

THUMP



NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS FEBRUARY 2019

Chalkboard image: Cobra Club



Detail from the Cobra Club's sign advertising the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab benefit.

With Bonded Bunnies, You Double the Love

February is a good month to think about the joys of bonded rabbits. In the spirit of Valentine's Day, take time to consider adopting a bonded pair, or a partner for your bunny!

Rabbits are extremely social animals who crave not only the love and attention of their human families, but also benefit greatly from the extremely close companionship they can receive from a bonded bunny partner. Bonded bunnies support, entertain

and comfort one another. They give each other confidence and mitigate nervousness during stressful situations. It is wonderful to see the joy that two bunnies can bring to one another's lives and witness all of the loving interactions between them.

If you and your rabbit would like to consider adopting a partner bun, then the next step is to learn all about bonding!

(Continued on page 2)

Photo: Alex Mele



Winter and Iko are special-needs sanctuary bunnies in the care of Rabbit Rescue & Rehab.

Musicians Help Rabbits

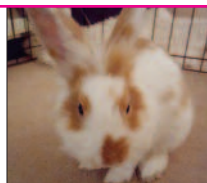
The Jan. 12 benefit concert for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab brought together an enthusiastic crowd of both new and familiar faces for a night of great music in support of our rescue buns.

A huge thank you goes out to Tracy Bradbury for coordinating and managing the event, and to the Cobra Club in

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Our masthead bunny on the left, Portobello, was adopted in 2018 by Rose Odorizzi and Jason Daversa from Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group. As fate and luck (and bonding effort) would have it, his lady, Angelica, was a "foster fail." *Love wins.* Masthead design: Mary Ann Maier. Photo: Rose Odorizzi.

Bonded Bunnies

(Continued from page 1)

The process of introducing and bonding your rabbit to a partner is one that must be done with great care, patience, and under the guidance of a rabbit volunteer experienced in the bonding process to ensure a safe transition into partnered life. It is very important for rabbits to choose their own partners, so initial introductions will take place during a speed date in which your rabbit will meet several potential candidates to ensure that the best possible match is made. Following a successful speed date, the bonding process continues at home.

A special housing set-up must be arranged, and a structured set of procedures must be carried out over time until the rabbits are fully bonded.

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab founder Mary Cotter and comedian Amy Sedaris, a rabbit owner, provide some basic bonding information in the Howcast video “Should I Get a Friend for My Rabbit?” (<https://rabbit.org/should-i-get-a-friend-for-my-rabbit/>), which is one in a highly recommended series of videos on rabbit care. Mary Cotter’s article “The Most Important Word in Bonding: PATIENCE,” (<https://rabbit.org/the-most-important-word-in-bonding-is-patience/>) is another essential source of information for all bunny parents

considering entering into the bonding process.

If you are interested in adopting a partner for your rabbit, email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com to inquire about arranging a speed date! All bunnies must be spayed or neutered before a speed date can be arranged.

There are also many bonded pairs waiting to be adopted in the New York area. These bunnies can have a harder time finding a forever home than single bunnies, but there are benefits to adopting a pair that is already bonded! Not only will they support one another through the process of settling into their new home, but adopting a pair of already-bonded bunnies completely cuts out the work of the bonding process; it’s a win-win for the bunnies and their new forever family!

In her article, “The Case for Rabbits in the Plural,” on House Rabbit Society’s website, Amy Espie writes, “The need for companionship can be met partially by a human, but once you live with a bonded pair or trio you will see that even the most devoted human cannot quite fill the bill. Bonded pairs are rarely out of each other’s sight. Humans will never be completely fluent in Rabbit. Rabbits talk to each other constantly, not so much with sounds as with movements. There are large movements such as dancing and grooming, and there are quite small communications of breath and slight shifts in position. You can sense some of this quiet conversation by lying on the floor beside two talkative rabbits. The bond between human and rabbit also can be deep and joyful. In fact, the closer we become to our rabbits, the more clearly do we understand their need for a friend of their own kind.”

(<https://rabbit.org/the-case-for-rabbits-in-the-plural/>)

See the back page of this issue of Thump for additional contact information and email addresses to begin the process of adopting a partner bunny, or to inquire about available pairs. Love is in the air!

Benefit *(Continued from page 1)*

Bushwick for providing such a great and welcoming venue.

We also extend our deepest gratitude to the musicians Recreational Outrage, Sister Munch, Chud and The SM Project for the contribution of their time, talent, and kind words in support of our organization and our rabbits.

Be sure to keep an eye on Rabbit Rescue & Rehab’s Facebook page for info about future events.



Cobra Club Photos: Marcie Frishberg/Tracy Bradbury/Alex McLe, Facebook/rabbitrescueandrehab



Bonded Buddies Need Loving Homes



Pineapple and Sugarplum are available for adoption. Please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Mandy and Cruise are available for adoption. Please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Elvis and Famous are available for adoption. Please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Leon and Patches are available for adoption. Please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Connie and Ophelia are available for adoption by emailing: information@longislandrabbitrescue.org.



Wally and Daisy are available for adoption. Please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Betty and Wilma are available for adoption. Contact: information@longislandrabbitrescue.org.



Ruth and Pierce can be adopted by contacting information@longislandrabbitrescue.org.

Photo: Lauren Marchant

Photo: Katie Scarr

Photo: Katie Scarr

Here Are Some of RRR's Happy Adopted Couples

Photo: Guineé Quintana



Arthur and Shadow.

Photo: Sylvie Jensen



Jasminda and Martin.

Photo: Jennifer Dergin



Jimmy and Lulu.

Photo: Megann Rogers



Luna and Sirius.

Photo: Saleem Nabi



Freddie and Flossie.

Photo: Susan Lillo



Sherlock and Rosie.

