

THE JUMP

NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS FEBRUARY 2011

My Bunny Valentine

By Robert Kulka

We've been together now for over eight years. After that much time together, you learn each other's likes, dislikes, habits and idiosyncrasies. Well, mostly I know his. But we have developed a finely tuned language of sounds, signs and gestures.

Photo: Robert Kulka



Skip

Certain words even trigger predictable responses.

It was July 2002, and I had lost a close friend to cancer, lost my job in the marketing industry after 20 years and was trying to start a business of my own. On top of that, I was not living in my hometown so my support system was

(Continued on page 3)

HEARTFELT LESSONS

What My Rabbits Taught Me About Love

By Kerstin Aumann

Over the years, I've had a number of bonded pairs and trios. They've taught me how beautiful and complex bunny relationships can be – and a thing or two about love in general. Below are some lessons in love I learned from my rabbits.

Shared joy is more than twice the joy. I learned this lesson quickly after bonding my first pair about five years ago. It was a joy to see my rabbit Schnucki's happiness increase – not just double, but expon-

entially – after he met his wife. This took me by surprise because I had believed my little Schnucki was already happy as can be just with me.

For most bunnies, life is better with a partner. Rabbits, like humans, are social animals who may feel lonely without company of their own kind. Think about it. Can you imagine a life for yourself without any kind of human contact? Life is richer when you get to interact

(Continued on page 2)

Joshua and Storm

Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Pet-Sitter Makes Her Rounds Despite Challenges Of Blizzard
Page 6



Long Island Rescue News And Photos Of Pappy, Julie
Page 7



Why Does My Rabbit Poke His Nose At Me?
Page 9

What My Rabbits Taught Me *(Continued from page 1)*

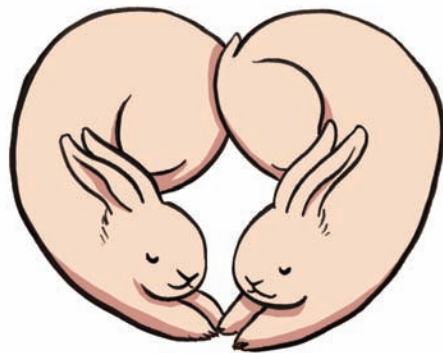
and develop deep bonds with a variety of individuals – both the kind that look like you and the kind that don't. Diversity makes life interesting, so allowing your rabbit to have a furry friend in addition to a close bond with you will make life more fun and rewarding for both of you.

Keep an open mind. You never know who Mr./Mrs. Right might be. Rabbits do not judge potential mates on looks. They don't care about size, breed or hair color. They don't even care about age differences. All they care about is chemistry.

Chemistry may not always be instant. My little dwarf hotot Warrior Princess Xena swore up and down she would never accept another rabbit in her life. Her bonded sister Luna was all the company Xena could stand. Then along came a big, burly New Zealand White Knight in Shining Armor. Xena fought and bit his nose through a puppy pen. A few days later, though, the White Knight jumped over the pen and into Xena's turf. The Warrior Princess knew then that resistance was futile.

Accept your mate just as she or he is – although with a little training and patience, learning is possible. After my beloved Schnucki passed away, his widow Bella met hubby No. 2 – a teenage boy with a lot to learn about love. Bella and Jerry bonded in about two weeks, but Bella continued to teach Jerry the social skills that were important to her, like mutual grooming. It took a couple of months, but Jerry eventually caught on to the fact that Bella loves attention and lots of grooming. If the basic chemistry is right, then the rest can be worked out with love and patience over time.

Take care of each other. For Bella and Jerry, taking care of each other means lots of mutual grooming. For Snowball and his girlfriend, it means lots of time sleeping close to each other. Rabbits take care of their mates physically and psychologically. When one is off to the vet with a problem, the other is noticeably relieved when the patient



Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Top, illustration by Eric Hosford. Below, Snowball, Luna and Xena; Jerry grooming Bella; Snowball napping with Luna.

returns home. My elderly rabbits Schnucki and Storm both got new leases on life as a result of the companionship of their younger mates. Rabbits prioritize their relationships and focus on their partner's well-being – they don't let anything interfere with it. Granted, it's a little easier to do this when you don't have to worry about a job and bills to pay, but I can't help feeling inspired when I see my rabbits' devotion to each other.

When the fur flies, practice forgiveness. Bella and Jerry seem to have the perfect

marriage – most of the time. Every once in a while though, usually for reasons totally obscure to their human roommates, they get into a tiff. It typically involves some intense chasing and fur pulling, but lasts only seconds. It always amazes me how quickly they move past it and go right back to snuggling and grooming. My husband and I try to get over our fights as quickly as Bella and Jerry do.

Be loyal for life – and defend your relationship with fierceness, if necessary. Rabbits mate for life. They don't stray. They don't run off with a younger, more attractive bun. They don't need divorce lawyers. They will be loyal to their mate until death parts them.

Not only are bunnies loyal to their mates, but they may fight to defend the status quo in their warren. Bunnies generally do not accept new rabbits in their territory without at least somewhat of a bonding period. They need to sniff each other out before making a commitment for life – who can blame them? And if there is a new rabbit in the house, even just a visitor or foster, it usually means some turmoil. Bonded mates may start fighting with each other out of jealousy resulting from a perceived threat to their relationship, or they may turn on their humans.

My husband learned a lesson about loyalty from Bella. He had cuddled one of our foster bunnies before coming into the bedroom, Bella's turf. Vic lay down on the bed and Bella came jumping up to him as usual. She started to sniff him up and down, then suddenly her ears went back and she lunged at him in a "Bell-istic Missile Attack!" With the foster bunny's smell on him like the proverbial lipstick on the collar, Bella caught Vic's infidelity red-handed. And she was upset for days! I sure hope Vic learned his lesson...

Good things come to those who wait. Like human relationships, bunny relationships can develop and change over time. Age and maturity sometimes play a role. A dominant partner may come to accept a role reversal, or at least a more egalitarian

(Continued on page 3)

Bunny Valentine

(Continued from page 1)

hundreds of miles away. Things were very difficult, to say the least, and many nights I felt frightened, exhausted and unsure of where my life was going. Just then, in walked Skip – actually he hopped into my life. He was a four-and-a-half-pound copper-and-gray rabbit with white feet and nose, sharp brown eyes and pointy ears that were always at attention. I didn't need another responsibility, but a friend asked me to take him in until something more permanent could be found.

In less than 24 hours I was not only smitten but was planning just how to rearrange my life and home to accommodate this new buddy. And a buddy he was! In fact, I soon came to see him as an angel sent to help me through a difficult time in my life. No matter what the day was like, there was Skip, eagerly awaiting my homecoming, ready to binky and run and play. He made me laugh when I didn't think I had one left in me. He took my mind off things when I really needed a break. He taught me what it was like to have an unconditional affection for and from another, and how to build a bond through trust and understanding.

The early days were interesting for me. I learned how much of a personality my little friend really had and was impressed by how confident he was in expressing it. Rearranging his things was not something to be done lightly. If I moved his toys or his food or water bowl, he let me know of my mistake in no uncertain terms. As

What My Rabbits

Taught Me *(Continued from page 2)*

relationship over time. Some relationships grow closer, as some bunnies learn new social skills later in life.

