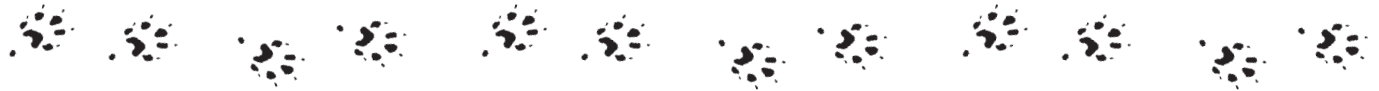


# The Fuzzy Papers

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS FERRET FRIENDS  
FALL / WINTER 2004



## Tribute to Luv of Ferrets

FROM the early beginnings of The Massachusetts Ferret Friends, Jo and Ed Fowler came to the organization with their "sleeves rolled up" and prepared to give of their time and energies to surrendered and rescued ferrets. After six years of dedication, commitment and great personal sacrifice, they made that hard decision to close Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue to future intakes.

Jo and Ed have continued to give of themselves by recently donating to MaFF many cages, water bottles, litter pans, food dishes, etc. to help support our newly organized Foster Network.

In appreciation to two people who have given so much to ferrets and the ferret community, I would like to thank them on behalf of all the members of MaFF, both past and present. For our newer members who did not have the wonderful opportunity of knowing Jo and Ed, you will find here a brief history of Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue, as well as a few heartfelt words from Jo. Please take a minute to visit their new website, [www.fortheloveofferrets.com](http://www.fortheloveofferrets.com), where they are offering a wide selection of bedding and products especially for ferrets, dogs, cats and other small animals. We wish Jo and Ed much success with this new venture.

—Phyllis Spy,  
President

Please note that the web site [www.fortheloveofferrets.com](http://www.fortheloveofferrets.com) is not in any way associated with Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue. The Editor wishes to apologize to Jo Fowler (Director of Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue) and to For the Love of Ferrets for any inconvenience this may have caused.

## Letter from the President

by Phyllis M. Spy

AS the year 2004 draws to an end, I am reminded of all the wonderful things that took place within MaFF and the ferret community. Through much hard work and dedication, we accomplished some great things this year.

I would like to thank my fellow board members, Diane Wall and Lisa Andrews for the spectacular job they did. Not only did they carry out the functions of their position, but they still managed to help out when ever the need arose.

Diane took in several foster kids,

all of whom she has since adopted. There was Raisin, whose family was moving to Hawaii and Petey and Pixie from the Providence ARL. Diane also hosted a Ferret Giving Tree Party in December, which resulted in many, many shelter ferrets enjoying new hammies, treats and toys this Christmas.

Lisa was there to lend a hand with transporting cages donated from Jo Fowler (Luv of Ferrets) for use by our foster care givers. She also, on a moment's notice, hosted our general

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## Jo Fowler, Shelter Mom

by Amy Robbin

I met Jo Fowler in October of 1998, thanks to my devil boy, Rascal. Let us just say that neither my life nor my ferrets' lives have been the same since.

I had ferrets for two years at the time, Critter my first, then Rascal came a few months later. Rascal was a beautiful silver mitt, but from a very unknowledgeable pet store. He was a horrible biter. I should have known when the store clerk put her hand in the cage and a ferret latched onto her hand and I had to pry him off!

One evening in October, Rascal jumped off the couch and his front legs just kind of gave out. That caused me a bit of concern so I kept a close eye on him. The next day he was lethargic so I immediately called my vet. I went in for an emergency appointment. They looked at Rascal and said "he seems fine." Rascal got progressively worse, I brought him back the next day, and they gave me amoxicillin and sent me home. The next morning he was so weak and lethargic that I asked my husband to bring him back to the vet and insist they admit him. Let's just say the bill got large with vets getting impatient as they were doing everything they could, but I would not allow them to open him up where he was so weak and there was no sign of a blockage or anything of the sort. They insisted he had distemper due

*Continued on Page 3*

*Letter from the President, from Page 1*

meeting in November by opening up her home to us. Lisa has donated much in the way of time and energy to give a helping hand whenever needed.

I would also like to thank Trudy Wallach for the great job she is doing as Foster Coordinator, Diddy Wheeler for her 24/7 commitment to the MaFF Hotline; Ronnie DiComo for her wonderful work sending out cards to our members when they lost a ferret and our new adoptive ferret owners when they added a ferret or two to their family; Mark Rosenstein for the wonderfully designed and maintained MaFF website.

A huge thanks goes to all our foster care givers for their donation of time and love while caring for our foster kids, who were either surrendered or abandoned. Each of you has done a marvelous job of caring for these little ones while they wait for their new families.

And, finally, I would like to thank each MaFF member for their support and their donation of time and talents at events, meetings and fundraisers. Each of you have shown your love of ferrets through your support of MaFF and the work we are doing in the ferret community.

As we move into the year 2005, there is much to be done in the areas of Education, Outreach and Shelter. I look forward to working with each and every one of you.

I wish everyone and their ferrets a very happy and healthy New Year!

