



THUMP

NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS FEBRUARY 2018

When It Comes to Bonding, You Can't Hurry Bunny Love

By Paula Rosenberg

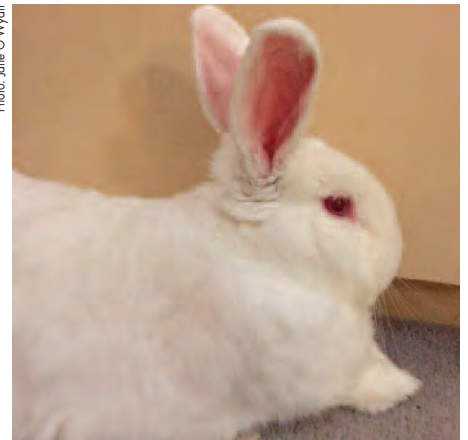
Four years ago, I adopted my first rabbit. I had always loved bunnies, and after spending time researching the care they required and how to set up my home, I was ready. I visited a number of the buns at Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and they were all sweet, but when I sat down in a pen with a Florida White rabbit who jumped right into my lap, I knew the decision had been made for me. That bunny was Milo and he chose me to be his person that day.

Milo has been an amazing addition to my home. He's a mellow boy, and loves people. I joke that he is a dog trapped in the body of a rabbit, because he tends to follow guests to my front door when they leave and wait there to see if they are coming back to play with him some more. While his affection for humans has never wavered, his feelings about other bunnies were a different story.

I know that most rabbits eventually want a bunny companion. We tried a

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Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Milo.

After Nine Years as A Volunteer, I Leave With Fond Memories

By Zhen Heinemann

It was an early spring day in 2009 and I was walking on the Upper West Side, putting up posters for concerts, movies and other free outdoor performances scheduled for summer. While the energy of the city's summers was something that I looked forward to, I had been generally feeling pretty low and was talking with my husband about wanting to live with an animal. My husband was in the process of getting approval for an animal from our landlord, and as a #teamdog fan, I wasn't impressed with the news we'd received so far: cats only.

Photo: Zhen Heinemann



Cow grooms her daughter Suji.

There is a pet store on 72nd Street that let me put a poster in the entryway. I

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Yasha Is Rescued From Brooklyn Store

By Sari Krieger

My neighbor told me about a rabbit living in the local eyeglasses store in Brooklyn. The store owner was trying to give him away because she had a new baby.

I told my neighbor to give the woman my number and the Manhattan shelter information, but weeks went by and I heard nothing. Eventually I went to the store in Kensington to check out the situation.

The woman said she had gotten the rabbit a year and a half earlier from "a guy who found him outside and had

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Fond Memories

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would stop in there often to visit the small furies living their lives in tight glass or barred enclosures at the rear of the store. I imagined us both benefiting from some quiet time of positive nontouch interaction where we would stare at each other and I would imitate their sounds and gestures. (This was a time when city pet stores still sold rabbits, chinchillas, guinea pigs, hamsters, gerbils, etc., and most of these are still sold.)

On this particular day, after I put up my poster I went to the back of the store and there was a cage with a large black and white rabbit in it – bigger than I had ever seen – and a sign saying “Free Rabbit,” right next to two smaller cages each holding two tiny \$60 rabbits. I thought, will someone take this rabbit and eat it? Feed it to their pet snake? And then she and I locked eyes. I fell in love immediately. I rushed out of the store to call my husband and demanded he call the landlord to get approval for a rabbit. Then I went back in to talk to the store personnel about this amazing being and to find out how she could be my new best friend.

The story goes that she had been abandoned at the store by a local woman who had a newborn baby and decided the rabbit was too much. I jumped online and started voraciously doing research into rabbit life, care and health. When we went to pick up Cow at the store, she ran right to me after being taken out of her cage. She buried herself in my lap. We bought her all of her necessary housewares and then scheduled her vet check and spay.

I was reading everything I could about rabbits. I learned to respect the will of the rabbit and not force my will (cuddling!), and to approach her on her level (getting down on the floor) and not directly from the front (blind spot!). We spent the first couple of days getting acquainted and watching each other, and she was doing something strange.

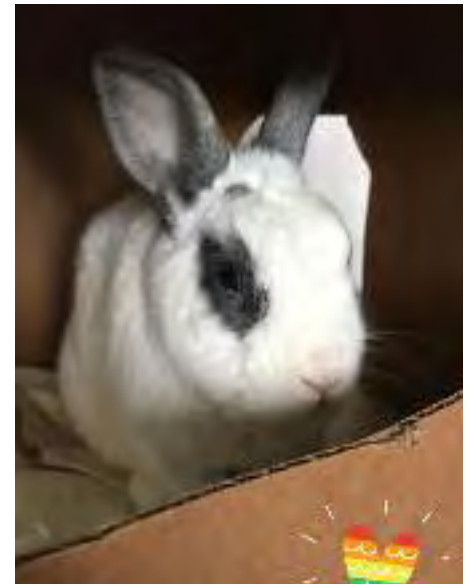
Photos: Zhen Heinemann



Cow.

She was stashing hay and anything she could carry into her hidey box. It was a sign of nesting, but I read online that sometimes female rabbits experience a false pregnancy. On the morning of Cow's third day with us, I let her out for a run before her vet appointment and she went right into her hidey box. When she came out there was a noise in the box, but she wasn't in it. That morning we had three rabbits in our house instead of one.

My husband was not excited and was pretty clear about it. I was nervous about not having the funds to be able to take care of exotic animals' veterinary care in a way that felt responsible and kind. I reached out to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab/New York City Chapter of House Rabbit Society in a bit of a panic. How would I re-home these baby bunnies? How could we find lower-cost spay and neuter options and not create more baby bunnies? I felt terrible for adopting and now having increased the rabbit population. Well, it turns out the manager of the pet store was the one responsible for that. I went back and talked to him. He had put Cow in the same cage as one of his rabbits for sale, thinking they were both male. He clearly didn't know how to sex rabbits! RR&R helped us figure out how to sex the two babies, Suji and Deedle, get



Deedle.

them spayed and neutered, and keep them at home all together with us.

After this emotional and wonderful surprise, along with the joy that Cow brought into my life, I knew I had to give something back to RR&R. I started volunteering at the Manhattan Animal Care Center in the rabbit room! I began in 2009 and just recently, in November 2017, I did my last shift and moved to Chicago with my husband, Cow and her babies.

The rabbit room at Manhattan's ACC is a very special place. The population swings from five to 165 rabbits and it's a joy to meet the rabbits and get to know their personalities. There have been rabbits who have come in abused and on high alert, and they melt into relaxed, healthy, confident bunnies after care from the rabbit-room volunteers and the ACC staff. The ACC volunteers help homeless rabbits get medical care (watching for symptoms and signs of illness and alerting the doctors), groom rabbits (who doesn't love plucking bunny cheek dreadlocks?) and socialize them so that they can more easily find their forever homes.

Bunnies end up at the shelter for various reasons, but I think all the volunteers have ended up there because they have

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Can't Hurry Bunny Love

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speed-dating session with Milo, though, and it was a disaster. Bachelorette #1 chased him, and Bachelorette #2 charged him. By the time Bachelorette #3 came in he was so annoyed that he sat in the corner of the pen and refused to interact with her. When I've fostered other bunnies, Milo showed his displeasure. Even though the foster(s) would be in another room, he would get territorial. Milo is excellent about using his litter box, but he made an exception one day to pee outside my bedroom door and signal that the foster bunnies in his other playroom had overstayed their welcome. I figured I had adopted the pet version of myself and that he was destined to be a bachelor bunny for life.

All of that changed when I met a rabbit named Victoria at an adoption event. Longtime volunteer Austin Torres had been taking care of her for several years after she was initially brought to Sean Casey Animal Rescue in Brooklyn. As a baby, Victoria had been thrown out a window, which resulted in a broken hind leg and amputation. Thanks to Austin's love and care, she hadn't let her disability get her down, but Austin knew she craved a buddy. When I met this sweet girl, I knew she was special. Like Milo, she was very mellow. Given his reaction to other bunnies in the past, I wasn't sure that Milo would love her as much as I did, but I knew I had to try.