My bonded pair Storm and Joshua grew much closer in their final year together. They had accepted each other as mates quite readily, but their relationship was

I showed him more of my patterns and habits, he too adapted. He learned how to let me know when it was time for me to play with him, or when he would like to climb up onto the sofa to sit with me. He could stare me down, even from behind, and let me know just when he wanted dinner or pellets or a treat or just some attention. And he was smart. I soon realized the word “apple” had to be spelled in his presence. Once it was said aloud, he fully expected apple to appear and would begin to walk around on his back legs demanding that a slice be served. He was even polite. In the evenings, then and now, he always waits until I sit down to eat my dinner next to him before he will dig into his own.

He showed himself to be quite brave, inquisitive and social. His curiosity about things around him was amazing. He was not afraid of a vacuum cleaner or a power drill. When someone came to visit he had to run over to them to see what they were about and whether they would pet him. Yet I learned that I had to warn him anytime I was about to sneeze, or he would thump a scolding at me for startling him – and demonstrate his annoyance with me for hours. Picking him up or trimming his nails needed to be done in very particular ways or, again, he would be put out with me for the rest of the day. We've adapted together as our lives have moved from Massachusetts to Connecticut to Westchester and, now, to New York City.

There were a few times when one or the other of us was sick and we took care of each other. Two years ago we drove in

more akin to being roommates than lovers or partners. As both grew older, Joshua – who had always been a bit of a loner bunny – increasingly sought Storm's company and closeness. Eventually, they even learned to groom each other – something neither of them was into earlier in their relationship. Storm always craved Joshua's company, but it took time for Joshua to crave hers.



Skip

an ice storm to get to the vet because he had a bout of gut stasis. He was in the hospital for two days. Recently, after I had eye surgery, Skip decided to sit behind my head as a pillow while I applied compresses to speed the healing. And then, just when I was recovering from my own swollen eyes, he ended up with a blocked tear duct. We are in sync more and more as we spend the years together. I look at him now and I see both of us going from our younger days to our new maturity. We carry on, even if we don't binky much these days.

I realize now that Skip appeared just when I needed an angel in my life. When he sits on my shoulder as we watch TV in the evenings, I understand he is my little guardian. He has taught me a great deal about my own capacity to give and to receive love. He is my patient and persistent and demanding little friend.

I'm not an expert on relationships – human or rabbit – but I feel lucky to have learned these lessons about love. If you're ready to learn yours by adding a bonded pair to your home, or adopting a mate for your rabbit, please contact us at nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com. We will be happy to help you and your rabbit find love and to be your “tutors” throughout the bonding process.



Top, Cindy Stutts talking to attendees. Middle, Marianne DeMarco of Best Friends Animal Sanctuary adopted Ruby. Bottom, Pepe, who was adopted as a partner bunny. Below, banner of the event.

Whiskers in Wonderland: A Holiday Success

By Natalie L. Reeves

Christmas came early for seven of New York City's shelter bunnies who found homes at the Whiskers in Wonderland event held Dec. 18 and 19.

Whiskers in Wonderland, an adoption event co-sponsored by Best Friends Animal Society and the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals, took place in Manhattan's Metropolitan Pavilion, a large venue near Union Square. Unlike most pet adoption events, dogs weren't featured. Instead, cats and rabbits (and a few reptiles) were the stars.

The Metropolitan Pavilion isn't a customary locale for such events. Shopaholics associate the building with its frequently held sample sales for everything from Gucci watches to Kate Spade bags. Its unlikely status as a venue for an animal-adoption event likely contributed to its success. Some attendees who might have been uncomfortable visiting public animal shelters were able to interact with adoptable animals in the more spacious and relaxed setting.

New York's Rabbit Rescue & Rehab was there on both days with rabbits looking for homes. Cindy Stutts and a group of volunteers were present to answer questions.

Mary Cotter, founder of Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and chapter manager of NYC

House Rabbit Society, gave a half-hour talk on rabbit care, while Cindy spent much of her time chaperoning bunny dates. Several families who already have house rabbits brought them to the event to find partners. The dynamics were fascinating to watch as the bunnies went on dates with multiple prospective partners and had completely different reactions to individual bunnies. For instance, on one date, a male bunny might have been too bold or frisky for the eligible female, but on another date with a different bunny that same boy might appear almost submissive.

Two bunny parents, Christie and Joe, mom and dad to rabbit Don King (previously adopted from New York's AC&C shelter) spent much of Saturday anxiously watching their boy meet eligible females. Christie, Joe and Don King brought along their extended family to help Don decide who his new lady love should be. It was a hard decision because Don King was a bit of a Don Juan and was compatible with more than one ladybun. Eventually, though, Don selected his new girlfriend, and Christie and Joe added another bunny to their family.

Friends and neighbors Miasia Imani Gaillard and Phantajiah Shaylene Ivory joyfully spent the afternoon sitting in a pen with different bunnies. The young

(Continued on page 5)



Whiskers *(Continued from page 4)*

girls were gentle with the bunnies, and, consequently, the bunnies enjoyed their attention. Much to their delight, Miasia's family adopted a beautiful and sweet grey bunny named Leandra. The Gaillard family's previous bunny had recently died and they wanted another rabbit to love.

Even the Best Friends' staffers couldn't resist the bunnies' charms! Marianne DeMarco of Best Friends adopted big love-bunny Ruby. Marianne told us that after she took Ruby to her first wellness vet

visit (as we recommend to all adopters), the vet technician wanted to keep Ruby because she is such a special bunny.

In addition to the seven rabbits, 125 cats and one snake that were adopted at the event, animals were helped in other ways. Jewelry company Sequin, which makes items worn by celebrities such as Oprah Winfrey and Madonna, donated jewelry to be sold with 100% of the proceeds to benefit New York City's homeless animals. Kim Renk, one of Sequin's owners and a longtime rabbit rescuer and benefactor, came in to help

the cause. Sequin had several tables of jewelry for sale, including numerous pieces that had been customized with animal themes.

Whiskers in Wonderland was the first holiday event sponsored by Best Friends in New York City. Given its resounding success, we hope that it becomes a tradition.

Top, Miasia Imani Gaillard, whose family adopted Leandra. Middle, Mary Cotter speaking at the event. Bottom, Blizzard.

Adoptable bunnies, with admirers.



Photo: Natalie L. Reeves



Photo: Natalie L. Reeves



Photo: Will Leung



Photo: Natalie L. Reeves

Pet-Sitting Weather: Making My Rounds in a Blizzard

By Jane O'Wyatt

The night after Christmas, I was making my evening rounds on Manhattan's Upper East Side. Meteorologists had predicted a blizzard. The kind of snow that skiers lovingly call powder – fine flakes that squeak underfoot and glitter in beams cast by electric lights – had been falling for several hours. About six to seven inches of snow had already accumulated and wind was blowing the stinging cold stuff in my face. The neighborhood was hushed, almost immobile.

After feeding and petting Liberty, a Maine Coon cat, scooping his litter box and turning off lights for his two tanks of tropical fish at 66th and Third, I was trudging up to 74th and First to take care of Rex, a silver marten bunny and shelter alumnus, when I remembered the inscription under the Corinthian colonnade of the main post office: “Neither snow nor rain nor heat nor gloom of night stays these couriers from the swift completion of their appointed rounds.” I wasn't a courier, and a pet-sitter should do her work carefully rather than swiftly, but with these two edits the elevated rhetoric fit like a glove. I felt heroic – the only purposeful person outdoors in a snowstorm that threatened to paralyze the city.

