeboyz, the Quilled Gentlemen, and the Molly Club. This month, the founding members of the Manly Hedgeboyz introduce you to their club.



Payton Woodring - Manly Hedgeboy

TESTIMONY of TEMPTATION by Payton Woodring

When I was a young, impressionable hoglet, I admit that I had my head turned by a nice set of quills or two or three. And then my Mom suggested that maybe I would like to spend some time with a nice lady. Well, I thought, okay...that could be fun.

That's when I found out the truth about these wimmens.

Well, the first one had this gorgeous set of white quills, and she was quite taken by me. She came to my house to spend the weekend. All went well until it was time to get together for the night. I mean, she wanted everything!!!! I was forced to roll up in one of my blankies, crawl into my sleepy bag and pull my other blankie in after me (which was not an easy task all rolled up like King Tut), and then I had to hang on to them all with my teeth. Geeeezzz!!! Okay, so I thought maybe it was just her, so I told my Mom I was willing to try it again. Same thing!

But now this one must have gone on an eating binge after I left because she got fat and blamed it on me. And then she had babies and blamed them on me, too, and I heard that if they had lived I would have had to get a job and pay hedgie support.

Well, then I heard that Artie and Bently were

starting the Manly Hedgeboyz, so of course I wanted to join.

We're dedicated to preserving our dignity without wimmens in our life. We still have wimmens as friends, but we want no living with them. The only exception is if we're forced into it by our momz.

We welcome all manly members...it would help if they have travel experience or a set of wheels.

The Manly Hedgeboyz: OUR ORIGINS by The Texas Manly Hedgeboyz

We became the Manly Hedgeboyz when our momz took her very first hedgehog, Hedglie Pricklebutt, and her second hedge kid, ME, off to see the new vet. The first vet we saw was kind, but knew little about hedgies and recommended this very nice lady for us to see. So, off we went for a "well hedgie" visit.

Now, this very nice vet lady took one look at our beautiful faces and flipped us on our backs...took one long look at both our undersides and declared us very MANLY HEDGEBOYZ! Now, who could resist a club name like that? Shortly thereafter we got Tank from Miz Judi J. and were a happy group of three. We were fostering Tater and Sunny Spirit for a while, and Sunny wanted

to go home to Judi J., and the adoption for Tater just never happened, so we were four Manly Hedgeboyz and quickly taking over momz sewing room.

Then we got a phone call from West Texas about a hedgehog needing a home. So, momz gasses up the Blazer and headed to Abilene and got Cisco. Cisco was sick - we knew it from the start - and so momz got him to the next (and final) vet. Cisco didn't even have a name, so momz and the vet gave him one and did everything to get him well. After his quarantine was lifted we became a group of five and decided enough was enough. And the momz agreed that five boyz was plenty. We could foster, but no more permanent kids.

We needed a motto for our club. **NO GIRLS ALLOWED** just seemed to fit a family of five boys, doing boy things and not particularly interested in the wimmens that others kept complaining about. Now, don't get me wrong, here. We think wimmens are just fine, just not around our stuff, sleeping in our spaces, taking our well earned goodies, and just not in our territory. Kinda like, take one out on a date, ya don't have to marry the girl. Fact is, there are a couple of girlys that we admire for their bravery and independence - just like us, in girl suits.

Tragedy struck us late last year...our much loved leader Hedglie died on his wheel one morning - just fell off it (and he was a champion wheeler, I tell ya) and was gone. Momz was heartbroken, and so were we. Kinda lost. Then we hear about a hedgeboy that needs a home, and here comes Icky (Icarus). Now we are back to five and adjusting to a new rhythm in our lives. When momz finds our Cisco gone over the bridge one frosty morning - that was losing two brothers in a month - hard on all us Manly Hedgeboyz. We really weren't feeling all that Manly, to tell the truth. We were sadly getting ourselves back on track, when here comes Sam needing placement in a "forever" home.

Sam stayed. We liked him right away, and he lived with a girly for a year. Oh, the stories he tells of their sneaky ways! Glad we have him to remind us of how it was with him.