Photo: Paula Rosenberg



Milo and Victoria.

My Untrammelled Heart Dwells in Afternoon Pastures

(This poem celebrates the love of a boy bunny, Dashie Heidinger, for his beloved Pippi. Dashie and Pippi live with Amelia Wilson and Nadine Heidinger. They assisted him in writing this piece.)

Here in the willow tunnel,
All my longing is done.
I lean against my beloved,
My mind gently adrift.
The early spring breeze
Smells of endless green meadows.
It lifts her mottled brown hair,
And releases a sweet perfume
Of freshness, renewal, hope.

I float, and relive that happy hour
When she first flashed before me.
Two eyes like bottomless brown pools
Held mine; my loneliness subdued.
I yearned for her to play with me,
Explore with me, stay warm with me.
I demurred, nose low and bashful.

But the field faun danced away,
My mood became doleful, resigned.

I awaited each day
Her still, faithful sentinel.
I sought her luminous presence
Rays that nourish, exalt.

Mirth in her eyes and gay esprit
She pranced back and beckoned me.
My heart leapt up at once,
And melancholy fled.
I bent toward her and she toward me,
Where we remain in perpetuity.

In the waning afternoon,
I leave the fields of memory.
The shadows lengthen across the room,
But she shines ever more.
A bright orb, a will-o'-the-wisp.
She leans closer and I rejoice
Another rotation of the earth.

Photos: Nadine Heidinger



Dashie and Pippi.



Fur from Dashie Heidinger and his partner Pippi following a successful brushing/grooming session.

Bonded Rabbits: How Personalities Can Complement Each Other

By Amanda Puitiza

This story starts with how I was lucky enough to meet one of the most social and expressive rabbits at the Manhattan ACC shelter. Her name was Athena (still is, but we nicknamed her Tina) and she came from a neglectful situation. A rabbit named Venus also came from the same home, but it appeared they were kept separately. For about eight months, I got to see how at ease Athena was with the other rabbits in their cages and with human visitors. Yet, no potential adopter took a shine to her. She may not be a classic beauty like the elegant Dutchies or floppy-eared Lops.

Photo: Amanda Puitiza



Athena and Jack.

But I'd say the helicopter touch of the ears and splotch of black spots down her back give her a charismatic look anyway. All that time stuck in the shelter really cut into her chance to be explorative and opinionated. Then I fostered-to-adopt Athena, and she got a whole room to herself.

For a year, she was the only bunny in the house. She quickly let us know how she liked to be handled through some tough love methods (aka light biting). If you took too long to serve her food, she'd give you a nice tug on the pant legs. She sorted through hay choices and only ate the ones she liked. She picked her favorite spots and greens. It was her

way or the highway. But despite all the freedom of choice and the enrichment toys she was given, something essential to who she was seemed to be missing. And you could sense this by the amount of inactivity and listlessness in her eyes. So that is when we decided to bond her with another rabbit.

Athena and the family decided on young Jack. And after some initial antagonism

between Jack and Athena, they achieved a working bond three months following their speed date. I say "working" because that is what this relationship appears to be. Perhaps Athena had the most reason to be upset with this new companion, simply because she used to monopolize use of her entire space. Assumptions aside, Athena still proceeds to let Jack

(Continued on page 7)

Photo: Sabine Heinlein



Moose and Tiny Tina.

Photo: Chris Allieri



Bean and Sydney.

Adopted Long Island Couples Keep Very Cozy by Cuddling

Photo: Danielle Carbone



Bailey and LIRRG alum Eddie.

Photo: Jacsy Buttaroli and Bryce Aiklin



Lucy and LIRRG alum Cooper.

Photo: Sandi and Scott Korman



LIRRG alum Riley and his wife, Harlee.

Photo: Jacklyn Latrav



Teddy and Maddie.

Photo: Ashley and Troy Smit



Eric and Ariel, both from LIRRG.

(Continued on page 8)

BONDING

Personalities *(Continued from page 6)*

know when she doesn't like something by lightly nipping him or grunting/lunging.

Jack has a very different personality from Athena. He was quite young (11 months) when we first adopted him and he had been fostered since he was 4 months old. Jack is very calm when being handled and will often go off into a trance. This doesn't mean he is a laid-back bunny, however; he is easily startled and is a slightly jittery fellow. He spent his first year with us on high alert when any strangers were around. He tends to be more interested in exploring the environment than he is with socializing. It is hard to imagine how these two make a relationship work; but oddly enough,

the two have managed to pick up certain characteristics from each other, perhaps in a way to settle their differences.

Athena has picked up Jack's destructive habits, although she focuses mostly on newspapers. Jack has developed a taste for dried cranberries (one of Athena's favorite treats).

What I found extremely interesting was how their strategies for problem-solving have evolved.

Athena was always quite good at figuring out how to get a treat. Unfortunately, I know less about how Jack would solve a problem on his own since I have only observed him with Athena.

After the bonding process was over, I gave the rabbits a problem to solve

together. It is Jack's way to use more force on his first try (for example, he will topple the tower of blocks right away, even if he could reach the treat just by standing on his back feet). Once Athena realized this, she would let Jack tackle the obstacle first and then swoop in and find one of the treats while he was distracted.

The longer they spend together, the more they get to know each other and learn from each other. Jack enjoys grooming Athena. She has runny eyes occasionally and he knows now to keep them clean for her. They are working on their bond as they become more attentive and in tune with each other's personalities.

Keeping Cozy by Cuddling

(Continued from page 8)

Photo: The Overholser Family



Jasper and Lola.

Photo: Danielle McCallieff



Maggie and LIRRG alum Virgil.

Photo: Cheryl Egan



Seniors Cynthia and Garth He is a three-legged blind boy.

