

Pets as Gifts

The next time you think of giving a cute bunny or chick, puppy or kitten as a gift, think twice. Many of these gifts here in Shanghai end up unwanted and discarded, either to organizations such as SCAA, or much worse, abandoned on the streets to be sold or eaten.

Those cute and precious little furry creatures grow up. They get big. Babies do that too. Cute chicks become chickens (and these days with the Avian Flu scare, not a good idea anyway); bunnies can become very big hares/rabbits and need a lot of care and attention; they are not toys to tire of. Puppies and kittens can be 15-20 year commitments. Just because you think a baby kitten may make a great gift, the recipient may not...take some time to think before giving a gift as a pet:

- Do they love animals (we're not kidding...someone who makes cute noises about animals still might not want to own one...)
- Are they prepared to take on a 15-20 year commitment?
- Are they allergic to any animal?
- Do they travel a lot and will they be able to take care of an animal long-term?
- Do they live in a sufficiently large home where the animal can exercise?
- Do they have enough funds to pay for proper regular and/or emergency veterinary care?
- Are they planning to have children and are they willing to have children and animals in the same home?
- If they leave Shanghai, will they be taking the pet with them (because if they are not, then what happens to the animal?).

If you do decide to give a pet as a gift, **DO NOT BUY IT FROM A LOCAL MARKET!!** Most of these tiny creatures are from cruel puppy/kitty farms; when you buy from them you are perpetuating and condoning this barbaric practice. Close your eyes and walk past these markets. If you want to give a pet as a present, contact SCAA and we will help you and your recipient find an animal truly in need of a loving home.

Or, give a gift of sponsoring a SCAA-supported animal! For as little as RMB 150/month you can give a sponsorship that will mean saving the life of an animal in need. SCAA will prepare a gift certificate and the sponsor can visit his beloved animal in person!

For more information about gift certificates or sponsoring a SCAA animal, please contact either Carol Wolfson (13817811443; director@scaashanghai.org) or Cat Brandell (13918552425 or 5030 6563; email.brandejl@juno.com).

by Carol A. Wolfson, founder of SCAA