



Three Rivers Ferret Council, Inc.



# Newsletter

July 2013

## Sunday, August 18, 2013

Trinity Lutheran Church, 601 Brownsville Road, Mt. Oliver, PA 15210

Join us at 1pm for the August TRFC meeting. We'll be finalizing things for the picnic and handing out picnic posters for people to distribute. We'll also have a short talk on how to prove your ferret is really yours if it would get out.

### Inside this issue:

Shelter News

Memorials

Member News

Picnic location

How to ID  
your Ferret



#### SCHEDULE

12:00 Unload and set up  
(Helpers only please, please come help!)

1:00 Socialize & eat

1:30 Store opens & meeting starts:

3:00 Wrap up & Raffles, store closes

4:00 Meeting Adjourned,  
please help with tear down and van loading

As always, there will be a potluck (bring something small if you can) with drinks provided by the club. Our Pampered Fuzzy Supply store will be open with over 200 items for sale. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover, Checks & cash. Please buy from our store, it helps support the club!

Martin



# R.I.P. Martin

Martin was a big white boy who was picked up from the Humane Society, lived with his new owner for a bit, and then came to live at the shelter. He was sweet, gave kisses, and had a quiet, sweet personality. He was afraid of other ferrets, so he lived alone. He hated being inside the cage and banged on it constantly. He wanted to be free roam!

When out, he would check things out, take a nap, check things out again, come see what you were doing, take a nap, come out to help you clean, take a nap ...

He was a very large ferret with no tattoos, so we don't know where he came from. He might even have been from a private breeder.

We realized he had stopped banging on the cage and then we noticed his very large spleen. We took him to the vet who diagnosed lymphosarcoma. He got three chemo treatments, which gave him at least 2 more months of playing. Then the cancer must have spread because he stopped eating, acted like he was in pain and had black poop.

One of the shelter volunteers (Joe) was kind enough to take time out of his workday to take him to be put to sleep. We will all miss Martin and his sweet little face.

## Available



**Trixie**

Trixie is a rather large, fluffy light silver/blaze female. She is deaf and frightened of other ferrets. She will nip if you startle her and her previous owners accidentally taught her to nip when she wanted down. We're working on that (and she's getting better), but it would be best if she went to a family who knew how to deal with nippy little girls. Any kind of roughness makes her shake in terror, so she needs a gentle hand.

She actually seems to like to be cuddled for a little while (a ferret minute) and isn't looking quite so shocked when I kiss her on the nose.

She might learn to like another ferret eventually, but she needs a quiet place without so many people, ferrets and smells so she can relax.

## Adopted



**Rogue & Ivan the Wonderful**





# Shelter News

by Joe Rembiz



**Cinnamon**

July started out looking like a quiet month for the shelter. Adopted first this month was our lil Cinnamon Girl. A family from the area was looking for a companion for their lil girl so they brought her to the Hide-E-Hole Rescue to try her out with some ferrets. Demon and Balto were a definite no. Cinnamon Girl was playful and not too nippy with her new friend so they decide to take her and give her a try. When matching up ferrets, the shelter will take them back if any serious behavior issues develop between the ferrets. You can either pick a different ferret or get a refund within 30 days. We want the ferrets to be comfortable and happy in their new homes and not end up at a kill shelter or Craig's List because of an unsatisfied owner. Most ferrets do settle in with their new buddy.

Natalie from the shelter staff took home Fern to try out with her group of 3. Natalie recently lost her liveliest lil girl ferret Moxie and things haven't been the same for her group. She is looking to bring back the



**Fern**

excitement Moxie offered the other kids with wild and crazy Fern. After 2 weeks, Fern seems to be accepting her new family.

Our first new ferret in this month almost didn't make it here. Ivan the Wonderful was thrown out of a moving car. A passing motorist grabbed him and got in touch with Barb. Barb was able to get in touch with TRFC members Jim and Paula and they went to pick up Ivan and brought him to the rescue. Ivan is no worse for his lil adventure. Even better news is Ivan has taken a liking to Rogue and Rogue has allowed him to play with her and stay in her cage. As expected Jim and Paula did come back to adopt Rogue and Ivan.

The Hide-E-Hole played a roll in a quick game of lost, found and returned. Barb received word of a lost ferret wandering into a woman's kitchen in the North Hills. The person called the Humane Society and they referred her to The Hide-E-Hole. On her birthday and with lightening speed, TRFC member Jackie went and picked up the ferret and it was safe before it got dark out. The family put fliers up in the neighborhood. The family got Barb's number and called. The next day the ferret was reunited with his very happy (and generous) parents. (They made a generous donation to the Hide-E-Hole).