We Manly Hedgeboyz love life and living it with gusto. Girls, they come and go, but just aren't part of our daily life. We are brave, fierce warriors when we need to be, and gentlemen when the occasion demands it of us. We don't particularly like the dreaded bath, prefer dirt to play in and have even considered sneaking out behind the barn and starting a bonfire and having a real down to earth pow-wow.

This is our story, and we are sticking by it. ~Bently and the Hedgeboyz, Tank, Tater, Icky and Sam

A CAUSHUNERY TALE

By *Artie Dunklee*

Howdy there - my name's Artie D. an' I'm a proud member of the Manly Hedgeboyz (NO WIMMINZ ALLOWED!!!). We Manly Hedgeboyz (NO WIMMINZ ALLOWED!!!) 've been ax'd t'write a lil' bit 'bout our group an' this is my con-tree-byushun to the Artie-kle.

Mine, I'm sorry t'say, is a sad, tearful, horrifyin' tale of caushun an' woe. It'll be mighty unpleasant readin', but I'm thinkin' that all young hedgelads gotta know 'bout them wimminly wiles an' how they're all bound an' determined to lead us boyz down the wrong path that leads t'nuthin' more than heartache an' misery.

When I was jes' a young'un, innocent an' enjoyin' the exper-eye-ences of bein' an unsullied youth, I had no idea that wimminz were evil temptashuns. I jes' thought that they smelled real interestin' an' I liked t' climb on their backs an' smush 'em. But then some of them wimminz started c'mplainin' that I didn't make 'em fat. (Yeah, I know. Wimminz c'mplainin' 'bout NOT gettin' fat - g'figger!) An' then I started thinkin' more an' more 'bout how them wimminz were always c'mplainin' 'bout somethin' or 'nother, like how they sed I needed to bathe more (I'm a shudderin' jes' thinkin' 'bout it!), an' then they sed I wuz gettin' too heavy (didn't they know that a REAL hedgeboy needs t'be large an' intimidatin'?), an' then they were sayin' that I set a bad 'zample fer the young'uns 'cause I like t'keep my home lookin' comfy an' lived-in. Sheesh.

So I decided, then an' there, that I didn't care how good they smelled, I jes' wuzn't gonna have nuthin' more t'do with them wimminz. An' jes' a little bit later I moved an' came t'live with my new Mum. (I'll tell y'all 'bout the horrors of that there trip some other time, 'cuz it wuz filled with lil' Miss Margie the Menace yakkin' an' singin' an' talkin' an' talkin' an' talkin'. It wuz derved near the death of yers truly.)

Well, I'd been thinkin' that this new Mum wuz a good way t'go, 'cuz I'd heard that she liked t'spoil an' pamper her hedgies an' let

them do jes' what they want. Blissful, ain't it? Sadly, that vishun t'weren't nothin' more than more of that wimminzly gossipin'.

That ferst night at my new home weren't that bad. I spent my time rearrangin' things an' makin' derved sure that each an' everythin' had been well marked with my scent. An' then I spent the next day sleepin' an' savin' up my energy fer 'nother night of carousin'. But that night wuzn't what I'd been plannin': instead, that derved Margie the Menace, she done went an' clambered into my home an' she went round an' started talkin' 'bout how I needed to clean-up the home an' how my wheel was disgraceful an' 'bout how much she liked livin' with the new Mum. An' she jes' kept talkin' all night! Well, I jes' couldn't handle it, an' after several hours of chasin' her round-an-round and tryin' t'scare her off, I jes' went an' crawled int' my sleepy sack. But she followed me in! An' it wuz at that instant that I knew things weren't gonna get much better.

A little later I wuz introduced t'the other hedgehog in the house, a prissy one called Miss Penelope Anne. Missy Prissy wuz always waggin' her fat bum in my face an' clamberin' int' my home fer unannounced an' unwelcomed visits. There weren't nuthin' else I could do but t'chase her round an' try an' climb on her back an' smush her real well. But Mum sed that wuzn't 'lowed an' would take away Missy Prissy. Sadly, that there wimminz jes' kept comin' back an' kickin' me outta my pigloo an' eatin' my food an' she'd bring 'long that there Menace kid, too, an' the two of 'em were always stealin' my wheel an' chasin' me 'round an' when I tried t'sleep they'd crawl up an' try an' *shudderin' at the memory* cuddle with me!

