

Other editions: [Mobile](#) | [News Feeds](#) | [E-Newsletters](#)Find it: [Jobs](#) | [Cars](#) | [Real Estate](#) | [Apartments](#) | [Shopping](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Place an Ad](#)

SEARCH ALL [go](#)

SPONSORED BY:

[Jersey Shore Moms](#)
[CLICK HERE](#)
[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [HOMETOWNS](#) [YOUR VOICES](#) [OPINION](#) [BUSINESS](#) [SPORTS](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [PHOTOS/VIDEO](#) [DATA UNIVERSE](#) [BUY/SELL](#) [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#)
[NewsFront](#) [Updates](#) [State](#) [Nation & World](#) [Living](#) [Obituaries](#) [Special Sections](#) [Politics](#) [Weather](#) [Submissions](#)

[Comment, blog & share photos](#)
[Log in](#) | [Become a member](#)

 ASBURY PARK
 PRESS
 POWERED BY YOU AND THE

Buy chocolate not bunnies for Easter

BY LINDA LOMBARDI • THE ASSOCIATED PRESS • MARCH 10, 2008

[Post a Comment](#) [Recommend](#) [Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#)

 SHARE THIS ARTICLE: [Del.icio.us](#) [Facebook](#) [Digg](#) [Reddit](#) [Newsvine](#) [What's this?](#)

ADVERTISEMENT

The Journal News
 MARTIN ROSSI
 PRESENTS

THE GREATER NEW YORK
Wine & Food Festival

Cooking Wine Demos Seminars

April 4, 5, 6, 2008 DoubleTree Hotel
 of Tarrytown, New York
 Click here to buy tickets

Easter rabbits: Chocolate or furry?

If you're tempted by the furry ones, especially for children, better do your research first.

"People buy them thinking they're great low-maintenance starter pets," says Mary Cotter, the vice president and education/outreach director of the House Rabbit Society. But that's a misconception, she says: "They're closer to dogs and cats than they are to the so-called pocket pets."

Cotter of Bronxville, N.Y., has a dog as well as rabbits, and says that she thinks that

rabbits are actually the more time-consuming of the two. They have cages that need to be cleaned, like other small animals, but they need social interaction like a dog does, at least a couple of hours out of their cage each day.

And your home needs to be carefully rabbit-proofed against chewing. The many electrical cords required by modern living are a particular hazard.

Because people often don't understand what they're getting into when they buy a rabbit, her rescue organization gets at least 30 phone calls a month from people wanting to give them up, many of which were bought as gifts for children at Easter.

That problem is why the House Rabbit Society started their "Make Mine Chocolate!" campaign, says chapter manager Karalee Curry. The campaign encourages a better understanding of rabbits by distributing educational literature, and raises awareness of the Easter issue by selling rabbit pins that resemble chocolate bunnies.

Chocolate rabbits are less trouble in many ways, starting with the fact that they don't last as long. Curry says people gasp when she tells them a rabbit can live 10 to 12 years. And there are other surprises as well.

"People say, 'The pet store told me they did great with small kids and didn't need vet care,'" she says.

Although rabbits can be affectionate, they don't like to be picked up, which is frustrating for children, and can result in injury to the rabbit when it tries to get away. (This is such an issue that Cotter recommends the largest rabbit possible for families with kids, so they're not even tempted to try to pick it up.)

Contrary to the claim that rabbits don't need vet care, spaying and neutering is critical.



Mary Cotter of Bronxville, N.Y., is vice president and education/outreach director for the New York area of the House Rabbit Society. She is holding Jester. AP PHOTO

PHOTO GALLERIES

[Pet Gallery 3.10.08](#)

 RELATED NEWS FROM THE WEB
 LATEST HEADLINES BY TOPIC:

[Kids](#)
[Family](#)

 Powered by [Topix.net](#)

more living headlines

[Buy chocolate not bunnies for Easter](#)
[Nautical and nice](#)
[Finding your fragrance](#)
[CRITTERS BITES](#)

latest headlines

[Peter stops Maskaev in 6th for WBC heavyweight title](#)
[Soccer brawl in Colombia leaves at least 80 wounded, 10 seriously](#)
[Dale leads Cornell over Princeton](#)
[Storm strikes Shore \(1\)](#)
[Wooden treated for rapid heart beat](#)

Otherwise, behavioral problems start at puberty, including territorial aggression and smelly spraying.

In addition, health problems need prompt attention from a specialist veterinarian who's experienced with rabbits. "If a dog doesn't eat for a day, you can watch for a day or two, often no treatment is needed. When a rabbit is not eating, that's a medical emergency," Cotter says, as it can rapidly lead to a cascade of serious problems.

So you might want to stick with the chocolate bunny you can buy to benefit the campaign at the "Make Mine Chocolate!" Web site.

For those who understand rabbits' needs, Cotter is enthusiastic about them as excellent pets for working adults. Although they require a fair amount of attention, they can adjust to your schedule. "If you're gone 12 hours a day, you can have a rabbit," says Cotter. "As long as you can let it out a couple of hours a day, it doesn't matter when it is, it can be at midnight."

And she says they're fascinating, social animals, more complex than other small caged pets.

"A lot of people say they're like a cross between a dog and a cat," she says. "Like a cat, a rabbit has no special desire to please a human — that's part of their charm."

Domesticated rabbits are the same species that lives wild in Europe, Cotter says.

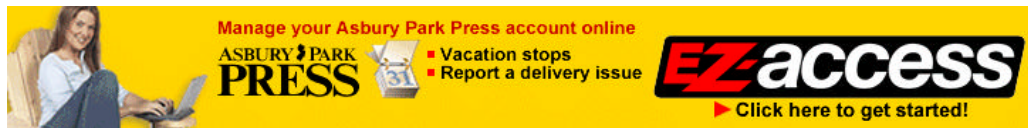
"There's still a part of them that's similar to wild animals," and that makes it all the more special when you know you've earned their trust and affection. She says, "They're wonderful to live with for the right people."

in your voice

READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

Submit



Manage your Asbury Park Press account online

ASBURY PARK PRESS

- Vacation stops
- Report a delivery issue

EZ-access

▶ Click here to get started!



Partners: [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) [Cars: Cars.com](#) [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#)

[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [HOMETOWNS](#) | [YOUR VOICES](#) | [OPINION](#) | [BUSINESS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [PHOTOS/VIDEO](#) | [DATA UNIVERSE](#) | [BUY/SELL](#) | [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | [Site Map](#)

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Work for Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright © 2008 Asbury Park Press. All rights reserved. Users of this site agree to the [Terms of Service](#) and [Privacy Policy/Your Privacy Rights](#) (Terms updated March 2007)