

## My Ferret Saved My Life

**A ferret saves its owner's life by alerting her to an imminent fire.**

*By Dianna Desrochers*

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Courtesy Dianna Desrochers

Mookie the ferret saved his owner's life by waking her up before a fire started.

I was once asked what my ferrets meant to me and how they have enriched my life. Not only have they enriched it — my first ferret saved my life!

Before ferrets became legal here in Massachusetts, I fell in love with a friend's ferret. Hers was such a love muffin and a joy. So when ferrets finally became legal, I just had to have one.

I had done some research about ferrets, so sort of knew what I was getting into — we have come a long way since those days. I went to my local pet store when they finally started carrying ferrets and purchased my first one, his name was Mookie. There were two at the store and I went back and purchased the second one, because I felt bad that he was now alone; my nephew named him Joey. Hence my ferret family started.

Two years later, my niece called me from the pet store she was working at, they had a little girl ferret that someone had just dropped off. They couldn't keep it at the store and wanted to know if I would take her. I did, and she became my first rescue. Since my other two ferrets were older and didn't like this little one, I got her a brother ferret her own age. I now had two groups of ferrets that had to have separate play times. I would let one group out during the day and the other group at night.

On one particular night it just happened to be Mookie and Joey's turn to be out overnight — and thankfully so! I never had a problem with any of my ferrets biting, so this particular night I was startled when Mookie climbed up into bed with me in the middle of the night and bit me in the arm — hard. At first I was upset with him, "Why did you bite Mommy"? It was then that I smelled an awful odor and knew immediately that something was burning.

I looked across the room and saw the electrical outlet glowing red in the dark. I grabbed my four babies, yanked the two cords from the wall, called 911 and then woke up my father. He immediately went into the basement and turned off the power to that room.

When the melted outlet cover was removed and the wires checked, it was found that the wires had shorted out and had started to burn backward into the wall. I was told that the wall would have gone up in flames within another five minutes if we had not killed the power. Because of where the outlet was located, if that wall had caught fire there would have been no exit out of that room except out the window, and I am three stories up.

To this day, I owe Mookie my life.

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Dianna Desrochers has been owned by ferrets ever since they became legal in Massachusetts. Ferrets have changed her life and given it a new purpose. She is the proud mama of 13 ferrets at the moment and most of them are rescues, either personally or adopted through the shelter that she volunteers for, The Educated Ferret Association in South Hadley, Massachusetts.