Milo and Victoria had a successful first date and we all agreed that they would be

Photo: Paula Rosenberg



Milo and Victoria.

a good pair. Jeanine Callace and Marcie Frishberg helped me in setting up my apartment for the bonding process and in teaching me about Victoria's needs as a tripod. Victoria doesn't have a lot of special requirements, but I needed to get low-entry litter boxes and make sure that there were rugs everywhere. Victoria doesn't jump, but boy, can that girl run, and she does do binkies. The rugs make sure that she doesn't slip and slide. She does not have any special health issues, but she needs to go to the vet for grooming every few months. Since Victoria is missing one of her legs, she can't pull

back her left ear easily to clean it. She requires cleanings by a vet so that the wax doesn't build up and cause her pain.

Before Victoria moved in, I made some preparations. Milo had been living pen-free for a while. Marcie suggested I reintroduce him to the pen about a month before we did the speed date so that he wouldn't associate it with Victoria's arrival. The first week, we didn't do any dates and let Victoria settle in. I switched litter boxes each day between the two side-by-side pens so that the rabbits

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Fond Memories

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felt the love of a great rabbit. Cow is my best friend and she has taught me a lot about care and respect. I felt glad to travel to East 110th Street every Tuesday, and then every other Tuesday, for nine years and to be part of a volunteer "rabbit room" team that is a strong, supportive and caring community. I felt honored

to be able to become an ACC pet photographer and take photos of the buns that conveyed their personalities and helped them put their best paw forward in their online profile.

I continue to feel close to the RR&R/ACC volunteer family from daily emails with updates about bunnies that I knew at the shelter. There are many volunteers I never actually met over all the years, but

when I sent my goodbye email to the group, I received so many genuinely nice comments from my volunteer team that it made me glad again to have had this experience. I am happy to be in Chicago with my three buns and get to pet them every day and to remember fondly my ACC rabbit room volunteer partners and the bunnies I met.

Rescued from a Store

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him in a cardboard box and was trying to get rid of him.” The store owner took the rabbit. Her heart seemed to be in the right place but she also seemed to know very little about rabbit care. The rabbit was in an unlined cage with no hay, no greens and no rabbit pellets. I found the rabbit with a full-sized carrot and a slice of bread.

The woman’s baby was allergic, so she needed to give the rabbit away, she said. The rabbit also had a goopy eye and was being given human eye drops from the shop, but had never been taken to a vet for the condition.

I couldn’t let this baby stay there. The woman was able to handle him, and he turned out not to be “wild,” as she had originally described him – or at least he wasn’t wild when I brought him home.

I didn’t try to touch him much. I just let him hang out in a clean, bunny-appropriate set-up and munch lots of hay, maybe for the first time. The store owner told me the rabbit didn’t like hay, but he went to town on it at my place.

She had called him Yasha. It now turns out Yasha is a she! Despite being handled

Photo: Sari Krieger



Yasha at Sari’s place.

a bit aggressively or inappropriately in the past, she came out of her shell quickly. She received expert care from the rabbit volunteers at the Manhattan

Animal Care Center. Yasha was adopted in January, and I wish her the best. She has a new name – Juno – and a bunny partner named Benny.

Can’t Hurry Bunny Love

(Continued from page 3)

could get used to each other’s smells. Marcie assisted me with their first bonding session, which was only a couple of minutes. Their bonding sessions were brief and I didn’t let them touch. I started switching their pens after dates so they wouldn’t become territorial. Eventually, the dates got longer and the rabbits were allowed to touch for a few seconds at a time.

After several successful bonding sessions in a row, I am tacking on an additional five minutes to see how they do. We’re up to 30 minute dates now. On their

earlier dates, Milo and Victoria would mostly observe one another, but now they kiss and do some light grooming. We haven’t had any fights or chases. The only behavior I’ve had to keep an eye on is their decision on who the “alpha” is going to be. Victoria loves to present herself to Milo for grooming on their dates, primarily because she realizes he likes to clean the ear and side of her face that is harder for her to reach. If she presents too much on a date, though, Milo will mount her. I gently move Milo off. Victoria doesn’t get upset by his behavior. She is learning to reciprocate his grooming and when she does, there isn’t any mounting during the date.

Milo and Victoria seem very happy with one another. They love to mirror each other’s behavior when they are in their pens. They eat at the same time and lie across from one other. When they go out for their individual play times they love to run back into their pens to make sure the other one is still there and is doing okay. As the bunnies continue to do well on their bonding sessions, I’ll keep slowly extending them. If they keep on track the way we have been, they’ll hopefully be bonded in the next month or two. Going slow has been key, though. You can’t rush love.

My Malachi Brothers – The Demolition Derby Duo

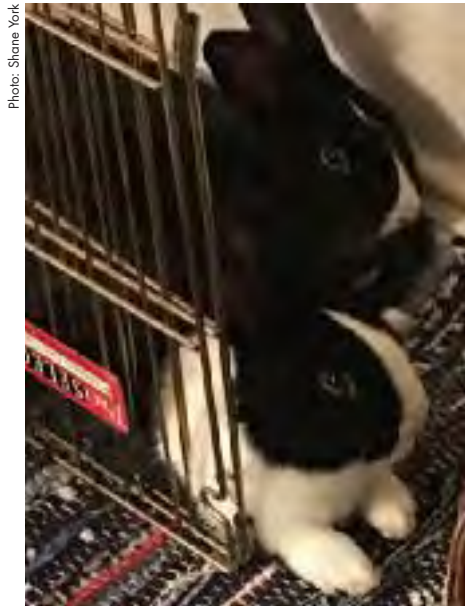
By Shane York

As I walked into the kitchen that morning I saw Lola was on her back, unable to right herself. Running to her side, I felt a deep panic take hold and something inside told me this was it. We had had 14 joyous years together, and now there was nothing to do but spend a little time saying goodbye and then take that awful last drive to Dr. John Pisciotta at the Rye Harrison Vet Hospital.

After a couple of months, I felt it was time to give another bunny in need a chance at a forever home. Lola was an alpha bun so she was never thrilled to share her space with a partner, and other bunnies never seemed to interest her. This time, I was going to find a bonded pair, so we could have group hugs, cook together on Sundays, have champagne toasts on holidays – plus each bunny would have someone to love.

Scanning Petfinder.com I found a pair of bunnies who were cuteness overload. Two black-and-white Dutch brothers had been abandoned at the door of a Petco and found their way into the shelter/foster system. I thought, naively, “Brothers – this is great!” They were blood relatives so surely they would always be best friends. When I arrived to meet the boys, there were no penned areas for me to really interact with them. They were small, only 5 months old and very calm in my arms. It was love at first sight (how could I say, ‘no thank you?’) so I took them both home.

The plan was to try to discover their personalities before I named them, but I had some standbys – Batman and Robin, Sonny and Fredo, or maybe Cut and Paste. The first morning I walked into the kitchen, I couldn’t believe my eyes: their hay boxes were turned over (who turns over a hay box?) the carpet was folded in half, the water was all over the floor, tunnels pushed across the room,



Paulie and Vinny.



Vinny and Paulie separated.

and the puppy pen had been somehow reconfigured. Still unaware I was there, the two of them were on either side of a stack of newspapers, trying to bring it down.

