

The Fuzzy Papers

NEWSLETTER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS FERRET FRIENDS
WINTER 2000



MaFF's Fourth Annual Halloween Frolic

by Bill Williamson

FIRST we had to set the date, reserve the hall, and design a flyer. Then volunteers had to be solicited and a meeting held to decide what events to have, and when to schedule them so that they would all fit in to the available time. Other ferret organizations and vendors had to be contacted by mail or e-mail and asked if they wished to rent a table for the day. The hall had to be visited to determine cooking facilities and where the events would take place. The sound system had to be checked out. We also had to verify that there were enough paper goods, ribbons, merchandise and other supplies on hand to meet the needs of the day.

As the time approached, flyers were sent to members and posted at locations around the area. Flyers were also sent to the press followed by a few calls or e-mails as "reminders." Tubes for the popular "tube races" had to be gotten out, clean dirt was found for the flower pot game, bottles of spray cleaner were filled. Trips were made to Sam's Club for soda, frozen pizza and other supplies. Signs were made to show people the way after they exited the Mass Turnpike. Cooking was started and cars were loaded ready for a fresh start in the morning.

Sunday arrived with clear skies, moderate temperatures, and plenty of fall color. Several of us came early to

move tables into position, unload cars and get food preparation underway. Soon more people began to show up. Vendors were shown their tables, ferrets were checked in, more cars were unloaded and the hall began to take on a festive look. Struminsky Photography set up their equipment to take ferret portraits.

By eleven everything was in full swing. Happy people with their ferrets were coming in the door and finding old and new friends. Tables were stocked with new ferret "treasures" and Diane Wood was announcing the first games. Ferret talk and ferrets

were very much in evidence.

The Costume Contest again proved to be one of the high points of the day. If anything is more adorable to a ferret owner than a ferret, it is a ferret in a creative costume. We saw ferrets dressed as a caterpillar, as a hot dog in a bun, as daisies, and as outlaws in prison garb. Most ferrets stayed in their costumes long enough to be judged and have at least one picture taken.

Dr. Karen's cheesecake auction earned two hundred thirty seven dollars, and Owen Clark came over from Sam's Club to present us with a most generous check (in the amount of \$1,136.00!!) to match the pledges earned during last summer's car wash.

(Continued on Next Page)



What is it about ferrets? Have you ever noticed how people who are holding a ferret do so — more often than not — with beatific smiles on their faces?

(Halloween Frolic! Continued)

We also thank all our helpers and volunteers, and particularly our Frolic organizer, Jill Northrup, for all her work in (this and over the past several years) making the Halloween Frolic once again a reality, and an event to remember for all of us.

At the end of the day several of us stood around talking about the day. We were really tired, but there had been a pretty fair turnout and we were convinced that those who came had a great time. Can we do better though? Friends were made and memories

were created, but will enough new people tell others and come back with friends next year? Could we have started sooner or advertised more? How do we involve more people in the planning and setup? How do we involve more people in MaFF? What do ferret owners want from an organization, and are we meeting their needs?

We still continue to wrestle with these questions. There are thousands of ferret owners in Massachusetts, yet MaFF membership is in the hundreds. We are convinced that we are doing good things for ferrets and

meeting a need which is not being filled by the Humane Society or any other organization of which we are aware. Those who come to our events almost always have a good time and come away with great ferret toys and even better ideas. How could we do better, become better known and meet the needs of more people? If you think that you have the solution, or even part of it, please let us know. We would like to hear from as many different people as possible in the next few months. We would like to hear from YOU. ☐

The Fuzzy Papers

Is a publication of the
Massachusetts Ferret Friends, Inc.
(MaFF)

Our mailing address is:
PO Box 3123
Wakefield, MA 01880

We can be reached via Email at:
info@maferrets.org

For late-breaking news
and other information, you can reach us at
The MaFF Hotline:
781 / 224 1098
or visit our Web site at:
www.maferrets.org

Managing Editor and Layout:
Jan Fleury

Contributing Editors:
Bill Williamson
Janice DeJesus
Jo Fowler
Kristine Kelley
Jan Fleury
Jill Northrup
Betty Rebel
Ronnie DiComo
Barbaralee Baron

Contributions to this publication are
invited and encouraged.
Send articles or ideas for articles to the
MaFF office address above, or to Jan
Fleury at jfleury@maferrets.org

**Thanks to
Everyone
Who Helped
Make this
Year's
Halloween
Frolic such
a SUCCESS!**



*A Sprite with a Sprite!
Donna Spirito of The Educated Ferret Agency
(above), with her costume entry... a study in
flowers and delicate blues: breathtaking!*



More ferrets . . . and more smiles.



