

"It is up to us to promote our hobby"

Paul Keen suggests a poster campaign

Travelling around the shows over the past few months I have noticed with pleasure the amount of newcomers, youngsters who have brought their pet rabbit along, and some newbie fanciers.

Some of them are with their parents. And some who had been to a show before and the parents who were dropping them off were taking it all in. Without exception, all the youngsters I met were on their best behaviour.

Talking to a family who had attended a recent show in Norwich, they told me it was fantastic that their child was doing something real – and that a computer screen was not involved. They thought it was good for their son's development and people skills.

The one thing that has become apparent is that these newcomers were attracted to the shows by reading about them on posters placed in public target areas.

These clubs are the ones who are reaping the rewards. The ones who wait for people to drop by are on borrowed time.

As has been said many times, FAIL TO PLAN, PLAN TO FAIL, but I believe that that so many simple things are at our disposal.

The one thing that seems to be working a treat for many clubs is a small poster. Keep the wording simple and display it at pet shops and garden centres.

The staff running such enterprises would I'm sure be pleased to display a poster; they may even point it out to new pet owners, as it will help them to meet like-minded pet keepers gain more experience and knowledge. Remember, we all started somewhere.

Fur & Feather has designed and printed my sample poster and it is enclosed with this issue. You can also print out further A5 or A4 copies by clicking on to the PDF that you will find on the *Fur & Feather* website www.furandfeather.co.uk and click on the publicity area.

On the bottom of the poster is the F&F website address giving links to a huge amount of information, the BRC and the clubs.

This is one way we can target the people that could become the next generation of exhibitors. It is up to us to promote our hobby. Keep it healthy.

Perhaps a new position in the club can be created, a new "Publicity Manager" to coordinate the campaign.

Bear in mind that the pet keepers you are inviting to the show will not have BRC rung rabbits, so run an informal pet competition at the show so they can bring along their pets.

Just think about the publicity a poster campaign will bring. Most of us have Garden Centres close by and some have pet sections,

or a pet shop. Another place is pet feed centres. Also scout and guide meetings, youth clubs, libraries, schools – the list goes on.

Ask your child if the poster can be put on the school notice board.

Make sure it is displayed a clear two weeks before the event.

The commitment is small, the reward immeasurable.

Why not give it a go? Your club will grow and so will your membership.

NOTHING VENTURED
NOTHING GAINED.

Go get those members!
Paul Keen

MY FANCY



Visit our Rabbit Show

Bring your pet rabbit, the best will win prizes!

Venue:

Date & Time:

For more information contact your local club:

To find out more about our hobby visit

www.furandfeather.co.uk

FINAL EDITION **The Times** EXTRA! EXTRA!

Smallest Rabbit in the World?

Mr Tom Jones, of Nonsuch, is showing a Netherland Dwarf rabbit which weighs only 1½ lbs at the Muckham-on-Mud Championship Show which is to be held in the City Hall tomorrow.

This rabbit, which will fit comfortably into a pint pot, is certainly the smallest rabbit out of the 250 entries at this show and Mr Jones, who is a well-known authority on the breed, which he has been keeping since they were first imported from Holland in 1951, says it is the smallest he has ever seen and he is wondering if it is the smallest in the world, for he has never heard of one weighing less.

Your local paper or TV/radio station can publicise your shows

Did the headline on the left catch your eye? Then the object of the writer who sent it to the local paper with the object of getting some free publicity for this show has been achieved.

By putting it this way he has told no lies. Equally eye catching could be a story about the club's heaviest rabbit, lop eared Lion rabbits, or rabbits with coats like velvet – mention there are over fifty breeds shown in hundreds of colours and patterns and you've got a story that will catch the Editor's eye . . . people will come to the show to see these beautiful animals and, of course, stop to have a cup of tea and a go in the raffle, and perhaps if there is a friendly welcome one or two will become really interested. New fanciers will be obtained and the show will make a profit.

This is just one example of the sort of thing a club can do to get publicity . . . it is surprising how often it can be pulled off.

Don't be afraid to approach your Press; they want NEWS and INTEREST FEATURES. It is their lifeblood and a LOCAL press wants LOCAL NEWS.

You can contact them by an internet search and email your story. Don't worry too much about your writing, spelling or grammar. If you can email the news and give a telephone or email contact number, so much the better. If you have a story to tell they will sort it out.

Don't forget the power of local and national television and radio. No rabbit club is ever likely to be able to afford to pay for an advertisement on the "telly" but many have succeeded in getting notices of their shows and even parts of their shows televised.

Any new or novel idea – from an Easter Bunny pets competition to a rabbit hopping display – will be seized on by the media.

Other ideas you can use for obtaining publicity are to get a display in conjunction with your local agricultural or craft show. Church fetes, open gardens or even the larger pet stores have welcomed clubs' rabbit displays.