An' things only got worse after I went an' spent some time with that there vet person, who'd done somethin' funny t'my tummy. After I'd come home, them wimminz decided that they were jes' gonna move in an' live in my space! Well, I weren't gonna have nuthin' t'do with that, so I packed-up my stuff an' moved into their ol' space. Didn't work, though, 'cuz they jes' went an' moved back in.

An' now, menny months later, I find m'self havin' t'share my livin' space with both Missy Prissy an' the Menace. It's a misery-able existence, 'cuz no matter where I go or what I do, they're always there, talkin' an' gossipin' an' rearrangin' the furniture an' tryin' to cuddle an' snuggle.

continued on page 11



Artie Dunklee - Manly Hedgeboy

I wuz resigned t'a horrible life, with no reason t'get up in the evenin' 'sept fer t'go an' sit on the food bowl an' guard my victuals, but then I wuz fortunate 'nuff t'find the Texas Manly Hedgeboyz (NO WIMMINZ ALLOWED!!!) an' then Payton an' Hans an' all t'other Manly Hedgeboyz (NO WIMMINZ ALLOWED!!!) who assured me that t'wuz okay an' that they all felt bad fer me an' then we all started plannin' our escape an' t'go an' hit the rails an' ride 'cross the country, seein' the sights, livin' offa the fat of the land, an' answerin' t'no wimminz. We're real lucky, 'cuz we now have members like Spongie, who has spent some of their life in the wilds an' knowin' how t'survive. An' the boyz down in Florida, who're members of the Hedgehog Military an' are good at organizin' things an' takin' care of stuff. An' now Payton's gone an' gotten himself a vee-hick-akle an' we all have our ID Cards that'll let us drive an' the Texas Boyz are gonna borry their Mum's vee-hick-akle, too, an' I jes' went an' bought us all a tent fer sleepin' in, an' we're all gonna leave our

homes an' go an' have us some grand adventures.

Let me tell you, this whole leavin' home plan kain't come to fruishun too soon fer me. Why, in the past couple'a months this here Mum'z gone an' moved in two more wimminz!!! One of 'em is an' old lady named Miss Pepper an' she's pretty much okay, 'septin' that she comes an' tries t'cuddle with me when it's sleepin' time. An' I've not spent a whole lotta time with the other, 'cuz she's been real sick, but Mum made me cuddle with her, too, an' she sez her name is Miss Christy Hermyone Poppet an' she talks an' talks an' talks! Tain't nuthin' wrong with her talkin' parts! *sigh* Mum sez that I'm a very good cuddler, but she don't seem t'understand that I'm not cuddlin' with 'em outta choice. I'm jes' tryin' t'sleep an' they go an' cuddle up next t'me an' I ain't got no say in the whole sitchu-eye-ay-shun.

An' that, m'friends, is what happens when you let the wimminz get under yer skin.

They take over everythin' an' move in an' jes' destroy yer life. Please, young'uns, the next time yer bein' tempted by some of those good smellin' wimminz with their wiggly bums, jes' think 'bout how horrible m'life is, what with the wimminz talkin' an' gossipin' an' cuddlin' an' takin' my pigloo an' takin' my wheel an' rearrangin' the fuernishin'z an' eatin' all my food an' tellin' me I gotta go on a diet an' exercise more an' talkin' an' talkin' an' 'bout near drivin' me t'insanity! Jes' remember this caushunery tale an' JES' SAY NO TO WIMMINZ!!! (Also say no to baffs, cuddlin', exercise, diets, an' lettin' ennyone share yer pigloo, too.)

Does your boy hedgie have a distaste for baths and girls? To become a member of the Manly Hedgeboyz, join the pog-chit-chat yahoo group at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pog-chit-chat>



Hedgehog CactusNot the kind they sell on eBay!...And Buckwheat Wikane really isn't standing on his head. Turn the picture sideways and you will see he has his head stuck in the pot attacking the wheels of a little red wagon.



