



Rabbit Sanctuary Newsletter

Sponsor-A-Rabbit

A Program of Rabbit Sanctuary, Inc.

**OUR MISSION: TO PROVIDE RESCUED DOMESTIC RABBITS
A HOME FOR LIFE**

IN THIS ISSUE

Sparkle



A guardian angel?

Page 1

Little Flower



Finding joy!

Page 2

Looking for a summer read?



Page 2

Learn about charitable giving and your IRA.



Page 3

Sanctuary News



Page 4

Pet trusts. What you need to know to protect your pet.



Page 5

FEATURE STORY

Sparkle



The little Lionhead was trying her best to survive but was not faring well in big horse, cow, and farming country. First, domestic rabbits are gregarious so for one rabbit on her own, everything is just too overwhelming.

Second, the poor little rabbit has a serious physical condition: both of her back knees were swollen and appeared to be extremely painful. This slowed her down considerably, making her easy prey. Her time was running out.

Fortunately, a young girl saw the rabbit and knew she had to catch her, especially when she noticed the rabbit was having difficulty hopping. In the pursuit, the girl unwittingly ended up in another's pasture. A man approached her, gun in hand. "Get off my land," he yelled. She replied, "I'm trying to catch a pet rabbit." The man waved the gun and yelled angrily, "I'll shoot the damn rabbit." The girl retreated but resolved to keep watch for the struggling little rabbit and to continue her pursuit albeit not on that particular property. Within a few days the rabbit re-appeared. The girl was able to secure her with no resistance from either the rabbit or the angry man.

The rabbit's condition was poor. She was quite thin and had fleas, ticks, and warbles. Both back knees were swollen. The left knee was oozing pus. The girl headed straight to her vet with the rabbit. The vet administered anti-parasitic to kill the fleas. The ticks and warbles were removed, and the warble "wounds" were flushed. X-rays were taken of the rabbit's knees and legs.

Presented with the bill, the rabbit's rescuer needed financial help and reached out to Greg and Angel at Izzie's Pond Sanctuary. As friends of the Rabbit Sanctuary, Greg and Angel contacted us. They arrived, paid the vet bill, and drove the rabbit to us.



After a few days of “settling in,” we drove the rabbit, now named Sparkle, to Healthpointe where Doctor Hurlbert reviewed the x-rays. She explained, “Sparkle’s condition is congenital. Her femur and tibia are malaligned in both back legs, and this of course affects her knee joints.”

Sparkle’s condition makes her a special needs rabbit. As such, she will have to live in the Health Care Building to receive her meds and special care for the rest of her life. Sparkle was introduced to Brisco, also a special needs rabbit with an injured back. They do wonderfully together and life is good for both.

None of us involved in Sparkle’s rescue caught the name of the brave young girl who saved Sparkle’s life. We really feel bad about this, as we like to pay tribute to the kind people who go to great lengths to save rabbits.

You can help by sponsoring Sparkle. Her medical expenses, medications, and spay surgery so far total \$294.



Little Flower

This chocolate Dutch was approximately 7 months old when she arrived at the Sanctuary in October 2017. She sports a dense two-tone fur coat giving her the appearance of wearing a white shirt and slippers with chocolate-colored trousers. A matching chocolate mask around her eyes includes her shapely long ears but separates leaving a white blaze down the center of her face. Her bright brown eyes reflect much intelligence.

She fulfilled a great purpose here at the Sanctuary: Our little brown lop, Yardley, had recently lost his mate. So lonely without her, he sat alone in the corner of his large territory grieving. Despite the age difference – Yardley is 7 years Little Flower’s elder – we introduced them. There was an instant spark. Yardley’s joie de vivre was back!



Little Flower & Yardley in their rabbit territory.

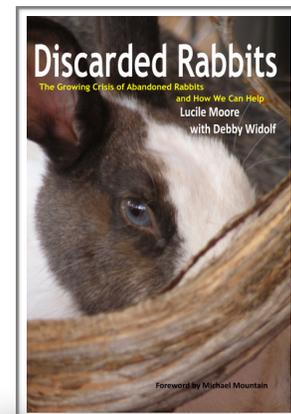
Little Flower runs circles around the perimeter of their large territory, leaping, bucking, and cutting figure 8’s like a quarter horse. She circles their burrow, diving in one end and out the other in a blink. Yardley can’t compete with Little Flower, but he enjoys trying or just watching. He remembers, “I used to be able to do all that. Now I’m better with grooming and grazing activities.”

