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### Easter bunnies: More than candy

*Brian Foley, STAFF WRITER*

SAN RAMON — Bunnies are cute and cuddly. There's no disputing that. But the **Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center** says that isn't a reason to buy one as an Easter present.

We want people to stick with chocolate rabbits, said Shann Ikezawa, who works in rabbit care at the veterinary center. After Easter, we get a lot of questions from people wanting to know where to place their unwanted rabbits.

With Easter brings a tradition of relatives buying little Johnny or Jane a fluffy, carrot-munching fur ball. But bunnies require a lot of attention, something Johnny and Jane might not provide, said Ikezawa.

That is when shelters are overrun with families seeking a new home for their furry friend. Unfortunately, there are so many bunnies in shelters already that they are euthanized after about two or three weeks.

Bunny ownership is an eight- to 10-year commitment that requires a fair amount of responsibility. Bunnies run around the house, hiding behind furniture and chewing things, said Ikezawa. Bunnies might not be so friendly at times, biting people who get too close.

Some people let bunnies go into the wild, which means the rabbit doesn't last too long, said Ikezawa.

People usually buy bunnies at pet stores rather than adopt them at shelters, because pet stores carry baby bunnies.

Just like kittens and puppies, kids want to buy them when they are young, so they go to pet stores, said Ikezawa.

However, bunnies can be loving pets and bond with the house cat or dog. Ikezawa said families should prepare for bunny ownership by researching the amount of time and money it requires.

For more information on bunny adoption, call Tri-Valley Animal Rescue at (925) 803-7043.

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