Next morning: clear blue sky, streets and sidewalks white with knee-deep snow. I began thinking of getting snowshoes from L.L.Bean for my animal-care kit. Flocks of pigeons flew overhead searching for buried pizza crusts. Dogs frolicked in the center of snowy streets, humans in tow. Cars, trucks and buses that ordinarily ruled the city on a Monday morning were gone or parked, somnolent, along curbs, wrapped in wind-driven snow. Only a few taxicabs crawled past Union Square, and, on the Upper East Side, several pricey SUVs slithered in the streets, dug out that morning by guys apparently intent on discovering how their splendid machines handled under such adverse conditions.

I added Beatrix the lop, at 58th between First and Second, to the previous night's Rex-and-Liberty route. From 59th and

Lex, I took the subway to Port Authority, the stop nearest to cats Boof and Ridley at 43rd and 11th Avenue. With almost no buses running, I was doing a lot of walking. Despite good boots, my toes were freezing. Slogging west, I was stunned to see that 42nd Street between 10th and 11th was completely impassable. In the middle of the block a big dump truck with a plow in front – and chains on double rear wheels – was stuck, grinding away in the snow.

Underground parts of the subway in Manhattan were working pretty well. In Brooklyn, though, the MTA website had said that the F train wasn't running beyond Jay Street-Borough Hall. Okay, I figured, that left a workaround involving the G, but I learned the hard way that the G wasn't running beyond Hoyt-Schermerhorn. At that stop, people were growling, “fuggedaboutit.” Plus, all the buses in Brooklyn, they said, were crashing or rolling over on their sides in the snow.

How to get to my clients' house on 16th Street near Prospect Park, for the last day's feeding of guinea pigs Smokey and Piglet, chinchillas Mouse, Monkey and Bugs, hamsters Georgia, Georgina and Georgette and a brown tabby named Inky? If I walked there, it would be a

cold, awkward couple of miles, mostly uphill. Was this trip absolutely necessary? The day before, having heard the predictions, I had given everybody in that healthy household extra food – just in case. The chinchillas, guinea pigs and hamsters got more pellets, along with their hay and fresh water. In addition, the chins all had dust baths and got apple, pear, pecan and cottonwood sticks to chew. The cat got three cans of wet food, and his water bowl was filled to the brim.

So I decided to let the snow stay the completion of my appointed rounds, vowing to reach these Park Slope animals the next morning, if necessary. Then I tried to call their people (for whom I didn't have a cell phone number) in New Hampshire but was told that they were in Vancouver. The New Hampshire mother-in-law didn't have her son's Vancouver in-laws' phone number. After consulting a map (Vancouver was on the wrong side of the country), I resorted to email, which *worked*, and I learned that my clients had an uncancelled flight that would get them back around 8 a.m. the next day. They thanked me for trying to reach their “zoo,” who they said would be fine until they returned.

And then, since it was a Monday (who knew?), my shelter day, I headed uptown, underground again. Erin McElhinney, Sunday's rabbit volunteer, who had “raced the storm from N.H. to N.Y.,” had given the bunnies extra greens and pellets and lots of out-of-cage play time the evening before – just in case. Coasting on Erin's foresight and generosity, I did the basics for 18 homeless animals – 17 rabbits and one guinea pig.

Afterwards I joined a cluster of shivering, cranky people waiting at 105th Street and Second Avenue for the downtown M15 bus. We all clambered up and down a mountain of plowed snow to get to the bus, which stopped about 10 feet from the curb. I got off in the 70s and walked through more unshoveled snow for another evening round of caring for Rex, the silver marten bunny, and Liberty, the Maine Coon cat, and his tropical fish.

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Top, 7:57 a.m., Dec. 27, 2010: view from front door of Rex's apartment building. Bottom, Rex.

Long Island Rabbit Rescue News

By Nancy Schreiber and Mary Ann Maier

December

Long Island Rabbit Rescue helped Matt C. of Islip. Matt's rabbit had four babies and we helped him place them ALL in good homes.

We helped Collette P. of St. James relocate her two outdoor hutch rabbits into her home and get them bonded.

Long Island Rabbit Rescue assisted the Crick family of Brightwaters catch a stray rabbit in their neighborhood. We supplied a cage and other supplies.

We rescued a sweet lionhead rabbit from an extremely busy street in Hempstead. As soon as we caught him, we learned that his foster home fell through. But noting that the bunny had spent weeks on the street with a colony of feral cats, we introduced him to Lisa B., who was specifically seeking a bunny who would be a pal for her cat. Lisa, bunny Fulton, and kitty Ti are all very happy with the arrangement.

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Pappy

A college student at New York Institute of Technology in Westbury found an abandoned rabbit on campus. Her dorm adviser called us frantically, as pets were forbidden in the dorms. One of our volunteers offered to foster. The bunny, Pappy, is an adorable young lop, extremely friendly, and scheduled to be neutered next week. He is available for adoption.

We worked with a Queens man who had a rabbit "dumped" on him. We provided



education and hands-on instruction and support. He will be keeping the rabbit and will be having him neutered soon.

We responded to a call from someone walking her dog in Garden City. Someone had apparently left a filthy cage containing a black lop bunny on the side of Clinton Avenue. By the time we arrived, the caller had vanished, the cage was knocked over and opened (see photo at bottom of page 1), and the bunny was huddling under a tree. We brought her in and named her Marjorie. She is affectionate and beautiful with the glossiest coat. Unfortunately, her teeth are in very bad shape and she had to endure a long surgery to have her incisors removed. She is recovering nicely. If you can make a

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



contribution to help defray the cost of Marjorie's surgery, please call us at (516) 510-3637.

One of our former adopters, Christine L., found a rabbit abandoned on her doorstep. We helped to have him neutered, which enabled Christine to find a good home for him (with one of her friends!).

January

Long Island Rabbit Rescue volunteers worked to educate and prepare a Suffolk family to move their hutch bunny, Teddybear, indoors. He is thriving now, and the family is enjoying him like never before.

Volunteers ran a bunny education booth at the Lake Grove Petco on Jan. 15.

We are working with a Glen Cove family to re-home their two rabbits. The family is being evicted.

We are working to convince a garden center in Sea Cliff to stop selling baby rabbits. The Long Island Rabbit Rescue volunteers have received calls over the years from people who purchased bunnies at this store, but who didn't receive adequate education, and now wanted to surrender their pets.

During the recent cold snap, we picked up two stray bunnies from a snowy street in Rockville Center. The rabbits are small and cute, and look exactly alike. We are having them spayed and neutered this week and afterward they will be available for adoption.

Below, Julie, a rabbit rescued from horrific conditions, came to us emaciated with most of her fur gone. Today she is a healthy and vibrant girl with an oversized personality. She was adopted by the Kerwin family on Jan. 15.



Photo: Nancy Schreiber

How Veronica, a Special-Needs Bun, Charmed Thumperino

By Amber L. Spradlin

My husband, Adelmo, and I recently adopted a sweet bun named Veronica from New York Rabbit Rescue & Rehab. Earlier, for our six-month wedding anniversary, we had adopted a male rabbit, Thumperino, from a family in Connecticut that had an accidental litter. Thumperino had blossomed into quite the little character. He learned to play piano, did some simple agility tricks, ran rabbit races through the house, and enjoyed traveling by all means of transportation (car, subway or even bus – his favorite because he can see more from the raised vantage point). Thumperino's mellow personality led us to register him as a therapy pet. This allows him to accompany me to my office in Rockefeller Center to practice his skills on over-worked office executives and occasionally to tag along with my husband, who is an opera singer. At age three we thought his life was complete but always wondered if it could be more fulfilling if he had a partner.

