

A poor economy time, when everyone is struggling just to make ends meet, is not the time for a lot of physical growth. If you have visited us throughout the year, you will have seen small **improvements happening in every animal neighborhood**. Those of you who've visited once every month or two keep saying, "Things are looking even better on this visit." That has been mantra for 2010, thanks to a huge number of dedicated volunteers and many new volunteer programs. Thank you Katarina!

Rabbit Rotunda II is nearing its completion. Thank you David and Christine! Soon we will be able to accept more rabbits, guinea pigs and pigeons. As most animal neighborhoods are, the original Rabbit Rotunda is at capacity. Even though it may look like there is still open space, we can't overcrowd the animals. Overcrowding creates stress, stress creates illness and arguing, and then nobody's happy.



The overflowing of rabbits is just a reminder to never, never ever, give animals as gifts or get an animal on an impulse or because you just have to have one when you see it. Most of our rabbits started out as Easter presents for kids or as pets for adults who saw them at Easter time and thought, "gee what a cute little bunny." But as all living creatures do, rabbits poop and pee, and their cages will smell just horrible if there isn't a diligent human caring for it every day. Yes, every day! The number one reason rabbits are given up is because they "smell bad". Now, I know the rabbit doesn't smell bad! And I know the rabbit, who has a far more sensitive nose than we do, hates the smell of that stinky cage even more than the people do.

No animal is an appropriate gift for Christmas. **Never mix gift giving with the life commitment of caring for an animal.** Don't teach your children through this bad example. When your family is ready to add a new animal, please work through the decision as a family. Explore the care needs of the particular species you are considering.

What IS acceptable as a Christmas gift, is a gift certificate to cover the cost of adoption once the family has made a unified decision on who should join them as a new forever member. Always consider the lifespan of an animal and please do not adopt unless you are ready to make a commitment for that period of time. And never, never buy an animal. No matter who you would like to invite to your home, there is one sitting in a shelter somewhere waiting just for you.

2010 brought us a new Quarantine Building. Thank you Marjorie, Rene, Ron and Paul! When it's ready for occupancy in 2011 it will provide an even safer environment for new residents.



Ron and Paul began the **expansion of Cat House Number One**. When finished, the kitties will have twice the play area and a lovely adoption center where they can meet prospective families. Thank you Ron and Paul. (Their ground breaking day made the front page!)

Jake earned his Eagle Scout by building a **new horse barn** for Rikki's! Thank you Jake and family and friends who all worked so hard.

Rene spent weeks running an assembly line in her home creating Kitty Nesting Boxes so she could outfit **every Cat House at Feline Fields with several warm cozy boxes**. The kitties give her a thumbs up (at least the polydactyls do) for such a creative, cozy design. Thank you Rene!

Margaret took to the sewing machine and made a **hammock for every one of our hospital cages**. The kitties, chinchilla, and even some rabbits and guinea pigs absolutely adored their new form fitting comfort beds! Thank you Margaret.

Thank you Bill for **replacing leaking roofs at Feline Fields**. Thank you Bob for **fixing fences and Club Houses at Doggie Downs**. And for being there when you had to walk down the mile long driveway in 3 feet of snow to make sure our generator was working.

All improvements at Rikki's are designed to improve quality of life. Thank you David and Christine for donating Rabbit Rotunda II.



David shares his lunch with KiKi. She loved the ice cold water all summer long!



In the spring these doves will move into Rabbit Rotunda II where they can stretch their wings and really Fly!



OUR MISSION

Rikki's Refuge is a 367 acre, no-kill, all species peaceful sanctuary, supported solely by donations from kind and loving individuals, just like you. Our mission is to reduce, with the ultimate goal to totally eliminate, homelessness amongst animals of all species. Loving, thinking, breathing individuals who so often must pay the ultimate price for their simple crime of being homeless with their very lives. Creatures who want the same chance to life and love and peace and happiness that you and I do. We carry out this mission by:

- rescuing homeless, abandoned, abused and or injured domestic and farm animals, providing medical care (traditional, alternative and holistic), finding suitable homes for adoption, and for many (the handicapped, the elderly, the unsocial, those displaced due to the death, incapacitation or displacement of their human companion) providing permanent shelter, care, love and compassion;
- promoting zero pet population growth through education and low-cost or free spay/neuter in an attempt to reduce the number of homeless animals, which often end up in animal shelters;
- promoting awareness of the animal kingdom through educational programs that teach compassion, for we firmly believe one who learns to feel compassion toward any living creature makes the world a more compassionate, caring and peaceful planet; our programs are designed for children, the elderly, the homeless and the handicapped;
- providing a site for safe release and the future home of rehabilitated native Virginia wildlife;
- maintaining 297 acres of pristine natural woodlands and wetlands where native Virginia wildlife may always roam free of human intervention.

Rikki's Refuge is owned & operated by Life Unlimited of Virginia, Inc, an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit Virginia Corporation. Federal Tax-ID 54-1911042, your donations provide direct support. A financial statement is available upon written request from the Virginia State Office of Consumer Affairs. Members: Combined Federal Campaign #77674, Combined Virginia Campaign #3163, PetSmart Charities #1377, iGive, paypal.com (mail@rikkisrefuge.org).

A big thanks to the hard working, dedicated members of Rikki's Board of Directors: Beth Hamilton, Bob Wallace, Candy Erhard, Cindy Wright, Crystal Bane, Debra Barrett, Deloris Quick, Dennis Bane, Fred Friedman, Jan Chetnik, Jane Whitmore, Joe Callahan, Katarina Galvin, Kathy Gallagher, Kerry Hilliard, Kurt Link, Larry Ramsey, Laurie Karnay, Mariza Soliman, Mary Walker, Michael Wood, Mike Gallagher, Paul Erhard, Rene Luther, Ron Herfurth. Advisors, Coordinators and Liaisons: Andi Dies, Judith Peele, Kerri Williams, Lena Stocks, Tom Sabol. Invited Guests: Alyce Smith, Bill Isen, Donna Winans, Grant Fincham, Kathy Doucette, Katie Fincham, Melanie Hansford.

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