It’s no wonder Kristen Zinkann needed several days to finally secure this speedy Little Flower. She had been turned out in a large property off Augusta Road in Greenville. Kristen said, “I knew I had to catch her because I knew she would never survive on her own.” Yardley and Little Flower and all of us at the Sanctuary are so grateful for Kristen’s kindness.

You can help offset the \$294 cost of Little Flower’s spay surgery and wellness check-up by sponsoring her.

Discarded Rabbits The Growing Crisis of Abandoned Rabbits and How We Can Help

Lucile Moore with Debby Widolf of Best Friends Animal Sanctuary has written a wonderful book on discarded rabbits and the serious situation this creates. This issue and the scope of the problem have been well-kept secrets for years, unacknowledged and unaddressed. This book moves this crisis from the shadows into the light. It is a must read for anyone interested in general animal control and specifically for those in the rescue and sanctuary fields. Working together, we can hopefully curb this escalating problem.





When “Thank You” Just Isn’t Enough

This year the Rabbit Sanctuary received two generous gestures of support we’d like to acknowledge. Each has been sent a letter of sincere thanks, but that hardly seems enough. We’d like you to know about them and how very grateful we are.

The annual Auction for a Kaws Bachelor/Bachelorette event was another resounding success. The gala was something not often seen in these parts. A round of applause for Keli Miller and her team for all their hard work in planning and executing a night of fun, food, and music. The auction items included trips, jewelry, and wine...all donated in support of this event and Keli and her team’s effort to assist animal rescue organizations in the Upstate. This year the Rabbit Sanctuary received \$5000!

The On Shore Foundation in Malibu, CA, is a family foundation providing grants to organizations that fit our profile. We’re small, staffed by volunteers, and meet their financial limits. After submitting our request for assistance, we waited and hoped. After all, Malibu, CA, is a long way from Simpsonville, SC. Given the more well-known organizations who may have applied, we wondered how good our chances were. Well, our waiting and hoping were rewarded with a \$2000 donation!

So, you may be wondering how this money will be used. The real question is, “How has this money BEEN used?” In previous newsletters, our regular readers were made aware of our water issues, which we dubbed our “Puddle Project.” Heavy rains created flooding in the rabbit territories, creating unsanitary conditions. The total to remediate these issues and remove a centuries old tree that was threatening the Medical Building amounted to almost \$10,000. To say this expenditure ate a portion of our annual budget is an understatement. It ate a significant portion of our budget! The donations received from the Auction for a Kaws and the On Shore Foundation allowed us to breathe a little easier. For this, thank you just isn’t enough.



IRA Minimum Distributions

New tax laws have impacted charitable giving so many are looking for innovative ways to continue supporting their favorite non-profits. Those who are age 70-1/2 or over are required by law to make Minimum Required Distributions (RMD) from their IRAs. Donating all or a percentage of one’s RMD to a charity will satisfy IRS rules. What follows is some information from IRS.gov. That said, however, it’s always a good idea to consult your CFP or tax professional regarding your specific situation.

Qualified Charitable Distributions

What is a qualified charitable distribution?

Generally, a qualified charitable distribution is an otherwise taxable distribution from an IRA (other than an ongoing SEP or SIMPLE IRA) owned by an individual who is age 70½ or over **that is paid directly from the IRA to a qualified charity.** See [Pub. 590-B](#), Distributions from Individual Retirement Arrangements (IRAs) for additional information.

Can a qualified charitable distribution satisfy my required minimum distribution from an IRA?

Yes, your qualified charitable distributions can satisfy all or part the amount of your required minimum distribution from your IRA.

How do I report a qualified charitable distribution on my income tax return?

To report a qualified charitable distribution on your Form 1040 tax return, you generally report the full amount of the charitable distribution on the line for IRA distributions. On the line for the taxable amount, enter zero if the full amount was a qualified charitable distribution. Enter "QCD" next to this line. See the Form 1040 instructions for additional information.



Annual Picnic with the Rabbits?

