

Paws-It!

Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter



Volume 15 Issue 1

Halloween & Holiday Festivities:

Halloween can be an awfully scary time for pets in general, but poses some unique dangers to ferrets as well. Here are some helpful tips to get you safely through the holiday & festivities to come.

- * Please confine your ferret in a cage or room where he will be unlikely to go home with someone as a very special treat! We all know how quickly those rascals can slip out the door, and if you're going to be opening the door frequently, or are having people over, it's better to be safe than sorry. You can even gate off your front door to prevent an accidental escape of your ferret or other pets.
- * Explain to everyone in your family how dangerous

large amounts of candy can be to pets. Put up all candy in a ferret-free location and dispose of all wrappers, since wrappers can cause choking and/or intestinal obstructions.

- * Use ferret-friendly decorations and/or costumes. Holiday lights & many costumes have rubbery textures that are very appealing for ferrets to nibble on. Certain brands of makeup can also be toxic if ingested. If you suspect your ferret has eaten something he shouldn't have, call your veterinarian or go to the emergency clinic right away. Symptoms to watch for, in all pets, include drooling, excessive urination, pupil dilation, rapid heartbeat, vomiting, diarrhea, small stools or com-

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plete lack thereof, hyperactivity, muscle tremors and coma.

- * Keep candles (Jack-o-lanterns) out of reach of your ferret, lest he turn one over, eat one or even get stuck inside a pumpkin.
- * If you are dressing up your ferret this year, avoid items like rubber bands which can cut off the animal's circulation or those that are easily ingested (dangling and/or sharp items in particular).
- * Dyes can be irritating to the skin, so please use skin-friendly products (Koolaid, Manic Panic), not ammonia-based products, if you are intent on coloring your ferret for the holiday.

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Save some goodies for me!

How to Contact Us!

Shelter Voicemail:
206.442.2025

Shelter Email:
washingtonferret@yahoo.com

Website:
<http://washingtonferret.org>

What's New?

General Update:

Continued thanks to all our dedicated volunteers! The Shelter has been running so smoothly these past few months and is always a busy, fun place to visit.

Newsletter:

Are there any topics you would like to see addressed in our newsletter? Would you like to write an article or submit a picture? Send us an email at: washingtonferret@yahoo.com. We're happy to include everything from happy stories to informational topics.

Membership Meeting:

Everyone is welcome to attend our General Membership Meeting on November 23rd from 7pm-10pm at the South

County PUD Office located at 21018 Hwy 99 in Edmonds. Topics to be discussed will be general organizational issues & Ferret Care 101, headed up by our Veterinarian, Dr. Cathy Johnson-Delaney.

Christmas CDs:

What a hoot! All of your traditional Christmas tunes ferretized for the Holidays. Copies will be available for sale at \$14 plus shipping. Includes Poofy Tails (Jingle Bells), Up on the Counter-top, The Night Before Christmas & many more. Order yours today by emailing washingtonferret@yahoo.com

Flu Season:

Ferrets can catch and pass on influ-

enza. If you're feeling a little under the weather, be sure to wash your hands frequently and stay away from the ferrets if at all possible. If not, make sure to keep them away from your face, keep your hands clean and watch them carefully for signs of runny noses, dehydration and/or appetite decrease. If they start displaying any of the above symptoms, be sure to get them into your vet right away.

Happy Tales:

Would you like to share your experience adopting, fostering or sponsoring a ferret? We'd love to hear from you!! Please send your story & a picture or two to washingtonferret@yahoo.com & we'll get it posted right away!

I wish someone had told me ...



We've all had our moments when we look at the ferret cage and think "If I had only known then what I know now..." In the interest of making hindsight foresight, here are some of those "someone should've told me ..."

... how much I would learn from my ferret. Ferrets are chalk full of life and they cram their time here on Earth into one bouncy, joyful, ecstatic, happy streak. They live each moment for the moment and are virtually fearless. I could stand to be more like them.

... how items weasel-less people would call trash can be made into excellent ferret toys! Empty soda boxes, left over drainage tubes, mismatched socks, an empty bag, etc. No assembly required and each contains high entertainment value! Trust me on this one.

... how I'd never again be able to exit a hardware store without a *little something*. Just try walking down the tubing aisle and see if your imagination doesn't start going into overdrive.

... how easily I'd fall for a cute look, or

a happily snoozing ferret that's taken up residence in my sock drawer. So my socks are a little ferrety these days... At least now I can blame more than just the dryer for those aforementioned mismatched socks.

... how ferret soup making would become an art-form, yet human food recipes would still allude me.

... how poop would become a topic of conversation & your day would not be complete until you'd brought it up at least once.

... how excited you'd get when you see a well-formed poop in an ill fuzzy's litter box.