The sad news of the month Martin lost his battle with lymphosarcoma. Martin received the best care under Dr Wagner and he seemed to be winning his battle, but he stopped eating and started having black, tarry stools (bleeding ulcer). Martin was in pain and at one point even bit through his tongue (he might have had a seizure). Shelter volunteer Joe assisted Martin to the bridge by taking him to the Humane Society to be put to sleep.

# Ferret Owner News

## Ferret Fun

We have a claw foot tub in the 2nd floor bathroom. It is seldom used, mostly just decorative. At the end of the tub I have an old slipper chair that was a wedding gift to my parents.

The ferrets can get up on the chair and then get into the tub. They seem to really enjoy sliding down the back of the tub. And watching them get a running start to make it back out is hilarious.

Unfortunately one of our cats has decided to use it as a litter box, so when the door is open I put a comforter on top of



the tub.

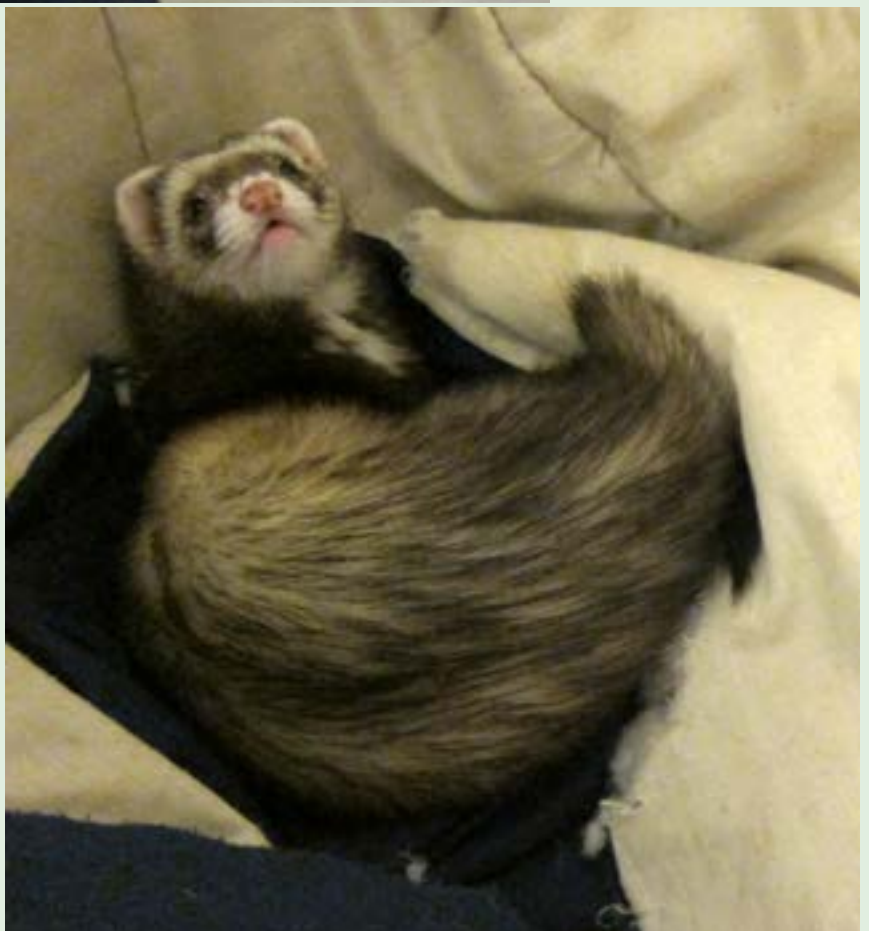
This morning after letting the ferrets out, I heard a commotion in the bathroom. Shadowfax and Duncan were in the tub, one under the comforter, one on top and they were having a blast! Fionnlaugh could hear them, but was looking for them under the tub. Finally she figured it out (with some help from mom) and in she went.



They were bouncing and playing and making noise. It was hilarious.

Even after all these years of having ferrets, it never ceases to amaze me when it comes to finding something fun to do!

--Chris Matlick







## Sweet Pea

Here is a picture of Sweet Pea (formerly Princess). She is doing fine. She is very playful and gets along with our other two ferrets and cat. She knows her name and comes when she is called. She is a real sweetheart. We love her very much. She is a very good fit in our household. Thank you.