After several unsuccessful attempts to meet bunnies on our own, we ventured into the Union Square Petco to see what

Photo: Amber L. Spradlin



Veronica and Thumperino.

buns might be there from the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab family. A volunteer told us how to set up an appointment at New York Animal Care & Control Center on 110th Street. Cindy Stutts and her team carefully spent time introducing Thumperino to all of the possible rabbits under her care at AC&C. He quietly and politely introduced himself to all of them and three buns were candidates for a possible match. Adelmo and I then interacted with each possible rabbit and weighed the options of which rabbit would fit our life, our home, Thumperino – and also, which rabbit liked us back. Veronica, a two-year-old female with special needs, proved herself to be the rabbit for our little pack.

Veronica is a tiny lady with a beautiful long coat, seal-point markings and slight spinal deformities that possibly developed from overcrowding in her mother's uterus. The best thing about Veronica is that she has no concept of her limitations and tackles each task or toy with the same spirit and determination as any other rabbit – traits that brought us to register her as a therapy rabbit, too. Her hearty spirit demonstrates that disabilities need not limit one's potential enjoyment of life. She exudes tremendous pride in kennel décor, rearranging her blankie,

her pillow bed and stuffed monkey toy. We introduced her to the joy of cardboard tubes – bunnel tunnels, as Adelmo and I like to call them. Now, we chuckle at the shuffle, shuffle sounds of her “burrowing” back and forth inside the tubes while we are in the next room.

From the very beginning, Veronica and Thumperino had many successful interactions. They mostly dated for two to five minutes on a tablecloth placed over our bed. Since Thumperino had been a free-roaming house rabbit for three years, the only neutral spaces without his territory stamp were the bedroom or the shower. We had a breakthrough date on day two. Veronica had been making cooing, guinea pig type sounds when they were together and presenting her head for grooming. Having been away from other rabbits since he left his litter mates, Thumperino didn't understand her language. Finally, he seemed to figure out what she was seeking. He licked her ears and head, which pleased her so much she gave a little bounce and then flopped beside him.

We ended each of these early dates on a positive note, and we let the rabbits' body language and actions guide us. We

(Continued on page 9)

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



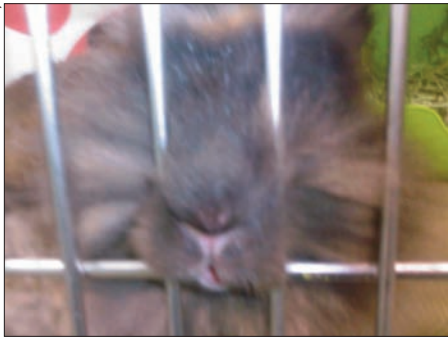
Photo: Adelmo Guidarelli



Top, Veronica at AC&C.
Bottom, Day One in her new home.

Why Does My Rabbit Keep Poking His Nose at Me?

Photos: Lisa Carley



Veronica fka Fuzzy at AC&C.



Nose Petting 101 with Wabbit.



Wabbit in the nose-petting spot.

By Lisa Carley

Generally a rabbit pokes at you with his nose to get your attention. That's pretty straightforward. What can seem odd, though, is that almost all rabbits have a peculiar desire to have their noses petted. Many of our first-time adopters don't understand the power of the nose. In fact, next to treats, the best way to your rabbit's affection is generally through the nose.

I've done some research into this, and haven't come up with a clear answer as to why this is so. It just is. I have yet to meet a rabbit who doesn't respond well to nose petting. Some, like Wabbit, my two-pound alpha male, are aggressive nose petters.

These rabbits will shove their noses anywhere they see an available human hand.

Veronica *(Continued from page 8)*

made a point to give each rabbit equal attention. Veronica and Thumperino each received a tiny cube of carrot or apple as a reward treat, and we made sure to familiarize each rabbit with the other's scent. The most important thing we kept in mind was that we were a pack teaching each other how to live together.

After a couple of weeks, we noticed that the rabbits wanted to share the same kennel. We adjusted the living space to give them each their personal property and configured positioning of their food, water and litter to make it easiest for Veronica to have access. The first week was difficult. One day we came home and Thumperino had carried all of her

In fact, at home we have "the nose-petting spot." When Wabbit sits under the gold chair in the living room, it behooves me to go and pet his nose. I shudder to think of the years of bunny therapy I would have to pay for if I ignored this basic need.

Unfortunately for Wabbit, who could have his nose petted for hours on end, it gets a little old for me after 10 minutes or so. He's been very understanding, but only to a degree: either he wins, or else he tries to pull my hand back with his teeth. I find it best to wear long sleeves. If you are with a rabbit who doesn't know you, start slowly. Do not grab the nose. Put your hand out, as you would with a cat or a dog. Then take it back. If the rabbit is relaxed with this, put your hand

possessions from the kennel into the hallway, but we found them grooming his stuffed lion toy together so we figured they weren't too upset and just returned her things.

Veronica now has learned the command we use for bedtime: "Thumperino night-night and Veronica night-night." She hops right in the kennel after him and they snuggle up like kittens in a basket. She has also taught him how to play with her favorite toy, the red slinky, and introduced a game during meals where she hops over him while he runs in circles around my ankle until I place the bowl of greens on their mat.

Veronica is a welcome addition to our family and we have all been completely

out again and use the back of it to lightly stroke his nose in an upward motion.

Always pet upward. I often rest my hand behind Wabbit's ears and use my thumb to stroke upward. (see middle photo above)

Another tried-and-true method is the full-body nose pet. Just take your hand, with your thumb next to your index finger, and follow from the rabbit's nose to his tail. Keep going, front to back, as long as you and the rabbit enjoy it. With this move, there's no need for sleeves.

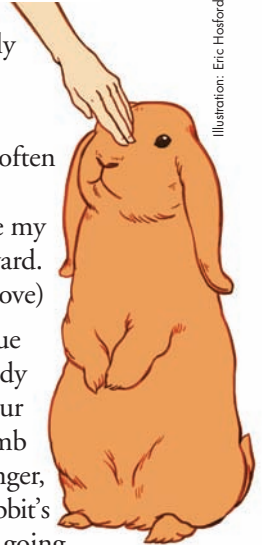


Illustration: Eric Hoxford

smitten with her from the moment we met. What a little love puff...wait...a BIG love puff in a little package! We are forever grateful to Cindy for rescuing this fur angel.

Thumperino and Veronica have their own pages on our rabbit themed website www.HocksOut.com. We share pictures and videos of them; we have branded items for rabbit lovers, and a page for Hocks Out Press, where the debut book *Thumperino-Diary of a Superbunny* is available for purchase. Sales have been positive and I have been able to donate a portion of the sales to help rabbit organizations and charities. Rabbits have brought my husband and me such joy we hope others will consider rabbit adoption, too!



Left, Dash and Oreo at Petco, 86th and Lexington.

Forever Homes Found!