... just how much poop one little body could produce.

...how talking about surgeries, lumps & bumps, and, of course, poop would all become accepted topics at the dinner table.

... how one little ferret poop wouldn't be that scary, but keep that baby diaper the heck away!

... how you'd become so concerned that their medicine didn't taste bad, that you've driven your ferret to meet your pharmacist so he'd get it just right.

... how that same pharmacist would become familiar with flavors like Ferretone.

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... how to handle the general public. "No, he doesn't stink, doesn't bite and cannot take down a cow." and "No, I'm not wearing an ermine on my shoulder." (One of my favorite Ozzy moments!)

... how important it would be to have the phone number of someone that's been there before you to call in the middle of the night when your baby is sick. Wise words have such a calming effect on worrying parents.

... how crucial having a ferret-savvy veterinarian would be. We couldn't keep the Shelter running without ours, and I so appreciate being able to call or email her at all hours when we need her.

... how having understanding friends and family to put up with your ferret-riddled brain would be so necessary.





... how your favorite song lyrics would warp into zany, ferretized lyrics.

... how addictive ferrets are and how there never seems to be just one in any given household.

... how ferrets can turn a crappy day around in under 5 seconds just by being in their presence.

... how you'd gather everyone around to look at one more cute sleeping position or pile of snoozers.

... how you'd spend more money and time on ferret-proofing your home just so they could be out everywhere in your home with you.

...how after you've spent the money and time constructing barriers to make the ferret area safe, you'd give up and let them have the whole house.

... how creatures without wings can magically teleport to unreachable, unclimbable places.

... and how ferret poop can magically get 6' up your wall?!

... how you'd leave more phone numbers for people to reach you while

you're away than for your own children.

... how you'd rather stay home instead of traveling for vacations because it's more fun to stay & play with the fuzz.

... how virtually everything can be gotten into, but may not be so easy to get your ferret out of.

... how a putty knife would become an essential part of your "clean-up" kit.

... how you'd spend tons of time in the baby department shopping for toys and you don't even have a child.

... how it'd be possible to own twice the amount of bedding and towels for your ferrets than you would for yourself. And how most of it's nicer than the stuff you keep for yourself!

... how you'd smile when your favorite coat had that slightly musky odor.

... how you'd cut out, save & email everything that mentions the word "ferret".

...how you'd managed to live without a digital camera for years, but it's a must



have with ferrets. Especially if you don't want to spend so much money on film!

... how they would change your life. All it took was just one little weasel girl, and I was hooked.

... how expensive these little buggers were going to be. I started adding up the bills from just one of my ferret kids and when the number climbed over \$1,000, I stopped, shocked at the pile of receipts I had yet to enter. \$1,000, and that was only half of his life! Ozzy was a healthy boy until the age of four when he developed Adrenal Disease. We did surgery first and Lupron second, battled a cystic prostate and then finally Insulinoma. There were general check-ups, teeth-cleanings and vaccines thrown in there too. But I can say I'd happily do it all over again for one more car-ride with that big ol' white carpet shark.

... how much I would miss them when they are gone. They take a chunk of your heart when they leave. Be ready for that.

At the Bridge ... We would like to remember those fuzzies who brought us so much joy... Their time with us was too short.

Stacie's Harley passed away in his sleep one evening. He was curled up with his buddies where he was the happiest. We'd like to thank her for fostering Harley & his friends and for giving them a wonderful life outside of the Shelter.

Cara & Jeff's Peanut & Hambone also traveled over the Bridge. Both girls battled numerous health problems in their later years and Cara did every possible thing to keep them comfortable.

Monica & family said their goodbyes

to Julie. We thank them for providing such supreme care to our old lady throughout all her health troubles and for giving her the absolute best life she could have had.

Sweet and entirely bald Dusty made his journey recently with Charity & Jason by his side. Dusty had lost all of his fur in his battle with tumors, but thankfully remained a happy boy throughout all his treatments.

Megan & Geoff lost their sweet Stoli-boy. He had been ill for a number of months and is now at peace. He was a

very special boy and is missed enormously, but we are thankful he is now happy & healthy once again.



Is a ferret really 'right' for me?

They're so adorable, and you think they'd make the perfect addition to your life. Only, you're quite not sure if ferrets are really right for you or for your family. The following is some very real information about what owning a ferret entails.

Ferrets are high-maintenance pets that cannot simply be left in a cage. They are very social creatures that want to be out and about with you, with your stuff and anything that might or might not resemble a toy. They remain silly and active throughout all of their lives, and are generally not content to sit and cuddle on your lap. They are as busy as your average playful kitten would be, and require about as much daily care as a dog. Ferrets generally live a good six years, so look ahead in your life and really ask yourself if you can afford (literally and emotionally) to commit to a ferret.