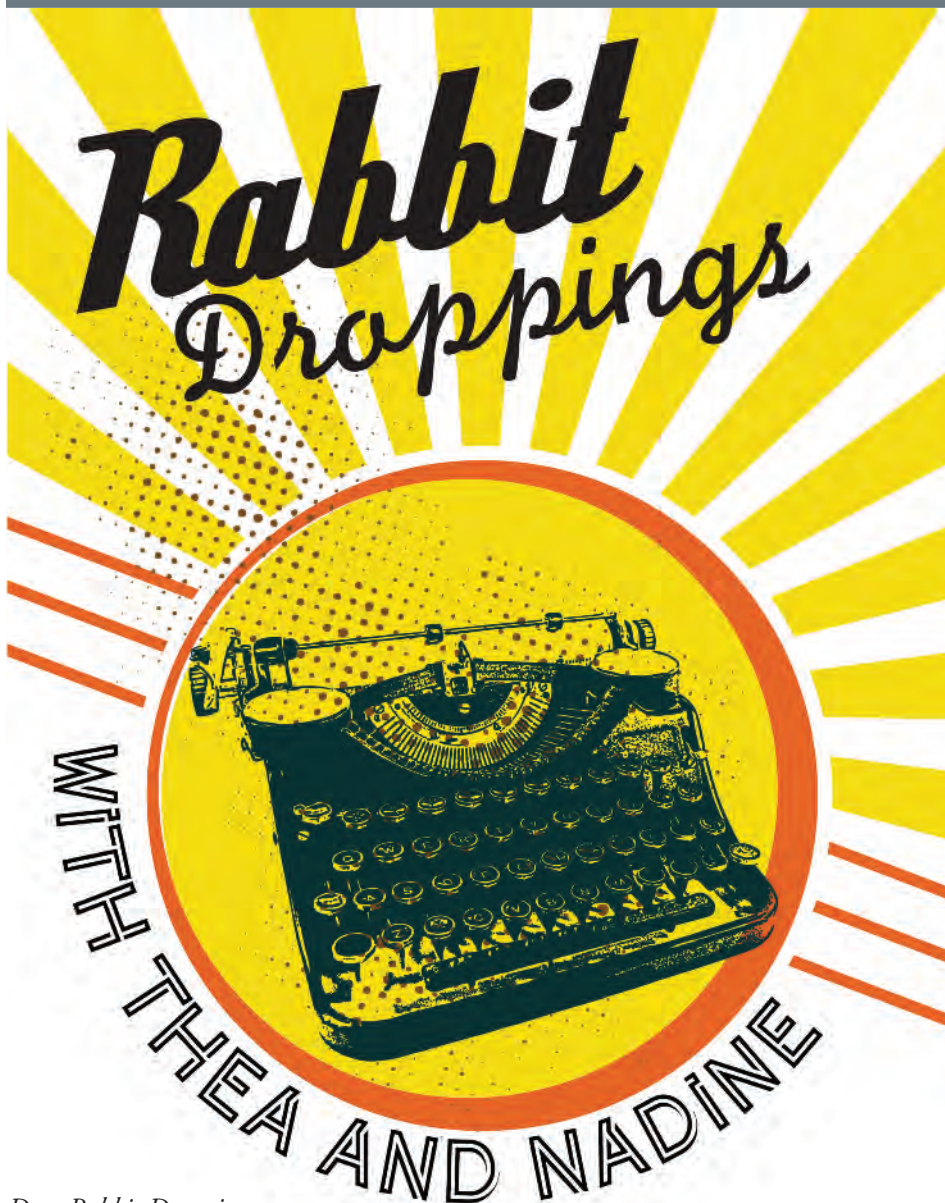
Suddenly they realized I was standing behind them so they turned around with their paws in the air and one whispered to the other, “Did you hide the spray paint?” I knew I was in trouble. That morning their names became clear. These were the Malachi Brothers, from the sitcom “Happy Days.” These are the brothers who made famous the “Malachi Crunch,” a maneuver where the brothers worked in tandem to crunch their opponents’ cars into accordions. I gave them new names, Vinny the Fish

and Paulie Boy – actually, those are just their street names and we just use Vinny and Paulie at home. My dreams of singing “Kumbaya” with my bunny soul mates evaporated and I was faced with a dusty team of demolition derby drivers, and they were just getting started.

To keep the brothers busy, I bought a cardboard two-level condo funhouse, only to find the next day somebunny had scratched “Live Entertainment” over the front door. That evening there were flashing lights inside the condo and the doorbell rang all night with other bunnies hopping in and out. Later, I noticed my shot glasses and bottles of carrot juice were missing. I finally had to raid the place around 3 a.m. when things started getting out of hand, but I let the poker game continue because 10% goes to the house. Later that week I caught Vinny spinning the lock on the safe and I found Paulie logged into my Facebook account posting snarky comments on political sites. I think one or both are thinking of running for office – either brother would be an upgrade.

Although Vinny and Paulie clearly love each other, they’ve had their bouts, as most brothers do – but when the fur starts to fly the demolition derby goes into high gear. Vinny has emerged as the alpha and now it seems all of Paulie’s food, toys and personal space really belong to him. Now we keep the peace with separate puppy pens with limited time together, although they still lie with each other on either side of the bars of the pen.

It’s not the bunny relationship I wanted, but as my good friend Mary Cotter said, “Don’t worry about what you thought you wanted and just enjoy what you have.” I don’t know what will come next, but the Malachi Brothers have clearly taken over the neighborhood, my house...and my heart.



Dear Rabbit Droppings,

I recently adopted my first rabbit, Bernie, from a rescue group. I love Bernie but he is a major baseboard chewer and the bitter apple spray has no effect on him whatsoever. What can I do?

– Chewy in Carroll Gardens, Brooklyn

Dear Chewy,

Aside from trying to distract him with the latest Stormy Daniels scandal, there are many ways you can rabbit-proof your house and keep you and Bernie safe and out of harm's way. House Rabbit Society has some good info here: <http://rabbit.org/faq-rabbit-proofing/>

For a great local solution, go to Canal Plastics at 345 Canal in Lower Manhattan. It has an amazing selection of chloroplast or clear Plexiglas that can easily be drilled to any baseboard. Remember, holes are easier to fix than chewed-up edges. You can get covers for the corners and use double-sided tape or Velcro as an easy-to-remove adhesive.

Also, never underestimate the power of the Ikea Hack as an alternative. For example, the Knagglig box can easily be used to cover your baseboard in a fun way. The Knuff is a cool-looking hay bin and the Moppe can easily cover up

that small space Bernie has been itching to explore – while also holding toys, treats and those dreaded nail clippers. All are made with untreated wood as well, so they're less problematic if chewed. So grab some vegan Swedish meatballs and get your Ikea Hack on!

Dear Rabbit Droppings,

My future mother-in-law is staying with us for two weeks this spring. She's not an "animal person" and is allergic to rabbits. Do you know of any place in the city where I can board my rabbit? Baby is free range and I can't imagine he'd do well stuck in a cage.

– Desperately Seeking Escape,
Times Square, Manhattan

Dear Desperate,

Are you familiar with something called Airbnb? It's a website that lists boarding facilities for relatives visiting from out of town. Inform you future mother-in-law that because of your concerns about her well-being, she shouldn't even enter the apartment.

Of course, we know that allergies to rabbits and hay are a serious issue for many of us who share our lives with rabbits. We're not knocking people with allergies. (For more on allergies, please see this article on the House Rabbit Society website: "Living With Rabbit Allergies" (<http://rabbit.org/living-with-rabbit-allergies/>) But we sense that your future mother-in-law may not approve of Baby's important role in your life. Use this as an opportunity to educate her about house rabbits.

If she does end up staying with you, do not put Baby in a cage. Instead, provide your mother-in-law with a puppy pen to surround herself with on the pull-out couch. Insist that it is for her own well-being, comfort and safety. Arrange a

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Droppings

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lovely basket of supplies for her, including a box of tissues, a flask of Dewar’s and a copy of the House Rabbit Handbook (<http://rabbit.org/house-rabbit-handbook/>)

Dear Rabbit Droppings,

What is the naughtiest thing your rabbits have done? The worst you have heard or seen?

—Nosy Buns in Queens

Dear Nosy Buns,

Below are two photos in response to your “naughty” question. The rabbit on the couch is Ivy, who was adopted from

ACC, where her name was Alesha. (Thea took this photo after walking into this scene one morning when she was rabbit-sitting Ivy.) The passport is Nadine’s, which was invalidated/destroyed by her bunny Butter. Readers, got some naughty bun photos of your own? We’d love to see and share them. Maybe we can offer some ideas for preventing some of these acts of wanton destruction. Email us at askrabbitdroppings@gmail.com.

ABOUT RABBIT DROPPINGS: This is our inaugural column. We are not veterinarians or veterinary technicians, and claim no expertise in rhetoric, political maneuvering, comedy, or math.

We are, however, curious, dedicated, long-time rabbit owners, fosterers, shelter volunteers, rescue advocates, and litter-box cleaners. As volunteers in a busy shelter like Animal Care Centers of NYC, we see, hear and chat a lot about rabbits – and we are excited to share all those little droppings. Please email us at askrabbitdroppings@gmail.com if you have any questions or comments. Sometimes we embellish and combine questions we hear frequently in order to present common themes in an entertaining way.

We look forward to hearing from you ... until then, Cheers, Buns!



Ivy amid her demolition project.



Butter’s demolition project.

Card Purchases Help Rabbit Rescue & Rehab

Fundraising cards for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab are available at Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital on Long Island. The cards are for various occasions and also include thank-you cards. We are grateful to Dr. Jennifer Saver for having our cards there and handling the proceeds to apply toward our account. All donations received from the cards at Catnip are credited directly toward our consistently huge veterinary bill.

Other cards that benefit RR&R can be obtained by emailing us at

Photos: Birgit von Roemeling



nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com. Birgit von Roemeling designed these cards

with bunny motifs, and a pack of three is available for a donation of \$5.

