



Heather and Ginger Join Our Family

It was a tough winter at the farm. Finally, the last of the piles of snow have melted and the animals are enjoying the warmer temperatures and exploring the farm, especially the newest members of our family who we rescued during the harsh winter. One is a lovely white hen who had sought refuge from the bitter temperatures on the porch of a compassionate woman in a nearby town. She was afraid that the hen would freeze to death in the cold, with nighttime temperatures near zero for days on end. Could we make a home for her in our barn? After a few days in quarantine to be sure she had no parasites or other infections, we put the hen, whom we named Heather, with a group of others. One of the hens in the group was a white one named Cloud who had always been wary of people. Almost immediately, Heather and Cloud started exploring the barn together. As Cloud watched Heather come right over to us and even hop on an outstretched hand, Cloud became less fearful. Now they both keep us company as we clean the barn.



Heather (right) with her new friend Cloud (left).



Ginger enjoying the outdoors.

Not long after Heather came to join our sanctuary family, we got a call from someone in New Rochelle who had been given a red hen by a relative for a pet. Her family situation didn't allow for a chicken, and she asked if we could adopt her. After a few days in quarantine the little hen, who had been named Ginger, was allowed to join the others. The first thing she did was take a long luxurious dust bath. Ginger was missing a few feathers and her beak had been cut, signs that she had spent some time in an egg layer factory farm and she was probably purchased from a live market where she was awaiting slaughter. Despite her rough beginnings, Ginger is a friendly inquisitive hen, and we are so happy to have her with us.

It is always a little worrisome to adopt a single chicken because you never know how the others will treat her. But in both of these instances, it couldn't have gone better.

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Burdock is a bantam rooster who came to Safe Haven 6 years ago after being abandoned by the owner of a petting zoo. Recently, Burdock seemed to be slowing down. He didn't move much, and he stopped the crowing that was once so loud and frequent. We started worrying about him. We also started thinking about his time with us. Burdock spent his early days with us roaming widely around the barn or pastures, sleeping on a high rafter in the barn at night. Every night we would have to take a flashlight into the barn to search around the rafters to be sure we could find him safe inside. He was such a little guy that he could hide easily just by crouching down to go to sleep. If we approached him, he scampered away, and he showed no interest in spending time with the hens who lived in the chicken aviary.

After about a year, we adopted an elderly hen named Sweetie. Sweetie had trouble walking, but she seemed to enjoy life—especially resting in the sun in the aviary. Burdock soon began spending a lot of time just outside the aviary near her. Then one day, when we opened the door to the aviary to go in and clean the chicken house, Burdock walked right in and sat down next to Sweetie.

As Sweetie found it increasingly difficult to move, Burdock rarely left her side. He no longer wanted to leave the aviary. When Sweetie passed away, Burdock paid more attention to all the hens in his chicken house. He would call to any of them who were outside the aviary at bedtime and would only stop when he was certain they were all inside for the night. He developed a special relationship with Katie, a hen adopted from a family in Brooklyn who had bought her from a live market for a pet. Bill Crain has written about Burdock and Katie's special relationship in his book, *The Emotional Lives of Animals and Children: Insights from a Farm Sanctuary* (San Francisco, CA: Turning Stone Press, 2014), and you can watch a video about Katie the hen on our website www.safehavenfarmsanctuary.org.

Katie and Burdock were great friends and watched out for each other. On her last day with us, Katie rested in the grass in the aviary and Burdock remained by her side for several hours. When she died, Burdock flapped his wings vigorously and let out a piercing rooster crow. These memories of Burdock, Sweetie, and Katie confirm our belief that chickens have complex personalities and are loyal and caring if they are allowed to live normal lives. Now that the days are getting longer, it seems that the sun has given Burdock new energy, and it is great to see him foraging for insects and seeds on the ground. And we love to hear him crowing once again.

Got love for animals? Consider Adoption!

If you would like to help support one of our precious animals, or give a unique gift to an animal lover, consider Adoption! It's so easy. Just go to our web site and click the Adoption link for more information.

<http://safehavenfarmsanctuary.org/>

Wedding at the Farm

Two animal lovers got married in our barn in late March, surrounded by their friends, some turkeys and chickens and several inquisitive goats. We had straw bales for seating and bought the two flower arrangements, one of which Duncan (pictured below) nibbled at. The wedding went well and the animals, especially Stuart (one of our roosters) and the turkeys were very well behaved. Congratulations to the newly-weds!