—Phyllis M. Spy  
President

*Make a contribution to  
MaFF's Shelter Fund.  
Please do it today!*

## **A Brief History of Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue**

*by Jo Fowler*

**I**N September 1997, the yet-to-be-named shelter got underway as a halfway / foster home for the Frisky Ferret Shelter, which at the time was overflowing.

There were some ferrets at the FFS that, because of illness, needed extra attention as well as others that required behavior modification. These were the ferrets that we brought home to work with, because we felt we had the time and patience to donate to this worthwhile effort.

There was a need for additional shelter homes to relieve the demands on the FFS, so being in the same general location and working so closely with FFS, my husband and I decided that we would obtain our own shelter permit from the Town of Tewksbury. Once having received our town permit, we would then submit an application to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Division of Fisheries and Wildlife for the necessary state permit. This process was started in October 1997 with an application submitted to our town.

After all the legalities had been completed at the town level, the Town of Tewksbury issued a permit to us on December 4, 1997, which allowed us to house 15 ferrets. Having now received a permit from the Town of Tewksbury, an application for a state permit was sent to the attention of Bob Arini in December 1997. The permit was issued soon after.

Because of the love and enjoyment we have for these critters and the need they have for the service we provide, the name we chose to give to our shelter was "Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue." It plainly states in a very few words what we feel about the work we were doing.

Since starting as an FFS-overflow / foster home in mid September 1997 through the end of that year, 17 ferrets came through our doors and all were adopted to caring homes. Now we can happily add so many more adoptions to that total.

Our shelter would be kept on a small scale in order to provide individualized attention, thus ensuring that our little fuzzie charges feel like members of our own family of ferts until such time as they leave our care to go into a permanent family of their very own.

While here with us, they are given love, stability, nursed back to health, with behavior training and whatever else is needed to prepare them for their new "Mom and/or Dad."

Our mission: "To help a little displaced fuzzie—return it to health if need be—find trust if trust has been lost, cure a behavior problem if one exists, but most of all find a loving home and family."

In March 2002, Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue relocated to New London, New Hampshire, where we continued our work of caring for and meeting the needs of fuzzies that were in transition.

In December 2003, Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue accepted the last ferrets into the shelter, therefore closing its doors to incoming ferrets. We continue to care for the older, ill and unadoptables that are still here with us until such time that they need to start their journey to the "Bridge."

The shelter folds will always continue to be a resource when advice is sought.

*[The following is from Jo Fowler — Ed.]*

"There is so much history, dedication and 'luv' that has gone into my shelter and the work that my husband Ed and I have done - it took me a long time to finally admit that I had to put an end to the daily efforts of sheltering, because of the toll it was taking

on both of us. Tears and anguish were and still are a frequent occurrence, because I feel I am letting that one unknown ferret down by not being there to take it in when it is in need.

Over these years of sheltering, I placed many ferrets into loving forever homes - somewhere in the vicinity of 500 of them were helped. There were the occasions that the ferret in need bypassed the shelter altogether and went right into a loving forever home. I will attempt to continue helping ferrets and their family in that manner when the need arises." ■

### **Jo Fowler, Shelter Mom, from Page 1**

to the chapped pads of his feet. He would also periodically stretch his neck, which the vet suspected to be the neurological part of the disease.

After several days of hospitalization (with me being there every morning before work and evening after work) they were still unsure — I was quite sure that if it had been distemper he would have passed by now. They gave me the ultimatum of putting him to sleep or taking him home. I couldn't put him to sleep without a reason so Rascal came home, weak and very sick. He was now having trouble breathing. I did everything I could think of to help. Nothing was helping. He was now messing himself. I knew time was running short as I knew nothing about caring for a sick ferret and I knew he wasn't eating and drinking.

I began frantically searching the web. Each day I spent hours searching for help. I came across the MaFF site. Desperately I began calling the shelters for advice. By now my husband was trying to convince me to put Rascal to sleep, but I felt that if he was fighting this hard to live, I would fight right along side him. I wasn't going to quit until he was well, until he gave up or I had an answer. Then I called Luv of Ferrets shelter and began my education with Jo. I explained to her what was going on

and what the vets were telling me. Her response, and anyone who knows Jo will know the voice I'm talking about, was adamantly "You do NOT have to put that ferret to sleep!" This was the encouragement I was looking for.

This woman whom I had never even met spent hours on the phone with me walking me through nutrition, duck soup, pedialyte, and everything you could possibly need to know to nurse a sick ferret. I can't even begin to express my gratitude and how much this source of strength and knowledge meant and still means to me. She told me about an educational visit she was doing at a pet shop about 15 miles away from me. A light bulb had gone off. I had felt guilty about eating so much of this woman's time for someone she didn't even know, and I feared that she would eventually tire of listening to my panicked calls. So that Saturday I packed up my poor sick ferret, knowing that it probably wasn't best for him. Where he had been sick for weeks now, or so it seemed, and Critter was still healthy, I risked the fact that he wasn't contagious. I really needed to be sure that this kind woman could see the face that she was helping. Knowing that if she saw this wonderful little face, she wouldn't give up on us.

Jo saw Rascal and cradled him like a baby. I felt so guilty about unloading my worry on someone who I'm sure had plenty of her own, but I couldn't help it... We needed help. Jo gave me the name of two vets but both were at least an hour's drive. I had just started a new job so flexibility wasn't an option. I called and begged for an appointment, they could not seem to accommodate me and I was afraid of losing my job. As it was I was going to work, driving a half hour home at lunch to feed Rascal, and then driving a half hour back to work. Finally with Jo's help I was able to get an appointment which would only require me to leave 1 hour

early from work. By this point I had three animal hospitals hating me as I was being horribly pushy, but d\*\*\* it, someone was going to help us. I brought Rascal to work with me and hid him so I could give him his lunch without having to drive home. Needless to say, the vet seemed to know exactly what to do and was wonderful to my Rascal (thanks Dr. Purcell). We never found out what exactly was wrong, but months of nursing care and coaching from Jo, Rascal pulled through. With the extra love and care, his biting subsided and he became my big, sweet teddy bear.

I was so impressed by Jo that I wasn't going to let her get away. I

### **The Fuzzy Papers**

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wanted to get to know this person and learn from her. So for months I found every excuse possible to contact her. Even adopted a wonderful little girl named SusieQ, the ulterior motive was so I would have more opportunities to work with Jo. I guess I can be pretty pushy when I want something.

Through Jo, I met some wonderful people and learned so much. Oh... and the wonderful fuzzies! Thank you Jo — for SusieQ, Moose, Buster, Tequila, and helping me find Little Buster and Gus through Tom (thanks Tom!)

Jo has been such a source of support and strength through ferret illnesses, losses, additions and just outright weird ferrety stuff. Jo and Eddie have really touched my life and although she is so far away now I still make it a point to visit a few times per year and email as frequently as possible. I miss having her so close by. She has had such an impact on me that I wish everyone could be so lucky to have such a friend, one who understands and offers support and at times feels your pain and cries right along with you.

When Jo decided to retire from sheltering I sent her this message that I would like to pass along to all and also for those of you shelter, fos-

tering or caring for the ill, homeless, when you feel like giving up, think of these words.

“Despite the pain and cost to yourself you have given so many ferrets new lives. You’ve given them opportunities that they wouldn’t have had without you; God only knows what would have happened to them. And those that are unplaceable; you’ve given these desperate little creatures care and love that they would never get somewhere else. Under another’s care they would probably just face a needle or worse. But with you, they got hugs, love and a belly full of warm soup. You’ve filled their lives with warmth, and ours too.

From my position: Jo, you saved my Rascal! When three vets wanted to put him to sleep because they didn’t know what was wrong, you took the time to talk to a stranger and give her hope. I will always be grateful for that. You referred me to a vet you thought could help, and called her and went to bat for me to get Rascal in there asap ... again, all that effort for a stranger. You coached me through duck soup and meds, answered my calls of panic and provided encouragement. God, it takes a truly wonderful person to do all that for a stranger, despite all

the pressures you already had.

During this time when I thought my Critter would end up alone, you introduced me to SusieQ who became a wonderful addition to my family. Then you introduced me to Moose and Buster who will never leave my heart. When Buster was sick, you introduced me to Tom who helped a great deal through that trying time. You comforted me when I was so distraught over losing Buster. Then you encouraged me again, to talk to Tom who found me my wonderful Gus and Little Buster who helped eased the pain. And then ... there was Tequila, that beautiful, wonderful, little girl who came into my life twice. You gave her a home and a new start twice and gave me the opportunity to give her the forever home she deserved. I wouldn’t have all these wonderful, loving little faces in my life, who keep me so happy, if it weren’t for you. You also introduced me to so many new people and taught me so much. You’ve become a treasured friend.

Although this is just my story Jo, I’m sure everyone’s life that you have touched will have similar stories. Take comfort in the many, many lives you have touched and in many cases, saved.

—Hugs.” ■

## In Memory of . . .

WE would like to remember all those little ones who have passed on since our last issue. Each of these ferrets was dearly loved and will be sadly missed by their owners.

In hearing the stories about each of these fuzzies, it occurs to us that every one of them taught their owners some important lesson about life and living it fully. This list only contains the names of those ferrets who we have heard about. If YOU have lost a ferret recently and your fuzzie’s name is not included in this list, please know that MaFF’s thoughts and prayers are with you.

Critter  
Cleo  
Pody  
Ferris  
Oscar  
Roxie

Stellina  
Millie  
Epcot  
Max (Great White Panda Ferret Shark)  
Emmett  
Pee Poa Poa

Sammie  
Buster  
Scooter  
Stewie



## The Andover Wanderer

by Amy Robbin

IT'S been quite the summer. My six ferrets: Critter, SusieQ, Tequila, GusGus, Buster and Vin Dweasel have all settled nicely into their new home. They have the run of a large finished basement as well as their own bedroom.

A friend had asked if I could keep her daughter's three ferrets for a month while she was away at camp. Of course I agreed, I had plenty of room. Then ironically enough a few weeks after that request, I got a call from another friend asking me to watch his three ferrets while he was away for three weeks. At a quick glance it looked like the schedule would work, so I agreed. Then for the task of telling my fiancé that we were having guests (he has yet to discover their charm). I waited until the last minute to tell him, kind of like the pulling off the band-aid fast theory.

The first three were young, playful and bouncy. At this point I had to work around three playtime shifts. I felt a little guilty that they weren't all getting maximum attention but I thought, it's only for a few weeks. Toward the end of the guests stay, the other guys arrived! So for a few days I had six of my own and six visitors! Let me say I was beyond busy! It was fun, they were all adorable.

During that time, my wonderful old geezer, Critter, crossed the bridge at the ripe old age of 8 1/2. He had been struggling with health issues for years, I had been hand feeding him for months (on top of caring for the 12 ferrets, two horses and a full time job!). Critter knew it was time and curled up beside me on the couch for a long last nap. He slipped away in the wee hours of the morning of July 14, curled up in the crook of my arm. Sigh . . . what a wonderful way to go, fed warm soup, a warm bath and



*Little Cocoa Puff, curious and cute.*

curled up in your favorite sleep sack, in your favorite place. I was going to miss his wonderful dark sable face with his cold dark nose.

Well toward the end of the last guests' stay, I got a call asking if I could help find a home for the original three visitors. My heart sank. Those poor kids had only been in this home for about six months, they were too young to move to another home. I fought very hard to keep from bringing them home. I went so far as taking apart my extra cage so there was no empty cages.

Ahhh, life was back to normal . . . for exactly one day. I was sitting at work on Friday, August 6th and my phone rings. It's Diddy from MaFF. I was taken by surprise as I haven't been actively involved in the ferret community in a few years now. She was telling me about this little ferret that has been wandering the streets of Andover for the last few weeks. I had also read about it on the FML so I had an idea of what was happening. Then to my surprise, she asked if I was located anywhere near Andover. I'm about an hour away, but that's close enough. Diddy asked if I could pick up the little girl and give her a home for a week or so. I said of course, thinking to myself "Oh, no. What the heck am I doing? We both know exactly what is going to happen." I was proud to be asked and trusted with this mission. I took

the woman's name and number and half-heartedly made the call, leaving a message. I fully didn't expect to receive a call back from someone who was truly concerned about the animal. I had been afraid that I would hear the worst possible story and be talking to someone who cared nothing about the little girl. Within an hour I received a call back from Ashley. She explained to me exactly what steps she's taken. She had gone so far out of her way for this little ferret. When she saw the ferret in her yard a few times, she went online to find out more about it. Upon discovering that that they couldn't survive on their own, she brought the ferret in and called MaFF. Ashley went to the store, bought ferret shampoo, food, ferretone, a hammock, ear wipes and even a cage! All to make sure the little girl was safe and comfortable while in her home. I was impressed. She had gone to such lengths to take care of this little girl that I was surprised that she didn't want to keep her. Ashley explained that she and her husband were newly married, new home, doing major renovations and it just didn't seem like the right time for a pet. But she did say that this little girl, Simon, she was calling her, certainly changed her opinion about ferrets. It was obvious they were quite fond of her. I made arrangements to go pick up the little girl the following day.

Meanwhile, back at the ranch, that morning I was chatting with Kevin about things I wanted to do. He said "do whatever you want, just as long as you don't bring home anymore ferrets." I did the only thing I could. I looked at him and said "oops." He just rolled his eyes at me and shook his head. I said "it's only temporary (even though I hoped it wouldn't be). But Kevin knew better.

As I drove along this busy street,

## The Fuzzy Papers

Deadlines for Submissions to  
Upcoming Issues of  
*The Fuzzy Papers*

**For the Spring/Summer 2005 Issue**  
March 10, 2005

**For the Fall/Winter 2005 Issue**  
August 10, 2005

**Submissions are accepted  
throughout the year!**

Snailmail your submissions to:  
MaFF / *The Fuzzy Papers*  
PO Box 283  
Marshfield, MA 02050  
Or e-mail to: Phyllis Spy at  
publications@maferrets.org

### WRITERS! PHOTOGRAPHERS! SUBMISSIONS SOUGHT!

Submissions to this publication in the form of articles, letters, or photographs, are invited and encouraged. Please feel free to send your submissions to the MaFF address above, or via e-mail to Phyllis Spy at publications@maferrets.org

Articles or letters can be neatly handwritten, or typed, submitted via e-mail, or on 3.5" IBM formatted diskette as plain ASCII text.

Photos can be prints or transparencies, must have permission of those depicted, and can be in either color or black & white.

If you wish to e-mail photo images, kindly e-mail us first at publications@maferrets.org for advice on sending image files via e-mail.

I was amazed that the ferret hadn't wandered out onto the street. I went up the steps, carrier in hand, and was greeted by a nice young couple. They showed me in, the whole time talking about how cute and sweet this ferret was. They were thrilled that I was familiar with ferrets, I got the impression that they wouldn't have let me take her otherwise. They appeared very protective and caring for her. They showed me outside where they were keeping her. She was snuggled up in a large box. Beside the box was a nice, new cage. I asked why she was in the box and not the cage, they explained that she seemed happier in the box. Well, if that isn't sensitivity, I don't know what is. I reached into the box and gently pulled back the corner of the blanket. This beautiful little dark sable face, yes, with a black nose, peeked out at me. I couldn't resist, I had to pick her up. She snuggled right into my arms. For a ferret that was on the streets for two or more weeks, she looked wonderful. Her coat was clean and shiny, ears clean, and her weight was great. She looked just wonderful. After about a half hour of getting updated on her we headed out to her new temporary home. As I pulled

away, I looked in the rearview mirror and saw Ashley and Mark on the stairs watching us drive away. I thought "that's so sweet." They really were wonderful, kind people to go to such lengths for a little wanderer.

The little girl had been at my home for a few days, I just couldn't think of a name. The original rescuers were calling her Simon, Diddy suggested Ashley, I was calling her Pumpkin, a friend suggested Lucky. One morning Kevin was playing with her and asked what her name was. I told him I didn't have one. He suggested Toots. I thought "Aha! If he is calling her Toots, he really likes her." Within a few weeks she had integrated well with my ferrets, as I knew almost immediately I wasn't sending her home with anyone else. So this little lovely who is now called Cocoa Puff because of that silly commercial "I'm kuku over coco puffs!" She plays wonderfully with my girls. Dweasel, one of my big boys is going out of his way to get her to play with him, but she's still not sure what to make of the crazy fatso. Cocoa Puff will enjoy the rest of her life as an adored and spoiled part of my weasel family. ■

### YOU Are MaFF's Most Important Ambassador

WHILE sitting in the vet's office with your ferret or visiting a pet store for supplies, you may be approached by a stranger asking questions about ferrets as pets. This is your Golden Opportunity not only to answer their questions on the care and handling of ferrets, but also to direct them to the Massachusetts Ferret Friends website for more information — or to extend an invitation to them to attend any of our General Meetings or upcoming events. **There are many ferret owners around who still do not know about MaFF, and YOU are the best person to get the word out to them.** Your enthusiasm and helpfulness can do much to get the word out to others about MaFF and the work we are doing for ferrets.

### We Thank You

MaFF wishes to thank those who have — and those who continue to support their local shelter by adopting ferrets who otherwise would be "permanent" shelter residents, by donating supplies (hammies, food, treats, etc.) and — most importantly — by donating much-needed money to cover costs of surgery and medicines for those sick and elder ferrets. Special thanks go out as well to those who have opened their hearts and homes in assisting the shelters by providing foster care when needed.

## The 2005 International Ferret Symposium

**T**HE 2005 International Ferret Symposium, scheduled for April 29 - May 1, 2005, will be held in St. Louis, Missouri at the Hilton St. Louis Airport Hotel. For a complete list of guest speakers and topics, please visit their website at [www.ferretcongress.org](http://www.ferretcongress.org).

This looks to be a great event with many familiar names heading the list of guest speakers. If you are thinking of attending, deadline for registration is April 1, 2005. You can go to their website to download Registration Forms.

If anyone is interested in attending, please contact Phyllis Spy at [president@maferrets.org](mailto:president@maferrets.org) and we can start looking into some great deals for airfare and hotel accommodations. Sharing a room with a "buddy" will also help to save on expenses.

Wouldn't it be great to have representation from MaFF at this event? There is still plenty of time to start planning and saving.

Following is a list of websites to help you plan your trip:

- St. Louis Airport - [www.lambert-stlouis.com](http://www.lambert-stlouis.com).  
Please note that Lambert has two terminals. The main terminal handles all airlines, except Southwest and charter airlines (such as Champion Air and Ryan International), which are located in the East Terminal.
- St. Louis Airport Hotel - [www.hiltonstlouisairport.com](http://www.hiltonstlouisairport.com).  
Don't forget to mention the International Ferret Symposium when booking your room in order to get special discounted rates.
- Metro Bus and Rail System - [www.metrostlouis.org](http://www.metrostlouis.org)  
St. Louis Area - [www.explorestlouis.com](http://www.explorestlouis.com) and [www.saintlouis.com](http://www.saintlouis.com)

You won't want to miss the trip to the St. Louis Zoo on Sunday afternoon!!  
St. Louis Zoo - [www.stlzoo.org](http://www.stlzoo.org). You will love seeing the Meerkats and the Dwarf Mongoose!



## Meet Ferret Photographer Jeanne Carley!

**C**OME meet and hear Jeanne Carley, internationally recognized and award-winning ferret photographer at the International Ferret Congress' 2005 Ferret Symposium on Saturday April 30th in St. Louis, MO. Deadline to register is April 1st so don't delay if you are interested!

Jeanne will detail how she photographs ferrets for her wildly popular ferret calendar with favorite past and present ferret photographs, including some new images for her 2006 edition Ferret Babies! She'll also show some "ferret bloopers" where things didn't quite go exactly right — with hysterical results.

Anyone wishing to have their 2005 Ferret Music calendars autographed by Jeanne is welcome to bring them in for signatures. Jeanne will also have some of her very popular ferret T-shirts, cards and other merchandise for sale at this venue.

For information on her talk and how to register, visit: <http://ferretcongress.org/>

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## The Ferret Giving Tree Party

by Phyllis Spy

**A**ROUND the end of November or early December, I received a copy of an email from Diane Wall, which also appeared on the Ferret Mailing List. In it Diane explained that she had been blessed with much during the year and she felt a strong desire to share her blessing with others. She proposed holding a Ferret Giving Tree Party at her home. After several emails amongst several MaFF members, it was decided that Sunday, December 12th was convenient for most people. Diane said that she had placed a large order with the Ferret Store of items for the shelter ferrets on the Ferret Giving Tree. She asked that if anyone wished they could bring along some donated items to be added to the items she had.



*Diane, Trudy, Bill, Valerie, and Jackie enjoy some desserts.*

Well, you can't have a party without some refreshments, so everyone decided to chip in with a dish consisting of appetizers, sandwiches, salads, etc. Then we had some one offer to bring boxes for packing and mailing our goodies.

We all met at Diane's home around noon laden with goodies for the shelter ferrets and food for our party. We started by putting together a spread that would have fed a small army. Everyone had a chance to visit with Diane's ferrets, particularly Miss Princess Pixie Mouse, Raisin and Houdini. Trudy brought several MaFF foster kids as there was a possibility that a prospective adopting couple would be there to see them. Two of the boys were particular favorites and there were several members who were becoming quite fond of them. Well, we left the ferrets to play in the playpen in the ferret room and proceeded with our feast.

We had a great time just sitting around the table sharing ferret stories as is often the case when a group of us get together. After eating our fill of great food and topping off our meal with homemade creme puffs from Diddy, we were ready to get down to the business of putting together packages for the shelter ferrets.

Lisa and Diane started by printing out "Wish Lists" for ferrets on the Giving Tree. The list was then given to Donna Wood, Phyllis Spy, Diddy Wheeler and Vikki Walsh. Donations had been pre-sorted into specific categories from which the "elves" would then go about picking out items on the Wish List. There were hammies, sleep sacks, treats, Ferretone, toys, tubes, food, Q-tips, to name a few of the items donated by everyone attending.

After the items were selected, they were given to Trudy Wallach, Bill Harkins and Jackie Marman for packaging in mailable boxes. Rose German and Donna Wood took care of the final task of purchasing postage and printing labels for each package. Finally all the packages were stacked by the front door for the mailman in the morning.

As everyone was preparing to leave and feeling very satisfied with a day spent sharing our blessings with many shelter ferrets, it was time to gather up the MaFF foster kids as the potential adopters never showed up. Once again there were several members who were becoming very attached to two bonded males.

The next thing we knew, Diddy Wheeler was on the phone with her husband explaining that she was bringing home two new kids and that she was going to foster them for awhile (ha, ha). Well, those two boys now permanently own Diddy and Jeff Wheeler and have been re-named Simon and Theodore. They have taken over the Wheeler household and provide Diddy and Jeff with many moments of laughter at their antics.

In closing, I would like to thank Diane Wall for suggesting the Ferret Giving Tree Party and anticipate that it will be an annual MaFF Christmas



*Santa Bill busy packing.*



*Diddy and Vikki study the Giving Tree List.*



## Massachusetts Ferret Friends — Fall / Winter 2004

event, where we can come together to share our blessings with shelter operators as they care for those ferrets still waiting for their forever homes. If you were not able to attend this year's party, we look forward to seeing you next year. It is time well spent and the warm feeling of helping out stays with you for many weeks afterward. ■



Trudy and Jackie with packages.



*Diane gets a big "Atta Girl" from Phyllis: what a wonderful idea!*



Donna and Rose preparing labels and postage.



*At the end of a good day's work: ferret packages await pickup.*

### **A Note to Phyllis from Jason Longo, Vice President of TheFerretStore.com**

I am so impressed with all you have done to establish a community. Please express my gratitude to your foster parents on behalf of TheFerretstore.com.

What an outstanding group of people you must have. We can do so much to help your foster homes. I am very excited about your organization. It is very refreshing to find an organization that is thinking outside the box. I think it is just wonderful.