Irresistable ferrety daisies?! Too cute!

*Kiss a Ferret Today . . .
You'll be glad you did!*

Massachusetts Ferret Friends — Winter 2000



Whoever goes in . . .



Must come out . . . eventually . . .

A Thank-You

by Janice DeJesus,
Gimmee Shelter
Ferret Rescue

ANOTHER year coming to a close... I admitted ferret #272 today. A little black sable boy found in a back yard. This past year has been a hard one for all the shelters. Many losses, many struggles, so much anxiety and heartache. I look back to my first ferret, Chewbacca, and I would never have guessed where he would lead me.

MaFF: an organization still growing. So many ups and downs. So much controversy. So often I have heard the words and have uttered them myself, "MaFF is not doing all it should be; too many problems. I quit." I said to someone today: "It is so easy to do that, to say that, so much easier than to stay and struggle and fight."

Bless every one of you who



. . . or maybe not!

have hung in there and kept on going. How many fuzzy little lives you have helped to save. How many you have influenced and helped in so many ways.

Thank you all who have stayed throughout despite how tired and "burnt out" you may feel. Thank you all who have adopted a "perfect" or

"not so perfect" shelter fuzzy. Thank you all who have donated anything from time, a check, food, etc., to our shelters.

God Bless you all and let's hang in there another year!! Come over and look in the eyes of just one shelter kid and you will know how very worth it this all has been. ☐

. . . A Few Words from the President

by Jan Fleury

JANICE just said it all, so I have little to add. Our thanks to those who have given us their all for a number of years, but who find that they must take a breather. A reasonable antidote is to bring in more people willing to pick up and carry on. But

better still is to find ways to include more people while at the same time not burning out the people who form the backbone of this organization. Anyone who needs a break should take one. All we can hope is that one day they'll be back to us when they're

ready. So we thank now the following people who have given us their all, but have recently found that they needed to pull back a bit: Dr. Karen Purcell, Jill Northrup, Deb Honeysett, and Heather Wojtowicz. We'll be the first to welcome you each back. —jf ☐

The Fuzzy Papers

Deadlines for Submissions to
Upcoming Issues of
The Fuzzy Papers

For the Spring 2001 Issue
Friday, February 16, 2001

For the Summer 2001 Issue
Wednesday, May 16, 2001

For the Fall 2001 Issue
Thursday, August 16, 2001

Snailmail your submissions to:
MaFF / *The Fuzzy Papers*
PO Box 3123
Wakefield, MA 01880
Or email to:
jfleury@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 Jan Fleury at
jfleury@maferrets.org

Articles or letters can be neatly
handwritten, or typed, or submitted
via e-mail or on 3.5" IBM formatted
diskette as plain ASCII Text
(no word processor-specific
formats, please).

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

Hobo's Story

by Jo Fowler
Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue

It was a late evening in August that I received a phone call from a young woman in Burlington, MA. It seems that the evening before, a friend of hers who was temporarily

homeless had found a wandering ferret crossing the road and he rescued it, but not having a place to stay himself, he brought the ferret to his friend.

This young woman knew that the ferret, who we named Hobo, needed medical attention and she was unable to provide it so she brought him to me. Hobo was definitely in need of medical help — he needed adrenal surgery and his spleen removed, and that was done in late August. It also turns out that Hobo has insulinoma that he is on meds for. Then, to make matters even worse for the poor little guy he needed to undergo yet another operation for a malignant mammary gland tumor. That operation took place in early Novem-

ber - the little guy is a valiant fighter and is coming along well.

But with other ferrets, Hobo is a timid guy and feels most comfortable when out alone and in the company of the shelter folks. He will give kisses, enjoy surfing the ferret tube, go through the toy box picking out that "special" toy, and even climb into the laundry basket.



Hobo peeking out from the relative safety of a cozy ferret tent!

Hobo's medical expenses have been reimbursed by MaFF's Good Samaritan Fund, this fund is a very special fund set up at the request of a caring benefactor who made the first generous donation to it. This fund is for ferrets that come into the shelter system, as did Hobo (a wanderer), and have a great medical need. □

Kristine's Tips for Sharing Holiday Cheer with Your Fuzzies!

by
Kristine Kelley

Sleigh Rides — Take an old towel and walk around dragging it behind you. See what it attracts!

Jingle-Bell Sock — Cut a small slit in a tennis ball and pop in a jingle bell. Then insert your Jingle-Ball into an old sock. Toss and watch!

Bobbing for Cheerios — Take a small basin and float a handful of favorite treats. They'll know what to do!

