

The Ferret Association of Connecticut Inc.

With more than 1,200 ferrets saved, what are the secrets and successes behind the Ferret Association of Connecticut Inc.'s nearly 20-year history?

By Troy Lynn Eckart

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Photos courtesy The Ferret Association of Connecticut Inc.

Shelter director L. Vanessa Gruden enjoys seeing frightened or abused ferrets "come to life" at the shelter, hopping around, dooking and having fun.

Day To Day At The Ferret Association Of Connecticut

A typical day at FACT looks like the following:

7 a.m. — Clean ferrets and feed oldies

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. — At work

3 p.m. — Feed oldies again

3 to about 5 p.m. — Nap so I can get up and do shelter work!

6 p.m. — Clean ferrets again

6 to 9 p.m. — Ferret paperwork, newsletter work, donor acknowledgements, accounting and all business related stuff.

Answering e-mails.

9 to 10 p.m. — An hour in front of the TV and hopefully playing with my own ferrets. Dinner for human.

11 p.m. — Feed/medicate oldies and crawl into bed.

"The most important needs for the shelter are funds to care for the sick/elderly," Gruden said. And gift certificates to big retailers, pet stores and online pet retailers are greatly appreciated. These are used to purchase ferret food, paper towels, trash bags, cleansers and other items for the ferrets and shelter.

FACT does a lot to raise funds, including doing annual mailings; using grants; selling products through their online store, Ferret Treasures; boarding ferrets; and holding events such as the annual FunFest.

FACT also has a plan for veterinary services. "We work with several vets," Gruden said. "It's good business practice to have as many as are willing to work with us know about ferrets."

In addition to all FACT does for ferrets at the shelter, it provides many other services, including: education, vet referrals, rescue, adoption, permanent foster program for sick/elderly ferrets, newsletters, health brochures and information.

Ferret Words Of Wisdom

With all her ferret experience, what does Gruden tell new ferret owners about ferret ownership? "Understand what you're getting into when you get a ferret, and commit to keeping the animal. These are not used Kleenex to be tossed when they're old, sick or no longer convenient."

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Troy Lynn Eckart is the founder of Ferret Family Services, a domestic ferret information, education and welfare public service organization in Kansas.