*A question for the pogs? Favorite Rescue Story?
Favorite Photo(s)? Letter to the Editor?*

Submissions for the Newsletter Welcomed!

Please send it/them to us either electronically at
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or via snail-mail to
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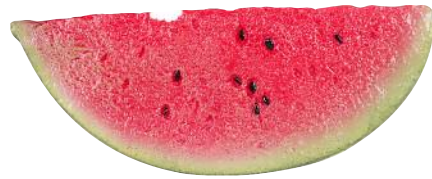
Sponge Bob: The Rescue Story

by Sarah Eshelman, Mounds View, Minnesota

Sponge Bob is a darling albino male hedgegie "rescue." That is, he "rescued" me two months ago.

Spongie's story is a sad one-with a very happy ending. One day in Orland Park, a Chicago suburb, the police received a phone call from a family saying that they had found a sea sponge in their yard. The "sea sponge" was a small albino male hedgehog, who was then rescued by a kind Department of Natural Resources officer. The officer helped the small hedgegie find his way to Dawn Wrobel and the Aint No Creek Ranch. The officer's name was Bob. So, what more perfect name for this little hedgegie could there be than Sponge Bob?

The Hedgehog Welfare Society organized a hedgegie rescue train for Sponge Bob: Dawn Wrobel brought Spongie from Chicago to Schaumburg, IL, and Liz Olson drove him from Schaumburg to La Crosse, Wisconsin. Jennifer Plombon and I met Liz and Spongie at the La Crosse Perkins Restaurant (now an official meeting point on Wisconsin-Minnesota hedgegie trains). After gushing over Spongie's cuteness and sweetness, we drove him to the Twin Cities. Sponge Bob was kindly accompanied by fleece blankets, hedgegie hats, and several months' supply of food, to his forever home with me in St. Paul. Bob was wheeling the first night-and has continued to wheel every night, all night. I



placed a counter on his wheel and found that he runs around five miles per night!

Bob recently participated in his first Hedgehog Olympics, the Minnesota IHOG event in February, hosted by Veronica Moyle. He impressed the crowd with his tricky maneuvering in the clear tube during floor exercises and his valiant attempts in the hurdling competition.

watermelon on his plate; the next morning, there was one tiny bite carefully carved out of the pink fruit. This was strange, since I had heard that he liked watermelon.

The next night, I gave it one more try. I put out a dime-sized bit of watermelon. The next morning, I was happy to see that his treat plate was empty-all the watermelon was gone. I love finding new treats Bob enjoys.

I began cleaning his cage. Beneath where his treat plate was sitting, a mushy, pink



One of my favorite Bob stories to tell is the one that has become known as the Watermelon Incident. One night I put a little bit of watermelon on his nightly treat plate, which is usually stocked with his favorites, which include mealworms, crickets, chicken sticks, turkey, and scrambled eggs. He did not touch the watermelon. The next night, I placed another quarter-sized bit of

substance clung to the sheet of newspaper lining the bottom of his cage. Watermelon. In a final demonstration that he did not, in fact, enjoy watermelon, Bob had scooted the unwanted fruit off his plate and hidden the evidence. The message came through loud and clear: No More Watermelon. You've got it, Bob. Thanks for rescuing me.

MOTHER'S DAY

by *Laura Dunklee*

I just told mean ol' Artie that there were all sorts of goodies in the foodie bowl and he ran right over and climbed right up on top of it and now he's sitting there guarding all of his food (but he doesn't know that I took all of the really good pieces and hid them in my little hedgie sleepy-sack that he's too fat to get into!) and so I can jump on all of these letters and write to you and he can't come over and stop me because then Miss Penelope Anne would get all of the food so now he's sulking and grumbling and being all grumpy and angry. Don't worry, though, because when the sun comes up in the morning he'll go and sleep in the pile of fleecies and I'll go and snuggle up next to his side and Miss Penelope Anne will go and snuggle up on his other side and Miss Pepper will go and crawl under all of us and then he'll forget that he's being grumpy and he'll be all warm and cuddly and nice again.