As you're reading this in summer, you may be wondering what happened to the Sanctuary's annual picnic normally held each spring. How did you miss it? What happened?

As it turns out, you didn't miss it. In years past, our annual rabbit soiree has been at the mercy of the weather. While many diehard attendees were willing to brave chilly temperatures, rain brought additional problems. Being chilly is one thing, but wet is another entirely. Parking capacity was always a challenge, but parking in mud made getting in and out a real effort.

While we have no control over the weather, we felt the drainage and water issues could be addressed. Earlier this year, the Sanctuary undertook an extensive capital project to remediate some of the issues recent heavy rains have intensified. Because our abnormally rainy winter delayed progress, we could not be assured the work would be done in time to host the picnic.

Considering all knowns and unknowns, the decision was made to cancel the 2019 open house. Future decisions will be made on a year-by-year basis, and the date may be changed to avoid spring rains. Be assured that Sanctuary Supporters can count on receiving an invitation to this and other special events.



Susan, Lorrie, Dot, Michael, and Jonathan enjoying great food and conversations on a volunteer workday.

No Invitation Needed

If you were disappointed that our 2019 annual open house was cancelled, take heart. Sanctuary Supporters are welcome to come visit. No invitation is needed, but reservations are. To ensure someone is available to introduce you to the rabbits and enrich your visit, please contact the Sanctuary to reserve a day and time.

The Sanctuary is also open to visits from well chaperoned Scout troops and home schoolers. Here again, reservations are needed, just drop us an e-mail.



Gentle Reminder

It is not our intention to send unwanted mailings. With that thought, individuals will remain on our mailing list for one year after their last support of the Sanctuary. As a gentle reminder, the date of your last donation is included on your mailing label. Please check your label's date to ensure you continue receiving the Sanctuary's news. Our donors are the heartbeat of this organization. It is only with your support that we exist and the rabbits in our care have the future they deserve. Your faithful donations, large or small, are gratefully appreciated.

Ready for Our Close-Up



We hope you caught our Sanctuary volunteer on the April 13 Channel 4 morning news. We are so grateful to WYFF for providing us an opportunity each year to bring our "Don't Buy Easter Bunnies" message to their viewers. While we have no hard statistics on how many people were deterred from making that unwise purchase, we know that if just one family said NO!, we saved a rabbit's life.

Imagine our surprise when Madeleine Hackett, the news anchor, expressed an interest in doing a feature story on our rabbits and our work. Just 3 days later, she and a cameraman came to the Sanctuary and interviewed Caroline. Appearing just before Easter, the piece had a very timely and important message. We were all thrilled with the interview and video of the rabbits and Rabbitats. You can be just as thrilled by visiting our website and accessing the clip.



Who will take care of your beloved pet rabbit after you pass away?

Consider a ‘pet trust’

BY ERIK R. BOGART, Attorney with Bogart Law Firm, P.A.

“In this world,” Benjamin Franklin is quoted as saying in 1789, “nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.” While mortality is certain, statistics show that many people die without having executed a valid will or revocable living trust. Even if you happen to be someone who has done so, it is quite likely that your estate planning documents lay out your wishes in terms of who will inherit your house, your car, your bank accounts, and the living room furniture. However, it is equally likely that your end-of-life paperwork includes no mention of what will happen to your beloved pet rabbit.

These are important questions to consider: Who will take care of your bunny? Where will he or she live? Who will become your pet rabbit’s new “guardian”? [We at the Rabbit Sanctuary don’t believe in using the term “owner.”] What provisions need to be made for your bunny rabbit’s care? How much money should reasonably be set aside to handle your pet rabbit’s care, in the event that his or her guardian passes away first?

It would be understandable if these questions have never come up in the past. Traditionally, in the eyes of the law, your pet rabbit (as well as any other pet animals you may have) would generally be considered your “personal property.” Indeed, as terrible as it sounds, upon your passing, your beloved pet would pass according to the terms of your will (or if there is no will, then according to your state’s intestacy laws), and treated much in the same manner (in terms of distribution) as your Honda sedan or your old sofa.

