

# News From the Sanctuary



*Tahoe, an old guy with a touch of arthritis, is part of the Old Folks contingent at Best Friends.*

## A little touch of heaven . . .

### Creating a paradise for abused and abandoned animals

By Michael Mountain, Editor of Best Friends

Once it was just a dream, shared between Best Friends Animal Sanctuary and animal lovers all over the country.

Then it became a dream-come-true for dogs and cats and other animals whose luck seems to have finally run out, but who suddenly find themselves in this very special haven, with good food and loving care, in a beautiful place where they'll never again be afraid or alone or hungry or in pain.

"We wanted to give as many as possible the kind of new life that would make up for whatever miserable things had gone before," says Faith Maloney, director of this unique sanctuary for the most helpless, abused, abandoned animals in our society.

**Planning for the future.** The Kitty Motel and the Wild Cat Catteries and the first three "octagon" houses for dogs were built ten years ago.

"Back then" says Faith, "we were planning to be able to take care of up to five hundred animals at a time. Nobody imagined we'd be bringing in more than that."

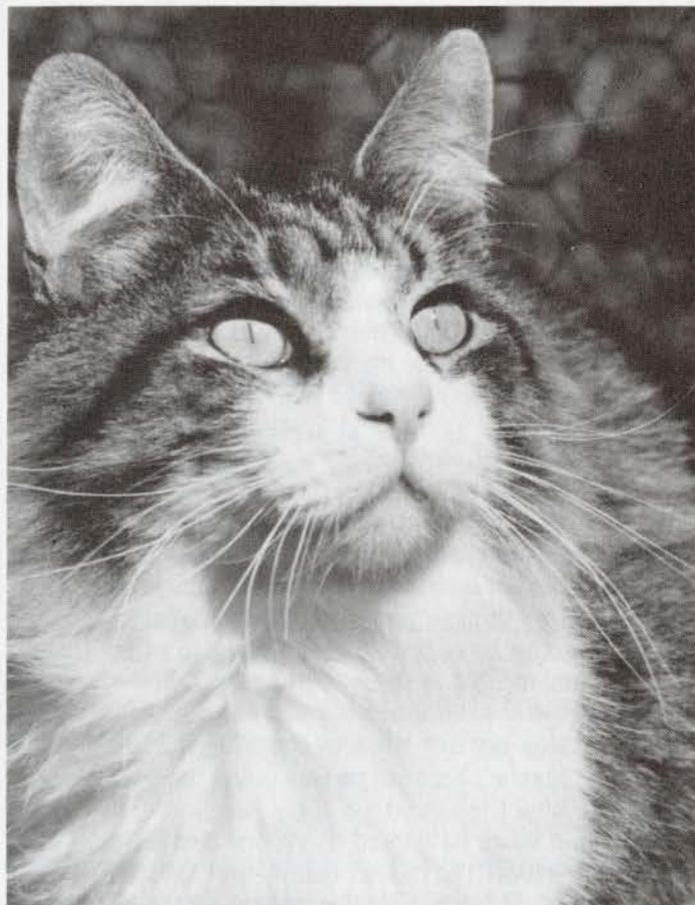
Now there are never less than 1,500 dogs and cats, horses, burros, rabbits, and a wonderfully eccentric assortment of other animals – from Mollie the Pig to Myrtle the Turtle – who were all once really down on their luck, but are now living "happily ever after."

Those original buildings are now quite old, and there are add-ons and extensions and temporary facilities all over the place. When the cat headquarters building got flooded during last summer's rains, that was the signal that it was time for some serious upgrading.

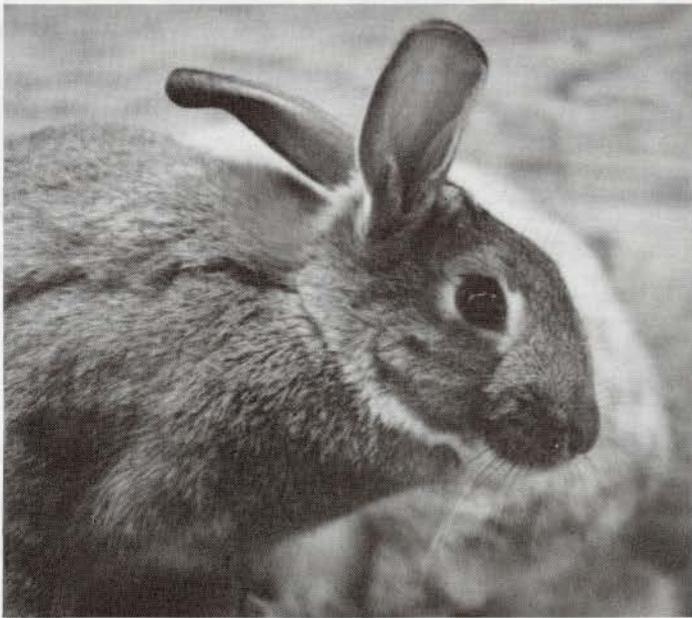
**The next stage of the sanctuary.** Members of Best Friends often write in and describe their own vision of the perfect sanctuary for needy animals.

"There seems to be a kind of collective vision out there of what would be really wonderful," says Faith. "That's the next stage of what we will build here."