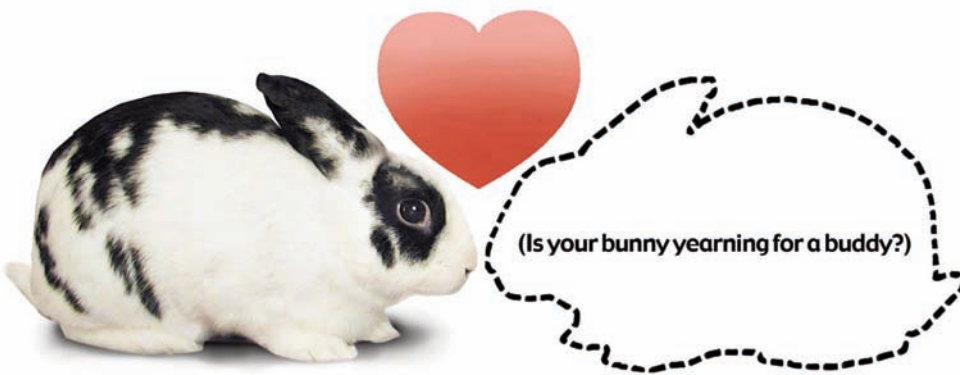
Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Casey, Twist, Johnny, Roebing, Leandra, Ruby, Honey, Pepe, Yam, Nikita, Graymore, Blizzard, Oscar, Bello, Montel, Cosette and Sandrine, Angel, Grace, Timmie, Nonnie, Betty, Patrick, Jack Frost, Dash and Eloise.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Eloise

February is Adopt-a-Rescued-Rabbit Month!



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HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

Hay!

Sincere thanks to all of our generous hay donors!

Photo: Helen Chen



Penny, adopted by volunteer Helen Chen from AC&C, and Kirby.

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Celebrating Ramsey's Joyful Life After Rehab

By Jane O'Wyatt

We already had a Roger in the shelter's rabbit room when another came in during my shift in late October 2008. A dwarf hotot with tan and gray markings, Roger #2 was an owner surrender. His coat was dull; his poops were few, small and irregular in shape. He nibbled a little hay but refused greens and pellets. He was inactive and looked like a sad old bunny. Aside from his name and the stress of having been dumped, what else was wrong with him?

Cindy Stutts, head of the shelter rabbit volunteers, immediately changed Roger #2's name to Ramses. With the elimination of the confusing cartoon reference (dozens of Roger Rabbits wind up at the shelter), this bunny was now a pharaoh's namesake.

A few days later, Cindy emailed the rabbit volunteers group: "Ramses is with Kerstin. FYI, this guy had terrible molar spurs. No wonder he was not eating!" (Molar spurs are "sharp points on the edges of the molars that result from uneven wear. These points can abrade the tongue and cheek, causing pain and irritation enough to stop the rabbit from eating." – Dana Krempels, Ph.D.)

After Ramses had those painful spurs filed down by Dr. Alex Wilson at the Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine (CAEM), his name morphed again – to Ramsey. His fosterer, Kerstin Aumann, reported:

"Ramsey (aka Ramses, Roger) is doing well tonight. The appetite and poop output still leave something to be desired, but he's very alert and feisty and even did a couple of respectable binkies during playtime."

Kerstin, a House Rabbit Society licensed educator, is known for her skillful, compassionate rehabilitation work. Her apartment, which she shared at the time with seven bunnies and her human partner Vic, had a 5-star rating among rabbit foster homes: perfect bunny ambiance, excellent care. And Ramsey

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



thrived. He became cheerful, gregarious and affectionate. He developed a healthy appetite, his fur began to shine, and his binkies became more elaborate. Ramsey had quickly endeared himself to Vic because, unlike the other bunnies in the household, Ramsey actually enjoyed being picked up, held, carried around, petted, squeezed and smooched. He was, according to Kerstin, "the cuddle bun Vic always wanted." Ramsey was still a foster, though, and speed dates were arranged to find him a partner. When speed dates proved a bust because Ramsey got too excited, it was Vic who wanted to keep him. So Kerstin and Vic assessed their bonded groups (one trio and two pairs) and decided to see if Ramsey could bond with Storm and Joshua.

Storm and Ramsey were drawn to each other immediately, and Joshua was tolerant of the new dynamic. Ramsey adored and groomed and cuddled with Storm as Joshua never had. For a short time Ramsey humped Joshua nervously, but Joshua didn't take it seriously – until he told the little guy to back off, which he did. "Instant trio, really," said Kerstin. "Storm really seems to love having two boyfriends."

In December 2008, when I began bunny-sitting at Kerstin's while she and Vic were in Germany for Christmas, two

(Continued on page 12)

Top, Ramsey at AC&C. Below, Ramsey on Kerstin's bed; sharing a meal with Storm and Joshua; with Storm and Joshua in their Leith condo.

2011, The Year of the Rabbit

By Helen Chen

Feb. 3, 2011 marked the beginning of the Lunar New Year, which is a time of celebration in many Asian cultures. 2011 is the Year of the Rabbit. One of the twelve zodiac animals of the lunar calendar, the rabbit is known for bringing good luck.

Those born in the Year of the Rabbit will perhaps find that they share many traits with a real rabbit. According to the Chinese zodiac, rabbit people are noted for their eye for fashion and design, and dedication to friendship. Real rabbits are consummate groomers of their own fur and like to arrange the “furniture” in their cage until it is just the way they like it. Rabbits who are a bonded pair have a strong relationship with their bond-mates and are inseparable. Owners who have gained the trust of their bunnies will attest to having the most incredible friendship with their rabbits.



Watercolor painting: Freda Lee-McCann

Ramsey *(Continued from page 11)*

threesomes (Snowball/Luna/Xena and Ramsey/Joshua/Storm) shared a three-level Leith Petwerks condo in the living room; and one pair (Bella/Jerry) lived free-range in the bedroom. Since Snowball, Luna and Xena were content to eat hay, cuddle, groom and nap in the condo's two upper levels, Ramsey, Joshua and Storm, whose home base was the lower level, had almost continuous access to the living room, open kitchen and bathroom. Only during their upstairs neighbors' out-of-cage playtime were they enclosed.

Two days before Christmas, I was preparing to leave Kerstin's after an early morning visit. Ramsey had greeted me at the door, and then had binkied and zipped around and cuddled with Joshua and Storm. He had devoured his entire breakfast and had demanded a second papaya tablet. I had caressed and conversed with each of the bunnies, prepared and served salads and pellets, changed litter boxes, cleaned the condo, and had given everyone at least one papaya treat. All

eight rabbits were bouncy and enthusiastic, eating and pooping well that morning. That was just how I liked to see them when I left to continue my pet-care rounds.

Glancing around one last time, I noticed Ramsey lying on his side on the parquet floor near the kitchen area – not the most comfortable place to flop. He didn't look right, and I hurried over to him. His eyes were glazed and he was breathing through his mouth. He was completely limp and unresponsive when I picked him up. He twitched a few times and died.

So shocked that I was scarcely able to breathe, I called Kerstin in Germany. The pitch of my voice rose by half an octave as I struggled to get the words out. Kerstin seemed puzzled but calm.

“Ramsey's dead? How?” I heard her take a deep breath. “Maybe we can learn something from this,” she said. “Would you take his body to Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine for a necropsy?”

I wrapped the still-warm body in a dish towel and placed it in a small cardboard box. In a taxi on the way uptown (I never took living animals on the subway),

I couldn't help reopening the box to see if Ramsey was really dead.

Dr. Wilson, who had examined and treated Ramsey in October, did a necropsy. “No indication of respiratory or heart problems,” Kerstin reported after consulting with the doctor. “Ramsey was in much better shape than at his first visit to CAEM. His digestive system looked great, as if he had eaten well recently.” Dr. Wilson suggested that he may have had a seizure related to *E. cuniculi*. Later, when results from tissue specimens came back from the lab, Dr. Wilson said that a weak heart muscle – due to an earlier illness or to old age – could have been responsible for Ramsey's death.