The idea that one’s beloved pet bunny could be left behind in such a precarious situation—without his guardian around to offer any clear instruction as to the pet’s ongoing care—is a frightening one. Even well-meaning relatives or friends, who might inherit under the decedent’s will, very well might—without any clear guidance or any specific instructions—have no idea what to do, nor understand the special needs of a pet rabbit. Or even worse, what if your pet were to, by some twist of fate, fall into less sympathetic hands—one can only imagine what kind of nightmare scenario might result. These are all terrible things to think about.

It goes without saying that while pets are legally be considered simply as “property,” to their guardians, these beloved animals are often their best friends—and in many cases, are like family. Fortunately, this nightmare scenario described above can be avoided. When a person is considering his/her estate planning, the care of pets is a very important matter to be addressed. A pet trust is a very good tool to achieve this objective.

Section 408 of the South Carolina Trust Code authorizes the creation of trusts for the care of animals. This provision, which was passed by the South Carolina General Assembly in 2006, is an important one—mainly because, historically, prior to its passage, attempts to construct so-called “pet trusts” were not recognized by the Courts. They often failed for a number of reasons, one of which was because such trusts did not have a person or beneficiary with standing to enforce the trust’s terms. For example, Leona Helmsley famously left \$12 million in her will to her Maltese dog; unfortunately, it did not hold up legally and most of that money went to others whom had not been intended as beneficiaries. Thankfully, the laws have modernized in this regard, and these days, pet trusts are considered a viable—and for many, perhaps even indispensable—part of estate planning.

A trust for the care of an animal, or “pet trust,” is a legally recognized document that allows you to provide financial support for the care of your pet (or pets) in the event of your death or disability. They work much like a conventional “revocable living trust,” and involve the establishment of a financial fund that is only to be used for the care of your pet, and the appointment of a “trustee” (essentially a “caretaker”)—this is the person who is charged with the fiduciary responsibility to oversee that the trust funds are properly applied toward the ongoing care of your pet after you are gone, and that the terms of the pet trust are enforced.

One benefit of the pet trust over a standard will is that it goes into effect *immediately*, and can alleviate or mitigate problems involved with an owner’s estate. For example, a pet trust could be helpful if there are estate administration complexities due to will contests or delays in the probate process. Even if there are no major problems with an owner’s estate, a separate or stand-alone pet trust would provide seamless care for pets in the event of the owner’s death. Even if one has executed a standard will that provides generally who would “inherit” their pet, keep in mind that there is usually a period of time after someone’s death before the will document is actually located, read, and submitted to the Probate Court. This “gap” leaves open the issue of who owns and cares for the pet during this period—and could in many ways invite a dangerous risk to the well-being of your beloved pet in the interim. Another benefit of a pet trust is that it can provide for the care of an animal in the event of the owner’s mental incapacity, as well as the owner’s death. It is also important to note that under Section 408 of the South Carolina Trust Code, *any person concerned with the welfare of the animal* (not just family members or heirs to the estate) can petition the Probate Court to appoint a person to enforce the trust (or remove a person appointed, if they are not fulfilling their fiduciary duties pursuant to the trust).

Here are some important elements to consider in designing an effective pet trust:

- **Custody/guardianship:** Consider naming one or more persons (or organizations) in successive order to care for your pet.
- **Funding:** Generally, for a trust to be legitimately formed and to be effective, it must be “funded.” It can be funded by setting up a bank account in which a set amount has been deposited, with additional funds being added by virtue of a bequest in a will or by making the pet trust a beneficiary in your life insurance policy. Factors to consider when deciding on how much funding is needed are things like, how many pets are to be included in the trust, the life expectancy of the pet, and the expected costs of caring for the pet (e.g. veterinary care, food, supplies, standard of living they are accustomed to, etc.).
- **Appointment of Trustee/Caregiver:** The trustee can be the person who will be serving as the custodian/guardian, although in some cases, one might want to appoint a different or independent person or organization known as a “trust protector” whose role would be to oversee the trustee to make sure the terms of the trust are being met—thus providing further protection for your animal.
- **Remainder beneficiary:** Traditionally, the courts have frowned upon any will or trust that leaves what might be considered to be an unreasonably large amount of money for the care of an animal (i.e. more than deemed to be necessary for the expected lifetimes of the animals). Also, by its very definition, the animal trust officially ends upon the death of the last animal in the trust. Therefore, to avoid the risk of someone (for example, a disappointed heir or family member or the like) challenging the trust in the courts due to the amount of money remaining in the trust fund when the pet trust expires, it is prudent to designate a “remainder beneficiary” that, pursuant to the terms of the trust, would be entitled to receive whatever funds are left in the trust, upon the death of the last animal in the pet trust. This would ideally be a charitable organization such as Rabbit Sanctuary, Inc.