Did you know that now I have a new hedgie sister? I do! I really, really do! And she's nice and sweet and funny and silly and she lets me eat all of her kibbles that she doesn't want and I can run in her wheel while she watches and when she gets food all over her quills I clean them off for her. Aren't I a good sister? My friends Miss Sophie D and Daisy Lou Who and Sleepy (who's my bestest friend in the whole wide world and he's big and brave and strong and sweet and he lives far away from me but we send each other 'prises and stuff and he's just the bestest hedgie ever!) all say that I'm doing the right things as a sister, but I'm still a little bit scared because I can't remember being a

sister before and I don't know if I'm going to do everything right and I don't want to make any mistakes.

Oh, my new sister's name is Miss Christie Hermylene Poppet, but Mum calls her "Hufflepuff" and "Missy Christie" and the Texas Manly Hedgeboy, Icky, calls her "Sissy" but I call her "Silly Missy Christie My Sisterey" because I think that's what her name should be, don't you?

Anyway, part of being a hedgie sister is that I get to teach my new sister all kinds of things, like how to scare Artie off the food dish and how to get Miss Penelope Anne to share her wheel and how to tickle Mum so she laughs and calls us her silly quilly girlies and how to roll into a ball and hide our paws so the nasty silver snippers can't get our cute little toes and how to flip over the wheel and hide under it and all sorts of other good things. Being a sister is a very big responsibility, isn't it? Do you think those are good things to teach Silly Missy Christie My Sisterey?

The other day I was snuggling with Silly Missy Christie My Sisterey and I'd just finished cleaning off her visor quills, because she always puts food on them because she thinks it makes her look pretty and smell good, but really it's kind of messy and it makes my tummy get all rumbly because it smells good when I'm sleeping and then I get hungry and have to get up and eat and then when I come back my warm spot is all gone and I have to find another spot and make it all warm and that takes a lot of time. Anyway, I was cleaning off her quills and she looked up at me and said, "My dear big

sister Miss Margie, do you know what Mother's Day is?" and I was a little bit surprised because I didn't know that Missy Christie knew anything about Mother's Day. But I nodded (I couldn't talk because my mouth was full of quills and even though we talk without using our mouths sometimes it's kinda good to concentrate on what you're doing if you have pokey quills in your mouth), anyway. And then Silly Missy Christie My Sisterey mumbled a little bit and then she kind of fell asleep.

So I finished making her all clean, 'cause that's what a good sister does for her sister, and then I went and I sat next to Miss Penelope Anne, who's old and smart and fluffy and warm and I asked, "Miss Penelope Anne, what is Mother's Day?"

And Miss Penelope Anne opened one of her eyes and went huffle, huffle, snuffle, snork, and then she said, "Miss Marjoram the Menace, this is the last time I am going to say this: I do NOT appreciate being woken while the sun is still above the horizon!" and then she closed her eye again and she started to snore!

Then I said, "It's okay, because I know that you don't appreciate it because you always tell me that and I remember it always so you don't need to ever tell me that any more," and then I went and I stuck my nose into mean ol' grumpy Artie's face and I asked, "Artie, what is Mother's Day?"

And Artie didn't even open one of his eyes, but he said "It's jes' anuther of them derved so-called holleydays dreamed-up by them card makers so as they kin make more

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money an' drain dry suckers like you," an' then he got up and went and sat on the foodie bowl.

So I went and I sat next to Miss Pepper who is even older than Miss Penelope Anne and she's very wise and nice and she likes it when I ask her questions and I asked, "Miss Pepper, what is Mother's Day?"

And Miss Pepper sat up and she yawned and I could see all of her teeth and her tongue and throat and all the way down into her tummy but I wasn't scared 'cause I'm big and brave, and then she said:

"Why, Miss Margie, don't you know about Mother's Day? Mother's Day is the one day each year that is set aside by us hedgehogs to celebrate all that our dear mothers do for us.