Kerstin interpreted the necropsy's findings in a positive way: “It seemed like the excitement of the morning routine proved too much for Ramsey's little heart. The good news is that it went so quickly. When Cindy and I talked about it, we concluded that he must have died from happiness.”

I am still learning from the experience of seeing Ramsey take his last breath.

Press Release – Year of the Rabbit

Contact:

Margo DeMello, margo@rabbit.org

Mary Cotter, mec@cloud9.net



Image courtesy of HRS Singapore.

INTERNATIONAL HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY AND SINGAPORE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY URGE PEOPLE NOT TO BUY RABBITS FOR LUNAR YEAR OF THE RABBIT

RICHMOND, CA/SINGAPORE (January 27, 2011) - House Rabbit Society (HRS) and House Rabbit Society Singapore (HRSS) strongly urge people not to acquire live rabbits for the Year of the Rabbit unless they are willing to make a 10-year commitment to properly care for the animals. In the Chinese calendar, the Year of the Rabbit occurs every twelve years. Asian animal welfare groups like HRSS are warning of an inevitable outcome this year: abandoned and neglected bunnies.

In Asian countries, and in Asian-American communities in the United States, there is a growing demand for pet rabbits, who are thought to bring luck during the Year of the Rabbit. Once the year is over, the rabbits are often abandoned. HRSS reports that in the 1999 Year of the Rabbit, rabbits in Singapore were abandoned at that nation's shelters at twice the rate that they were in 1998.

Both HRS and HRSS point out that while rabbits are intelligent, curious, loving pets, they are not "lucky charms." In addition, they are not low maintenance pets. Margo DeMello, president of HRS, encourages rabbit lovers to celebrate the Year of the Rabbit by purchasing artwork and gifts adorned with rabbits. Items can even be purchased from rabbit rescue groups, which then benefit rabbits, such as the rabbit-themed angbao (red envelopes in which to give money) sold by HRSS. "Rabbits are not 'low maintenance' pets," says DeMello; they require at least the same amount of work as a cat or dog, and often more."

Mary Cotter, vice-president of HRS, says that many of the rabbits purchased for luck will never live to see their first birthday. Some will die from neglect, while others will be abandoned in local parks or left at animal shelters. "It is irresponsible for pet stores to push rabbits during the Year of the Rabbit" says Cotter. "Unless people are willing to take full responsibility for the possible 10-year lifespan of a live rabbit, they should not acquire live rabbits. They should decorate their homes with rabbit-themed items instead."

Children, especially, do not realize that rabbits are fragile, ground-loving creatures who will struggle when held and are easily hurt when dropped. Also, it is near impossible for a child to commit to a rabbit for 10 years. All too often, the child loses interest, and the rabbit ends up unwanted.

(Continued on page 14)

Press Release *(Continued from page 13)*

“Many pets in Singapore suffer unnecessarily because of ignorance on the part of their owners,” commented HRSS President Jacelyn Heng. “During the Year of the Rabbit, many people buy rabbits for the wrong reason and do not fully understand the responsibilities of keeping an animal at home. The problem is particularly acute for rabbits because people wrongly assume that they are low-maintenance starter pets for children.” Jacelyn added, “Many pet shops in Singapore are also not well informed about the care needed for a pet rabbit and often provide wrong or false information to unknowing first-time owners.”

For people willing to make a long term commitment to a pet rabbit, HRS and the HRSS recommend adopting a rabbit from local animal shelters or rabbit rescue groups instead of purchasing them, as there are simply too many rabbits desperately in need of a good home. For those who are unsure about the commitment that they are able to offer, toys or rabbit-themed gifts would do just as well for this Lunar New Year’s celebrations. Let’s make this Year of the Rabbit a truly enjoyable time for our rabbits.

For people willing to make the long-term commitment, here are a few points to consider before acquiring a rabbit:

Housing: Bunnies need a roomy indoor space to call their own. There should be room for a litterbox, toys, food and water bowls. Playpens or puppy exercise pens are a good alternative to the small cages sold in pet stores.

Playtime: Rabbits need plenty of exercise and should be allowed at least 30 hours out-of-cage running time in a rabbit-proofed area of the home per week.

Outdoors: Rabbits should never be left outdoors unsupervised. They can, literally, be frightened to death when approached by predators such as dogs, cats, raccoons and owls. They can also dig under fences to escape.

Litter Box: Rabbits, once spayed or neutered, will readily use litterboxes that are placed in one corner of the rabbit’s cage; the rabbit’s running space should contain at least one additional box. Use dust-free litter—not the clumping kind, and no softwood shavings.

Diet: Bunnies need fresh water, unlimited fresh, grass hay, 1-2 cups of fresh vegetables, and a small serving (1/4 c per 5 lb. rabbit) of plain rabbit pellets each day.

Health: Like dogs and cats, rabbits should be spayed or neutered. The risk of uterine cancer in unsprayed female rabbits is alarmingly high, and unneutered males are likely to spray.

Grooming: Rabbits shed their coat 3-4 times per year; use a flea comb and brush away excess fur.

A person who chooses a baby rabbit as a pet must:

Have lots of time, a household that can withstand some chewing, and a stable residence.

Expect an unneutered/unsprayed baby may spray urine on the walls. Know that neutering/spaying (at four to six months) will greatly alleviate or stop the problem.

Expect accidents when baby forgets the location of the litterbox.

Allow the rabbit at least 30 hours a week of free time outside her cage.

Know the cute baby will soon be an adult rabbit and may have a different personality.

House Rabbit Society is an international, volunteer-based nonprofit organization with two primary goals: 1) to rescue abandoned rabbits and find permanent homes for them; 2) to educate the public and assist humane societies in teaching proper rabbit care. HRS has fosterers, educators, and chapters around the world, and a rabbit adoption and education center in Richmond, California.

The House Rabbit Society Singapore is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to rabbit welfare and awareness. The HRSS runs a fostering program to rescue and re-home abandoned rabbits and participates in numerous public events to educate the general public about rabbit care and behavior.

RIP: Douglas, 1988-1996

(Editor's Note: Mary Cotter's quiet tribute to Doug ran in NYC Metro Rabbit News more than a decade ago. As the Year of the

Rabbit gets under way, we pause to think of rabbits we have known, keeping them forever in our hearts.)

The remnants of his bunny life surround me
I turn, and think I see his little form
But then the ache inside makes me remember
That what I see are shadows, that he's gone.

I hear him in the crackling of the birdseed
When sparrows feed outside his window bed,
I see him in the shaft of morning sunlight
Where he'd stretch out, while I would kiss his head.

His fur was softer than the softest velvet,
The sweetest spot was just behind his ears;
I'd nuzzle in, and breathe his bunny fragrance,
And whisper how I'd love him through the years.

He came to me from one who didn't want him
He bit and scratched, aggressive out of fear;
But here he found no need for his defenses,
And gave his trust – a gift that I held dear.

He had a little bunny wife named Dinky,
He'd kiss her face, and snuggle by her side,
They lived, six years, devoted to each other,
Then suddenly one day his Dinky died.

He'd hover near her corner, as if waiting,
He'd look around when I would say her name;
Eventually he learned to live without her,
But life for him was never quite the same.

His very favorite way to spend the morning
Was chomping off the bristles from my broom;
He left it half the size it was last summer,
I use it now to sweep his empty room.

I clean up all his little bunny traces,
And find things that I didn't know were there,
A few stray poops, a tiny piece of celery,
A hidden corner dusted with his hair.

How did that little poop get on the table?
And how'd that hay get underneath the rug?
He taught me well that neatness was just silly;
I traded keeping house for keeping Doug.