On behalf of the RR&R bunnies, we want to thank Birgit for her generosity. Her delightful, beautiful cards require a lot of time and effort and are enjoyed by all!



Conference Videos Are Now Online

House Rabbit Society has posted videos of the presentations made at the 2017 Educators Conference in San Diego, Calif.

The October conference attracted educators from across the country, and the three-day event featured talks by leading rabbit experts.

Now, by going to the link <http://rabbit.org/2017conference/>, rabbit owners can view the various presentations. The talks include slides, photos and illustrations.

“Staying Strong in Animal Rescue,” by Debby Widolf, gives suggestions in balancing idealism and realism in rescue work.

“Preventing and Dealing with Aggressive Rabbits,” by Joy Gioia, offers some common-sense ways to understand behavior problems.

“Helping the Public Keep Their Rabbits at Home,” by Criss Starr, gives ways of coping with the problem of returns at shelters.

“The Rabbits of Okunoshima: Rewilding the Domestic or Domesticating the Wild?” by Margo DeMello, Kototyo Hoshina and Koushi Takahashi, describes a Japanese island populated by rabbits.

“Creating Successful Rescue-Veterinarian Partnerships,” by Carmine Bausone, DVM, discusses the importance of good relationships with veterinarians.

“Fundraising and Using Social Media to Help Rabbits,” by Anne Martin, provides information about projects and emergency appeals that can educate the public.

“The Vet Doesn’t Open Until 8am and OH NO! There’s a Problem,” by Linda Siperstein, DVM, provides some basic guidance on dealing with common emergencies.

“The Golden Years: Caring for the Geriatric Rabbit,” by Linda Knox, DVM, includes X-rays showing how a rabbit’s body changes during the aging process.

“Growing Your Organization: Everyone Can Do It!” by Joy Gioia and Edie Gower, encourages rabbit rescue groups to have goals and a vision.

“Recruiting, Training, and Retaining a Solid Volunteer Corps,” by Kimberly Elman, offers ideas for developing a strong volunteer organization.

“Community Outreach: Activities, Events, Strategies, and Publicity,” by Joy Gioia and Patricia Mulcahy, gives a variety of ideas for events that educate the public and promote an organization.

“Rabbit Health: Newest Treatment Protocols & Time Tested Effective Ones plus Current Thoughts on E. cuniculi,” by Bill Guerrero, DVM, offers new medical findings with an eye on future research.

“Emergency Rabbit Confiscations: How to Quickly Mobilize an Effective Rescue Response: Case Studies,” by Dawn Sailer, reviews the necessary groundwork for confiscations, and discusses legal considerations.

“Rabbit Agility Training and Course Building,” by Alison Giese, gives tips for clicker training and agility courses.

LONG ISLAND NEWS

How I Successfully Fostered a Rabbit for the First Time

By Diana Kronenberg

My family has fostered four different rabbits over the past few years, and all were foster failures until Cameron. It is very tough to love and care for living creatures, only to have to send them on their way to live with another family. I tried to find the right balance of nurture without getting too attached, which was difficult. Ultimately I was finally successful with my foster bun, Cameron.

The first time I fostered, I had no idea what to expect. My own rabbit, Charlie, decided that we were going to keep my

foster girl, Bella Leche, and there was no arguing with his logic. The next time I tried to foster a pair of bonded boys, not realizing how hard it is to get bonded pairs adopted. Six months later, my family decided that they were not going anywhere, and we might as well just make them officially ours. I was very hesitant to foster again, even short-term. With four rabbits of our own now, there was not much space left for a foster, and I knew how attached my family would likely become.

It was two nights before this past Halloween, and five rabbits were spotted running around the streets of Baldwin

on the South Shore of Long Island. (See December 2017 Thump, page 11, http://www.rabbitcare.org/Thump_Dec2017.pdf.) The Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group volunteers sprang into action to rescue all five rabbits, but the work was far from over. The next day my mom and I went to their overnight foster space to check the rabbits over and bring them each to their new foster homes.

Due to a miscommunication, we realized that there was only foster placement for four of the rabbits. My mom decided we would just have to take one of them

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Fostering for the First Time

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home with us until we could find somewhere else for him to go. We randomly brought home Cameron, whom we were calling Camille as we thought he was girl, and braced ourselves for what my dad would have to say.

We initially thought the rabbit would only be with us for a couple of days until we could find more permanent placement. I set up a pen in my dad's den and promised that we would not be keeping the bunny. Later we discovered a wound on the rabbit's side, so my mom brought the bunny to the vet the next day. There we found out that he was actually a boy, and officially changed his name from Camille to Cameron. His neuter was scheduled for the day before Thanksgiving to give him time to relax after his rescue ordeal. That was almost four weeks away, but I told my dad that it would not be fair to move him around again until after his surgery. He agreed and Cameron settled in for the month of November.

I called and emailed a few potential fosterers about Cameron, but nothing was working out. My mom wanted to keep him with us, but I knew that fostering would be hard for us, given our previous track record. Eventually I agreed with her, and we broke the news to my dad. I adjusted the pen to make better use of the space for both Cameron and my dad, since the rabbit might be staying for months now. I kept telling my dad that Cameron was small, cute and friendly, which is everything you want going for an adoptable rabbit. I was sure that he would be adopted soon. I just wasn't sure how we would handle giving him up.

My mom I and shared rabbit-care duties for Cameron, and we both tried to spend a little time every day in the pen to socialize him. My dad spent most evenings watching TV with him, so

Photos: Diana Kronenberg



Cameron.



Cameron with right ear lopped down.

there was a lot of human interaction. Cameron may not have been the most social rabbit, but he never said no to a head rub.

A month after his neuter, and just two months after we welcomed him into our home, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group received an email from a potential adopter. I wanted to make sure she was familiar with GI stasis, since he had come down with a bout while under my care. I spoke to the potential adopter, and she seemed eager to adopt Cameron and willing to address my concerns.

I was a little conflicted about Cameron's potential adoption. Ultimately, adoption is what every fosterer hopes for, but as his foster-momma I also wanted to make sure that he would be getting the best care possible. I thought I would have had a few more months with him before sending him off to his forever home, so

I had to just focus on what would be best for Cameron. He deserved a home where he was the center of attention, and that was not something I could give him.

While waiting for a volunteer to conduct a home visit for the potential adopter, Cameron came down with an ear infection. I noticed on Christmas Eve that his right ear had lopped down, which is not something that usually happens in an adult rabbit. I made him an appointment as soon as the vets opened up again after Christmas and he was put on antibiotic ear drops. Cameron had been very good about taking his oral meds on the floor when he was recovering from his earlier stasis, but I had to pick him up every day for the drops. Fortunately, his ear came back into the upright position about a week later.

I brought Cameron back to the vet for a recheck a few days after his ear came back up, and she said that his ear was not as red and the infection seemed to have subsided. His potential new family was approved for adoption just after the New Year began, so now we just had to coordinate the adoption.

The rescue group set up an adoption for the next weekend and I scrambled to gather all of the supplies and toys I would be sending with Cameron to his new forever home. I was very nervous, just like a parent sending a child to camp, but in this case I might never see him in person ever again. It was an emotional day for everyone, Cameron included, but a very happy one. The house definitely felt different with him gone, even though I still had four other rabbits hopping around.

Cameron was my very first successful foster. He was utterly adorable and extremely well behaved. It was not easy to give him up, but I knew that he was going to be in a loving home. With four rabbits of my own, I simply did not have the time to devote to him that he deserved. I knew he would be happier in his forever home and bring his new family joy, just as he did with me.

Long Island Volunteers Get Help From Residents in Rescuing Two Buns

By Lauren Marchant

Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group's recent rescues have been impressive. I thought nothing could top our Flanders rescue catch that involved traveling all the way across Long Island to the North Fork. That was until five rabbits in Baldwin were brought to our attention through social media and our team was able to catch these five rabbits one dark night.

And then the Rocky Point rescue catch came along.

Our team – I often call them my family – was contacted by a fellow volunteer, Gina Pipia, on Dec. 4. Two stray buns were spotted in Rocky Point. I picked up Nicole, K.C. and Anthony, and we headed out to rescue the buns. It was cold, rainy and dark, and we traveled about 90 miles round-trip.