Photo: Kelly White-Guaricela



Senior special-needs boys Harry, Hercules and Freddie. Saved, rehabbed and loved by Kelly White-Guaricela.

Photo: Darlene Famiglietti



LIRRG alum Wally and his wife, Jinx.

Photo: Shantie Herstiko



Buttercup and LIRRG alum Sammy.

Photo: Alyssa Mullen



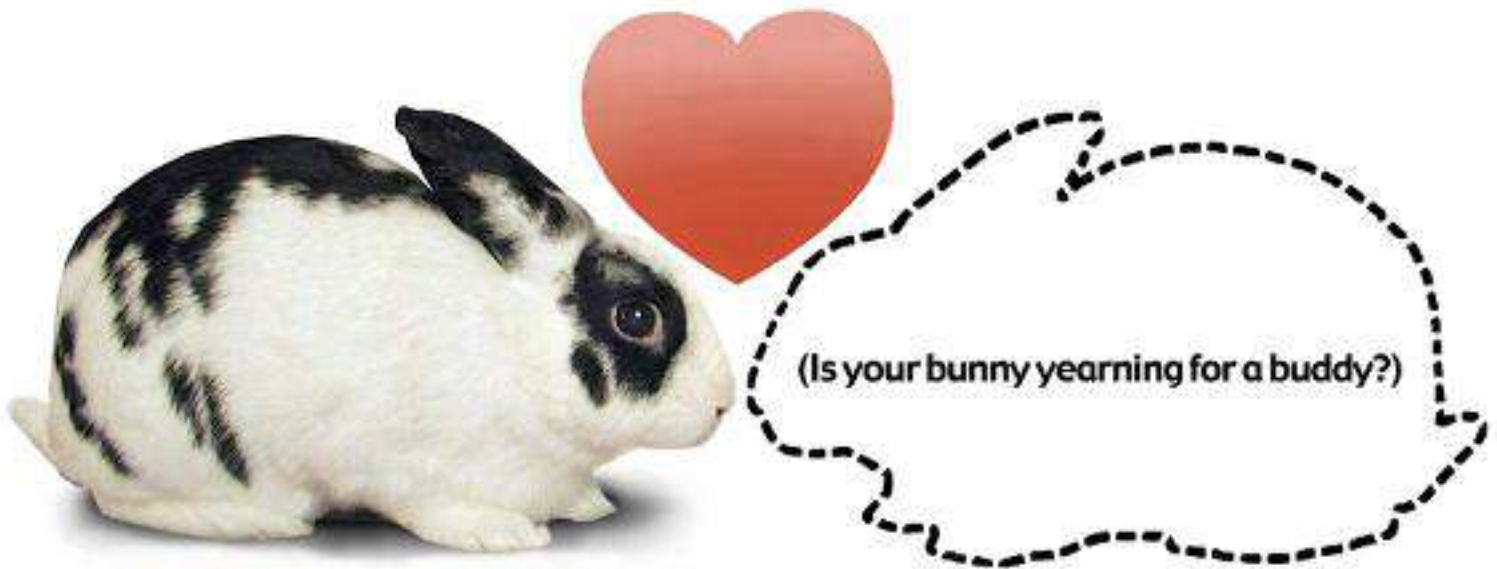
Elvis and LIRRG alum Jade.

Photo: Katie Scarr



These bunnies live with Katie Scarr, a volunteer with Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group. Mario was adopted from Rabbit Rescue & Rehab in 2015, and his partner, Rosie, is from Manhattan ACC.

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

Opera Singer Adopts Lady Gaga the Bunny

By Luciano Lamonarca

Make no mistake. When I first saw Lady Gaga's picture on the NYC ACC's website, it was what I would call "love at first look." I had been checking the website for a full week, and while I was hoping that she could find a loving home, I was really hoping in my heart that the home welcoming her would be ours.

I have always loved animals. When I was a kid I wanted to become a veterinarian to be able to help and cure injured and sick animals. The love remained, while my passion went into opera and into becoming today an opera singer (tenor).



lady Gaga.

Adopting a rabbit was not an easy choice, but not a difficult one, either. For some time my wife and I had considered getting a small pet. At the beginning we thought about a dog, as both of us previously had dogs in our homes for many years. But our little son Sebastian started to ask for a rabbit, and I think that happened because he saw a children's song performed on YouTube that talked about a rabbit's furry tail. The song was from Moldova, my wife's country of origin, and the word for rabbit in that language is *iepuras*. So, we decided that

Photos: Luciano Lamonarca



Luciano Lamonarca with Lady Gaga.

Santa Claus was going to bring home a "new member of the family."

While I was aware that it is not recommended to have a rabbit when there is small child at home, I knew that we could be extra cautious when Sebastian was interacting with our new "adopted" child.

In fact, Sebastian is always very careful. He pets Lady Gaga only when we are around, and she enjoys some nice, quiet time outside her pen only in our presence, together with Sebastian. We just love her!

I often sing when I am home, and the curious fact is that often when I start to vocalize and go to the up register of my voice, Lady Gaga's attention increases to the point that sometimes she stops doing whatever she was doing, and focuses her eyes on me.

To all those who are reading this article, I would recommend that you adopt a rabbit or other pet, instead of considering buying one. Why did we adopt a rabbit rather than buy one? It is simple. We accomplish two things: First, we know that the animals at the ACC shelter are properly cared for and handled, and second, that adopting a pet does not make him or her less valuable.

Love is an unconditional feeling. It is this same feeling of love that my wife and I showed to Lady Gaga when, like two diligent parents, we went to meet her at the NYC ACC. We later expressed our gratitude to the volunteers and staff members of the Animal Care Centers of NYC (ACC) for taking care of Lady Gaga until we were able to adopt her on Dec. 24.