"We didn't always celebrate the special day, because we used to think that every day was Mother's Day (and Father's Day, and Daughter's Day, and Son's Day, and Sister's Day, and Brother's Day, and Grandmother's Day, and Grandfather's Day, and Aunt's Day, and Uncle's Day, and Cousin's Day, and Friend's Day), but then we hedgehogs, well, we started getting busier and busier in our lives. Some of us chose to come and spend our lives sharing our homes with humans. Others of us went off to explore the world. Some of us got busy wheeling and tubing. And, somewhere along the line, we forgot that our Mothers are very special people and that we should tell them that.

"So, some of the wise hedgehog elders called for a worldwide hedgehog campfire meeting. And from all around the world the hedgehogs came. They came from England. They came from Africa. They came from Russia. They came from India. They came from New Zealand. They came from Peru. They came from Canada. They came from the United States. Yes, little one, representatives from all of the hedgehog clans of the world attended that momentous campfire.

"It was pretty noisy, what with all of those hedgehogs talking and laughing, catching-up with old friends and meeting new, discussing their favorite mealworm recipes and exchanging preparation methods for other favored insects, and the elders, being understanding and caring, let everyone talk for a little bit. Then, once the initial chitting and chatting started to settle down, the elder hedgehogs called the gathering to order.

"Using a talking stick and taking turns, the elder hedgehogs spoke to the multi-national hedgehog gathering, first expressing their joy at seeing all of the hedgehogs coming together for an important meeting, extending personal greetings to some of the more revered attendees, and thanking every single hedgehog for taking the time to attend the coming together.

"Once the formalities had been satisfactorily dispensed with, the eldest of the elders stepped forward and took in his aged paw the talking stick. The gathered hedgehogs fell silent. Clearing his throat, the eldest of the elders spoke:

"My friends, thank you for coming to this evening's campfire. It makes this tired heart beat with pride to look around and see so many of you here, and I am honored to call you all friends.

"I am old and I know that soon I shall be crossing the Rainbow Bridge. But I feel that, before I undertake that next journey, I must speak of something that has been weighing heavily on my mind; I see each of you tonight and I know that as we have grown and established new homes and new customs, we have started to lose some of our most ancient and noble heritage. I am saddened to see that we hedgehogs are starting to forget those things which are most important in our lives, most notably the respect and honor which we used to daily offer to those most wonderful hedgehogs, those valiant, beautiful, strong women who bore us into this world, fed us from their bodies, taught us to be honest, loving, and always thinking first of the needs of others, and who will always love us, on this side of the Bridge and on that other side as well, without judgment or condition. I am speaking, of course, of all of the lovely mother hedgehogs.'

"The eldest of the elders paused to catch his breath and take a sip of mead from a birch bark cup. The crowd was murmuring, some hedgehogs nodding in agreement and others staring at the ground, saddened at how they had forgotten to pay homage to their mothers. Then a whisper ran through the assembled hedgehogs, as they collectively realized that the eldest of the elders was ready to resume speaking.

"My friends, I know that these days we are all preoccupied with things that we think are important: exploring new lands, building even more beautiful and spacious

living quarters, developing the most exquisite methods for serving our most favorite foods, you know of what I speak. And I will agree that there is a certain importance and gratification associated with these pursuits. However, we must learn to set aside some of these more personally rewarding tasks and spend more time thinking about and caring for others, just as our mothers have taught.

"So I propose the following: that we hedgehogs here, representing hedgehogs the world over, make a vow that we will, at least once a year, set aside a whole day that we shall spend doing nothing but hugging, caring for, honoring, and pampering our mothers. Are you in agreement?'

"The hedgehogs around the campfire rose to their paws, as one, and shouted 'Hear, Hear!' and 'You speak with wisdom, oh eldest of elders!' and 'Hey, get your quill out of my back!' and everyone was talking and laughing.

"So the elders moved off to the side and drew up a special proclamation, which stated that the second Sunday of the month of May would hereafter be called "Mother's Day" and that the day would be spent in the unselfish pursuit of celebrating that one thing we all have in common: a mother!