Holiday Photos — Try taking pictures of your furkids in a santa hat or other holiday poses.

Bows and Ribbons and Paper, Oh My! — Let your fuzzies help wrap gifts this year. It will take twice as long, but it will be much more fun!

Mystic's Story

by Jo Fowler

Luv of Ferrets Shelter & Rescue

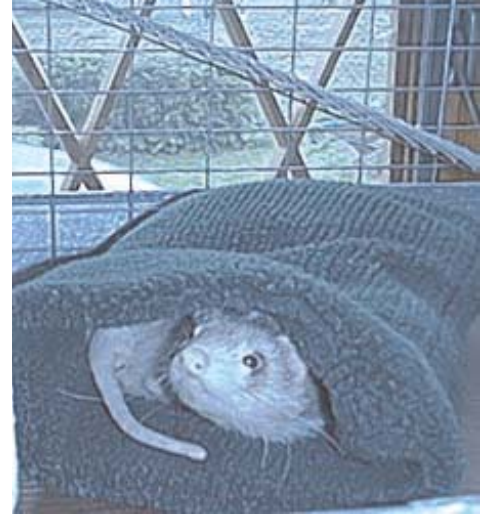
THIS is Mystic's story, which also appears on the Luv of Ferrets web site.

In mid June of this year Mystic was found wandering across the Mystic Valley Pkwy in Medford. He was a sorry little sight because he was nothing but skin and bones (literally), and very nearly all of his fur was gone. Just a little remained on his head to indicate his color was that of a Blaze. The gentleman who rescued Mystic was not sure what Mystic was or if he were rabid, but he was not going to let the turkey hawk that was hovering overhead get him, so he scooped him up and asked me if I would take him. The next day Mystic was at the vet and scheduled for adrenal surgery.

Now Mystic has his fur back (all

but his tail, where it is slowly returning). Although he is not afraid of other ferrets, he really prefers to be a loner. He will amble about with the other shelter ferrets, but will not engage in play, nor will he snuggle with the others. He needs the company of a good human friend to love and pet him. I consider Mystic a "SPECIAL NEEDS" ferret.

In October just as I was preparing to leave on a trip I received a phone call from a wonderful young woman, Kristine Kelley — a MaFF member who asked me what she could do to help me and the shelter. My response to her was, "Foster." She was back to me saying that she would foster Mystic on a permanent basis. Kristine has taken Mystic into her home and family "Business of ferrets." Mystic is one very happy and loved little guy. And by the way, all the fur on his tail has returned, and he is only too happy to give kisses and dance with joy. ☐



Mystic peeking out of his snuggle sack as we was in recovery from his surgery.



Mystic — happy and safe now with his foster Mom, Kristine Kelley.

Ferrets Have Fate, Too!

by Betty Rebel

Someone left me months ago
I don't know why I'm here.
They dropped me off and drove away
They won't be back, I fear!

Did I do something wrong
Did I dance the wrong way?
Did I miss my poopy box
Too many times today?

I miss them already.
Oh! What will I do?
I don't have a home
Can I come with you?

I don't know why they left me
I din't do nuttin' wrong.
But they can't have me back
They've taken way too long.

Now, I'm looking for a place
Where people like my kind.
I know I can be a handful
But I will keep your heart in mind.

I know it's a big decision
Please take your time and think it through.
I'll wait her while you're deciding
Your heart knows what to do!

Someone left me months ago
I miss them every now and then.
But here I am with folks who love me...
I guess in the long run I win!

No more shelters or scary moves.
No more wondering where I belong.
'Cause the shelter answered that for me:
I was meant to be here all along.

— © 2000 Betty Rebel

Oops!

In our fall 2000 issue, we did not entirely accurately report the amount of the donation check we received from Sam's Club! Please read the article on Page 1 about the Halloween Frolic to find out just how truly generous Sam's Club, Natick was to MaFF after our car wash!

Tyler Finds a Home

by Jill Northrup

PHYLLIS Spy is a wonderful person. Her little Tyler was one of the fuzzies from the MSPCA in Boston. Phyllis had been looking for a companion fuzzie and Jan DeJesus remembered that I was visiting one at Boston, so she put her in touch with me. I described to Phyllis this BEAUTIFUL baby who needed a home, and Phyllis fell in love with him sight unseen! See the photo of Tyler, right. I get regular updates! The photo really captures his personality: full of love of life!