Next... I am considering contacting the NYC ACC to say that I would like to possibly take part in a nice benefit concert in 2019, where all those who have adopted a pet prior to the concert could join together and celebrate the love for their "new family member," while enjoying a wonderful music performance.

Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Sam, Post Malone, Belinda, Gouda, Cinnabon, Wanda, Brownfootgirl, Robin, Chive, Lavender, Lola, Sam-I-Am, Daniel, Fozzie, Rizzo, Alma, Sophia, Sudoku, Booboo, Harry, Maple, Acorn, Francesca, Bugs, Tuny, Nutmeg, Bianca, Carson, Eggnog, Mr. Grey, Happy, Bun Bun, Pumpkin, Jellybean, Tuna, Diamond, Gill, Leaf, Charlie and Percy.

Indy Is Our Fearless, Relentless Adventurer

By Chase Budell and Allie Bach

As we sit down to write our story about Indy (formerly Frankie), he reclines, stretched out long, next to us after a big morning of breakfast, binkies and breakneck sprints. A one-year-old, red-eyed New Zealand White rabbit, his story cannot be told without mentioning Scully (formerly Jingles), also a New Zealand, adopted from Brooklyn ACC only a few months prior to Indy.

Although we had lived with bunnies previously, Scully, our first New Zealand bunny, entered our home almost as a new species. Her voracious appetite, fearlessness in the face of the vacuum, deliverymen and our dog, Lucy (even trying to steal her dog treats), and near-constant demand for attention presented us with an unknown but delightful side of bunny-nature. Unfortunately, only two months after moving in, Scully passed away unexpectedly from an underlying disease she had kept well hidden. Although still raw from losing Scully, we told ourselves that mourning her did nothing to help bunnies still in need of homes. Plus, we had a three-

Photos: Allie Bach



Indy and Lucy.



Indy.

month supply of food and hay that weren't going to eat themselves and a huge bunny pen that Lucy did not like to see empty.

Since coming home with us, Frankie has embodied Scully's effusive personality, and set some new standards of his own. With Lucy, Frankie is fearless, friendly, and, if necessary, fierce. He has discovered that grunts are an effective way of keeping poor, smothery Lucy at bay. He has also learned that occasionally having your ears licked or getting your butt sniffed aren't really so bad. It's just

the price you pay for having a big sister watch your back.

Frankie's new moniker became clear once he revealed his relentless, investigative self as well as his reverence for precious artifacts. Indiana, aka Indy, plays hard and sleeps even harder. He is just as likely to be found running full tilt through his tunnel or crashed out on his side next to Lucy, dead to the world. He is living life to the fullest in his new home, with his new parents, new sister, and a new adventure every day. Go Indy!

Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group Marks Record Year of Adoptions

By Denise Bertolotti

Our little rescue organization, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, closed 2017 with 54 adoptions. If that wasn't a record for us, it was close for sure. We set the 2018 adoption goal at 55 – 2017's accomplishments plus one.

We hit 55 in mid-June.

Long exhale... and now what? On July 2, we set our new 2018 goal at 79. We picked that because four adoptions a month is a sustainable, manageable expectation.

We ended 2018 with 88 adoptions. A total of 88 rabbits found loving forever homes.

We accomplished such an incredible feat because of one word: Trust.

Trust from our leadership to empower those volunteers who have stepped up into leadership roles themselves. Trust in the team. Trust from the abandoned, abused and neglected rabbits who allow us the honor of rescuing and caring for them.

As the volunteer coordinator, I've watched dozens of people step up selflessly, doing not only what they said they would do, but beyond that. We are soaring because we have each other. As we soar, we save more lives and complete more families than ever before.

Photo: Katie Scarr



Betty and Wilma.

As we look into the future, I'm inclined to say that I don't know how we are going to top 88. But I don't need to know how. I just need to know why. Why we rescue is so strong that the

“how” figures itself out. We are succeeding on a bigger scale than we ever could have imagined. Contact us at information@longislandrabbitrescue.org.

Our Human Baby Finds Love with Gentle Dwarf Bunny

By Laura DeTiberus

I became a mother for the first time in January of 2017 – to a dwarf bunny. He was only eight weeks old when my husband got him for me for my birthday. He was the sweetest little baby ever.

We named him Phil Bunphy. It didn't take long for him to become the king of the castle. We actually left a weekend trip early to come home to Phil. He had a pet sitter but we missed him.

Photo: Laura DeTiberus



Shawn and Phil.

I was nervous when we had to get him neutered. I sat in the car and cried after I dropped him off at Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital on Long Island.

I found out I was pregnant and we nicknamed the baby “hoobie” for human baby. Then we bought a house in Levittown. Phil was always pretty much a free-roam bun, but now he had a whole house!

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Human Baby Finds Love

(Continued from page 12)

Our baby, Shawn, was born in October 2017. When we came home with this new baby human, Phil was skeptical.

I was nervous about how I was going to take care of both babies. Phil and I had developed a routine. We would wake up, and I'd feed him some greens for breakfast. I would clean his litter box. Then I'd have my coffee and computer time, and he got his morning pets. But now there was a baby!

Everything changed but we are doing fine. We still have a morning routine of breakfast and coffee and litter-box cleaning, but now Shawn is a part of it.

Phil is slowly warming up to Shawn. Phil loves playing with all his toys, eating his books on the carpet, and practicing his bunny 500s. We try to get Phil to come into our bedroom but he never will. He only is interested in Shawn's room.

Photo: Laura DeTiberus



Phil and Shawn.

One night I brought Shawn upstairs to put him to bed. I was feeding him and I heard a weird noise and then I realized it was Phil thumping under the dresser.