A pet trust is a complex legal document, which should be prepared by a lawyer familiar with your state’s trust and probate laws and drafted in accordance with your specific circumstances. Every situation—and every pet—is unique, so one should avoid the temptation to use a generic trust form found on the Internet or attempt to take a “one-size fits all” approach. If you have any questions about pet trusts, and whether it might be a good idea for you, please call Erik R. Bogart at Bogart Law Firm, P.A.; his phone number is (864) 235-8228. He can also be reached via email at erik@bogartlaw.net.



Benny Bunny, Erik's house rabbit



Help the Bunnies While You Shop!

Binky Bunny

Shop at Binky Bunny to generate funds for the Sanctuary. BinkyBunny.com is a fun informative site for people with house rabbits. Their store includes hay and feed, treats, baskets, books, toys, and playhouses! Use the link below, and the Sanctuary will receive 7% of the purchase price.

<http://store.binkybunny.com/shared/affiliates/?Affiliates=44&Target=Store>

A clickable link can be found on our web site on the Helpful Links page.

GoodSearch.com

You can help the Sanctuary by using a search engine. Go to goodsearch.com and enter Adopt A Rabbit then click verify. Each search will raise money for the Sanctuary.

Shop at iGive.com to Help the Rabbits

Generate funds for Adopt-A-Rabbit by shopping on line through iGive.com. Join for free at www.igive.com/AAR

Shop at over 700 popular on line stores including Barnes & Noble, JC Penney, and Hallmark. A percentage of every purchase will be donated to the Sanctuary.

Amazon Smile

You can help support the Sanctuary by shopping at smile.amazon.com and choose Rabbit Sanctuary Inc. as your organization to support. Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible Amazon Smile purchase to the Sanctuary.



Thank You New and Renewing Members

Includes donations given through May 14, 2019

Lisa Alleman
Cherokee Allen
Carol Anderson
Auction for a KAWS

Malinda Baker
Lynn Barnett
Bruce & Sally Bauder
Betty Billingsly
Carol Bogdan
James Boyd
Lorrie & Michael Brooks
Douglas Buffo

Lori & Tom Calhoun
Eleanor Campbell
Grace Cantrell
Cat Clinic of Greenville
Brandon & Maya Christen
Zbynek Chudej
Suzanne Chudejova
Bonnie Cook
Mary Cook
Jordan Cornellier
Cindy Craighead

Dorothy Dahm
James Daniels
Gary Davis
Rosamund Downing
Joe Drews
Esther Dukes
Mark & Amy Dunning

Courtney Ecklund
Monica Edger
Laura Elder
Maria Evans
Kaye Evatt

Cesar Filippi
Mary Finegan
June & Ron Fisher
Faye & Irving Fishman
Emma Fitzgerald

Colleen Fox
Sherry Frye

Faith Gabel
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Jenny Genone
Lee Ellen Gorman
Ronald & Ladonna Greiner
Martha Grigsby
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Mary Hanson
Ann Harris
Dan & Jolene Harvey
Emily Harvey
Evelyn Henry
Chris, Larissa & Sophia Hepler
Jackie Hepler
Molly Hill
Patricia Hill, DVM
Dawn-Michelle Hiseley
Amy Hood
Janey House
Beverly Huley
Becky Hummell
Dennis & Susan Hutchinson

Shion & Punch Ishiguro

Kathy Jayko
Franklin Julian

Vanessa Kahn
Debra Keller
Beth & Jamie Kendall
Mary Ann Kiriakides
Byron & Barbara Knuth
Ladia Konz
Marilyn Krizansky

Mary La Porte
Marilyn Lautenschlaeger
Renee Layson
Dean & Susan Ledbetter

Sonja Levine
Manuel Lopez
Janice Lorick
Luke Lorick
Mary Lorick
Meredith, Leo & Chester Lorick
Low Country Boy Scout Troop #241