[And a note from Phyllis herself:

"To all the folks at MaFF — Just wanted to thank you all for a WONDERFUL time at the Halloween Frolic. The games, raffles, auctions, etc. were just great. Everything was so well organized and ran pretty much on schedule. We were so busy playing games that I didn't get to visit all the vendor tables to check out neat stuff and didn't get to look up folks that I said I would say 'Hi' to.

Did get some good fuzzie stuff and I bought a DELICIOUS apple pie baked by Dr. Karen — had 3 slices be-



Tyler playing in his rice box of fun. Try this with YOUR ferrets!

fore I went to bed. Great pie crust, Dr. Karen. Look forward to next year's frolic. Great work, Jill (and Tyler sends big hugs & dooks) —Phyllis & Duchess, Tobey, Tyler & Jenny". □



Postings from Dr. Bruce Williams

Submitted by
Ronnie DiComo

MANY of you know of Dr. Bruce Williams, veterinary pathologist who is very highly regarded in the ferret community. In addition to running one of the world's largest teleconsultation practices, he's also recognized as one of the world's top experts on ferrets. Dr. Williams posts regularly to the Internet Ferret Mailing List (FML) and has graciously given permission to reprint any of his FML posts. His website www.afip.org/ferrets contains extensive information on ferrets, including a Powerpoint presentation which he gave at Ferrets 2000 in September 2000. This presentation can be downloaded through MS Explorer for Windows. [For further information on receiving the FML, contact bigcu@cunyvms.cuny.edu]

Here is a sampling of Dr. Williams' postings:

Vet Practices

Q: I have been present for surgeries on three of my ferrets (I like to watch, I

always learn something). Each time, my ferret has been given an injection to knock him out before he is placed on the table with the isoflourane mask over his face. Is this pre-injection not a good thing to do?

A: I generally recommend gassing ferrets down, either by facemask or in a tank. Injectable anesthetics are unpredictable in ferrets, and can result in prolonged anesthesia. Additionally, some of the commonly used tranquilizers, such as acepromazine, predispose to hypothermia by causing dilation of blood vessels around the body. The nice part about simple gas induction is that if you run into problems you turn off the gas, pump up the oxygen, and the animal comes up quickly. The problem with injectable anesthetics is that once you administer them, you can't get them back. (Some can be antagonized by other drugs, but most of the common injectable anesthetics or preanesthetics cannot.)

Q: After surgery, I am handed my little patient so I can hold him until he comes around. I have noticed that each of my ferret's little bodies have felt very cold immediately after surgery. When they start to come around, they shiver a lot, and eventually warm up. I

worry about them getting so cold during surgery, and now your post has me thinking that I really have something to worry about!

A: All ferrets having abdominal surgery, including a spay, should be on some type of heating pad. Ferrets tend to become hypothermic readily during surgery, and should be monitored after surgery until their temperature returns to 100°F or higher.

Q: Lastly, what does "appropriate fluid therapy" during abdominal surgery consist of?

A: Fluid therapy in the form of either IV or subcutaneous fluids should be administered during surgery. Ferrets which will not be able to eat or drink following surgery — usually insulinomas — for 24 hours should receive subcutaneous fluids during surgery and again after surgery, which will handle 24 hours of the animal's needs. For surgeries in which significant bleeding is a possibility, an IV line should be placed. This information is available on my web site at www.afip.org/ferrets, in the section titled "What's New in Ferret Medicine" and was also published in the *Vet Clinics of North America, Exotic Ani-*

(Continued Next Page)

mal Practice, January 2000 (in case your vet has a copy.)

Post-Op Adrenal Care

Q: My little ferret is going in for adrenal surgery in a couple of weeks. Does anyone have any suggestions on how to make her comfortable as possible after her surgery? I already have a cage made up just for her alone, full of comfy, soft fleece bedding and a low litter pan for easy in's & out's. How long do you normally keep separated from other fuzzies after surgery? She does not like to be alone ... she loves her cagemates.

A: A competent surgeon makes for the fastest recovery. Your idea of a separate cage is a good one. I generally wait 4 to 6 days before allowing the post-op ferret to mix with the others: long enough to know that there is no seepage from the incision, and that there is minimal inflammation. If the ferret is showing any pain at the incision when you clean it (which you should do daily with a bit of hydrogen peroxide), I would hold off a bit, too. Under supervision, you can allow a little mingling, but let's not let them sleep or romp together for a while. Daily cleaning with a soft cloth and hydrogen peroxide for about 5 days is a good idea. Dried blood is very itchy and may make her chew at the stitches. If there is redness or swelling at the site of the incision, or any of the stitches, show it to your vet. For the first 3 days after surgery, I recommend replacing the litter with shredded newspaper. Small pieces of litter may stick to the incision and even work their way into it superficially. Generally it doesn't cause much of a problem, but it can be distressing to the ferret to have it removed. No kibble for a couple of days — I generally use baby food for a couple of days afterward with a slow return to kibble. Whenever you anesthetize a ferret for more than a blood drawing, the intestine tends to slow down or stop, and it really isn't up to kibble for a couple of days.