I can't wait to watch them grow up together. I feel that having a bunny will teach Shawn how to be a gentle,

compassionate person. Shawn is already very sweet with Phil, following him around and under the table (under close adult supervision). Phil lets Shawn get close and then hops away. We are patiently waiting for the day when Phil will return the affection with a gentle kiss.

Dr. Emmett Brown and Lady Yuriko: Two Lovebirds From Long Island

By Jennifer Merkel

Emmett lived with us for three years before we got Lady. We decided to take him to a rescue close to where we lived at the time, and let him pick out his new friend.

The first couple of rabbits were either too aggressive or not interested in him. Emmett curled up in my lap. The rescue owner made a joke about him already having a bond. I half smiled, realizing that she wasn't wrong.

The last rabbit she brought out was an older English Spot, our Lady. She went

right up to Emmett, and chinned him immediately. It was probably one of the sweetest things I'd ever seen.

Once we got the two home, it took a long time to bond them. Each rabbit got stasis twice that summer, and the frequent separations set back the bonding process. But, at last, the two bunnies bonded, and became inseparable.

Now, when I return from work each day to our home in Central Islip on Long Island, more often than not they are lying right next to each other, purring with their teeth, eyes half-closed.

It wasn't an easy journey, and it was hard to hand over some of Emmett's bond to me to someone else, but seeing them together and happy will always melt my heart. They are going to be 9 years old soon, and I hope they have many more years together.


Photo: Jennifer Merkel



Emmett, top, with Lady.

Rabbit Droppings

WITH THEA AND NADINE



Photos: Nadine Heidinger



Bongo came into the Manhattan shelter in the spring of 2016, grossly overweight and dragging his belly on the ground. He wasn't able to hop more than a few times at a time. Nadine Heidinger took him in as a foster for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and put him on a diet and exercise routine. (Here he is during his dieting period.) It worked, and by the time he went to Petco to eventually be adopted, he was able to run, play and jump like a healthy little bun.

Dear Rabbit Droppings,

The vet told me that my boy bunny is overweight and must cut down on his intake of pellets. He looks fine to me, though I guess he does have a rather expansive and cute backside. Meanwhile, his bonded girlfriend has no weight problem at all. I guess she's been letting her buddy grab as many pellets as he wants, and then taking what's left.

So do you have advice for weight gain in older rabbits? And is there a special way to cut down on pellets for one bunny while giving his partner her fair share?

Is there a way to tell if a rabbit is putting on weight? Are some scales more reliable

than others? Do you have tips for keeping weight down in general?

– Chubby in Manhattan

Dear Chubby,

While a fat bunny can be cute, obesity has serious implications for your rabbit. Aside from the obvious ones (joint pressure, heart disease and diabetes), there are subtler but equally important consequences as well. For example, your bunny might not be able to reach for his cecotropes, which are ever so vital to nutritional health. Furthermore, obese bunnies cannot groom properly between the folds, and the result is often clogged

scent glands. Finally, rabbits' saliva is moisturizing, meaning that they can develop flaky skin if unable to groom.

Now that you know all that, let's turn to some solutions. As you suspect, your male bunny is very likely taking extra pellets from his partner's bowl. My first suggestion is to divide the pellets into two bowls, and separate the buns during pellet-feeding. It is critical to measure your pellets and to never overfeed, no

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Droppings *(Continued from page 14)*

matter how quickly he inhales his allotment. One-quarter cup per bun per day is generally recommended, but do check the feeding guidelines on the pellet bag to be sure. During the weight-loss period, you should reduce your fat bunny's intake to much less than that. Make sure your pellets are Timothy-hay-based – not the seed blends that you can buy in many pet stores. Seed blends are basically bunny Doritos and should be avoided.

The most important tool in your weight-loss toolbox is to emphasize hay. During any bunny weight-loss regimen, hay should make up the majority of your rabbit's diet, and as disappointed as your rabbit might be, it is for his own good.

Finally, exercise your bunny! Introduce new toys that stimulate the brain while inviting physical interaction, such as a two-tiered bunny castle or a chewable object that he can throw in the air. Tunnels can really get them going as well. Just make sure the tunnels are not too snug. Good luck on your quest to slim down your bun.

Dear Rabbit Droppings,

I watched some really funny YouTube videos of bunnies playing with wild deer and chickens. One was called something like "Bambi and Thumper." How cute is that?? (You don't have to answer because I'm sure we all agree.) If you haven't seen it, I highly recommend it!

– *YouTubing in Yonkers*

Dear YouTuber,

I have seen these same videos, and unlike you, did not find them cute at all. You cited the Bambi and Thumper video – so let's discuss that example specifically. The bunny can be seen leaping in the air with its paws out in front of it. It whirls, never turning its back on the

deer and never fleeing. What this video shows is that the bunny is in attack mode while probably terrified at the same time. It is not "playing" with the deer – though the young fawn, for its part, does seem curious and rather amused.

If you see a bunny in such distress, please don't film it. Try to help it out! Maybe scare off the deer or break up the exchange in some way. The Good Samaritan law – which requires people to offer aid to those in peril – does not yet extend to animals. But don't you think it should? (You don't have to answer that because I'm sure we all agree!)

Dear Rabbit Droppings,

I have had it up to my ears (no pun intended) with my bunny chewing the rug. I'm afraid he will get stasis from the fibers – and God only knows what they are made of! Plastic? Everything is synthetic these days so I wouldn't be surprised. Help!

– *Munched Carpet in Manhattan*

Dear Carpet Muncher,

First off, I feel your pain. I myself have an adorable little carpet-obsessed guy who – while otherwise perfect – can suddenly be apprehended mid-rip or running through the apartment with a loose thread, unraveling the whole rug in his wake. This is comical sounding, to the lay reader, but hell for us who live it! His daytime area looks like a cratered moon.