When we arrived, neighbors had their eyes on one of the buns. Jacey and Bryce were on their way from Farmingville, but before this little guy ran into the street again, we had to ensure his safety. We quickly and quietly got the pens out of my trunk and in less than three minutes, the ginger spotted bun was safe. I went into the pen with him, placed my hand on his soaked fur and told him he was safe. The fur around his bottom was matted and he had fleas.

There was another bun still out there. We had help from the whole block of neighbors who helped us search in the dark and rain with their flashlights. Despite driving around the block, walking up and down the block, and checking under trailers and parked boats in driveways, nobody was able to spot the second rabbit.

We all felt terrible about leaving the first bun's "little buddy." I wondered if I'd be able to sleep that night knowing that she was out there. One of our volunteers, Veronica, lived nearby and assisted with

Photo: Nicole Weiss



Bun number 1 shortly after rescue.

Photo: Pam Fregeau



Bun number 2 was trapped in this humane cage.

the catch. She and the fosterer arrived and they took home bun No. 1.

I had exchanged information that night with a neighbor, Pam Fregeau, and in the morning I texted her to check up to see if the second rabbit had been spotted. Pam was a former rabbit owner, and she had set up a humane trap with all the treats and salad a rabbit could not resist. She messaged me that the second bun had hopped into the trap.

Photo: Pam Fregeau



Bun number 2 (female) spotted in morning after bun number 1 was rescued.

Photo: Pam Fregeau



Buns number 1 and 2 settled in foster home.

That night, April, another volunteer, took a trip to clean up the matted bun and drop off supplies to the fosterer. The second bun was taken to the vet and she appeared to be emaciated but had no other health issues. April has been providing support and education for the foster family. This rescue was a joint effort involving cooperative neighbors with big hearts, and our experienced, dedicated team. I always like to say that we do not find the buns; the buns find us. And they always, without a doubt, find the family who wants and loves them.

Mario and Rosie: A Bonding Adventure

By Katie Scarr

I adopted Mario from Rabbit Rescue & Rehab in September 2015. Fast forward a year and a half, and my boyfriend Ryan said to me, “Why don’t we get Mario a friend?” Of course, I tell him it’s not that simple, and that you can’t just put any two rabbits together. But he had made me start to think about bonding. I read some articles and looked online for female rabbits we could meet.

I saw a cute little gray poof named Jabba on the ACC of NYC app. She was a 4-year-old Jersey Wooly, and I wondered if we could handle adopting another rabbit while we were in the process of moving to a new apartment in Brooklyn. I figured she would get adopted quickly because most long-haired Angora types seemed to be popular, so I put this idea on the back burner.

After we were settled, I started to think again about adopting another rabbit. Mario was showing some signs of wanting a companion. He was licking his bed to death and shoving his head under our two cats (Patti and Nigel) requesting kisses, but they didn’t always give in to his charm.

I created an Instagram account, @raisingmario, to post pictures and videos of Mario. I started to follow other rabbit pages, rabbit lovers, rabbit rescues and rabbit volunteers. One day I saw a post that showed six rabbits up for adoption from @badass_bunny_rescuer at the Brooklyn ACC location, and I

asked if one rabbit was still available. The volunteer, Thea Harting, replied that the rabbit was already adopted but I should take a look at Jocelyn, a long-haired girl available at the Manhattan location. Well, to my surprise it was Jabba, the bunny I had seen online months earlier, but with a different name!

We brought Jocelyn home and we renamed her Princess Rosalina – Rosie for short. She almost immediately made herself comfortable, and displayed how happy she was with her new home by showing off her sweet binkies. She hopped into bed to lie next to me at night and watch movies while I petted her. Rosie was really a total sweetheart.

On to bonding! At first, Mario was scared. He thumped a lot and ran into his hidey house for a while but then settled down. We housed them side by side in separate pens with enough space in between so that they couldn’t touch, in what was the most neutral space in our apartment. They were both curious, but Mario was acting territorial. We proceeded to swap pens back and forth every day for two weeks so they could get used to each other’s scent before we started the mini dates. Mario was nervous and aggressive, but Rosie was calm and curious.

Ryan and I then moved again – this time to a more spacious place on Long Island. We had a few months to move everything. Every week we took a car full of stuff along with the bunnies out to the new house, and we stayed there

each weekend. The car rides helped calm Mario down and we got to a point where he would let Rosie lick his head. We finally had some progress! After we settled into the new place we started the dates in completely neutral space. Mario and Rosie ate meals together, and we increased the time of each date as they became more comfortable with one another (I spent a few nights sleeping on the floor toward the end.) One issue was that Rosie mounted Mario’s head occasionally.

We were approaching Mario’s annual wellness checkup and thought this was a good opportunity for the perfect bonding exercise. I had started volunteering with Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, so after the vet trip, I brought the bunnies with me to the LIRRG foster home. I figured Mario and Rosie could be together in a new neutral space while I helped the foster buns. Then I brought them home, rearranged their room and crossed my fingers that they would be more comfortable. They got along great.

They had finally worked out their issues and were able to trust each other. I can’t even begin to explain how cute they are when I come home and they run up to me for their nightly pellets and then lie down side by side for a nap. It has been very rewarding to watch the slow progressions of their bond, and even though bonding was difficult, it was worth every minute. Rosie is my little princess and if she and Mario had never gotten along, I would still be so happy to have her in my life. I recently took on a foster bun and we’re going to attempt a trio! (I must be crazy.)

One final note to all potential adopters: Please think about adopting a bonded pair. The rescues and shelters have adorable ALREADY BONDED pairs that need loving homes, and all the work is done for you! If you’re anything like me and fall in love with these creatures, you will want a friend for your bunny.

Mario and Rosie.



February is Adopt-a-Rescued-Rabbit Month!



**This month, match your bunny—or yourself!—
with a rescued rabbit.**

Nothing can match the love.

Please visit www.rabbit.org today!



HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

We Are Looking for Loving Homes: These Rabbits Are in Foster Care

Wilbur

Wilbur is a handsome, young New Zealand White rabbit and we all know how wonderful they are!! He is the sweetest bunny boy you will ever meet. He had a rough start in life, but that certainly does not keep him from looking for love everywhere he turns his beautiful eyelashes. Wilbur is great with his litter box, eating all types of hay, and playing hide and seek. He is curious and playful, but his favorite activity is lying down next to a human and melting into your hands for pets like a big puppy. He will grind his teeth in pleasure as you kiss him between his ears. Simply put, he is amazing at being loved and is ready to show you! He has been neutered, and is residing at the Union Square Petco. For more information, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Wilbur.

Garbo

Garbo is a stunning medium-sized agouti female. True to her name, this bun is a classic beauty with an edge. She's a big city girl with smarts and wit, yet she is as mellow and easygoing as they come. Garbo loves playing with her willow toys and tunnels, doing super-fast binkies, and exploring new places. She is quite independent and will follow her own whiskers wherever they take her. Once ready to take a break from her glamorous adventures, she will come when called and settle down next to her human for pets and/or a body massage. (She is Garbo, after all!) Garbo has the dreamiest eyes, whitest of bellies, and softest of necks. Her litter-box skills are impeccable, and aside from radicchio there is not much this divine lady does not enjoy. She has been spayed, and currently is at the Union Square Petco. For more information, please contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Garbo.

Lex

Lex is a medium-sized male harlequin Rex, approximately 2 years of age. He has a medium to high energy level. He



Lex.



Romeo.



Mandy and Cruise.

is a shy guy when meeting new people, but quickly warms up. This sweet, gentle boy is very inquisitive, likes to play with his toys and, due to his sweet demeanor, would make a great companion rabbit. Lex is an excellent eater, loves his greens and hay and has exceptional litter-box skills. He is very well behaved and enjoys petting and hanging out with his foster mom in her kitchen during playtime. Lex has been neutered. If interested in adopting Lex, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Romeo

Romeo is a medium-sized black and white Dutch bunny who was found in the woods in January 2015 and brought home by a Good Samaritan. He is bursting with personality and will totally charm the person who adopts him. Romeo has been neutered and is currently in foster care. For more information and/or to arrange a meeting with Romeo, please contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Mandy and Cruise

Mandy and Cruise are a bonded mother-son pair of English Spot rabbits. Mandy is the larger bunny with lighter markings, and Cruise has the darker markings. They are curious, friendly,

(Continued on page 14)

Looking for Loving Homes

(Continued from page 13)

and enjoy being petted. Both are full of young bunny energy and need a home where they will receive lots of exercise time, enrichment and affection. Mandy and Cruise are currently living in a foster home. Mandy has been spayed and Cruise has been neutered. Both are small to medium-sized. For more information and/or to set up a meeting with Mandy and Cruise, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Angelina

Angelina is a strikingly beautiful medium-sized Hotot who has been waiting for a forever home for over two years now. She was cruelly abandoned outside in a cardboard box but despite her prior mistreatment, she loves nothing more than to be petted by gentle humans. When you start petting her she presses her head down, starts tooth purring and closes her eyes in complete contentment. Angelina needs a peaceful and rabbit-experienced home with no young children where she can feel completely safe. She is a typical young, healthy rabbit with lots of energy for running, binkying and shredding cardboard! She does spectacular jumps and binkies! She is spayed, litter-box trained and living in foster care. If interested in adopting Angelina, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Ernie

Ernie is a handsome, medium-sized young bunny who was in bad shape upon being rescued, apparently because he was left outdoors. We got him the vet care and TLC he needed, and now he is looking for a forever home. Ernie has a great appetite for pellets and greens, but still will not eat any hay, so about every three months he must have his molar spurs filed down by a rabbit-savvy vet. This is a relatively quick procedure, and he has always started eating immediately



Angelina.



