



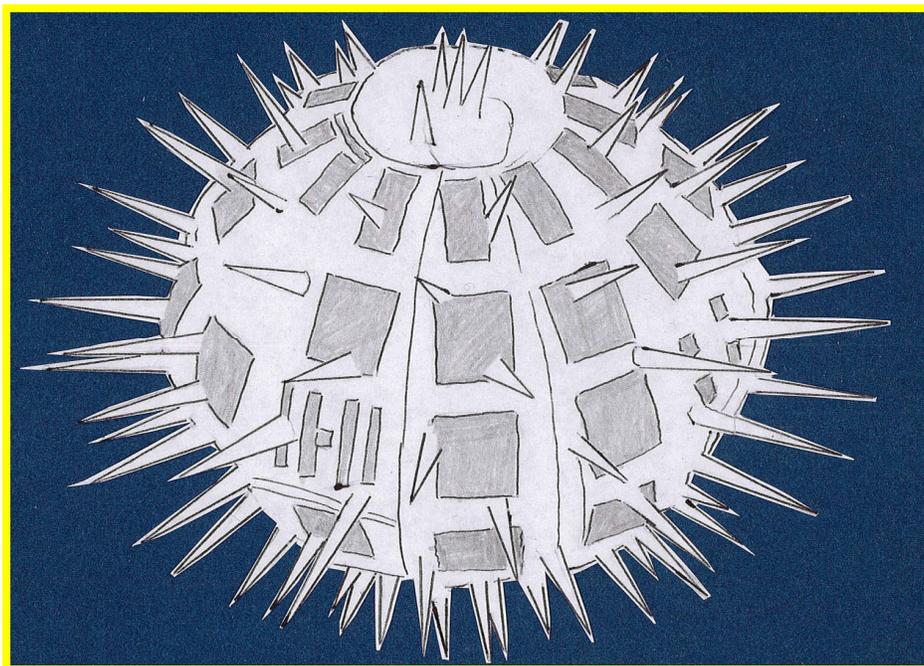
# Hedgehog Welfare Society

Newsletter No. 65 May/June 2013

To protect the well-being of pet hedgehogs through rescue, research and education of the people who care for them.

## Robotic Hedgehogs to a Martian Moon

By Andy Sierra



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Hedgehogs... in space? Well, no, not yet (the hedgehog space program is severely under-funded these days, with hedgehog scientists still struggling to design a puncture-proof space suit). But the next best thing, currently in progress from Stanford professor Dr. Marco Pavone, with a little help from NASA and MIT, is a robotic hedgehog-like device designed for distant planetary exploration.

Everybody has seen the traditional rovers. These cute little robots, with their sensor arrays and caterpillar tracks, have long been the standard for scouting new celestial bodies in preparation for manned missions. However, when it comes to very small celestial objects, such as tiny moons, the gravity there is so weak that traditional rovers are useless. Most treaded rover designs would not even be able to get enough traction to move. Those that could might be rolling along the ground, happily collecting data, only to hit a small upward slant of the ground and, before you know it, 800 million dollars worth of perplexed robot would find itself drifting into outer space!

One of the tiny moons that holds particular interest for planetary scientists is

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Hedgehog Welfare Society

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Mars clipart courtesy of eDigg.com <http://clipart.edigg.com/>

### *Continued from page 1*

Phobos, the larger of Mars' two satellites. Phobos has long been a part of the mystery of Mars' formation, as little is known about when it actually formed, or whether it is a long-separated chunk of Mars or a completely foreign asteroid. Being able to study this moon would provide great insight into the history of Mars and possibly more information about the question of ancient Martian life. But until now, there has not been a robot capable of roving Phobos due to its tiny size--it has an estimated surface area of 2,400 square miles, slightly smaller than the state of Delaware.