--Mary Beth

## Sidney & Sasha (available for adoption)



# Picnic News

The annual picnic is being held at a different shelter in South Park than it has been at the past few years; our usual shelter is being renovated. The date of the picnic is September 15th.

The new shelter is the Spreading Oak Shelter near the BMX bike track. Easiest way to get there is to use GoogleMaps and find the intersection of Linheart Drive and Broughton Road in Bethel Park, PA. Turn onto Linheart Drive (also named Willis Road) and the grove will be on your left as you go around the bend.





# New invention: Pet Cooler Carrier

We will be raffling one of these off at the picnic, so be sure to stop by! Retail value \$99, this new carrier is injection molded (i.e. very strong) and has a compartment on the top that you can put ice or frozen water bottles to keep your ferrets safe in the summer heat. It comes with front and side covers (to keep the heat or cool inside) and plastic divider trays. Melted water is available via a drinking spout on the inside.

We were excited to see this since ferrets do very badly in the heat. It's important to protect your ferrets from temperatures over 80 degrees. Their website is <http://petcoolercarrier.com/>, and has more information if you're interested.

The sizing is hard to tell, so stop by the picnic if you'd like to see it in person.



1. FILL CHEST WITH ICE



2. STANDARD CONVECTION CAUSES COLD TO FALL



3. WATER FROM ICE MELT RUNS TO DRAIN / WATER VALVE



4. PET DRINKS WATER BY LICKING VALVE



**HAPPINESS  
ENSUES!**

## Revised list of good foods\*



**Orijen Cat/Kitten:** Ingredients: Boneless chicken\*, chicken meal, chicken liver\*, whole herring\*, boneless turkey\*, turkey meal, turkey liver\*, whole eggs\*, boneless walleye\*, whole salmon\*, chicken heart\*, chicken cartilage\*, herring meal, salmon meal, chicken liver oil, chicken fat\*, red lentils, green peas, green lentils, sun-cured alfalfa, yams\*, pea fibre, chickpeas, pumpkin\*, butternut squash\*, spinach greens\*, carrots\*, Red Delicious apples\*, Bartlett pears\*, cranberries\*, blueberries\*, kelp, licorice root, angelica root, fenugreek, marigold flowers, sweet fennel, peppermint leaf, chamomile, dandelion, summer savory, rosemary, Enterococcus faecium. \*FRESH AND PRESERVATIVE-FREE

Analysis:

Crude protein (min.) 42%

Crude fat (min.) 20%

Crude fiber (max.) 3%



**Wysong Epigen 90:** Ingredients: Organic Chicken, Chicken Meal, Chicken Fat (preserved with mixed Tocopherols as a source of Vitamin E), Chicken Giblets, Gelatin (source of collagen and proteoglycans), Apple (source of soluble fiber), Beet Pulp (source of prebiotics), Plums (antioxidant source), Inulin (prebiotic), Blueberries (antioxidant source), Tomato (source of lutein), Taurine (amino acid), Oregano Extract (antioxidant source), Sage Extract (antioxidant source), Rosemary Extract (antioxidant source), Probiotic Microorganisms (Bacillus subtilis, Enterococcus faecium, Lactobacillus plantarum, Lactococcus lactis, Lactobacillus casei, Lactobacillus acidophilus, Lactobacillus lactis), Ascorbic Acid, Zinc Proteinate, Iron Proteinate, Vitamin E Supplement, Niacin Supplement, Manganese Proteinate, Calcium Pantothenate, Thiamine Mononitrate, Copper Proteinate, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride, Riboflavin Supplement, Vitamin A Acetate, Folic Acid, Biotin, Vitamin B12 Supplement, Vitamin D3 Supplement.

### Good Foods not all ferrets will eat:



**Wysong Archetypal 1** This is a raw, freeze-dried food that looks like shredded meat. It is most often served rehydrated with hot water, although ferrets who like it will often eat it dry like a treat. Ingredients: Chicken, Chicken Hearts, Chicken Livers, Ground Chicken Bone, Milk Calcium, Fish Oil (Preserved With Mixed Tocopherols), Coral Calcium, Organic Mung Bean Sprouts, Organic Millet Sprouts, Organic Quinoa Sprouts, Organic Blueberries, Organic Apples, Plums, Barley Grass, Wheat Grass, Dried Whey, Kelp, Dried Seaweed, Artichoke, Dried Enterococcus faecium Fermentation Product, Dried Bacillus subtilis Fermentation Product, Dried Lactobacillus plantarum Fermentation Product, Dried Lactobacillus acidophilus Fermentation Product, Dried Lactobacillus lactis Fermentation Product, Dried Yeast Culture, Dried Aspergillus oryzae Fermentation Product, Dried Aspergillus niger Fermentation Product, Phytase, Sage Extract, Rosemary Extract, Choline Chloride, Ascorbic Acid, Zinc Proteinate, Iron Proteinate, Calcium Pantothenate, Thiamine Mononitrate, Copper Proteinate, Pyridoxine Hydrochloride, Riboflavin Supplement, Vitamin A Acetate, Folic Acid, Biotin, Vitamin B12 Supplement, Vitamin D3

Supplement.

Analysis:

Crude Protein (Min) 45.0 %

Crude Fat (Min) 33.0 %

Crude Fiber (Max) 2.0 %

### **Raw/whole prey**

There are strong indications that ferrets (cats & dogs) should really be fed a raw/whole prey diet. We know this is not for everyone, and you have to become educated in the right balance. Feeding only meat (muscle) will have serious consequences. Carnivores need meat, bone and organ meats to be healthy. It's not hard once you (a) understand what to do and (b) convince your ferret it's food. The latter is usually the harder of the two. If you have a baby ferret (under 3-4 months old) you can just start right in with raw. They will eat pretty much anything at this point. The Holistic Ferrets group has a lot of advice on how to convert older ferrets. Some people use commercially prepared ground frozen raw, but this will not keep the teeth as clean as when they chew on raw bones (of an appropriate size).

75%- Meat (flesh, tendons, fat, skin)

15%- Edible bone (RAW chicken bones, mouse bones, SOME rabbit bones)

10%- Organ meat (livers, gizzards, Hearts, etc)

Read more: <http://holisticferret60.proboards.com/thread/55#ixzz2WiULF6rH>

Go to the Hide-E-Hole Ferret Rescue webpage for a couple more links: Hide-E-Hole

\*The list was revised because it was brought to our attention that Blue Buffalo and Welness have been involved in some disturbing recalls.

*You can use any food that has no grain, has meat as the first 3-5 ingredients (more is okay) and at least 38% protein and 18% fat (more is better).*

*Stay away from Zupreme Grain-Free as the pea protein has been linked to bladder stones in some ferrets. Peas are okay if they are listed 6th or later. Zupreem Grain-Free's first 6 ingredients: Chicken meal, Dried sweet potatoes, Dried peas, Chicken fat (preserved with mixed tocopherols), Potato protein. This is bad because the 2nd ingredient is non-meat and the 3rd ingredient is peas.*

*Stay away from foods that have starches or grains in the first 5 ingredients and certainly stay away from any food that has peas in the first 5 ingredients, at least until we figure things out.*



## A happy ending that might not have happened

by Barb Carlson

How would you prove your ferret is really yours? Ferrets get out—it happens to the best of us. If you are human, or have humans living in your home, chances are at some point your ferret is going to get out. Whether your ferret gets all the way out into the big, scary world or just out into some area they aren't supposed to be depends on the layout of your home and how paranoid you are.

I wrote a (rather large) pamphlet on how to ferret proof your home ([Ferret Proofing Your Home](#)) but that's not what this article is about. This article is about how to prove that the ferret someone found in their yard is actually your ferret. And to tell you about a happy ending.



This is Phineas. He escaped his family's house. Luckily, he went right over to a neighbor's house and managed not to get run over. The lady who found him got the shelter number from someone and called me. I posted an ad on Craig's List and someone wrote that it was their ferret and gave a rather vague description. If I had been less diligent, Phineas may have ended up in the wrong house. I don't know if that person was looking for a free ferret, or if they really did lose a ferret in the same general area around the same time as when Phineas got out.



The problem with identifying Phineas is that he is a pretty standard sable ferret. You can't say, "it's mostly dark brown with some lighter color" to make a positive ID. Now, if the person had been looking for a white ferret, then there would not have been a problem. But they said a female and described a sable. Hmm. Lots of people don't know the correct sex of their ferrets. I've even seen vet records with the wrong sex written down. So I asked for a little more information. They sent a photo of a girl holding three ferrets. One sable, one all-white and one a light chocolate. I had no way to know that the ferrets in the photo were even her ferrets. (It's easy to find photos on the Internet.) At this point, I asked what street she lived on and she stopped writing.

That was rather scary. I might have accidentally given him to the wrong person. So that led me to the question, "How do you ID

your ferret?"