Daily requirements include one to two hours of interaction with you as well as time to romp about the house. Ferrets are generally fairly good with their litter boxes, but will forget that boxes are available to them if they are not plainly in sight. Thankfully, ferret misses are small and easy to clean up and do not share the same odor as a cat's does. Ferrets will also need their food bowl and water bottles replenished as well as their litter box scooped daily. Weekly maintenance includes ear cleaning, nail clipping, teeth brushing and laundering bedding. Oddly, the more you bathe a ferret, the more he will smell. Feeding him a quality food and keeping his ears, litter box and bedding clean will keep your ferret's odor to a minimum.

General supplies include a cage or playpen for confinement when you can-

not supervise him, a food bowl, a water dish or bottle, multiple litter boxes (& paper towels for misses!), litter, some soft bedding, Q-tips, pet toothpaste and ear cleaner. Be advised that the initial purchase of supplies and the adoption of the animal are going to be the cheapest part of owning a ferret. In addition to routine exams, dentals and vaccinations there are a number of health problems that ferrets face after the age of about 3.5 years. In fact, health care can get so expensive that we actually recommend putting away \$25 a month *per ferret* when you first adopt, so that you have money on-hand to use whenever you need. Another good figure to keep in mind is that your ferret will cost you around \$1,000 in his lifetime (no, you didn't misread that... it really does cost \$1,000+). Ferrets become seniors at age four, and you can reasonably expect them to live six to seven years. 60% of ferrets will develop Adrenal Disease and 80% of ferrets will develop tumors of some kind. Treatment for Adrenal Disease will run you in the neighborhood of \$40 for the office visit, \$80 for the hormone panel or more for the ultrasound, \$350-\$600 for the surgery or \$30-75 each month for Lupron therapy. Neither surgery nor Lupron therapy "cures" the animal. It's really more about making the ferret comfortable and reversing some of the symptoms associated with Adrenal Disease (hair loss, tumor growth, enlarged prostates potentially blocking the urethra, itchiness, lethargy, reversion to mating behaviors, etc.). Adrenal Disease is one of the biggest problem ferrets are faced with, however, ferrets are also prone to Insulinoma (inability to regulate blood glucose), Lymphoma / Lymphosarcoma (cancer), Helicobacter (essentially an

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infection) and other gut-related disorders. It is crucial to have a ferret-savvy veterinarian that is familiar with all of the above diseases. A local Shelter should be able to recommend one for you, if your veterinarian is not comfortable treating your ferret.

Now that I've scared you with the expenses of owning a ferret, let me tell you about the rewards. Ferrets are truly amazing creatures that exude joy from every fiber of their beings. They are perpetually happy, busy critters and I can virtually guarantee one can make a horrible day turn-around in less than five minutes. Ferrets do dances of joy when they're excited, sleep in the cutest and strangest yoga-like positions, and will have you wrapped around their ferrety claw in no time at all. No trip to the hardware store will ever be complete without something your ferret might find interesting, and you will find yourself willing to discuss poop pretty much on a daily basis, and not feel in the slightest bit awkward about doing so. I've heard it said that owners often pick similar pets, so if you are one to live each day to the fullest and are fully prepared and committed to have a pet in your life, ferrets might just be 'right' for you.



Ferrets Seeking Homes ...



Adoptable Ferrets

Vincent & Garrett are two older dark sable boys. They're incredibly sweet and would love to go to a new home together.

Rocky & Bandit are both dark sable boys that are around a year old. They love other ferrets, playing and just need a new home.

Ranger (sable, m) & **Peaches** (albino, f) were recently surrendered. They are both around 1-1.5 years old. Peaches

has cataracts in both eyes and has limited vision. She may bite if scared, but is generally quite sweet. Ranger is a chubby cutie with a happy wardance. They would do best in a home with no other ferrets, with a human of their own to spoil them rotten.

Surfer is a California dude with a fun personality. Surfer loves people and would like to go to a home where he can have a human all to himself!

Rigby is a 2.5 year old sable female ferret that was purchased from a feed

store in Arizona. Rigby is a classic looking ferret with a black mask that makes her look like a little bandit. She weighs under 2 pounds. **Tess** is a 1.5 year old sable female ferret that was purchased from a Petco in Washington. Tess has a whiter face than Rigby and is a little larger, but is still fairly small.



Frankie is a sensitive boy that is missing his family. He adores his temporary foster home and really lets loose with those crazy dances of his. **Sadie** is a feisty little thing. She's a busy-body through and through and would love to go home with her buddy, Frankie. Frankie & Sadie will need to go to a home without other ferrets as they do not play well with others.

Mayhem is a big dark sable boy. He's 4 yrs old & has a cataract in one eye. He gets along well with other ferrets and is such a happy-go-lucky guy.