With kindest regards,

—Bruce Williams, DVM □

The Adventures of MacLeod MacFerret

Episode 7: MacLeod Visits Sea World

by Barbaralee Baron and Cyndi Farr

SEA World, the name sounds huge. Imagine a whole world of sea creatures. These were things I dreamed of as we approached our destination. As we entered the gates the first stop was "Sea Turtle Cove." They weren't like your normal turtle. They were lighter in color and shaped differently. Most of them stayed underwater. Very anti-social beings.

We moved from there to the "Dolphin Cove." These dolphins were similar to my friend Aquarius, but bigger and all one color. [MacLeod met Aquarius in *Episode 6: MacLeod Goes Surfing*. See it in our Fall 2000 issue!—Ed.] They came right up to us asking for food. Mom bought special fish and we fed them. They thanked us by splashing us with their tails. From there we continued on to the Stingray pool. These remind me of birds in the sky except they are black and under water.

Our next stop was the ride to "The Lost City of Atlantis." We got into a boat and were transported undersea. A golden seahorse was our guide. We saw the city's riches and encountered an evil merwitch. She tried to trap us into staying, but the golden seahorse saved us by showing us the way out by climbing a large waterfall and then sliding down it. It was fun and I got really wet. This felt good because it was hot out.

Mom thought we needed to dry off, and so we went to see the "Clyde & Seymore" show. A mime dressed

like a pirate showed us to our seats. He was funny, imitating people as they entered the theatre. A little while later another mime came up and asked if I wanted to be in the show (with Mom of course)! They took us backstage and dressed us like pirates.

It was then that I saw her. My heart stopped, my breath caught in my throat. She was the most beautiful, sleek creature I ever saw. The sun glittered off her brown coat. I instantly fell in love. Her name was Olivia the Otter. I was to help her steal the treasure map. We got to chat with each other while Mom got directions for her part. Olivia said she liked being in the show, but unfortunately never got to see the rest of the park. It was then that I had the bright idea of escaping and taking in the park together.

So we did our part in the show, and then while everyone was changing we sneaked off. We rode the "Congo River Raft Ride," and visited the Cydesdales: man are they big horses with really BIG feet! We also got to go to Egypt and see the boy king's tomb. It was there that Mom finally caught up with us. Olivia's trainer and Mom were really mad at us, but very glad we weren't hurt. She thought we went over to the jungle tour and got too close to the lions. I kissed Olivia good-bye and told her I would try to come back again to visit.

□

**Stay Tuned for
Episode 8!**

We need YOU to step forward and become a MaFF Committee Chairperson.

FUNDRAISING

This position needs a dynamic and energetic (ideally a duo!!) person or persons to take on this VERY IMPORTANT heart-of-the-operation committee.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Are you good at Press Releases, and do you have excellent people-diplomatic skills and great corporate connections? We're YOUR CAUSE!!!

***There's No Time Like
the Present . . . Join the MaFF NOW!***

*If you're not already a contributor to the MaFF, or if you'd like to renew your membership,
you can do so by filling out this coupon and sending it in, or send email to
info@maferrets.org, or call us at 781 / 224 1098 for a contribution form.*

Please indicate one of the following — New Membership Renewal

name _____

address _____

telephone () _____

Level of Support — Friend (Individual) \$25 Family \$35 Sponsor \$50

Total enclosed \$ _____

Your contribution is valid for one year from date of issue and includes a MaFF card, a subscription to the MaFF newsletter, *The Fuzzy Papers*, and special offers on ferret-related items from other interested businesses and organizations. Massachusetts Ferret Friends, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Please send this coupon, along with your contribution as a check or money order to: Massachusetts Ferret Friends, Inc.,
PO Box 3123, Wakefield, MA 01880

TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR MAILING LABEL for the expiration date of your membership!
Be sure to renew your membership before your expiration date so you won't miss even
a single issue of *The Fuzzy Papers*! If you need a renewal form, use the coupon on this
page, or contact the Membership Group by calling the MaFF Hotline at 224 / 224 1098,
or sending e-mail to member@maferrets.org. DO IT TODAY!

Massachusetts Ferret Friends, Inc.
PO Box 3123
Wakefield, MA 01880
(a nonprofit organization)

