



FERRET FRIENDS INC.

December 2006

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The Great Texas Surgery Trip

Written by Carol Owens

A couple years ago someone wrote to the Ferret Mailing List that her vet in her small town in the Texas panhandle did cryosurgery on ferrets for only \$150. I tucked that information away in my brain and thought hey, that's not so far away. If only I could take a bunch of ferrets needing surgery. Mmmmm.



That was then. Now, I had a few more, two right adrenals, two presumed lefts, and an insulinoma. (There are still more to do). But, since August, when we gained our 501c3 non-profit status, I thought, let's find out more about this. So I wrote to Terri G. who had written about the vet, Dr. Gordzelik, and found out more. My husband Bill, who loves to fly a Cessna 182, volunteered to fly us there in the plane he rents from a flying club, and the costs of all the trip could be deducted from our taxes.

I contacted the veterinarian's office, Gray County Veterinary Clinic in Pampa, Texas, a small town of about 18,000 in the middle of cattle country. Its 60 miles northeast of Amarillo and the home town of Woody Guthrie. Stacy was the person who set up the appointment and helped juggle the date for trip. Due to impending weather and other factors like that the pilot had to go out of town on business I had to reschedule several times. I also had to arrange with Dian to take care of the ferrets still at home. One of the right adrenal ferrets is hers. Finally we agreed on a target day of Friday the 13 of October. Friday the 13th? I would take my chances. We would fly there the day before, settle in, take them to the clinic, and fly back on Saturday. Would the flying have any effect on the ferrets' wounds? No, - I asked a few people and they assured me in would be ok. The highest we went was about 9500'.

Things don't always go according to plan but we did have a good flight there. We had four carriers crammed in the back seat and luggage area with our luggage and supplies on top and around. We took jackets for the weather there and it's a good thing we did. When we arrived there were cold winds whipping across the plains. We had called a car dealer to rent a car and he brought it to the airport when we got in. Talk about small town service. Hotel arrangements had been made at the new AmericInn that has two "pet suites" with laminate floors, in room spa tub, gas fireplace, and the bathroom was set up for the handicapped with a roll-in shower and seat if needed.

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Ferret Friends Inc.

A 501(C)(3) Nonprofit,
No-Kill - Rescue, Shelter,
and Club in Tucson AZ

Please be generous with
your donations! Make do-
nations or membership fee
checks out to Ferret Friends
Inc. Send to:

Ferret Friends
C/O Dian Curran
PO BOX 594
Vail, AZ 85641



Over the RAINBOW Bridge

Shelter Ferrets:

Codo

Sebastian

Lulu

Friends:

Carla Costa-Rica

**Midnight
Schwertfeger
(a cat with an
attitude, she ruled
over us all. She will
be missed!)**

The Great Texas Surgery Trip Continued from page 1

I took along a playpen and set it up. All the hotel people were great. Outside the hotel in back is a strip of land that follows a creek. It is a city park and there is a memorial of sorts to Woody Guthrie, a fence that is a large music staff of this Land is My Land.



Bill took along his notebook and was always checking on weather conditions. Although he has an instrument rating the airplane was missing one radio that needed servicing and therefore could not be flown by instrument. Friday we got up, ate the hotel breakfast (very good) and went to the vet's on the south edge of town. Got them there, made arrangements, said goodbye. I was assured the vet was very good and could do them all in one day.



We went back to the hotel where he checked the weather again. Uh oh, storms forming around Deming, New Mexico, right in our return path. But if we hurried out we could make it back before the storms got real bad. Called the vet, he was done by noon! We packed up, went and picked up the girls at 2, paid up, packed them up, and got to the airport. Called the car dealer and asked if we could leave the car there. Sure, they would get it later. (Small town service again.) We took out of there in to the setting sun. After three hours in the air fighting a headwind we decided to set down in El Paso because it was getting dark and a storm was coming over. We spent the night, next day and Saturday night in El Paso, rented a car there and found a La Quinta Inn (they welcome animals) so explored the city somewhat and went back to check on the weather. Sunday looked like it would be clearing after a while and indeed it did. We were able to leave about 2:00 and with the time zone change we arrived back in Tucson just at sundown on Sunday.

The ferrets were all in good condition. The hotel rooms both had refrigerators and microwaves so I could keep a tub of chicken gravy cold and heat it up to give them their Amoxicillin and pred. They have earned their wings. I would not hesitate to make the trip again but wouldn't fly in winter because it does get to be real winter in Pampa. I would love to drive a whole bunch there if I could have an additional driver while someone stays home to care for the rest of my charges. Practically speaking the cost of the flight is similar to the cost of a car trip at the IRS allowance per mile. And of course meals and lodging are extra. But there was a satisfaction to meeting this doctor who does right adrenals for \$150. (He also works on large animals) .I just wish he were closer.



Carol Owens,
President

THE CURRENCY CORNER: WORDS FROM THE TREASURER

Treasurer Report 1/5/2007: At the time of this newsletter being completed, Dian Curran, our treasurer, was in the hospital with a ruptured appendix. We wish Dian a speedy recovery and will have the report in the next newsletter.



We would like to thank all of the people who have helped us out through out the year either with donations or with volunteering. It is because of your efforts we stay going year after year.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF DIAN!!!

HELP NEEDED

Ferret Friends really needs volunteers to help us with various aspects of keeping our shelter going, physically and financially. Please consider giving us some help. Some of the ways a person can volunteer; Write something for the newsletter. Join the board of directors. Help formulate and put on a Ferret parenting program at the Humane Society.

Help us out at special events when they arise, such as the county fair. Help a current foster parent by cleaning cages, playing with ferrets, washing bedding, and other ferret housekeeping chores. Contact Carol 762-5568 or Michelle 664-1077 if you can help.

There's also a need for someone to be in charge of the foster program. We are looking for some one special

to help run the program and make home visits. We want to make sure the animals are getting the best care.

If everyone would pay dues we could pay off our outstanding balances at the vets. Please be generous with your donations! Make checks out to Ferret Friends Inc. Send to: Dian at PO BOX 594 Vail, AZ 85641.

If you would like to make a donation or help with volunteering please contact Carol at 762-5568 or Robin at 740-1707.

How To Correctly Restrain Your Ferret

By Bob Church

There is active and passive restraint. Passive restraint is basically getting the ferret to forget what is going on by misdirecting its attention elsewhere. For example, a drop or two of Ferrettone, honey, or Nutrical on the ferret's belly will often give you enough time to clip claws or even clean ears (depending on the ferret and its greed for the treat). Cuddling and grooming can also be pretty good distractions. A lot of times, you just have experiment and try different things.

Another method is active restraint. The method employs actual physical restraint of the ferret, which has results which vary depending on the temperament and psychological state of the animal. The simplest form of physical restraint is scruffing the ferret, which **usually** works well for ear cleaning and minor physical and dental exams. Some ferrets, like Tui, are immune to scruffing and it actually makes him angry! He will turn inside his skin and bite you for trying it. For Tui, I simply wrap him up in a towel, making sure I pin his legs, but I have to tell you, towels don't always work. A more drastic approach uses two people; one holds the neck and shoulders firmly with one hand (with the hand above and behind the neck to prevent bites), while the other hand holds the butt area. The second person does the work on the ferret and applies Band-Aids to the ferret holder later.

If you can find a veterinary supply house, you can purchase actual restraints for problem animals (I am thinking of angry fear biters). This is a really good option for large shelters which get in a lot of wild and woolly ferrets. You may not have to buy one; it is possible to look at one in a catalog or at your vet's office, then build a substitute.

This article originally appeared on the Ferret Mailing List (FML) on April 17, 2000.



What's Scruffing?

Grab the skin at the back of the ferret's neck (scruff). The skin is somewhat loose here, allowing you to hold it between your fingers. Think of a mama cat picking up a kitten. Scruffing does not hurt the ferret.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

What would happen to your ferrets in case of an emergency, accident, illness or death? Recently, on November 29, one of Ferret Friends' long time members, Carla Costa-Rica was not feeling well, laid down to sleep and never woke up. She leaves her mother and two sons, along with four ferrets. When I first heard about this from her neighbor who used to have ferrets my second thought was, what about the ferrets? After about a week of her mother and son caring for them, along with their grief and making arrangements, her mother called me and asked Ferret Friends to take them. Well, of course, four beautiful boys, what's a few more?

I went to her apartment and got the ferrets, and the family also donated all equipment, anything ferret related. They gave me a Marshall playpen, extra panels, the nylon pad for the base, cage cover, lots of toys, food, pans, all kinds of stuff. This will help at our picnics and Petco adoption outings.

Carla was lucky to have us to fall back on, but if you had a problem what would happen to your ferrets? There was a woman on the Ferret Mailing List who ran a small shelter, I believe in Indiana or Ohio. She recently died in a similar way and her husband and daughter took over but are trying to adopt out many of the 45 or so fuzzies. It is a lot of hard work, please make sure you have told your love ones what they need to do for your animals if something should happen to you. Or an even better idea, put it in your will so everyone will know what actions you want taken with your beloved pets.

Web Sites

Below is the link to Ferret Universe. They have several ferret tests you can take to see how well you actually know about ferrets. Be forewarned. It is hard! (You have to create a user name and password.)

<http://www.ferretuniverse.com/tests/overview.html>

Here is a link about what kind of nutrition ferrets need. Please view this website as it gives you the breakdown on what ferrets need and compares ferret foods.

http://www.ohioferret.org/INFO/nutri_prn.asp

Last but not least, a website that gives you a link to every imaginable website you could want about ferrets.

<http://www.geocities.com/ferretcorneraz/information.html>

Here is a website that can help you find information about many, many things one needs to know when owning a ferret.

<http://www.ferretcentral.org/>

RAT TAIL Pictures

Article on page 5



Left tail: note the skin looks darkish because of the black-heads.

Right tail: note the hair loss is not on the rump, but at the tip of the tail.



Thanks to Nancy Propper and Candy Johnson for the rat tail pictures. **This article was found on the World Wide Web on August 22, 2006 at:**
<http://www.ferretnews.com/issues/ferret-news-95.html>

RAT TAIL

Pictures on Page 4

Did you know that not all bald tails are adrenal disease. Sometimes ferrets get what is called "rat tail." How do you tell the difference between a ferret who has adrenal disease and one who has a simple case of rat tail? It's all in where on the tail the hair loss begins and in the character of the skin.

With rat tail, the hair loss will usually be on the tip of the tail or on the underside of the tail. You often (but not always) see black dots on the tail: these are clogged pores, your garden variety blackheads. In contrast, adrenal disease hair loss usually begins at the base of the tail near the rump and the skin is smooth. However, sometimes the skin is smooth with rat tail, too.

If you have any doubt if your ferret's hair loss is caused by adrenal disease or if it's rat tail, have a vet take a look. Or, if you're in touch with a local ferret club or shelter, ask an experienced ferret owner for his or her opinion.

What do you do for a ferret with rat tail? Pretty much the same thing you'd do if you had blackheads on your skin. We use a two-step washing process. We first wash the ferret's tail with ferret shampoo -- these often help to break up the oils. We use a washcloth to help clean out the pores and stimulate some blood flow to the tail (this helps the skin stay healthy). The second step is to wash the tail with a mild anti-acne cleanser or astringent-type cleanser. It's best to choose a product made for sensitive skin. Make sure you rinse thoroughly. Remember, you need to wash only the tail.

You'll have to wash the ferret's tail a few times (every other day is fine) for about a week. When the skin is clear (the blackheads are gone), you can change the frequency to once every week-and-a-half to two weeks.