I would first recommend that you NOT let the holes go uncovered. I know it can feel a bit like stomping out fires, but you have to, every day, put something over the holes. The already frayed and chewed edges are veritable siren calls to your muncher. Maybe put a water bowl over one, a litter box over another, or even an

immoveable toy plopped over a third.

At some point you will need to replace the rug. But at what cost? Rugs are expensive – even those from that mammoth Swedish retailer. One seemingly cost-prohibitive solution, but one that is actually economical in the long run, is to purchase carpet tiles. You can swap out certain beleaguered carpet spots without having to replace the whole rug. Plus, they come in a variety of fetching colors that you can mix and match, making them QUITE the creativity provocateur! Protect your bun's digestive system while expressing yourself in burnt sienna at the same time! Stave off stasis while finally trying out that cobalt blue you've always been curious about. The world is your palette – this is your bun's gift to you.

ABOUT RABBIT DROPPINGS:

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!*

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

Harriette

Meet Harriette! This beautiful and young female rabbit was recently rescued from a bad situation and is hoping to find herself in a loving forever home soon. Harriette is extremely curious and energetic, and needs a quiet home with a very gentle human who will help manage her long luxurious hair. She is spayed and has excellent litter-box habits. If interested in adopting Harriette, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Harriette.

Pierre

Pierre is a young, sweet and energetic male rabbit looking for his forever home. He was rescued in Mount Vernon and seems young enough that he may still have some growing to do. He loves to explore, run, binky, and shred cardboard during playtime, between taking breaks to do the most dramatic and adorable side flops. Pierre is a true joy to be around as you spoil him with the love and attention he deserves. He has good litter-box habits and is neutered. If interested in adopting this sweetheart, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Pierre.

Esmeralda

Esmeralda is a large, young and beautiful female New Zealand rabbit looking for her forever home. She was rescued from a lab with a #18 tag on her ear. This gorgeous and sweet soul is much more than a number who never deserved to be a part of such a terrible situation. Due to her past, Esmeralda is nervous in new situations and is especially fearful of sudden movements and loud noises. She will need a very quiet and peaceful home with patient and loving human attention. She is curious, energetic and an absolute joy to watch as she explores, runs and binkies. She is spayed, has a great appetite and excellent litter-box skills. If interested in adopting Esmeralda, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.



Esmeralda.



Romeo.



Carmela.

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 email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

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.

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Rabbits in Foster Care

(Continued from page 16)



Famous and Elvis.



Huey.

Famous and Elvis

Famous and Elvis are a pair of bonded, middle-aged bunnies who love to cuddle one another. They are tidy roommates, often preferring their “room”/area most of the time. They can be free roam when supervised in a rabbit-safe environment. Elvis and Famous will do some light lounging and exploration of the rest of the apartment/house, especially if anything new is introduced. Famous, the smaller of the two, is a Netherland dwarf female about 5 years old. Elvis is the slightly larger male English Spot, about 4 years old. He is super-sweet and unperturbed and is mostly the sidekick in the duo. As of their last checkup, Elvis is 4.5 lbs. and Famous is 3 lbs. These two need to find forever homes soon so they can continue being the easygoing partners they are now. For more information, please email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Huey

Introducing Huey! This big beautiful boy is one of the friendliest buns you’ll

ever meet! Huey is playful, interactive and looking for his best friend. He is white with gray sprinkled throughout his fur and has beautiful greenish eyes. It’s surprising how much Huey loves being around people considering that he was dumped outside to fend for himself. He was literally rescued in the nick of time. Weak and emaciated, he was brought to a local shelter where he won the hearts of everyone who met him. The staff had the most wonderful things to say about him and were awfully sad to see him go. Huey is a very happy and healthy rabbit, and he loves all of the attention that you can give him. He adjusts quickly to his surroundings and is not shy about meeting new people. He has been neutered and is living in foster care. If you are interested in sharing your life with a puppy in a 12-pound rabbit suit, please contact us at nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

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

(Check Petfinder for Updated Listings; Some Rabbits Have Found Homes!)

By Kirsten Ott

Ush

Ush is a small- to medium-sized all-black female. This girl might more properly be called “Mush,” because that’s what she turns into when you pet her. She’s on the shy side, and prefers to hang back in the corner of her cage – she’s probably unnerved by all that’s happened to her recently. But as you pet her, she relaxes more and more, gradually morphing into that lovely mush. Ush seems to be in need of lots of affection, so she should be adopted by someone who can devote plenty of time



Ush.

to her. She would probably also benefit from a bunny partner.

Fluffy

Fluffy is a small- to medium-sized dark agouti and white Dutch female. This sweetie is a middle-aged, mellow girl who just wants to cuddle. She hunkers



Fluffy.

right down for petting, and adores head and cheek rubs. She’ll protest ever so politely if you stop for more than a second or two! Fluffy is clearly starved for love. This gentle, sweet soul deserves to get lots of love and attention in her forever home.

(Continued on page 18)

Rabbits at ACC

(Continued from page 17)

Robin

Robin really enjoys gentle head rubs. She will not sit still for very long – partly due to her young age and partly due to her just having a lot of energy. But she is a brave and curious soul who will check you out and blossom into a best friend. Come meet Robin in the rabbit room.

Lullaby

Lullaby is a sweet and pretty bunny lady who enjoys having human company, especially if you give her plenty of hay and fresh greens! Lullaby is not overly shy, but likes to make friends on her own terms. Once she has decided she is comfortable with you, she will sit happily for head and cheek rubs. She also likes roaming around, dancing, and exploring boxes and tunnels.