Dr. Pavone's proposal takes the form of a spherical device with small spikes all over it—similar to a grumpy hedgehog curled up into a ball. Unlike traditional rovers, these robotic "hedgehogs" would roll and bounce effortlessly across the low-gravity surface of the moon like a hedgehog enjoying (or not) a game of croquet. A three-pronged system of flywheels inside the device would steer it around the moon, while internal instruments gather data from the satellite's surface.

While an actual mission to Phobos has yet to be formally planned, a hypothetical approach would be to put five or six of these robotic hedgehogs on a mother ship which would fly to Phobos and release the devices, one at a time, onto the moon's surface on selected landing sites. The devices would happily bounce around until they had enough data to send back to Earth, potentially revealing more clues about the Martian moon's origins.

Perhaps with the publicity gained from these robots, our space program will look into a true hedgehog-manned (hedgehogged?) mission to the stars!

### Sources:

Howell, Elizabeth. "NASA Eyes Hedgehog Invasion of Mars' Moon Phobos." *Space.com*. Ed. Tariq Malik. TechMediaNetwork.com, 19 Jan. 2013. Web. 1 May 2013. <<http://www.space.com/19342-space-hedgehogs-mars-moon-phobos.html>>.

Kooser, Amanda. "Robotic space 'hedgehogs' under development." *C/Net*. CBS Interactive Inc, 2 Jan. 2013. Web. 1 May 2013. <[http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938\\_105-57561650-1/robotic-space-hedgehogs-under-development/](http://news.cnet.com/8301-17938_105-57561650-1/robotic-space-hedgehogs-under-development/)>.



*Photo by Margaret Myhre. Used with permission.  
Baseball cap from Sweet Clipart.com*

## How Does the Adoption Process Work?

By Linda Woodring

Did you ever wonder what's involved in adopting a hedgehog from *The Hedgehog Welfare Society*? Do you already have your "family" of hedgehogs and wonder how to go a bit farther in helping hedgehogs in need? Since I took over the adoption responsibilities for *The Hedgehog Welfare Society* last year, I've had some questions as to how we actually go about screening someone interested in adopting and how to become an approved HWS Rescue Facility. I thought I would take this opportunity to answer both questions.

Let's start out with adopting a hedgehog for your family. The first step would be to fill out an adoption application on our website. These applications will come directly to me for approval. As of the first of the year, we changed the minimum adoption age from 18 to 21 for several reasons. The first is that we feel very strongly that a hedgehog is not a good animal to have in a college dorm even if they would be allowed. We were finding that a lot of 18 year olds wanted them for that reason. We also felt that most 18 year olds do not have the financial stability to care for a hedgehog should it become seriously ill. We also don't adopt to anyone who wants to get a hedgehog for a classroom pet. Hedgehogs are easily stressed and the noise in a classroom during the day (when the hedgehog should be sleeping) can really stress out the hedgehog. There is also the problem of who takes the hedgehog home on weekends and holidays...another cause for stress. And finally, most schools turn down the heat at night which could cause hibernation attempts. We also don't adopt to anyone who is going to use a hedgehog for any display purposes such as zoos, wildlife centers, etc. I realize that some of these places might possibly be fine for a hedgehog but, since it's very difficult to make this determination, we pretty much have an across the board rule on it. If there is a facility like this that one of our members can vouch for, we may make an exception to this rule.

When I'm looking at an application, I make sure that if the applicant has children, the child is not going to be the primary caregiver. I also make sure that the prospective adoptee knows that he or she is ultimately responsible for the well-being of the

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hedgehog. If they are renting, I call the landlord to make sure that they are allowed to have animals. It's amazing how many people are not aware that they are not allowed to have animals, or that they are allowed to have dogs or cats but nothing else. I also check references, although usually people aren't going to put down someone who won't give them a favorable reference. If the person happens to mention working for any type of animal related place (vet, humane society, etc.), I will ask for the name of the organization and the name of their immediate supervisor so I can check that also. If they have a vet in mind and it isn't someone who is on our vet list, I will also call the vet to make sure that they see hedgehogs (and add them to our list if they do). If they don't list a vet, I refer them to our list and advise them that it's important that they find a vet they feel comfortable with before we place a hedgehog with them.

Once all of these things have been done and they are approved, I'll go through the application and address any issues from an educational standpoint such as cage set-up, feeding, etc. Hopefully, we've made a good choice of potential hedgegie parents. We then put the person on our waiting list. I do try to touch base with them every six weeks or so just so they know we haven't forgotten about them, and hopefully will get any updates on their status if they have a new phone numbers or addresses, etc.

The next step is to match the approved applications with hedgehogs. This can be done in several ways. We do not troll any of the lists (Craig's List, Petfinder, etc.) looking for hedgehogs! If someone contacts us to help them rehome their hedgehog, we first have them fill out a relinquishment form. This is a must. Once that's done, I try to get the hedgehog to one of our rescue facilities if there's one near by rather than hooking them up directly to an adoptee. This is mainly done because I've found that people who want to rehome their hedgehog tend to be less than 100% honest about health issues. I like to have the hedgegie evaluated for health and temperament before it goes to an inexperienced person. Sometimes all they need is a bit of socialization before they move on to a forever home. And if they need vet care, they can get that before moving on also. Of course, if we don't have a rescue facility in the area, we sometimes do have to place hedgehogs directly. Sometimes our rescue facilities are contacted directly with relinquishments. The first of every month I send all of our rescue facilities a list of the approved adoption applications we have. If they have available hedgehogs, they will then contact me to see if there are approved people in their area. I have also been sharing information with the IHA in some instances to get hedgehogs placed in a timely manner.



*Emmy with violets by M. Myhre. Used with permission.*

Now we get down to the dedicated people we have around the country who are our *HWS Approved Rescue Facilities*. These folks take in hedgehogs and make sure that they get any veterinary care necessary, usually at their own expense or with minimal help from the HWS. They will evaluate the health and personalities of the hedgehogs and try to match them up to the perfect home. Some prefer to just keep any hedgehogs taken in which is fine. We are always in need of new rescue facilities around the country and in Canada.

If you're interested, you can contact me and I will send you an application. In order to be a rescue facility, you should have some experience caring for hedgehogs. We also require a reference from a board member or someone in the hedgehog community that we know and trust. If you don't have either of these, we would require you to become an active member of the *HWS Yahoo* chat group for at least six months so we can get to know you. There are no requirements as to how many hedgehogs you can take in. We do ask that you stay in good standing in the hedgehog community and that you respond in a timely manner if you're contacted by myself or another rescue facility about taking in a hedgehog, even if it's just to say that you can't do it. It's a plus if you can/are willing to drive at least a short distance to pick up a relinquishment when necessary or to deliver a hedgegie to his/her new home. Individual rescue facilities can also have their own screening procedures as long as they adhere to the HWS standards. We also allow them to charge up to a \$50 rehoming fee if they've had any expenses associated with the care of the hedgegie such as vet bills.

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We do have some rescue facilities that are also breeders. We, of course, insist that none of the rescues be bred and that the rescue facilities do not use their position as a HWS Rescue Facility to sell their own hedgehogs. We have had a couple of instances where someone who's been on our waiting list for a long time has decided to buy a hedgehog. If I can, I will help them find a breeder either by giving them contact information for someone I know from our hedgehog community or referring them to the breeder's lists that appear on the IHA and Hedgehog Central websites. But I do make it clear to them that we don't recommend any breeders and can't guarantee the quality of their breeding programs since that's not what The Hedgehog Welfare Society is about.



*Emmy sniffing violets. Photo by Margaret Myhre*

I hope this answers your questions about what we do. If you would like to become one of our Rescue Facilities, please feel free to contact me either through the Hedgehog Welfare Society website or at my personal e-mail, [hedgiemom@comcast.net](mailto:hedgiemom@comcast.net). We can always use more people who want to help with hedgehog rescue.

### Vintage Hedgehog Illustrations: *"Dogs Frustrated by Hedgehog"*



*Hécatomgraphie De Gilles Corrozet: Libraire Parisien (1540) Chez Denys Janot. Paris: H. Champion, 1905.*

This illustration is the first in a series of vintage hedgehog illustrations that will be appearing in the next few issues of the newsletter.

# Is Health Insurance Right for Your Hedgehog?

By Linda Woodring

Every so often the question of health insurance and the high cost of exotic vet visits comes up. I can only speak from my own experiences, but I can honestly say I would not be without health insurance for our hedgehogs. I think we've had our last five or six hedgehogs covered by **VPI** Insurance ([www.petinsurance.com](http://www.petinsurance.com)), and we have certainly paid in a lot less than what we've gotten back from them.

Although there are several health insurance companies for pets, as far as I know VPI is the only company that covers exotics. They pay promptly, usually within two weeks of submitting the claim, and have never called to ask for any additional information (they may have called my vet). Although they don't ask for a lot of information, I always make sure that I note what the symptoms were and what diagnosis was made. I also include copies of any tests (blood work, etc.) that were done.

Before you can insure an animal, it has to be in your possession for 60 days, then there is a 14 day waiting period from the date you make your first payment until the time you can file a claim. They have a \$50 deductible per illness (not per visit) with a maximum cap of \$2000 per illness and \$7000 total during any insured period. They then pay 80-90% of covered expenses. They do supply you with a very complete list of covered expenses when you sign up. They don't pay for anything that involves parasites, routine wellness checks, preventative services (such as a spay if not medically necessary), pre-existing conditions, or any type of vitamins or supplements you may be giving your hedgegie.

The cost is minimal. If you pay per year, it's \$84.00 which comes down to \$7.00 per month. If you prefer to pay by the month, they do tack on a \$2.00 monthly processing fee, so that raises the premium substantially. If you pay yearly, you will get a refund for any months not used if your hedgehog passes during the year. They also have a multi-pet discount which can be combined with other animals such as dogs or cats. If you have two or three covered pets, you get a 5% discount and 10% for four or more. So in my case, with three hedgehogs covered, I'm paying \$79.80 per year per hedgehog.

If you have any questions, you can call the **VPI** Customer Service number at 800-540-2016 for more information.



Illustration by M. Myhre

## Thoughts from the CVO

By Deb Weaver

"I'll do it some day." How many of us have said this? "When I lose 20 pounds I'll swim in the lake." "When I retire I'll travel to Paris." "When the kids go to high school I'll take that sewing class." "When the time is right, I'll take some time for myself." When, when, when.

The question is, are you sure "when" will come?

Why do we put off doing things now? Why do we typically look ahead and anticipate the enjoyment we'll have then?

I met Carla in college the first week I was there on a Tuesday. By Friday we were best friends. We finished out our teens and went through our 20's and 30's blissfully ignorant of what our future held. We always talked about traveling together when we were "older" and "after we retire". At age 41 Carla had a stroke and died. Our "when" never came to pass.

Life's hard, we're busy. Many of us are doing things that don't exactly "float our boat" on a daily basis (like our jobs!). However, we have the power to change how we perceive what's happening to us or around us. Enjoyment of life is a choice - - you can choose to view that glass has half full vs. half empty.

We can't live our lives with the assumption that tomorrow is a guarantee. It simply isn't. Swim in the lake, pack a suitcase and hit the road (Paris is a beautiful city by the way), take that class, read that book.

Enjoy your life today - - you may not get a tomorrow.

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT : Linda Woodring

By Deb Weaver



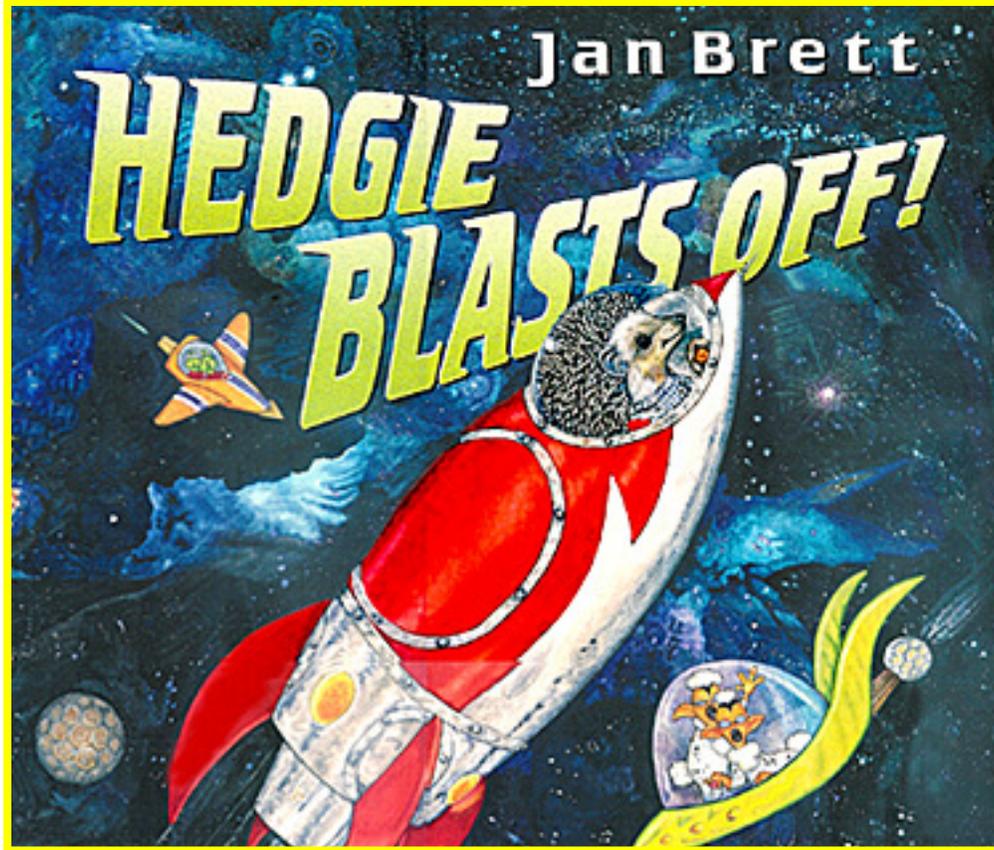
*Linda Woodring and Wizard*

I'm pleased to announce that Board member Linda Woodring is receiving a Gold Level President's Volunteer Service Award for her work with HWS. In March, She also received her second Bronze President's Volunteer Service Award (100 hours) for her work with the Naperville, Illinois Police Department.

Linda has taken on many Board duties this past year and a half, including all of our rescue issues, completely revamping our rescue data base, and taking the lead on getting our new web site up and running. She's also our primary email checker and runs our wheel-a-thon fund raiser.

Over a 12-month period Linda logged almost 700 hours of volunteer work for HWS!

Thank you Linda!!! We couldn't have done it without you!!!



## The Literary Hedgehog: **Hedgie Blasts Off!**

Jan Brett, a popular author and illustrator of children's books, is well-known for her illustrations of hedgehogs. Several of her books feature hedgehog characters but the prize for hedgehogs cast in an unusual role goes to *Hedgie Blasts Off!* Hedgie is a member of the cleanup crew at Star Lab where, attired in bright orange coveralls, he takes care of the Zeppadoppler rocket.

One day the Professor, a large Labrador retriever with a graying muzzle, exclaims, "Hedgie, we have a problem!"

It seems that Big Sparkler, a volcano on the tiny planet of Mikkop, is sending up smaller and smaller eruptions of sparkles and this is affecting the planet's ecological balance. The famous flowers of Mikkop depend on sparkles for their food. If Big Sparkler stops erupting the flowers will not survive! This will create havoc with the tourist industry which depends on alien tourists flying over Mikkop and photographing the strange flowers.

Mikkop is too small for most rockets and astronauts, so the Professor and his scientists get to work building a tiny rocket and a Rescue Robot (which looks very much like a hedgehog) to visit the planet. Finally the work is done and the Professor holds a press conference to explain the problem and his plan to send a robot to Mikkop to assess conditions. When he proudly throws open the door to the new rocket, he discovers that the Rescue Robot is missing! Eventually the robot is found in the cleanup crew closet. It seems that Rescue Robot had probed too soon, his spikes jammed trapping him in the closet and he crashed.

Hedgie is recruited to fill in for Rescue Robot since he is the only employee who will fit in the small rocket. He flies to Mikkop and discovers that the volcano, Big Sparkler, is clogged with coins thrown by astro-tourists flying overhead in tourist rockets. Hedgie finds a unique solution to the problem, unclogs the volcano and returns to earth. There he is introduced to admiring reporters and awarded an Official Astronaut Star for his courage and cool thinking.

Brett, Jan. *Hedgie Blasts Off!* New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2006. ISBN 0399246215

# H E D G E H O G T R I V I A



This postcard featuring the Story Garden in Holon City, Israel, shows a giant sculpture of Shmulik as well as a postage stamp honoring the garden and the hedgehog.



*Shmulikipod (Shmulik the Hedgehog), is a popular Israeli children's book. קיפוד, or kipod, is the Hebrew word for hedgehog.*

## Shmulik — Israel's Most Famous Hedgehog

Israel is a small country which claims three varieties of hedgehogs: Eastern European, long-eared, and Desert or Ethiopian. But the most famous hedgehog in Israel is a one-of-a-kind creature who is not a member of any of these varieties. Shmulikipod—or Shmulik the Hedgehog—is a story book character whose popularity has been compared to *Sesame Street's* Big Bird.\*

In the story, Gadi, a small boy who is sick in bed, complains that he has no one other than the donkeys printed on his pajamas to keep him company. Then he receives a visit from an impatient, cranky hedgehog whose name is Shmulik. Shmulik leads the boy through a series of messy misadventures without ever leaving the playpen. Finally he manages to escape from Gadi. The concluding sentence in the story is:

*And Shmulikipod walked and walked and walked and walked.*

Frankly, the story doesn't seem particularly enticing but it's not available in English and I can't read Hebrew, so it's entirely possible that it's charms have escaped me.

The story has received quite a bit of attention in Israel. For one thing, Shmulik is featured in *The Story Garden*, a unique sculpture project in the city of Holon. Top Israeli artists have been commissioned to create sculptures based on favorite Hebrew children's stories. As of September, 2011, thirty-five sculptures had been created, transforming the city of Holon into a national cultural center for children and families. The giant concrete hedgehog representing Shmulikipod is so popular it was selected to appear on one of six Israeli postage stamps featuring the *Story Garden* sculptures.

Surely a hedgehog who has been portrayed in a storybook, transformed into a giant concrete sculpture and portrayed on a postage stamp must be the most famous hedgehog in all of Israel!

Carmi, T, and Shoshanah Heman. *Shmulikipod: Farah Le-Shmulik, Ra'ah: Gadi. Merj avyah: Sifriyat Po'alim, 2009.*



**MAY**

May 21 Mayo Matarese

**JUNE**

June 3 Dyson Woodring

June 11 QE2 Fischer

**JUNE (Continued)**

June 20 Francesca Joy Bennett

June 20 Nyarai Naomi Bennett

June 25 Sprite Clark



## Hey You !

**Ya wanna write for da news?  
 We can always use some more  
 reporters...so...if ya see somethin'  
 or hear somethin', just write it  
 up and send it to  
[newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org](mailto:newsletter@hedgehogwelfare.org)**

**Deadline for da next issue is  
 JUNE FIFTEENTH**

**Don't be late!**



Props courtesy of M/Y/D/S/ clipart.