He always knew exactly what he wanted,
And if I crossed him, he would hold a grudge,
But then, when he was ready, he'd forgive me,
His nose would tap my ankle: nudge-nudge-nudge.

As he grew old his little body failed him,
He bore his pain with dignity and grace;
I often wondered whether I could manage
Half as well, if I were in his place.

And now I've lost him, yet each day I find him
In baseboards gnawed, upholstery ripped and torn;
When he was here, I thought of it as "damage"
But now it's Doug, not damage, that I mourn.

We buried Douggie in a summer garden,
Right next to where his little Dinky lies,
And on his grave we planted baby lettuce,
And through our tears we said out last goodbyes.

I really hope that there's a bunny heaven
Cause if there is, I know that's where he'll be;
He was the sweetest, bravest little rabbit
I hope he'll save a place up there for me.

Mary E. Cotter

Remember a Beloved Bunny

A wonderful way to remember and/or honor a beloved bunny is to make a tax-deductible donation to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab in his/her name. Your donation will help other bunnies to get the care they need. Please send your bunny's name and your donation (make checks payable to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab) to: Nancy Schreiber, 12 Grace Court North, Great Neck, NY 11021.

RIP: Tandy

Apple and Tandy – Love Came Quickly

By Erin McElhinney

We had all the usual nicknames for her – Snookums, Creampuff, T-bear – but she was anything but usual. Tandy Ann came into the shelter circa October 2007 as a stray, extremely underweight with sparse fur. She was a true stray, terrified of humans and practically feral. Being new to rabbits, I felt she was out of my league, but I tried to picture her living with another family and I realized that I had to give her a home myself. I had a full house of rabbits, but my sister, Elissa, who lives in Boston, had a spoiled-rotten little baby-boy bun, and she had been flip-flopping over whether she should try to bond him with another bun or not. Her flip-flopping ended on Nov. 3, 2007.

I brought Tandy to Boston with me on Amtrak (I have since learned pets aren't allowed on Amtrak trains). I was nervous about traveling with such a feral-acting little pink rat-looking thing, but Tandy gobbled up all the greens in her carrier, and when I petted her, she flattened. I couldn't resist the opportunity for a cuddle so I put her on my lap and I soon had an admiring gaggle of train conductors and ticket collectors. She purred patiently and blissfully while everyone rubbed her cheeks and petted her. She was so sweet and accommodating that nobody mentioned her scruffy appearance at all. Other passengers were smitten. People told stories of their childhood rabbits and stared at her curiously. I hoped they were contemplating adopting a rabbit of their own.

I arrived in Boston on one of those cold, gray days that wipe the smiles right off the faces of Bostonians and give us our stern expressions. My sister was there waiting, with the look of someone on their third piña colada on an Aruban beach. Her enthusiasm made her stand out. I will never forget her expression as she opened the cardboard carrier and for the first time laid eyes on the ragamuffin that was now hers. The expression was pure joy – the look of a child opening

her biggest Christmas present at five o'clock in the morning.

While never losing her high-strung demeanor, Tandy settled into life in suburban Boston. Her new partner-to-be, Apple, had his world disrupted by her presence, however, and we all feared the bonding process would be long and arduous. I recommended that Elissa wait a bit for Tandy to feel comfortable in her new environment before making any introductions, but Tandy felt differently. When my sister left for her friend's house to tell people about her new rabbit, Tandy decided to take matters into her own paws. She jumped out of her puppy pen and then she jumped into Apple's puppy pen and what happened next is anyone's guess, though there were no telltale tufts of fur – nothing to indicate any sort of struggle. Quite the opposite; there were his and her poops left on a cushion on the couch. The two lovebirds took a nap together on the sofa! When my sister came home and saw Tandy missing from her pen, she immediately assumed the worst and began a frantic search. Instead, she found the two love buns, happily munching on hay together.

Tandy and Apple's romance became a thing of legend in my household. We chuckled over the improbability of a half-starved and ragged bun plucked off the streets of New York City and then falling in love with a pet-store boy. (My sister didn't know any better at the time! He is now seven years old.) Her rags-to-riches story helped me realize the impact that rabbit rescuers can have. We're not just bringing joy and happiness into the life of a single little rabbit; we are touching the lives of entire families and their other pets, of people who sit next to us on trains, and our friends and family members. Sometimes, when I think of the enormous scale of rabbit abuse and neglect – the shocking casualness of it – I know that what we see in New York is just the tip of a terrible iceberg. I become

Photos: Elissa McElhinney



Top, "Angry Apple" photo was taken when my sister first brought Tandy into the house. Apple was so mad, he gave her the bunny cold shoulder! Middle, "Pretty Tandy" captures the beautiful softness of her gentle soul. She was stunning. Bottom, they loved being together.

disheartened until I think of stories like Tandy's and remember all the good that this five-pound Angel from Heaven did in her three short years with us.

(Continued on page 17)

Letters

Photos: Justin Mair



Mookie

Vallen and her family adopted Mookie in the fall. They sent us this email in December.

Hi Marcie,

We adopted India (renamed Mookie) back in September. I kept meaning to send pictures, but I forgot! Here are some cute ones for a holiday treat. Thank you again, she's the best bun in the world: Mookie McBunbuns :-)

Adopting her was the best part of the whole year. Happy holidays!

Vallen, Justin and Mookie

Snowball

Ana and her family adopted Snowball. She sent this holiday note to us on Christmas Day.

Snowball is doing very well. She is a very gentle and curious bunny. We gave her chew toys, a pine cone and a wooden carrot. She loves them! Snowball binkies

often and loves to hop around the dining table. She loves to be petted, and sometimes she cannot make up her mind whether she prefers to be petted or whether she prefers to eat. Often, there are times we come by her playpen to be with her, and she is eating hay. Snowball chooses the best of both worlds; she comes running to us – with her mouth

Photos: Ana Saito-Schachter



Snowball with Therese.
Snowball with Timothy.

full of hay! It is precious to see it. Her favorite foods are pellets, romaine lettuce and green leafy lettuce. Her favorite chew toy: THE CHILDREN'S HOMEWORK!

Thinking of you.

Happy Holidays!

Ana

(Continued on page 18)

RIP: Tandy *(Continued from page 16)*

Tandy passed away on Nov. 15 due to complications from thymoma. Thymoma is a slow-growing mass that in Tandy's case had grown so big that it was crushing her heart and all of her other organs. The only symptom was that it was taking Tandy longer to eat. She still had an appetite and she still ate, but it just took her longer to finish her food. Tandy was treated by Jennifer Graham at Angell Memorial Hospital, who gave Tandy the best medical care possible on her last day on earth. Tandy was kept on oxygen until my sister could get there on the

afternoon that Tandy was put to sleep. She died knowing she was loved, but she left behind a devastated family and a little guy who misses her more than anything. Animals are so astute. I have little doubt that Apps knows that Tandy was sick. I think he just doesn't know that she is dead and isn't coming back because he wasn't there when she died. He has since adopted a toy panda as his companion, but he is acting out in ways that are uncharacteristic for him: flipping his food dish, excessive grunting like a piglet. My sister is too broken up to consider adopting another rabbit, which is a different philosophy than what I would

have in this situation, but I have to respect that.

In the meantime, I tell everyone who knew Tandy, or saw pictures of her, about the joy she brought to and took from life. These little, furry street urchins who make their way into our shelter and into our homes are so precious. We cannot know what kind of horror show they escaped from, or how little time we will have to help them erase the bad memories and replace them with good ones. Tandy only had three years, but she crammed a rabbit lifetime of binkies, nudges and love into them.