Tristan

Tristan will melt and pancake into your hands for cheek, head and back massages. If you stop petting him, he will look at you with his large brown soulful eyes and beg for more. It is just impossible not to fall in love with this big, soft, lop-eared bunny boy who is patiently waiting for his forever person. If Tristan cannot find someone to cuddle with him, he spends his time zooming through tunnels and playing with bunny toys. He also likes a good nap during which time he dreams of fields of cilantro and a human companion with plenty of time for bunny massages.

Jumper

Jumper is a very pretty medium-sized bunny. She's white with calico-like markings – they're mostly shades of brown with some dramatic black spots here and there. Her eyes appear to be a deep shade of blue, bordering on violet – a bit like Liz Taylor's. Jumper is a very friendly girl who adores affection and accepts it readily. True to her current name, she's also very agile – you'll see her periscope a lot when she's in



Robin.



Lullaby.



Tristan.



Jumper.



Cookie.



Ella.

exploration mode. Jumper would make a good choice for a first-time bunny home.

Cookie

Cookie is a medium-sized dark agouti and white Dutch female. What a yummy girl this is! She's a total love sponge, hunkering right down for petting whenever a kind hand is offered. She might even initiate the cuddling by looking up at you imploringly or butting you with her nose ("cookie or stick" approach). Cookie may have been given too many treats or had too little exercise in her prior residence, because she needs to lose some weight. But she appears to be in otherwise good condition – active and chinning when she's not soaking up the love. Cookie will be a fabulous companion.

Ella

Ella is a medium-sized all-gray bunny with the softest, plushest coat imaginable. You want to bury your face in it – it feels like it's a centimeter thick! Ella's not

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Letters From Adopters

Thumper

Karissa Li adopted Thumper in December and sent us this great update.

Thumper is an agouti rabbit, which means that her fur is the color of a wild rabbit and she has banding on her fur. Her stomach fur also has banding and is dark brown and white, which is really cool. Her fur is soft and thick, and she always feels as if she has just been washed – although I know you should never shower a rabbit.

She is really shy, but I guess it is because she is still getting used to her surroundings. She doesn't bite. She will place her head on your leg but won't bite. She will stop whatever she is doing

if you start to pet her, and her short little ears are always listening.

She eats a lot of hay and really likes bananas. One time, I forgot to monitor her banana eating so I was holding an unpeeled banana and talking to someone who was standing behind me and when I remembered I had a banana in my hand, Thumper had eaten almost half of the banana! She got a bit of a sugar high and starting jumping everywhere. (I will know next time to watch her and make sure she only gets a tiny piece of banana.) She started to jump on small stools and on a cardboard box. But she calmed down eventually.

She is a sweet rabbit and I hope she lives for a long time. I don't really know her

Photo: Karissa Li



Thumper.

that well yet since I adopted her two days before Christmas!

Karissa

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ADOPTIONS

Rabbits in ACC

(Continued from page 18)

especially outgoing, but she's a sweet, gentle girl and will let you pet her. However, her reserved nature suggests she might be best off with a bunny partner. (Because she's a beautiful shade of gray, we like to think of her as a "cinder"-Ella who deserves a handsome prince.) In addition to her beautiful coat, Ella has a very expressive face with big, shining eyes.

Peter

Make way for Peter! This little guy is the zoomiest, thumping-est, jumpiest, chinning-est, climbing-est bunny in the house. He's an adorable brown and white Dutch with pale blue eyes that are always wide open in astonishment, as though he's seeing the world for the first time and can't believe his good fortune. He also has some quirky features – the back of one ear is brown while the other is white (perhaps borrowed from the Harlequin fashion guide), and his chubby cheeks are accentuated by an extra-wide



Peter.

Dutch triangle on his face. Of course, you'll only notice these amazing features if he slows down to less than 30 miles an hour, which he'd prefer not to do. Peter is sure to gradually settle down post-neuter, but his adopter should still be prepared for his boundless energy and need for ample play space.

Roger

Roger is a small, all-white Dwarf mix with blue eyes. This guy is both adorable and positively magical looking – he's the



Roger.

lagomorph version of a Samoyed puppy or a polar bear cub. Roger is also very sweet and well-socialized, but more than anything he loves to play. He gets more enthusiastic and active when you respond to him vocally – it's exactly like a little kid showing off his latest acrobatic feats. Roger will need plenty of room for exercise in his forever home – along with humans who don't mind cheering for him!

Photo: Maybel Santana



Lancelot.

Lancelot

Maybel Santana adopted 4-year-old Lancelot in December. She says that he is doing really well.

Lancelot is the best gift and an amazing addition to our family. He is simply adorable.

Maybel

Photo: Farrah Wilton



Midnight loves her new toy.

Midnight

Devin and his family adopted Midnight, formerly known as Helena, in early December. Devlin, 8 years old, sent us an update.

I saw a movie called “The Secret Life of Pets” and saw a bunny. So I wanted to get one.

I wanted a white one to name it Snowball. But then when I learned about bunnies, I heard that black bunnies are good luck.

That’s when I adopted Midnight, the black bunny we all know and love.

Devin Demelva

Lavender

Lavender was adopted in early January by Alyssa Keil, a rabbit volunteer at the Brooklyn shelter. Alyssa sent us this wonderful update.

Lavender came into the shelter on my first full shift as a rabbit companion volunteer. He was only three weeks old and so small, but his bigger-than-life personality soon became known to everyone who came into the rabbit room. No matter who walked in front of his cage, he would run up to the bars and stick his nose through, begging for head rubs. Out in the pen, he executed endless binkies. Despite having the personality of a star and the most adorable oversized ears, he was consistently passed over by adopters. In between my volunteer shifts each week, I would check the shelter’s website to see if he’d been adopted. I was half hoping he was off to a life he deserved, and half hoping he was still there so I could continue hanging out with him every Sunday.