Memories of Fred, Sprinkles and Daisy

We lost three of our beloved animal friends this winter, Fred the rooster, Sprinkles the sheep, and little Daisy, a dwarf Nigerian goat.

Fred was a kaporos survivor who from his first days here was one of the friendliest and bravest roosters we have ever been lucky to know. He grew from a skinny malnourished, nearly featherless chicken to a big, handsome rooster. Fred had several serious infections requiring months of fairly intensive care; he never complained and everyone who helped care for him fell under his spell. We will miss him every day and are grateful for the time we had with him.



Sprinkles was one of our first rescued animals. She narrowly escaped slaughter and was extremely afraid of humans. We had no idea how old she was, but from the start she was a quiet leader of the sheep. Sprinkles became increasingly friendly to humans over the years. She would come over for a kiss on her forehead, and you could always count on her to open the barn door to see what was going on inside. Recently Sprinkles seemed to be slowing down. A week in the hospital with her friend Angel did not help, and Sprinkles died the day after Christmas with Angel and her human friends by her side. She will be in our hearts forever. You can read more about Sprinkles on our website.



Little Daisy came to our sanctuary with her friends Violet and Astro after her owners decided to move and had no place for their goats. She was brave, inquisitive, and mischievous and always had a smile for everyone. Daisy's left front leg was shorter than the right and she walked with a limp but it never got in the way of her going everywhere she wanted. Although acupuncture and medications did not seem to help, Daisy plugged along, getting into mischief, coming over for rubs under her chin or behind her horns and a slice of apple if it were offered, and then moving off to another adventure. One morning in January, Daisy couldn't get up. The vet came quickly but could not get her back, and she died a few hours later. Daisy has left an indelible mark on all who knew her.



Her indomitable spirit is an inspiration to us all. One of Daisy's caretakers has written about her memories of Daisy and it is posted on our website, www.safehavenfarmsanctuary.org.

Exposing Animal Abuse

In early January, the animal activist group Direct Action Everywhere released a harrowing video based on an undercover investigation of Petaluma Farms, a Humane Certified, Northern California operation that supplies eggs to Whole Foods and Organic Valley. In it, hundreds of chickens are shown crammed into sheds and suffering from several obvious ailments, including respiratory distress and being stuck in feces. This is pretty distressing since many people who choose to eat eggs, try to buy eggs from farms certified as humane, organic, or free-range. We may not be able to trust these certifications any more. To read more about animal abuse, subscribe to the blog by James McWilliams at james-mcwilliams.com (<http://james-mcwilliams.com>) .

United Poultry Concerns' web site has a new undercover video showing what happens to commercial egg-laying hens who slow down their egg laying around the age of two years. These hens whose commercial life is over go to "spent fowl" plants. "Spent" hens are considered worthless. They travel hundreds, even thousands, of miles because the plants are few and far between. During the long journey, they do continue to form and push out some eggs, so that, in addition to no food or water or space in the transport cages and being trucked often naked of feathers in all types of weather, they are covered in egg slime.

Another method for disposing hens is death by carbon dioxide (CO₂). Millions of hens are now being gassed to death at the farm site. CO₂ is used to exterminate “spent” hens because it is cheap and readily available. Typically the CO₂ is pumped into containers filled with hens. Black Eagle Farm is a typical “cage-free-organic” egg operation that uses this method of extermination. For the whole story, visit http://www.upc-online.org/pp/winter2011/black_eagle_revisited.html.

If you are concerned by how hens are treated on certified humane farms or when they are considered “spent”, and want to show your support for these hens, avoid eating eggs and foods with egg ingredients.

Open House

Come visit us on Saturday, June 6 from noon – 2 p.m. Meet the animals, explore the sanctuary, and enjoy light refreshments.

Volunteer

We are always looking for volunteers to help with cleaning, socializing the animals, gardening, outreach, and various other projects going on around the farm. If you are interested in helping out, please call or e-mail (contact info below).

Donate

Help us help animals. Donate and help us provide the best possible care for our farm family. Our farm sanctuary is home to over 100 animals. We appreciate your support. Click the Support Us link on our web page.

Contact Us



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