The first of these new facilities will soon be ready: Benton's House (named after everyone's favorite alley cat here) is the new home of the TLC cats, a group of a hundred or so kitties with physical disabilities, who need extra Ten-



*Bart had some special internal surgery when he joined the TLC Cat Club. Now he's among the furriest and purriest of these special-care kitties.*



*Heather looks forward to having her very own bunny house.*

der Loving Care. Best Friends supporters from all over the country have been sending in special donations to help build it.

**Rover's Refuge.** As soon as Benton's House is finished, Faith would dearly like to build at least one new "octagon" building this year for fifty of the dogs who live in temporary houses at the sanctuary.

"The phone rings," she says, "and someone's telling you a heartbreaking story about a dog who's been badly abused. It's very hard to say no."

Right now, many of the most recent arrivals are housed in a series of temporary fenced areas that have grown out of special needs for emergency housing.

"Rover's Refuge will be for dogs who have been physically or emotionally abused, and have the least chance of being adopted. The scars stay with them. They need a permanent refuge here – a place they can call home."

**Learning to Sit-t-t!** Faith also has a special exercise and training area on her wish list, so that volunteers at the sanctuary can work with dogs who have a good chance of finding a new home.

"It will be a simple, large gazebo," she says, "with shelter from summer sun, rain and winter snow. Dogs who have a good chance of being adopted need to be sure they've learned their manners, so they'll be on their best behavior when they go out on an adoption day."

**Rabbit Redford's Retreat!** Over in one corner of Dogland is the old rabbit house, another hastily constructed "add-on" when the first rabbits began coming in to the sanctuary. Now all the bunnies want a place they can truly call home, and some of their Best Friends have already sent in funds to lay the concrete foundations for Rabbit Redford's Retreat.

**Feathered Friends,** a home for sick and injured birds, has long been part of the Best Friends dream, too. As we go

to press, the first stages have just been completed, thanks to the caring and generosity of Best Friends bird lovers who have helped make it possible.

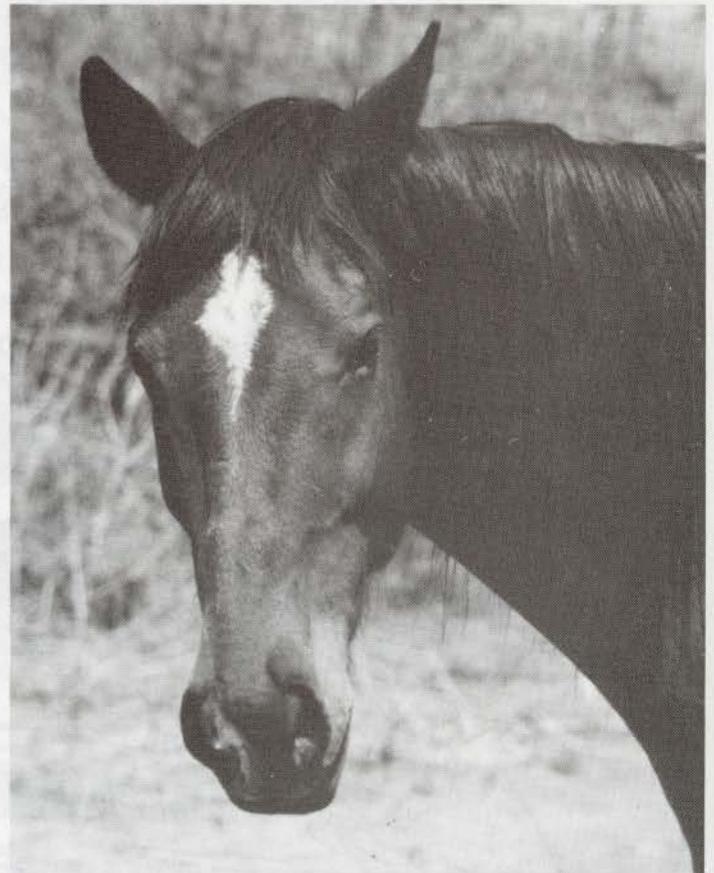
**A little horse pampering.** Last, but not least, the horses would really appreciate a nice barn. Bucky, an old rodeo horse, was already twenty years old when she came to Best Friends ten years ago. She's typical of these big old guys who all deserve a little extra pampering and loving, especially during the winter. Some of them like hanging out in the old barn on the One Little Indian movie set, but a nice, cozy new barn with extra carrots would be just what the doctor ordered!

**A mecca for animals and the people who love them.** Angel Canyon, the home of Best Friends, has been a sacred gathering place to generations of peaceful people, stretching back thousands of years.

"There's an extraordinary quality of peace here," says Faith. "Angel Canyon works its own magic on these little creatures who come out of really horrifying circumstances."

"Now it's time to take another big step in the Best Friends dream," says Faith. "Our supporters all share the dream of providing something very special for the animals – something they'll be really proud of when they come to see their furry friends."

If a society is judged by the way it treats its children, its old folks, and its animals, then Best Friends is the dream of a better society for us all. 🐾



*Big Enough was on his way to the slaughterhouse after a long, hard life. Now he's having a long, happy retirement!*