Photos help, of course, but way too many photos show a ferret-sized blob in the middle of the room. They are dark, fuzzy, and way too far away to be useful. If your ferret has some special markings, getting a photo with the markings would help. But often, people photograph their ferret when it's a baby and two years later it gets out of the house. Coloration and markings change. So then what?

Look at this ferret's nose. Enlarge the photo if you have to. I'll wait. Done? What do you notice about the ferret's nose? Well, besides that it's cute. What color is the nose? What color are the markings? What pattern do the markings make? The "nose print" stays the same all through a ferret's life. Even when they are old and gray, the nose will stay the same. So get a clear, close-up photo of your ferret's face. Look at his neck—do you see the white splotch? That's another identifying feature. That might go away in time, though. Phineas has another not-very-visible identifying mark—he has a white splotch between the toes of his front feet. Good luck photographing that, but if you write it down, it will help.



Get a photo of your ferret (again, up-close and clear) of the top of his head and from the side. The shape of the ears and position in relation to the eyes does not change. The size of the eyes do not change (unless the ferret has glaucoma or a tumor, but that's another story). Get a photo of the whole body from the side and top. Put the photos somewhere safe where they won't disappear if your computer crashes or your cell phone is damaged. Photograph your ferret regularly. Enlist the help of someone with a good camera if you need to. (I have a good camera and I'm willing to help.)

The very best way to prove your ferret belongs to you is to have him microchipped. Ferrets are adventurous and want to see what is on the other side of that door. They

will try and try and try to escape. You need to be sure you can get him back again. What would stop a neighbor from taking in your ferret and refusing to give it back? Legally, how could you prove it's your ferret? The microchip is the ideal way to prove the ferret belongs to you.

It's a big needle, the ferret doesn't like it (they do *\*not\** need to be sedated) but it's over in a second and that's that. All chip readers can tell there is a chip in there. If you get an "open" chip that does not use a proprietary code, many readers can read them. I use the 24HrPetWatch chips, but I've used others. The key is to register the ferret, keep the records with his photo, and put it somewhere you can find it when you're in a panic.

So go forth and photograph! Write down a description. Get your ferret microchipped.

And then give them a hug from me. I hope I never have to pick them up from a neighbor's house!





## Memorials

We wish to remember the ferrets that have crossed over the Rainbow Bridge.

If you would like your ferret to be remembered, send the appropriate information to [TRFCnews@gmail.com](mailto:TRFCnews@gmail.com)

**Gabby:** I met Gabby or “Brownie”, as I called her, not 2 weeks after my beloved ferret Trouble had passed away. I fostered 4 little girl ferrets for a week while Barb was away, hoping that one of them would become my forever ferret and help me through the difficulty of losing my favorite companion. Well, 3 of them became my forever ferrets! By the end of the week I knew a bonded pair were meant to be mine; Cha Cha, now DG (a tiny deaf blaze) and Bubbles, now Butters (a husky champagne girl). But the mature chocolate girl with scarce hair around the



tail, a habit of attacking sock covered toes and a recent Deslorelin implant, Brownie, tugged at my heart as I went to return her to the shelter. I couldn't go back home without her. So Barb and I agreed that I could foster her, given the overwhelming number of ferrets she had at the shelter at that time. She came home with me and never left. She filled many days with laughter; remembering her terrorizing our dog is something that will never cease to amuse me. I'm so glad that I was able to give her a loving forever home, that she spent her last years giving never-ending kisses and playing like a wild woman with her two best buddies, DG and Butters.

-- *Jamie Campayno*



# Miscellany

Meeting dates for 2013  
While meeting activities are not set in stone for the upcoming year, we can list the meeting dates.

August 18th, 2013

September 15th, 2013  
(Picnic)

October 20th, 2013  
(Halloween party and costume contest)

November 17th, 2013

December 15th, 2013  
(Christmas party and ferret gift exchange)

Put the dates in your calendar now, and plan to come to the meetings!

## TRFC YAHOO GROUP DISCUSSION LIST

Want to tap into a wealth of advice and information? Join the TRFC Yahoo discussion list! It's easy—just ask Barb at (bcarlson@andrew.cmu.edu) for an invitation link, click on the link, and you're done!

A BIG BIG THANK YOU to those volunteers who have been keeping the shelter running. They have been dedicating a large portion of their time to keeping the shelter running while Barb deals with other things and they are greatly appreciated.

THANK YOU!

Supplies needed: Wood pellet litter, paper towels, EVO Dog little bites. Volunteer Opportunities: Cage cleaning, helping with shelter records and book keeping, Nails and Ear cleaning before meetings – you can help load the van too!

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