Precious is a tiny dark-eyed white girl & **Lucky** is a smaller chocolate boy. Both love to cuddle & need to stay together for their own well-beings. They play well with others & would make an easy addition to any home.



Baby (sable, f) & **Ruskie** (sable, m) are 3 year old ferrets. They get along well with other ferrets and are quite attached to each other. They are healthy

& would make a great first pair of ferrets for someone!

Penny is a 2-3 year old dark sable female. She's a sweet & happy girl that needs a new home. Come see her today!

Casey is an adorable sable girl. She is around 3 years old. She enjoys the company of other ferrets and would love to join a playgroup. Do you need a sweet, single girl in your home?

Eddie is a nice, young sable boy that just arrived at our Shelter. He will be vaccinated this weekend and will be available for adoption shortly thereafter. He is getting along wonderfully with the ferrets in his temporary home and we don't expect him to be around very long!



Foster Ferrets

Note: We do not charge an adoption fee for our foster ferrets, though many of them will require a vet visit (or many!) in their golden years. The Shelter provides medical care and any medications that your foster ferret will need in exchange for a monthly donation to help cover your ferret's medical costs. Even just a few dollars, once a month, helps keep our foster program running, so that we are able to continue helping elderly/ill ferrets.

Pudge (dew, m) & **Pooh** (chocolate sable, m) are between 2 and 4 years old. They're happy kids who were spoiled rotten by their previous owners. They'd love to go to a new home soon! Pudge was recently diagnosed with adrenal disease and will need to return to the Shelter each month for a Lupron shot.

Hershey is a feisty little chocolate girl that only likes her buddy, Marshmallow. **Marshmallow** is a beautiful DEW boy that will need to come back to the shelter once a month for a Lupron shot. Marshmallow does not see well in

his old age, and does not appear to hear much either. He makes up for his disabilities with his happy attitude and would love to retire in a forever-home sometime soon.

Mickey is a sweet boy that loves to snuggle. He was recently diagnosed with adrenal disease and will need to return to the Shelter once each month for a Lupron shot. His buddy, **Minnie**, is a feisty little girl with cataracts in both eyes. She is otherwise completely healthy & would love to go to any home with him.

Prince & Princess are wonderful ferrets. Princess has adrenal disease & will need to return to the Shelter once each month for a Lupron shot. They would make great "first" ferrets for someone.

Blonde is a spastic 2.5 year old light chocolate female. **Alora** and Blonde are best of friends and cannot be separated. Alora is also 2.5 yrs old and is a dark sable female. **Farrah** is a 7 year old female that likes the other two, but has lived independently and seems content either way. Farrah is recovering from surgery to remove her spleen (Oct 25th) and will be available soon.

Mia is a sweet & active 5 year old sable girl. **Chloe** is a sensitive 3 year old dark sable female that is under evaluation for adrenal disease. And **Mr. Elliott** is a goofy 3 year old champagne boy. These are new ferrets to our Shelter and must go to a home together.

Hemmingway is a 2 year old sable mitt boy, **Zelda** is a 3 year old dark sable female that can be quite nippy and **Grendel** is an adorable 3 year old chocolate girl. Grendel is currently under evaluation for adrenal disease, but should be available soon. This threesome would love to go to a home where they can remain together.



Washington Ferret Rescue and Shelter
18724 Bothell Way NE
Bothell, WA 98011

We're on the Web!
www.washingtonferret.org

A 501(c)3 non-profit organization

Yes, I want to help Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter!

Enclosed is my donation of:

- \$5.00 ()
\$10.00 ()
\$15.00 ()
\$20.00 ()
Other ()

Please make your donation payable to Washington Ferret Rescue & Shelter (or WFRS) and mail to:

18724 Bothell Way NE
Bothell, WA 98011

Contributions are tax-deductible under 501(c)3 regulations of the Internal Revenue Service. Appropriate receipts will be mailed for your records.

Our Wish List:

Donations of time or money are always gladly accepted & appreciated!

Hammocks, Security Cubes—homemade or store bought, we can always use hanging sleep sacks of some sort.

Wood stove pellets for litter (found at Safeway, local hardware stores, the Grange, etc.)

Cages or carriers—clean or dirty, we don't care!

Volunteers to wash laundry, scoop boxes, scrub cages and cuddle ferrets.

More foster homes! Do you have room in your home for a few extra fuzzies for a few days/weeks? Do you have any medical training or are you interested in learning? Let us know!

Ferret Food (Mazuri, Totally Ferret, Marshalls & The Ferret Store's Superior Choice)

() I am moving! Please see below:

() Yes, I know of someone else who would like to receive the newsletters.

Please send one to the following:

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:
