

## WEE COMPANIONS WEBPAGE

This section of the Cochrane Humane Society website is dedicated to rabbits and other small animal companions. Find out why adopting a **wee companion** from an animal shelter makes YOU so special!

Pet stores abound with furry little animals that entice buyers to make that spontaneous decision to buy a rabbit, guinea pig or other small pet without thinking carefully about the care it will require. Sadly, many of these animals end up in animal shelters each year. Since they are rarely spayed or neutered when purchased, their babies also end up unwanted in shelters across North America. The Cochrane Humane Society is no exception. Of the 1030 animals that were cared for by the Cochrane Humane Society in 2005, 50 of those were small animal companions. Other, larger shelters have even higher numbers of these unwanted pets because they have more space for unwanted pets.

By rescuing one of these wee companions not only might you have saved its life but by choosing to adopt from an animal shelter you will also be supporting the trend to not make impulse pet purchases at a pet store!



Star

Before you adopt a rabbit, do your homework! Rabbits require a lot of care and attention, clean living quarters, lots of exercise, fresh vegetables, rabbit food and a constant supply of timothy hay. You need to clip their claws, watch their teeth and make them a part of your family just like a cat or dog!



Pita



Toffee

Guinea pigs can make great companions but require specific care and attention. They live for 5 to 8 years and require fresh fruits and vegetables daily, timothy hay and clean living quarters. They need to have their claws clipped too. Within their enclosure they require a hiding spot or small den. Guinea pigs are quite clean and can be litter trained.

Instead of buying a small cage for your rabbit, be creative and think big! The happy bunny pictured to the left has its home in a wooden storage shed that has plenty of hay, platforms at different levels and even a large balcony that comes out the front of the shed. Rabbits can also be let loose in your yard for periods of time while supervised. Just make sure there are no holes in your fence and that they cannot squeeze under the fence. They will likely be content to just hop around and eat fresh grass!

### DID YOU KNOW? Wee Companion Facts

- Rabbits can live for 5 to 10 years
- Rabbits can be litter trained
- A rabbit's teeth will continue to grow throughout its life - hence the need to chew
- Hamsters and gerbils live for about 2 -3 years
- Hamsters like to be busy and enjoy hamster wheels, mazes, etc.
- Gerbils are very social animals and enjoy a companion
- Hamsters are typically solitary pets
- The word Hamster comes from the German word Hamstern which means "to hoard"



Weenie



Mack

*"Animals are such agreeable friends - they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms" - George Eliot*