In November, after Lavender had been in the shelter for four months, I decided to take him as foster. I had every intention of having him in a pen while I was at work and sleeping, but he had other plans. On our third night as roommates, I was woken up at 2 a.m. by a huge splash of water on my face. I scrambled to turn on the light, and when I did, I found a very proud, but wet Lavender. He had binkied into his water bowl and right over the side of the pen! I learned then that it’s Lavender’s world, and I’m just living in it. And, that he will only ever be a free-roam bun.

A week or so later, he began sleeping on the pillow next to mine at night, and I knew that he was more than just a foster to me. Soon after, I formally adopted him. I love watching him explore my apartment and turn every person who visits us into a rabbit fan. I’m so lucky to be able to provide him with a forever home and the life he deserves.

Alyssa Keil

Photo: Alyssa Keil



Lavender.

Mimolette

Marissa Fleming adopted Mimolette, formerly known as Tunny, in January. She sent us this update.

I’m very happy with my new rabbit (renamed her Mimolette – Mimo for short).

She’s so adorable and cuddly, and I’ve fallen in love with her quite quickly.

Photo: Marissa Fleming



Mimolette.

Learning how to potty train is our first adventure, but so far all is well. She had been recently spayed, and is recovering nicely.

We’ve already developed a little routine in the morning and evening. It’s the best part of my day, spending time on the ground with her.

Marissa Fleming

How a Non-Pet Owner Became a Rabbit Volunteer

By Melissa Lee

When I was a child, I read every book about animals that my local library had. I knew all there was to know about every pet from dogs to hamsters to fish. I went through phases of wanting a dog, then wanting a cat, and then I finally settled on wanting a rabbit.

My parents didn't let me get a rabbit until I was in sixth grade, and we only had him for a few years. I have not had any pets since, but I have always liked animals.

Last year was Year of the Dog on the lunar calendar, and Madison Avenue did a Lunar New Year celebration in which various businesses offered dog-themed activities and specials. I stopped by a furniture store that had foster dogs. Although I didn't think I could foster a dog, someone from the organization mentioned other volunteer opportunities. After years of considering myself to be an animal lover and a civic-minded person, this was a chance to put my interests into action.

While I was looking up the foster organization online, I realized that, while I like all animals, dogs are not my favorite pet. I decided to see what other animal volunteer opportunities were out there. I had assumed that, if I wasn't working with dogs, I would be working with cats.

The first search result was for NYC's Animal Care Centers, and the blurb mentioned that one could volunteer with rabbits, which I hadn't realized was a possibility.

Being a rabbit volunteer has been an enlightening experience for me. Rabbit care has changed so much since I had a rabbit that I feel as if I am learning everything from scratch. I learned more in my first couple days of volunteering than I did in years of rabbit ownership.

I have also discovered a great network of passionate rabbit-loving volunteers. I am impressed with how knowledgeable the

Photos: Melissa Lee



Lady Boa.



Maple.



Tuny.

other volunteers are, as well as the amount of time and resources they dedicate to caring for the shelter buns. Thanks to the volunteers, the rabbits really get the best care they can possibly get until they find their forever homes.

When I was a kid, rabbits were considered the "easy" pet compared with dogs and cats. Now that I have learned things like how much space and exercise they need, what kinds of greens they should and should not eat daily, and how important it is to be prepared for issues like gut stasis, I don't think rabbits are an easy

pet at all. I have a steep learning curve because I don't own a rabbit, but I have learned so much from talking to and shadowing the other volunteers.

I don't think rabbit ownership will fit into my lifestyle anytime soon, but the few hours that I spend each week with these adorable buns is all the bunny love I need. Seeing the rabbits happily binky around the pen or hunker down for some pets gives me joy. I am proud to be part of this amazing group of rabbit volunteers.



Kuzco.



Petra in flight.



Bugs.



Pancake.



One of the babies of Maple (fka Alessia).

Poopinators and Other Fun Hay Box Tricks

By Shane York

You hear it all the time: Bunnies are easy to litter-box train. There are countless stories of how folks miraculously coached their bunnies to use the litter box in under a week. I just want to know one thing. How did these people somehow manage to tap into a bunny's inner psyche to get him to agree to such a thing? (House Rabbit Society offers a number of useful tips about litter-box training: <https://rabbit.org/faq-litter-training-2>)

Vinny and Pauly, the battling Dutch brothers of Bronxville, clearly enjoy the freedom of going where they like – or as they said when I ask them about it,

“Fuhgeddaboutit.” They live next to each other in separate puppy pens. I had been advised to put their hay boxes in the corner where both bunnies seemed to poop most, but they actually move the boxes out of the way to get full access to their favorite corner.

They are very inventive. I've caught them using their hard poops as artillery in hand-made catapults that target the other pen and as bocce balls in neighborhood tournaments. They know that with poops the fun never ends, especially when I come into their room and am suddenly ambushed by the poopinators – the machines they built that automatically

rocket poops at high speed with drone-like accuracy.

Certainly, hay-box training takes time, patience and maybe a small bribe. One day I put small bits of alfalfa hay, pressed hay cubes and small willow toys in their adjacent hay boxes to entice them to stay, talk about the events of the day, and just be munching, pooping, healthy bunnies. Later that day I came home, and both hay boxes were turned upside down, hay everywhere, and both looked so proud about what they had done. What can you do but have a good attitude, be patient, and hope that one day they decide the box is better than a good laugh?

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

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:

Long Island:

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

Heidi Hofer, 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

<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

Jeanine Callace, Rofoyo.pippin@verizon.net
Alex Mcle, alexlmcie@gmail.com

Marcie Frishberg

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

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

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

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THUMP FEBRUARY 2019

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www.rabbitcare.org

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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.