Frank Machovec
Stan & Mary Madden
Peter Mady
Val Magin
Naomi Mattingly
Sandy McCreight
Marie Mead
Deborah Meadows
Marion Moir
Karlene Moore
Lucile Moore

Holly & Gordon Nason
Laurie Nicholson
Merrily & Larry Nilles

Patti Packer
Charlotte Palmer
Debra Parsons-Drake
Emily Michelle Peck
Maitland & Nola Pine
Joanne Prieto
Ron & Patrice Pruitte

Suzanne Raboy
Cheryl Rensburg
Deb & Michael Reuter
Harriet Robinson
Jim & Honey Robinson
Nadine Robson
Lynn, Michael, Maddie & Robert Ross
Barbara Ruder

David & Jane Schiraldi
Teri Sardella
Nancy & John Schuhrke
Lauren Shilling

Sandi Smith
Eileen Snitzer
Lee & Terry Spears
Charles Spradlin
Christine Sprecher
Monica Stone
Charles Stroup, MD
Richard Strouse

Bethany & Errol Tisdale
Don Turner

Eric & Elaine Unger

Lynn & Mark Varacallo
Nancy Virgulak

Jane Waldmann
Carolyn Walker
Renee Wallace
Betty Way
Linda Weider
Rebecca Weider
Elizabeth Miller-Welborn
Bennett, Ava, & Liam Weston
Cynthia Wheat, DVM
Carey White
Laura White
Anita Winsor
Veronica & Jonathan Winstead
Anne Witty
Ashley Wofford
Susan Wood
Kathy & Mike Worsham
Tallah Woykowski
Loretta Wroble

Elizabeth Zimmerman
Ellen & Steffen Zinsser



Goldie

In Honor of People

Sanctuary volunteers Jim & Honey Robinson
Val Magin Sandy McCreight
Bob Ground Janey House
Debra Reuter Charles Stroup
Sam Menze Adams Veronica Winstead

In Memory of People

Nancy Tucker The Sanctuary rabbits
Landry Layson Renee Layson
Douglas (DK) Knight Lynn Ross
Leigh Merritt Skoglund Val Magin
Landry Layson Lawrie Nicholson

In Honor of Rabbits

Ming Cat Clinic of Greenville
YoLo Lynn Barnett
Ming Jenna Gutierrez
Duchess, Harlow & Friday Monica Stone
Little Red & Litz Boy Scout Troop # 241, Bluffton, SC

In Memory of Rabbits

Nugget Ross Family
Petunia Cesar Filippi
Angel Bunnies Eric & Elaine Unger
Clancy, Toby, Chance, & Bosco Ron & Patrice Pruitte
Buffalo, Cocoa, & Isabel Ron & Patrice Pruitte
Alfie Renee Layson
Dozer Eileen Snitzer



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**Rabbit Sanctuary Inc.
P. O. Box 80036
Simpsonville, SC 29680
rabbitsanctuaryinc.org**

OUR VISION: To see the DOMESTIC RABBIT win his rightful place as a valued and beloved COMPANION ANIMAL

The Rabbit Sanctuary provides a HOME FOR LIFE for rescued domestic rabbits. Rabbits given a second chance at life by kind people who, regardless of inconvenience, expense or even their own safety, made an extra effort to help rabbits in need.

Our virtual adoption program, offers an alternative to supporting the cruel pet industry and the bunny mills. For \$40.00 or more you can choose and virtually sponsor one of the Sanctuary's rescued rabbits. You will receive a photo of your rabbit, certificate of sponsorship, sanctuary news letters and invitation to our annual Picnic with the Rabbits. Sponsorship is renewable annually. Additional rabbit sponsorships are \$40.00 each.

Your support is vital to our ongoing work. Please help as you can. In return, we will devote ourselves to ensuring a wonderful life for the rabbits.

ALL DONATIONS, OF ANY SIZE, ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!



Cut along dotted line and enclose with your check.

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____
ADDRESS: _____
CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____
E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

_____ NEW SPONSORSHIP I would like to sponsor _____ I need a receipt ____ YES ____ NO
_____ RENEWING DONATION \$ _____ VOLUNTEER IN _____ general office _____ grounds

Please make your tax-deductible check payable to Rabbit Sanctuary Inc. and mail to P. O. Box 80036 Simpsonville, SC 29680