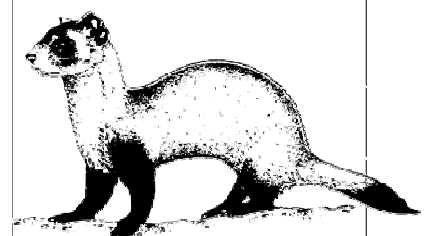
You can prevent rat tail in many ferrets by paying extra attention to washing the tail whenever you give a bath. For extra help, use a washcloth on your ferret's tail. Some ferrets will get rat tail regardless of what you do to try to prevent it. Our Cauliflower was a late-alter ferret and he was an oily boy. No matter how hard we tried to keep his tail free from blackheads, he always managed to produce more oil than we could keep up with. Of course, we loved him anyway!

Rat tail isn't painful or bothersome to your ferret. But some ferrets seem to be annoyed with not having a fluffy tail (I swear this is true!). Because washing a ferret's tail isn't nearly as much of a challenge as washing the whole ferret, it's not much bother to keep your ferret's tail fluffy and black-head free, so it looks like a ferret tail, not a rat tail.

This article was found on the World Wide Web on August 22, 2006 at: <http://www.ferretnews.com/issues/ferret-news-95.html>

Adoptables

Happy		
Cinnamon	M	3
Skeeter		
Butterscotch	M	1
Lizzie		
Albino	F	1
Lil Bit		
Sable	F	1
Cocoa		
Sable	F	1
Alberta		
Albino	F	1
Blackie		
Dark Sable	F	1
Boomer		
Albino	M	3
Ish		
Sable	M	2
Oshi		
Dark Sable	F	1
Rocky		
Silver	M	2
Nog		
Sable	M	2
Ellie		
Sable	F	2
Night Crawler		
Cocoa Color	M	3
Rikki		
dark sable	F	3
Bonnie		
Sable	F	2
Pumpkin		
DEW	F	3
Bubba		
Silver	M	3



Ferret Friends of
Tucson

Board of Directors:

President: Carol Owens
762-5568

Vice-President: Robin Kladke
740-1707

Secretary: Michelle Schwerdtfeger
664-1077

Treasurer: Dian Curran
762-9710

Board Members:

Donald Heywood
975-0685

Ed Radek
624-0221

Ferret Friends of Tucson
917 N Solar Dr
Vail, AZ 85641-9744

We're on the Web
www.ferretfriends.org

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Ferret Friends Board Member Meeting—The Ferret Friends had a board meeting and the 2nd Annual Ginny Childs Memorial picnic on November 19th, 2006. In attendance for the board meeting was Dian Curran, Carol Owens, and Robin Kladke.

Board Member Meetings — Board member meetings happen every other month on the third Saturday at 1:30 PM at China Star Restaurant. The next meeting is on January 28 2007.

Chicken Gravy —We are having a Chicken Gravy class on January 27, 2007 at 1 PM. If you would like to attend or have questions please call Michelle at 664-1077 or Carol at 762-5568. You can also email ferretfriendsoftucson@yahoo.com



son@yahoo.com for information or answers.

Arizona Animal Fair —

The Animal Fair takes place in February. If you would like more information go to www.safeanimals.com, if you would like to help or attend please contact Carol Owens at 762-5568 or send an email to ferretfriendsoftucson@yahoo.com.

Vaccination Clinic—We will be having a vaccination clinic in 2007; more details will be announced on the website.

Ferret Friends

Store—We are now selling cages and other items at the online store. Please look at the webpage for more info.

Yahoo Group—We have started a yahoo group: ferretfriendsoftucson.com. Go to our website and click on the Ferret Friends tab or follow this link:
<http://www.ferretfriends.org/aboutme.htm>.



The largest of its kind in Arizona and one of the largest in the Southwest! Our purpose is to provide both an educational and entertaining experience.

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Questions?
Contact Michelle S. at
Phone: 520-664-1077
Or email:
ferretfriendsoftucson@yahoo.com