"But then there was the sound of quiet sobbing coming from the darkness. The eldest of the elders peered into the gloom, squinting and blinking until he was able to see the source of the sound. It was a little hoglet! He gestured for her to come forth.

"She was obviously terrified and hesitated to approach the elders. But they smiled gently down at her and she slowly came forward, her visor quills lowered in fear and huffing at every snap! and pop! from the campfire.

"Speak, little one,' invited the elders. 'Tell us why you are weeping.'

"Visor quills still lowered, her small voice came forth in a rush, 'Excuse me, I don't mean to interrupt you or question your decisions, most honored elders, but I'm feeling sad because I came to this campfire because I heard that you were going to talk about mothers, and I don't have a mother, I don't think, because when I was very little I was put in something that humans call a "Pet Store" and then a human came and got

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me and now I live with her and she loves me and takes care of me and sometimes she even kisses my nose, but I don't have a hedgehog mother and I am sad because I won't be able to celebrate Mother's Day when all of the other hedgehogs get to spend time with their mothers.' She stopped speaking, sniffed, and then began to weep again.

"One of the elders moved slowly to the little hoglet, offering her a dish of toasted mealies, and sniffing her ears in greeting. The little hoglet looked up, gave a shy smile, and began to eat, smacking her lips in gratitude, as the elders stood to the side, speaking in small groups.

"She quickly finished the tasty treats, carefully licked her lips and what of her whiskers that she could reach, and sat back on her haunches, watching the elders mill about, talking amongst themselves.

"Another of the hedgehog elders spoke to the little hoglet, 'My prickly child, tell us, do you think of this human as being your mother?'

"She thought for a minute, then bravely replied, 'Well, she does all of the things that I think mothers do, like cleaning me and feeding me and keeping me warm and making sure I am healthy and that I have lots of toys and that I am always safe and loved, so, well, yes, she is kind of like a mother to me, only not a hedgehog mother, of course,' she finished with a gulp of more sadness.

"The elders looked at each other and then nodded. The eldest of the elders spoke once again:

"My little hoglet, you have done us all a service this good night. You were brave and you reminded all of us here that not everyone is lucky enough to still live with their mothers. Some of us have moved away from our mothers, some of our mothers have crossed the Bridge and now wait for us in the Rainbow Meadows, and some of us don't have hedgehog mothers but we have human mothers and our human mothers are just as good as our hedgehog mothers and so we must honor them in the same manner.' He smiled down at the little hoglet, who blinked a few times and then gave a very big smile.

"Oh, thank you! Thank you! I have to go now, because my human mother doesn't know about these campfires and I don't want her to be worried about me being gone, but I am so glad that I snuck away for a little bit to come and see you.' With that, she impetuously ran up and gently hugged the eldest of the elders, who gently brushed away the drying tears from her fur and held her close for a moment. She stood on her tippy-toes and stretched as much as she could, to give the kind hedgehog an enthusiastic ear snuffle, then dropped a quick curtsy to the rest of the elders before running off.

"And ever since that remarkable evening, little Missy Margie with All of the Questions, we hedgehogs have spent the second Sunday in May celebrating our Mothers. Does that answer your question?"

And then I said, "Yes, thank you Miss Pepper," and I gave her a mealie that I'd only nibbled a little bit, and I went back and woke up Silly Missy Christie My Sisterey and I told her all about Mother's Day, because I'm her sister and it's my job to make sure she knows everything.

And now all of you know about Mother's Day, too!



What's In Store at Ruby's Rescue Shop?

crystal hedgegie pin • hedgegie footprint rubber stamp • hedgegie huts • open door hedgegie bags • lapel pins and more!

www.hedgehogwelfare.org



Hedgehog Welfare Society Committee Reports

January-March 2005 (Quarter 1)

Advocacy Committee

Jennifer Plombon & Stephanie Hyne, co-chairs

The Committee assisted concerned HWS members in contacting the USDA to report poor conditions seen in pet stores. The Committee assisted others in determining the licensing status of pet stores and breeders, and ensured that contact information for the USDA remained up to date on the HWS Web site.