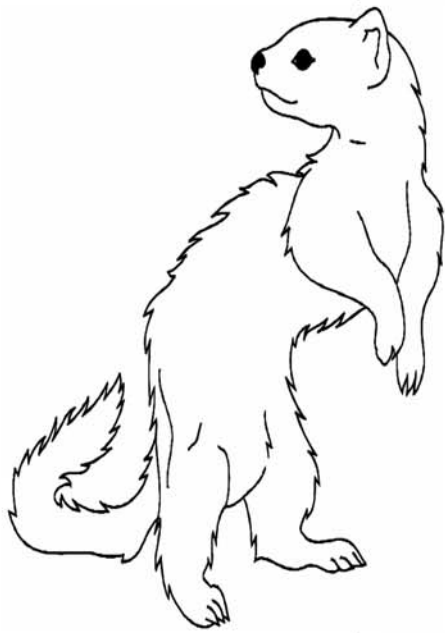
Please call on me personally anytime I can help.

Best Regards,  
Jason

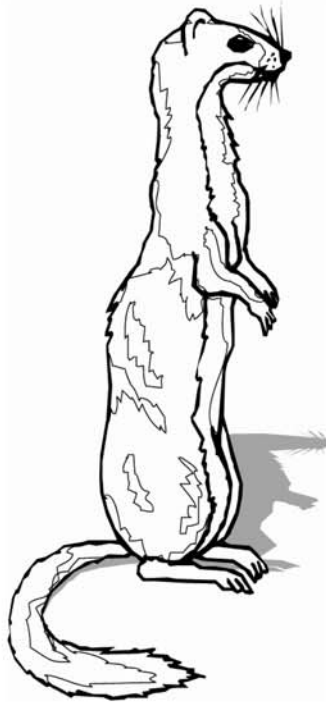


— P.S. I had to include a photo of our newest ferret Mango. He made the mistake of falling asleep at a ferret show. He was really mad when he woke up and there were 30 people standing around him pointing and laughing

**KID'S KORNER**



**Color the frolicking ferrets!**



**Ferret Word Search**

S	P	K	I	T	E	W	I	L	W	F	N	X	F	J	B	J	E	I	T
T	H	A	O	U	H	I	E	K	V	R	R	P	V	E	H	E	C	W	F
T	G	E	Y	Q	P	Z	Q	R	E	A	L	B	I	N	O	I	G	O	D
Z	W	X	L	E	H	V	N	M	T	Q	H	W	A	R	D	A	N	C	E
P	T	G	U	T	W	X	X	B	E	Y	T	W	Q	U	V	T	A	F	D
K	B	N	N	R	E	O	G	U	R	B	T	V	B	B	L	G	P	Q	M
Z	B	A	L	A	Y	R	N	S	I	F	F	A	H	F	L	S	I	V	W
O	M	I	F	W	Q	H	Q	I	N	C	D	C	S	A	H	V	G	D	U
S	C	L	P	E	J	V	H	N	A	O	B	C	G	T	M	K	K	X	W
A	R	C	S	A	R	P	E	E	R	L	J	I	W	O	Z	M	H	P	W
V	Z	L	G	G	M	R	C	S	I	X	R	N	X	P	N	P	O	H	J
H	U	I	Q	N	X	M	E	S	A	I	T	A	X	V	S	T	L	C	I
X	I	P	R	G	G	M	V	T	N	V	O	T	U	G	A	I	N	A	K
J	W	P	L	C	J	C	Q	Q	J	B	A	I	W	G	B	T	K	U	Y
G	J	E	J	D	N	G	F	A	X	T	N	O	Z	X	L	K	G	D	X
S	D	R	X	V	Z	T	R	E	A	T	S	N	N	L	E	F	X	I	T
W	M	S	F	Z	C	A	G	E	E	L	O	F	J	H	C	M	A	I	O
B	F	Z	Q	Y	C	N	C	E	C	F	H	Z	G	G	K	E	X	L	Y
Q	L	I	T	T	E	R	B	O	X	Z	Y	R	W	A	T	E	R	Q	S
H	P	G	D	J	T	Y	G	B	M	P	Q	S	X	R	Y	P	Z	R	K

- Albino 1. A pure white ferret.
- Business 2. A group of ferrets is called this.
- Cage 3. A safe place for your ferret while you are away.
- Ferret 4. Our favorite pet!
- Hammock 5. A favorite place to sleep for ferrets.
- Kit 6. A baby ferret.
- Litterbox 7. Your ferret can learn to use one.
- Nail Clippers 8. You will need to clip your ferret's nails regularly.
- Play 9. Ferrets need lots of playtime!
- Sable 10. A common ferret coloration of brown tones.
- Shelter 11. Visit one to adopt a ferret!
- Toys 12. Rubber toys are not good for ferrets, choose toys carefully.
- Treats 13. Your ferret will love these!
- Vaccination 14. Your ferret needs vaccinations against Rabies and Distemper.
- Veterinarian 15. Your ferret should see one!
- Wardance 16. A happy dance that ferrets do.
- Water 17. Supply fresh, clean water daily.



## The Adventures of MacLeod MacFerret

### Big Wind Francis

by Barbaralee Baron and Cyndi Farr

**B**EING a southern ferret now that I have lived in Florida for 5 years, I've never experienced what they call a hurricane. I heard Mom and Dad talking about battening down the hatches. I'm not sure what hatches we have — no hatches in our house, just doors and windows. So I ignored their talk and went back to playing with my dingle balls. As I climbed up on the table to look out the window, I saw that the leaves on the tree were moving really fast and that the wind was howling and moving things around outside. The sky was really dark — like at night — and it started to rain really hard. All of a sudden a piece of the tree hit the window. I jumped off the table and scurried under the futon where all my toys are hidden.