Ernie.

afterward. Ernie is an active and curious rabbit, but still very shy and not much interested in humans (other than when you offer food, of course!), so we think he would be best off as a partner rabbit. He has been neutered and has very good litter-box skills. If interested in fostering or adopting this resilient, hunky bunny, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Carmela.

Carmela

Carmela is a young medium-sized Rex rabbit. Her beautiful coat is mostly white with tan and black spots. She is a sweet rabbit who loves to have her soft nose petted. She also likes to explore her house, but her favorite thing is to relax with a nice soft blanket. Carmela is shy and would likely do best in an adult-only home. She would also likely make a good partner for another rabbit. She has been spayed and is in foster care. For more information and/or to arrange a meeting with Carmela, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Bono, Kayla, Lulu, Eve, Bugs, Houston, Tiny, Snowflake, Dutch, Flash, Luna, Smores, Jackie, Olivia, Peanut, Daffodil, Paris, Bam Bam, Myka, Russ, Twin and Tundra, Pepsi, Wilbur, Kumbha, Velvet, Ginger, Mistletoe, Ming, Bowery, Amy, Sirius, Luna, Yasha, Belle and Ariel, May, Snowflake, Fuzzy, Luna, Magnus, Bill, Allen, Rolo, Snowflake, Montee and Fefe.

These Rabbits Are Available At Manhattan Animal Care Center (NYC ACC)

By Kirsten Ott

Annabel

Annabel is a large Californian bunny who's bright and curious but fairly defensive. This girl was probably not properly socialized in her prior living situation, because she gets nervous and grunts a bit when she first meets a new person. She really needs a bunny-savvy home with people who can work with her to develop trust. The other sign of a subpar prior habitat is that she is rather overweight – another reason she needs an attentive, knowledgeable person who can help her get back to an ideal weight. Annabel is otherwise quite stunning looking, with beautiful ruby eyes, mottled dark ears, a giant dewlap, and a big Hershey kiss for a nose. She had some lumpy tissue removed from her neck area when she first arrived at the shelter, but the tissue was benign and she is healing nicely. She has been spayed.

Ariel

Ariel is a small- to medium-sized black and white Dutch female. This girl is very bright and alert, but also rather anxious about human interaction. When you first approach her, she'll grunt and stare at you nervously with her big, saucer-like eyes. However, given enough time in her presence and a lot of patience, you will see her eventually calm down, and she will let you pet her. Because she has wary tendencies, Ariel would do best in a quiet, bunny-savvy home. She is a real cutie! An irregular Dutch triangle on her face culminates in an adorable mouth that's half black and half white.

Doug

Doug is a large English Spot mix with a super snuggly personality. This guy is very well-socialized and loves to be petted. He tooth purrs like crazy while you stroke his head! Doug is the kind of



Annabel.



Ariel.



Doug.



Pinky.



Mochi

bunny who will be happy to binge watch Netflix with you, especially if you're willing to cuddle with him the whole time. He's a real hunk of a bunny, with a sturdy body, nice big head, and large mustache. Doug would make a good choice for a first-time bunny home.

Pinky

Pinky is a large pastel-gray female bunny who can only be described in superlatives: she has the biggest ears, the softest fur, and the sweetest temperament! This girl can surely pick up the latest action from the Winter Olympics with her outsized pink antennas. She's on the young side, so she'll grow into those ears in the coming months. But the best thing about Pinky is her personality. She's a total mush, loves affection, and can chill with the best of them. This girl is a great catch!

Mochi

Mochi is a small brown Dutch mix with a very curious, friendly demeanor. This little girl will greet you at her cage door and immediately request affection. She's very alert, and hypersensitive to everything that's going on around her, but it won't stop her from enjoying a nice long petting session. Mochi is all brown except for a vestigial little Dutch triangle on her nose and a cute white "mitten" on her left front foot.

Urine Scald: A Symptom of a Greater Problem

By Dana M. Krempels, Ph.D.

*University of Miami Biology Department
House Rabbit Society of Miami*

A rabbit suffering from urinary tract problems may experience loss of fur in the genital region and hindquarters. The baldness and red, irritated skin are caused by “urine scald,” and it can happen to any bunny whose urine soaks into the fur around her vent and is in constant contact with her delicate skin.

There are many possible reasons for a rabbit to dribble urine and/or sit in urine, and the only way to know for sure is have your rabbit completely examined by a veterinarian experienced in rabbit medicine.

Some possible causes of urinary incontinence (and hence, urine scald) to consider are the following:

Bladder sludge

All rabbits normally excrete excess calcium and oxalate salts via the urinary tract, and the residue of normal urine will often appear “chalky.” However, when excessive amounts of calcium/oxalate salts precipitate in the urinary tract, they sometimes manifest as a thick, curry-colored “sludge” that sometimes has a consistency as thick as toothpaste. This can be very painful in the bladder and when it is passed, and sludge buildup can cause urine leakage and incontinence.

Although some vets suggest reducing dietary intake of calcium to help control this problem, we have not found any correlation between dietary intake of calcium and severity of sludge. Rather, this seems to be a metabolic problem suffered by a few individual rabbits, and may be an endocrine problem, rather than a dietary one.

Treatment for bladder sludge may include bladder flushes (in severe cases),

Photos: Mary Ann Maier



Urine scald.



Urolith.

or simply helping the bunny flush the bladder by administering subcutaneous fluids and a small dose of diazepam (Valium) to help relax the bladder sphincters. Your vet will know best how to treat your rabbit’s particular problem, if this is what it turns out to be.

Bladder stone (urolith)

Diagnosed via radiography, a bladder stone is a mass of calcium and/or oxalate salts that has precipitated into a solid mass. Like sludge, a urolith can cause urinary incontinence and dribbling. Unfortunately, the only viable treatment at this time is surgical removal.

Urinary tract infection (UTI)

Bacteria can infect the urinary tract (kidneys and/or bladder), just as they can many other organ systems. The best way to diagnose this particular ailment is via cystocentesis: inserting a sterile needle into the bladder and extracting a sterile sample into a syringe. This is then sent to a laboratory for culture and

sensitivity testing. This will reveal (1) what species of bacteria is causing the infection and (2) which rabbit-safe antibiotics (with good urinary tract penetration) will kill them.

Unfortunately, urinary tract infections are sometimes caused by “fastidious anaerobes”: bacteria that die upon the slightest exposure to oxygen. If this is the case, then the culture and sensitivity test will come back negative. However, your vet may be able to determine if a UTI is likely by examining the urine under the microscope for signs of blood and white blood cells in the urine. If there is a good chance that your bunny has a UTI, even if the culture comes back negative, your vet might wish to put her on a course of antibiotics such as chloramphenicol, which is effective against many anaerobes and also concentrates well in the urinary tract. Your vet is the best person to advise you on the proper course of action in case of a UTI.

Arthritis of the spine or pelvis

Arthritis of the spine or pelvis can result in the rabbit’s inability to posture correctly for urination. This can cause urine to collect in the fur and soak into it, causing urine scald.

Arthritis can be diagnosed via radiography, and can often be helped tremendously with non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs such as carprofen (Rimadyl) or flunixin meglumine (Banamine).

Rear limb/pelvic paresis

Paresis is defined as a weakness without total loss of movement in a particular area of the body. This problem is not uncommon in older rabbits, and some even lose the use of their hind legs. The problem may be caused by arthritis, disc degeneration or other skeletal problems.