The Committee is currently preparing a report on recent changes in USDA licensing for Class A Breeders; this report is being prepared by Stephanie Hyne, Jennifer Plombon, and Michelle Mulliniks, and will be posted to the HWS Web site when completed.

Jennifer Plombon has received her USDA Class C Exhibitors license to allow her to teach hedgehog care classes to veterinary students and instructors. Her first class was offered on January 19, 2005, and was attended by approximately 55 veterinary students and 2 instructors.

Care Packages Committee

Jennifer Plombon & Heather Johnson, co-chairs

Since January 1, 2005, the HWS Rescue Care Packages Committee has shipped or delivered 16 Care Packages, hats, and food samples to hedgehog rescuers throughout the United States. Funding for care packages comes from iGive sales and private donations.

Fundraising and Ruby's Rescue Shop

Donnasue Graesser, manager

Ruby's Rescue Shop re-opened and now includes several new craft items, including craft items from Darcie Carter, Naomi Wikane, Diane Conrad, and Easter items. We have re-stocked our supplies of Brisky Pet Product treats.

Tonya Thomas recruited donations for first aid kit supplies, and has compiled excellent hedge-specific first aid kits. These kits are currently selling for \$25.00 each.

Several of our members have initiated small fund-raisers on behalf of the HWS. For example, Sandi Dunn is selling breast cancer bracelets and Linda Woodring sold Hallmark Hedgehogs. Thank you so much to these ladies for their efforts.

Naomi Wikane is continuing her "blankie and gift card" program. Her Valentine's program was extraordinarily successful, raising over \$200.00 for HWS programs.

Laura Dunklee and Jenn Dekteroff have commenced a series of Ruby's Rescue Shop ads, using narrative stories from their hedgehogs.

Health and Education Committee

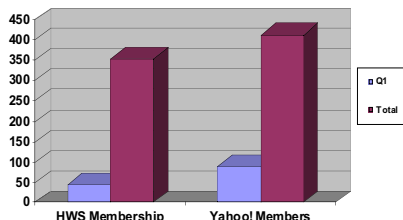
Gioia Kerlin, co-chair

During this quarter, the Health and Education Committee has collected data for an HWS newsletter article dealing with hedgehog spays, and has corresponded with Dr. Priscilla Dressen about the possibility of her writing an article for the newsletter on the benefits of spaying hedgehogs. We have also been making progress working on a hedgehog care video that will be available in DVD format to new owners, rescuers, and others who wish to inform themselves as to the care and husbandry of African hedgehogs. We have also corresponded with Welfare list members as to the appropriateness of those members' care sheets.

Membership Committee

Kerri LeMotte, chair

Hedgehog Welfare Membership: Quarter 1



As outlined above, there have been 44 new members in the Hedgehog Welfare Society this quarter, for a total of 355 members.

There have been 88 new members in the Hedgehogwelfare Yahoo! Group, for a total of 414 members.

During the quarter the online membership sign-up form was reviewed. Proposed changes were submitted to the board, the PR and Rescue chairs, and the Webmaster for review.

Newsletter Committee: No Report

Public Relations

Donnasue Graesser & Tonya Thomas, co-chairs

HWS members attended the Animal Welfare Federation of New Jersey conference, and passed out over 100 tri-fold brochures and 100 newsletters to animal shelter staff and animal welfare organizations in the northeast. We have a booth reserved at the Liberty Park Shelter Showcase in May, at the Rhode Island Humane conference in June, and are planning to attend the Michigan Humane Society Expo in November.

We are devising a series of "rotational ads," to be sent to the Hedgehog Welfare Society members and Yahoo! groups, to highlight specific HWS opportunities and to remind our members of ways they might participate in the HWS.

Quills and Comfort: No Report

Rescue Committee: No Report

Web site and Petfinder: No Report

Financial Report:

Detailed monthly financial reports are available to any HWS member, or other interested party, by sending a request to: donnasue.graesser@aya.yale.edu. HWS yearly reports are submitted to the Oregon State Department of Justice, charitable organizations division, and are available for public viewing on the ODJ Web site.