

## Real Easter bunnies require lots of TLC



Easter is almost here and you want to get something cute and fuzzy for your child. Stop and think before you buy an Easter bunny or duck or whatever animal you desire.

Rabbits seem to be the most popular animal to get at Easter. Make sure you are willing to take care of this new critter. Kids will take care of their new fuzzy friend for maybe one week. Then, guess what, the newness has worn off and the responsibility is up to you, the parent.

Domesticated rabbits began to catch on as pets in the 16th century. It has been during more recent times, especially the last several decades, that rabbits have really come into their own. Today, without a doubt, they can be included among the most popular of pet animals, especially at Easter time.

If indeed you are determined to buy a rabbit, make sure you read a book on what kind of rabbit is needed to make the rabbit a happy camper. Like any animal that lives in a cage, they require cage cleaning at least twice a week. I have learned this from experience. Cleaning the cage once a week for me was not enough. The odor builds up in one week.

### Where to buy your rabbit

Depending on the breed and color of your preferred rabbit, your resources to locate a special breed may be limited. Never compromise and buy a sick animal. Remember that happiness with a pet is a mutual thing for your whole family. You are responsible for providing for the rabbit for the duration of its life. Adult rabbits are less likely to be adopted should you decide that you're not compatible or are discontent with your furry charge. If you think anyone in your family might be allergic, find a family that has a rabbit. See if you can visit for about an hour, touching and holding the rabbit. It's better to find out beforehand, rather

than after you are attached and have to give the bunny away.

For all but the rare or uncommon breed, your local pet store is your best source. Apply strict criteria to any pet store that is selling live animals. Make sure that there is overall cleanliness in the surroundings; look for alert and healthy rabbits; insist upon intelligent answers to all your questions from the owner or manager of the store. Read a book on rabbits before going to the pet store. That way, you know as much as possible before picking the rabbit you may want. Be aware from the book on what a healthy rabbit looks like, how long a 6-week-old bunny can be, what characteristics are important in your chosen breed, etc. If you are looking for a particular breed or a less-popular color variety of a known breed, a breeder may be your only choice.

### Best age to buy

The best age to buy a rabbit is when he is from 6 to 10 weeks old.

Carefully observe the rabbit you intend to buy. Notice his eyes; they should be bright and clear. His nose should not be runny. If a rabbit has sniffles or sneezes, do not buy that rabbit. The coat should be sleek and shiny. If the fur at his back end is dirty from fecal matter, that would indicate diarrhea; do not buy.

Whether to buy a male or female depends on you. Whatever sex you pick, keep in mind however, that proper care for your rabbit will require a good bit of your time and energy. And PLEASE give your bunny lots and lots of love. They do make for a great pet.

Bev Cornell is a licensed wildlife rehabilitator and former veterinary aide. She will answer pet and wildlife questions in care of Ask Bristol, 33411 Grand River, Farmington, MI 48335 or her e-mail address: [bristol\\_dog@man.com](mailto:bristol_dog@man.com)

## Here comes the bride

Brides-to-be check out the latest trends at Longacre House

By JULIE SCOTT  
SPECIAL WRITER

We've always heard that "in the springtime, a young man's fancy turns to love"; however, even before the flowers have bloomed, many young brides-to-be with their mothers and attendants spent a sunshine-filled Sunday afternoon at the Longacre House Bridal Expo '99 on March 14.

Held in a 20-room Georgian country house, this event showcased nearly 20 wedding professionals who offered numerous ideas and products addressing every bridal party need or desire. Over a hundred people passed through the Longacre doors within the first hour of the expo. Attendees were treated to finger foods and the melodious sounds of pianist Jim Nuckolls while they shopped.

Kam Carman of Fox 2 News was the celebrity guest (and recent bride) who made herself available to answer questions as well as display photos of her own fairy tale wedding. Carman graciously discussed her traditional, lavish wedding which was 1,000 hours in the planning and over a one-year time frame. She was hostess for a medieval rehearsal dinner for 42 guests in period costume held at The Castle of Detroit. The costumes were designed and created as a gift to Carman by her mother and younger sister.

"Everyone had a great time," said the TV weather forecaster. "Even the shy guests really played along with the theme."