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Letters From Adopters

Lola

Kayla Kraker and Alex Serina adopted Lola in mid-December. Kayla sent us this wonderful update soon after the adoption.

Alex and I have always grown up surrounded by animals – fish, hamsters, guinea pigs, cats, dogs, you name it. Alex has had four bunnies at different times throughout his childhood. He had one pair of rabbits together (sisters) and four years later his family adopted two more (another pair of sisters).

After moving into a new apartment together, we both felt something fuzzy was missing. As we were researching different types of pets, Alex suggested a bunny. I'd never had one before and thought it was the perfect fit. While looking through adoptions online, I stumbled upon Lola, a Holland lop mix. We immediately knew she was the right bunny for us when we saw her photo (we just had that feeling...) and wanted to find out more about adopting her.

Alex drove into Manhattan (we live on Long Island) with my mother to try to surprise me with Lola, but there was a little bit more to the adoption process. After he told me he had made another appointment, I was surprised and super excited! We returned a few days later to see Lola. I sat with her in the pen and her sweet nature was undeniable.

The volunteer, Neil Schaier, was awesome, and provided us with very detailed and

(Continued on page 18)

HEALTH ISSUES

Urine Scald *(Continued from page 16)*

Some vets suspect that a central nervous system/renal system parasite known as *Encephalitozoon cuniculi* might be responsible for this condition, but there is still no conclusive clinical evidence to support this contention.

Some people have reported excellent improvement of paresis with acupuncture and massage, whereas others have seen improvement with short-term use of anti-inflammatory drugs (e.g. corticosteroids, which should not be used long term). This also helps with urinary tract incontinence.

E. cuniculi is being experimentally treated with any one of several related drugs (albendazole, fenbendazole, oxbendazole, etc.), and although some individuals have reported improvement in the condition after using these drugs, there are still no studies to show conclusively that such treatments are effective.

Uterine cancer

Unspayed female rabbits have a very high risk of developing uterine cancer, and a large tumor can sometimes interfere with normal urination. All female rabbits should be spayed for their health and longevity.

Our vets have noted that removal of the cancerous uterus (via spay operation) usually solves the problem, and they have not noted a high degree of metastasis (spreading) in this type of cancer, once the uterus is removed. Spaying is the best treatment option for this problem.

A Final Note: The Color of Urine

Healthy rabbits excrete excess calcium salts via the renal system, and this can give the urine a chalky or opaque appearance. The urine will often dry to a white, chalky residue. Unless the residue is thick, pasty, and the color of mustard powder, this is normal, and should not be considered “sludge.”

Normal rabbit urine is usually pale yellow in color, but upon exposure to the atmosphere, compounds in the urine may oxidize to darker yellow, orange, red, or even dark brown. This isn't unusual, and – by itself – is not necessarily a sign of a health problem. Blood in the urine, unless it is from a hemorrhaging uterus or very serious problem, is usually not readily visible to the naked eye. Your vet is the best judge of whether your bunny's urine is normal.

Photos: Mary Ann Meier



Fake sheepskin wicks urine away, keeping an incontinent bunny dry.



A low-entry litter box can help a bunny with mobility problems.

Urine that is very dark immediately when it emerges may indicate that the bunny is dehydrated, and should receive more water, either by mouth or – in more serious cases – via administration of subcutaneous lactated Ringer's solution.

Photo: Kayla Kraker and Alex Serina



Alex, Kayla and Lola.

informative demos that made me feel much more comfortable handling Lola.

She is home and has quite the personality. We got her a playpen and we are enjoying every minute watching her play and interacting with her. There is not a doubt we made the best decision. Thank you Animal Care Centers of NYC, Manhattan!

Kayla & Alex

P.S. We are keeping her name as Lola.
It really suits her!

Chloe

Chloe was adopted in late November by Rosangela Berini and her husband, Marcelo Camargo. They were assisted by volunteer Amy Odum.

When Chloe first arrived at our home, during the initial days she threatened to bite, but she never did. We had been warned about her biting at the shelter.

We kept her inside a fenced-in enclosure in our apartment. However, after four days, we started to let her free in the house. She is very clean. We decided to put her in the enclosure only at night.

Photo: Rosangela Berini



Chloe.

Rory

Rory, previously known as Flash, was adopted in December by Caity Taylor and Eoin O'Donoghue. Flash, beloved by all the volunteers at the Petco Union Square store, is enjoying his new life and new name.

After careful consideration, once deciding we wanted to add a furry addition to our family, I Google-searched “rabbit adoption” and Rabbit Rescue & Rehab was the first thing that came up – and thank goodness for that. Within a few days of submitting my application, Jeanine Callace reached out to me and told me everything she possibly could fit into a two-hour conversation about rabbits. I was more excited than ever, and felt truly comfortable that I had made the right decision in choosing RRR to adopt from.

We met several rabbits, but were told that when the right match for us came along we would feel a deep connection. Initially it was hard to choose, but the moment I saw Flash flipping his little plastic cup around in his pen at the Broadway Petco in Union Square, I knew his personality was going to be the right fit. The day after Christmas, we spent a good 20 minutes trying to convince Flash to get into the carrier to

Photo: Caity Taylor



Rory.

come home, and Doug Lee, a RRR volunteer, said to us, “You guys are his Christmas present!” However as all rabbit rescuers know, Flash was actually the gift to us.

We began calling Flash “Rory,” short for Rorschach, because of his awesome symmetrical black spots, similar to those of a Rorschach (or inkblot) test. After all, he is a little bit nutty!

He has been the absolute perfect rabbit for us as first-time bunny owners, and warmed up to our home immediately. He loves “un-making his bed” – every time we straighten out the blanket tucked

(Continued on page 19)

At some point we realized she was not chewing anything, and now we let her free all the time, day and night.

She is very happy. She follows me in the house everywhere, and she does not bite at all.

I think Chloe just needed a place where she could feel safe and comfortable. That is what we are providing her.

I'm very happy with Chloe.

Rosangela

Letters *(Continued from page 18)*

inside his house, he burrows and nudges until it's just the way he sees fit. He accepts pets on demand, finds great joy in binkying all around the perimeter of our living room, and loves hopping right into our laps during playtime.

He loves redecorating his house – particularly expanding the back door via nibbles – and has no problem moving his toys around when they aren't in their proper place.

We love Rory's unique, silly, playful and loving personality and are enjoying every second of getting to know him, as he continues to explore and get to know us.

Thank you for granting us the perfect holiday by giving us the knowledge and resources to be confident and loving first-time bunny owners.

Love,
Caity, Eoin & Rory

Luna

Luna, who had been surrendered at the Manhattan Animal Care Center on Aug. 9 with her seven babies, was adopted in December by Dawn and Steven McCole of Staten Island. Volunteer Cathy Zelonis scheduled a visit to their home to trim Luna's nails.

We love Luna. We laugh every time she jumps and twists. You guys did a great job training her. She appears comfortable around us and doesn't have any bathroom accidents. Luna is a wonderful addition to our family.

She plays out in the pen while the kids are in school. We take down the "fence" when they can help me watch her. This is a work in progress, and we need more "baby" gates.

Luna is great. It is so much fun to watch her jump and run like a little kid. I love when she stands on two "feet" to look around. It is so cute.

York

Georgia and Andrew adopted York, formerly known as Kirby, in November. They sent us this wonderful update.

Hello! We picked up York (previously Kirby) over Thanksgiving and he only took a few days to take over the apartment! He loves to run around and do binkies, especially in the morning, and is always trying to get into the closet to explore.

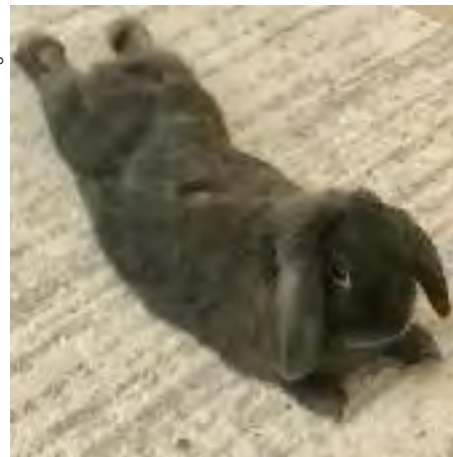
He hasn't had a single litter-box accident, so he has free run of the apartment. He spends most of his time lounging with his back legs kicked out behind him. His favorite toys are his tunnels, and he prefers to try to chew the carpet rather than his chew toys.

He loved smelling our Christmas tree over the holidays and still goes and sits in the spot where it was kept. He knows his veggies are kept in the fridge so he

comes and pesters you anytime you open it. His favorite veggies are parsley and lettuce.

York also loves his hay and will rake through it to find the exact pieces he wants. He learned very quickly that when we whistle he is about to get fed and will excitedly run rings around you, especially when you shake the jar with his dry pellets in it.

Photo: Georgia Frost



York

He is in the process of learning to sit up on his hind legs when we say up, up, up. We hope to get York a friend soon!

Georgia Frost and Andrew Scott

Photo: Dawn McCole



Luna.

Thanks again for letting her join our family. Connor is almost 16 and Brendan is 14. Faith is 10 and Hope will be 9. Hope is the one who found Luna on the shelter website. We can't believe how comfortable she appears to be in her new forever home.

Dawn McCole

Photo: Chris Allieri



A trio bunny date in Brooklyn last November ended happily, with Moon Knight, at rear, adopted as a partner to both Penelope, at left, and Hops, in front. Thea Harting and Chris Allieri assisted in the speed date. The adopters are Rachel Siegel and her partner, Jeff.



Snowflake.



Ming.



Garbo.



ACC volunteers formed a 'Buns of Anarchy' bowling team to compete in a Feb. 13 fundraising event at Lucky Strike on West 42nd Street, for Animal Care Centers of NYC.



Wonder.

HE'S NOT AN EASTER TOY.

HE'S A REAL, LIVE, 10-YEAR COMMITMENT.

It's that time of year again. Pet store windows are filled with adorable baby bunnies. Your kids are begging you to buy one. It's so hard to resist. After all, you think, wouldn't this be the perfect, low-maintenance "starter pet" for a young child?

Think again! Every year, many thousands of rabbits are abandoned to shelters or released outdoors (a sure death sentence for a domestic rabbit), often because of misunderstandings on the part of the parents who bought them for their kids.

Rabbits are prey animals by nature. They are physically delicate and fragile, and require specialized veterinary care. Children are naturally energetic, exuberant, and loving. But "loving" to a small child usually means holding, cuddling, carrying an animal around in whatever grip their small hands can manage — precisely the kinds of things that make most rabbits feel insecure and frightened. Rabbits handled in this way will often start to scratch or bite, simply out of fear. Many rabbits are accidentally dropped by small children, resulting in broken legs and backs. Those rabbits who survive the first few months quickly reach maturity and are no longer tiny and "cute." Kids often lose interest, and the rabbit, who has no voice to remind you he's hungry or thirsty or needs his cage cleaned, is gradually neglected.

Parents, please help! If you're thinking about adding a rabbit to your family, think about this: pet rabbits have a life span of 7-10 years. Don't buy on impulse. Wait until after the holiday. Make an informed decision by learning about rabbit care first. Consider adopting a rabbit from your local shelter or rescue group. For the rabbit's health and well-being (as well as for your child's) make sure an adult will be the primary caretaker and will always supervise any children in the household who are interacting with the rabbit. Domestic rabbits are inquisitive, intelligent, and very social by nature. A rabbit is a delightful companion animal as long as you remember: he's not a child's toy. He's a real, live, 10-year commitment!

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ON RABBIT CARE AND ADOPTIONS
IN YOUR AREA, CONTACT YOUR LOCAL HUMANE SOCIETY OR
VISIT THE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY AT WWW.RABBIT.ORG**

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Rabbit-Savvy Veterinarians

Here's our recommended vet list for the New York metropolitan area. Please note that many clinics have multiple veterinarians, and our recommendations are for specific veterinarians in those clinics. If you can't get an appointment with a recommended vet at one clinic, don't assume (no matter what you are told by the clinic) that other vets in the same clinic can help your rabbit. If you have any questions or would like to discuss any of the vets on this list, please contact Mary Cotter at (914) 337-6146. When you make an appointment with any of these vets, please tell them you were referred by us.

Manhattan:

Deborah Levison, DVM
Symphony Veterinary Center
170 West 96th Street, New York, NY 10025
(212) 866-8000

Katherine Quesenberry, DVM
The Animal Medical Center
510 East 62nd St., New York, NY 10065
(212) 838-7053, (212) 329-8622

Alexandra Wilson, DVM
The Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine
568 Columbus Ave., New York, NY 10024
(212) 501-8750

Westchester County:

Gil Stanzione, DVM
Dakota Veterinary Center
381 Dobbs Ferry Road, White Plains,
NY 10607 (914) 421-0020

Laurie Hess, DVM
Veterinary Center for Birds and Exotics
709 Bedford Road, Bedford Hills, NY 10507
(914) 864-1414

Long Island:

Jennifer Saver, DVM
Laura George, DVM
Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital
2056 Jericho Turnpike
New Hyde Park, NY 11040
(516) 877-7080

Heidi Hoefler, DVM
Island Exotic Vet Care
591 East Jericho Turnpike
Huntington Station, NY 11746
(631) 424-0300

Jeff Rose, DVM
Jefferson Animal Hospital
606 Patchogue Rd. (Route 112)
Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776
(631) 473-0415

Shachar Malka, DVM
Long Island Bird & Exotics
Veterinary Clinic
333 Great Neck Road
Great Neck, NY 11021
(516) 482-1101

Adoptable Rabbits

There are lots of adoptable rabbits available in Manhattan, Brooklyn, Westchester and Long Island.

To adopt a rabbit in **New York City** or **Westchester**, contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com. On **Long Island**, contact Nancy Schreiber at nschreibmd@gmail.com or at 516-510-3637 (www.longislandrabbitrescue.org).

If interested in volunteering or fostering for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Adoptable Rabbit Rescue & Rehab rabbits are at Petco's Union Square location. Rabbit volunteers are present at these stores on Saturday and Sunday afternoons to answer questions.

You can also visit Manhattan Animal Care Center at 326 East 110th St., between First and Second avenues, and the Brooklyn Animal Care Center at 2336 Linden Boulevard.

Rabbits for adoption in Manhattan and Brooklyn can be found by going to:

<http://www.nycacc.org/> and doing an adoption search (for ACC inquiries about adoption/bunny dates, email adopt@nycacc.org). Volunteers are there every weekday evening and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but it is best to arrange an appointment first.

Bunny speed dates can be arranged by appointment only on weekend afternoons at Union Square. Please contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com to make arrangements.

Many of our rabbits are living in foster homes and you can meet them as well. You also can arrange to foster a rabbit until he or she finds a permanent home. Contact nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com

For basic information about rabbits as pets, go to www.rabbitcare.org, www.longislandrabbitrescue.org and the House Rabbit Society main site, www.rabbit.org.

Licensed HRS Educators

NYC/Westchester:

M.C. Basile, Chapter Manager, NYC House Rabbit Society, bunnytorts@gmail.com
Mary Cotter, Founder, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, Adviser to Thump, mec@cloud9.net, (914) 337-6146

Marcie Frishberg

Gabrielle LaManna, New Fairfield, CT, gabbysbunnies@yahoo.com, (203) 746-7548

Mary Harnett, mmharnett@optonline.net, (914) 948-7976

Cindy Stutts, bygolyoly@yahoo.com, (646) 319-4766

Kerstin Aumann

Monica Shepherd, DVM

Long Island:

Nancy Schreiber, President, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, nschreibmd@gmail.com, (516) 510-3637, LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

Mary Ann Maier, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group Volunteer, altitude8@yahoo.com, LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

Donna Sheridan, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group Volunteer, hpocus217@yahoo.com, LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

Jennifer Saver, DVM

Laura George, DVM

THUMP FEBRUARY 2018

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS
www.rabbitcare.org

Editor: Susan Lillo

Creative Director: Jane O'Wyatt

Masthead Logo Designer: Mary Ann Maier

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation in New York State. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and find permanent homes for abandoned, abused and neglected rabbits, and to educate the public on rabbit care through publications, phone consultations, home visits and presentations. This newsletter is published by RRR/NYC HRS, which is solely responsible for its content. We retain the right to edit all submissions, which become the property of the NYC Chapter and cannot be returned.

All donations go directly to caring for our foster rabbits and are tax-deductible. Please help us help them by sending contributions to: Rabbit Rescue & Rehab/NYC Metro Rabbit, 333 Mamaroneck Ave, #363, White Plains, NY 10605 or <http://rabbitcare.org/donations.htm>.

To contribute to Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, please go to www.longislandrabbitrescue.org.