"Why are you are so scared," asked Merlin who was sleeping next to my favorite crinkly bag.

"Something hit the window and it's pouring water outside really hard."

"That's because there is a hurricane going on."

"What's a hurricane?"

"Lots of rain and wind. Sometimes the lights go out and Mom and Dad can't open the cold box where they keep the food."

"Man that is not good. How am I sup-

posed to get my favorite treat. They keep the long yellow sweet food in there" I said putting my head on my paws.

"Just hope that we don't have to leave here. If we do, then Mom and Dad have to put us in our carry boxes and take us to another place. They put us in cages."

"Why can't we go with them?"

"The safe places don't allow pets, only humans."

"I hope we don't have to go there. I don't want to be put in a strange cage."

All of a sudden the talking picture box went blank and the lights went out and the twirling thing in the ceiling stopped moving. Mom went around with a fire stick in her hand and was putting it to the long colored sticks that she called candles. They made it bright in the house. She also turned on the talking box she called a radio. The voice on the box was saying that the eye of the storm was heading for us. Storms have eyes? What kind of animal was this? The wind was rattling everything outside and making the windows shake. I cradled in mom's lap because I know she wouldn't let anything hurt me. She was real calm and reading a book. All of a sudden there was a

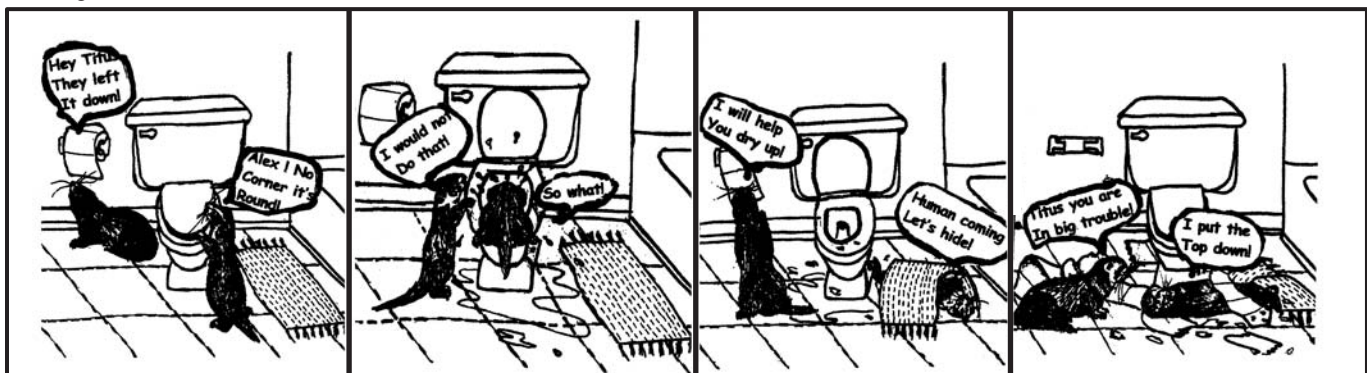
big crash outside. Mom looked out the window to see a really big tree fall down almost hitting the fence where the big dogs she calls cows live.

As the storm went on outside and the wind kept blowing the house, Mom poured bottled water in all our dishes and Dad cooked on the fire pot outside. It's a good thing that ferrets clean themselves because since the electricity was out Mom couldn't give me a bath. The bad thing is they couldn't flush the potty the normal way. Dad had to pour a bucket of water down the back.

The storm lasted what seemed like a very long time. Mom and Dad kept each other entertained by reading and playing human games. Taz and the cats slept. We couldn't leave the house and go outside. After a couple of days the storm went away but we still had no electricity and it was really warm in the house without the twirling thing moving the air around. I really wanted my long yellow treat and started thinking that I would never get it again. All of a sudden the picture box came back on. It was showing pictures of houses all fallen down and people crying. Mom said we were lucky that the eye missed us. She picked me up and headed for the bathroom. I guess it was time for my bath after all. The good thing was that the wind stopped shaking the windows and I could have my yellow fruit treat from the cold box where the food is. ■

## Alex & Titus in Ferret Joys — by Donna Spirito

The job's not finished unless it's well done.



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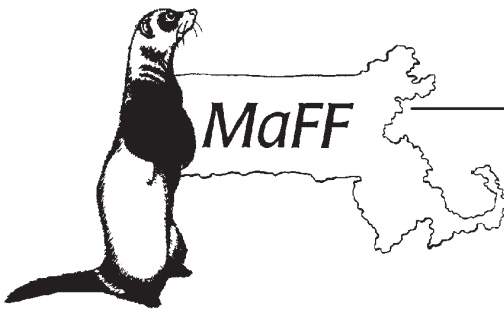
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