Letters

(Continued from page 17)



Jefferson in his new home.
Jefferson at AC&C.

Jefferson

Hop, now known as Jefferson, was adopted by Melissa, who sent us this update in late December.

Hop has been renamed Jefferson. He is doing pretty well. We are still working with him on the litter training. He is pretty good inside the cage, and when I let him out I have to watch him for accidents. He loves spinach, apples and raisins and enjoys hanging out and relaxing most of the time.

Thanks.

Melissa



Scooter

Nancy, who adopted Scooter, sent this letter to rabbit volunteer Genevieve Hannon on Christmas eve.

Dear Genevieve,

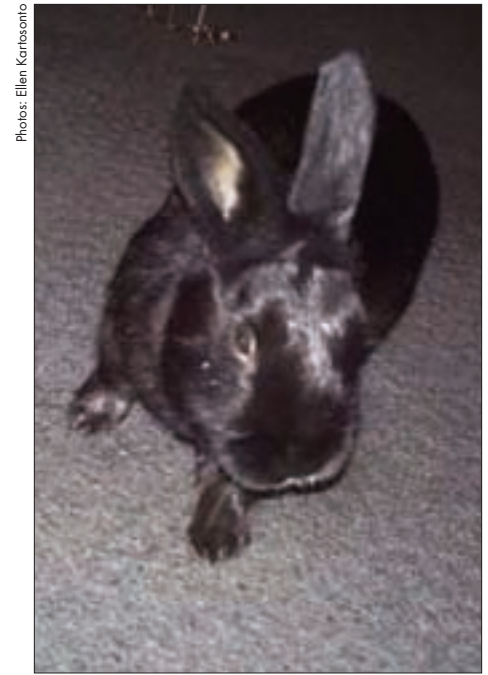
It's Scooter's first Christmas and as I type this he is sleeping on my feet, quite content. Scooter is a happy, inquisitive bunny who has brought much fun and joy to my home.

My deepest thanks to everyone at Animal Care & Control of NYC for taking such good care of Scooter and for bringing him into my life.

Best wishes for a very happy new year!

Sincerely,

Nancy



Bello

Bello was adopted on New Year's Day by Ellen and Ted. Here is their update.

Bello has some interesting jumps!

Everything is going well. He is not nervous at all. He is very alert. For every sound he hears, he reacts and listens.

He is eating well and he likes to be petted. He is eating plenty of Timothy hay. He adjusted well to the environment and he seems to have caught on rather quickly to where to go to the bathroom.

Ellen

(Continued on page 19)

Letters

(Continued from page 18)

Photo: Jeremy Sykes



Chester

Chester LeBunbun, formerly Trix, was adopted by Jeremy, who sent this email in mid-January.

Chester has lived with us now for a year and a half, and is still going strong.

He's a smart little guy, and in addition to doing tricks like spinning around, and jumping on command, he loves to race around the apartment at top speed.

Chester is also something of an escape artist, and has figured out how to open the bathroom door, the bedroom door, and as recently as last week, jump out of his 30-inch-tall cage (he pushes the walls backward to get a running start.) He also has a victory dance for those particularly heart-swelling moments.

You have to love an animal who dances to show when he's happy, and we do.

Jeremy Sykes (Dad of Chester)

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Photo: Kathryn Pizzo



Cosette and Sandrine at AC&C (and vice versa in photo below).

Cosette and Sandrine

Cosette and Sandrine were adopted in January by Amanda, who sent a note to volunteer Amy Odum, telling her how the sisters were doing.

Amy,

Thank you so much for this opportunity to have these sweet girls in my life!

They are settling in to their new home so well! They are still shy, but we've connected quite a bit. They seem so curious to explore their new space, and seem to be loving the quiet, peaceful atmosphere.

I'll definitely be in touch if I have any questions.

Again, thank you so much! They're amazing :)

Amanda

Photo: Christine Arzolini



Joey and Daisy at home.

Joey and Daisy

Christine adopted Joey as a partner for Daisy, and we received this email in late January.

Attached is a photo of Joey and Daisy. Both are rescued bunnies. Joey is the black lop and Daisy is the brown mini lop.

Daisy was adopted from a rescue group in New Jersey in May 2009. She was bonded with my bun Peanut, who passed away in June 2010.

I adopted Joey from Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group in October 2010 as a hopeful bond for Daisy. Joey was previously adopted but was returned. Perfect timing for a date with Daisy!

Daisy immediately took a liking to Joey during their first date at Nancy Schreiber's house. Daisy gave him kisses and shared some lettuce with him. She continued to shower Joey with affection throughout their bonding process, though Joey played hard-to-get for about six weeks, ignoring her courtship.

Joey finally gave in to Daisy's affections and they are now a happily bonded couple. Joey is a very sweet, lovable boy. He enjoys being held and lets me groom him without putting up a fuss. He has a hearty appetite and is always looking for a treat when someone walks into the room.

I know Joey is very happy with his new love since I've witnessed him doing several binkies in Daisy's presence. Both Daisy and Joey like to chew their cardboard boxes and run through their cardboard tunnel for exercise. They enjoy snuggling together on their mats and relaxing on the top floor of their bunny condo. I'm so thankful that Joey is happy in his new home with his new love, Daisy.

Christine, Daisy and Joey
Staten Island

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.

Long Island:

Jennifer Saver, DVM

Laura George, DVM

Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital
2221 Hillside Ave., 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

Manhattan:

Becky Campbell, DVM

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

Manhattan (continued):

Alex Wilson, DVM

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

Anthony Pilny, DVM

Veterinary Internal Medicine
and Allergy Specialists
207 East 84th St., New York, NY 10028
(212) 988-4650

Shachar Malka, DVM

Humane Society of New York
306 East 59th St.
New York, NY 10022
(212) 752-4842

Westchester County:

Gil Stanzone, DVM

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

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Cindy Stutts, HRS Licensed Educator,
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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 general public on rabbit care through publications, telephone consultations, home visits and public presentations. This newsletter is published by RRR/NYC HRS, which is solely responsible for its content. Letters, photographs and other submissions to the newsletter become the property of the NYC Chapter and cannot be returned. We retain the right to edit submissions for publication.

All donations go directly to caring for our foster rabbits and are tax-deductible. Please help us help them. Checks should be made out to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and mailed to: Nancy Schreiber, 12 Grace Court North, Great Neck, NY 11021.

ADOPTABLE RABBITS

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

To adopt a rabbit in **New York City**, contact Cindy Stutts at bygolyoly@yahoo.com or call her at 646-319-4766. On **Long Island**, contact Nancy Schreiber at nschreibmd@aol.com or at 516-510-3637 (www.longislandrabbitrescue.org), and in **Westchester** contact Mary Cotter at mec@cloud9.net or 914-337-6146 (www.rabbitcare.org).

AC&C rabbit volunteers' email address in New York City is nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com.

You can visit the **New York Animal Care & Control Center** at 326 East 110th St., between First and Second avenues. Volunteers are there every weekday evening and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but it is best to arrange an appointment first.

Adoptable AC&C rabbits are also at **Petco's** Lexington Avenue (86-87th) and Union Square locations; rabbit volunteers are present at both stores on Saturday and Sunday afternoons to answer questions. There are two rabbits living at each of those stores.

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 Mary Cotter at mec@cloud9.net or Amy Odum at either amy@adoptabunny.info or nyc.acc.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.