Adding to the relaxed atmosphere of the afternoon were free of charge tours of the home, as well as the romantic surroundings of The Longacre House itself. The Victorian-style home built in 1869. It was the first brick home in the area and served as a landmark for those traveling on Farmington Road.

Eventually the house was sold to Luanne Goodenough, a Detroit lawyer, who remodeled it in 1930 and pools and gardens were added to enhance the property's beauty. It was the first home in the area to have electricity and a telephone. The Goodenough fam-

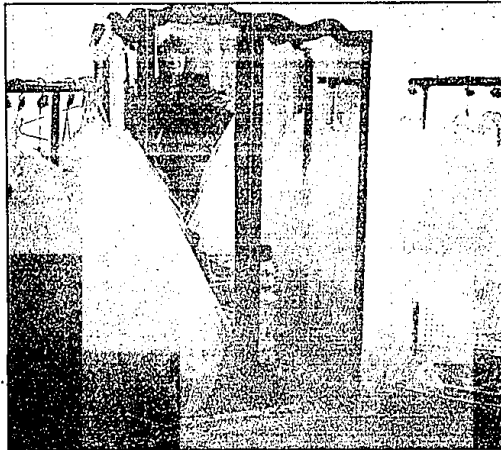


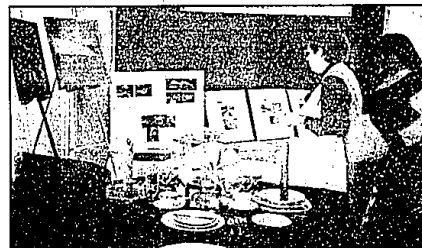
PHOTO BY DAN STEIN

ily donated the home to the city to be used as a non profit community center. Today, income to support and maintain the home is derived solely from various classes, an annual fund drive as well as rentals for special events.

The Bridal Expo was contained mainly in two rooms. Staffed tables offered the services of wedding ceremony planners from the Longacre House and The Wedding Connection. C&N Party Rentals, Credit Union One and Kay Britton Travel provided information pertaining to honeymoon plans.

Entertainment needs were supplied by Smith and Jones Entertainment, Inc. and pianist Jim Nuckolls. President Tuxedo was on hand to address men's needs and La Valle Bridal Millinery allowed guests to try on headpieces of every shape and size from satin flowers to pearl decorated veils of various lengths. Bridal registries were available through Linens 'n Things and Longaberger Baskets. Flower preserving and arranging services were represented by

Veils: An assortment of headpieces were available for patrons to try on at LaValle Bridal Millinery's booth at the Bridal Expo held at the Longacre House Sunday afternoon.



Browsing: A mom and daughter check out the C&N Party Rentals of Royal Oak display, a show vendor.

Hearts and Roses Florist, McFarland's Florist and Perpetual Petals. The Wedding Pages bridal magazine provided ideas to address any couples tastes and Michael Richards Photography was available to capture the special day on film. Greer and Associates Cosmetic

Registry offered each bride-to-be the opportunity for special treatment on that special day. Farmington Hills Wine and Liquor provided product advice for the grooms toasting their brides. As one bride-to-be summed up the afternoon: "This is only the beginning of a dream come true!"

## Spaghetti dinner will benefit scholarships

Come enjoy a spaghetti dinner and help the Children, Youth and Family Services in Farmington and the Miss Farmington Scholarship program Friday, March 26, at the Masonic Temple.

The menu will consist of spaghetti with sauce, plain or with meatballs, tossed salad, breadsticks, assorted cakes

and cookies, and a beverage. It's all you can eat. Cost is \$6 for adults, \$4 for students. Children under 3 eat free.

The Masonic Temple is sponsoring the event. Another dinner is planned with proceeds going to the playscape for City Park.

Hours are 5-8 p.m.

## Underground Railroad is topic

Farmington's involvement with the Underground Railroad will be the topic of discussion when the Farmington Historical Society meets, 8 p.m. Wednesday, March 24, at the downtown branch library.

Ruth Mochman, local historian and author of "Heritage Houses of Farmington," and a regular columnist in the Observer, will be guest speaker. The free talk is sponsored by the Farmington Historical Society and open to the public.

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