

THUMP

NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS AUGUST 2012

Rehabilitation Of Biting Bunnies

By Natalie L. Reeves

Cindy Stutts will never forget Samantha, the first rabbit she pulled from Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C) in 2004. Cindy was excited about the new partnership she and Mary Cotter were forging with AC&C in which they would find homes for the rabbits left in

Photo: Nancy Wu



Samantha started out as a biter.

the public shelter. Cindy started her new relationship by rescuing a rabbit from AC&C. Cindy was drawn to Samantha, a rabbit chewing on the bars of her cage to get attention. Samantha's tactics worked, and she ended up becoming Samantha Stutts.

Just as Samantha had proven her know-how in choosing the best tactic to get

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If I Knew Then What I Know Now: Looking Back on My Decade With Skip

By Robert Kulka

It was 10 years ago this July and in the dead of the night that a friend dumped a rabbit on me "temporarily." My friend had gotten the rabbit for his kids from a pet store where the previous owner returned him. But my friend's wife said "no way," and I was asked to house the rabbit a few days until a permanent home could be found.

I had never been around a rabbit and knew nothing about them. My first reaction was "Yuck! I don't want a rabbit anywhere near me or in my house." Over the next day or so, the rabbit was kept in my basement in a cage that had a wire floor. Even with no knowledge of rabbits, I knew that wire flooring couldn't be very comfortable. I covered the cage floor so he could stand on something other than wire. I also fed the rabbit some pellets that arrived

Photo: Robert Kulka



Skip has less hair on his ears and is a bit slower, but he's still as cute at the age of 12.

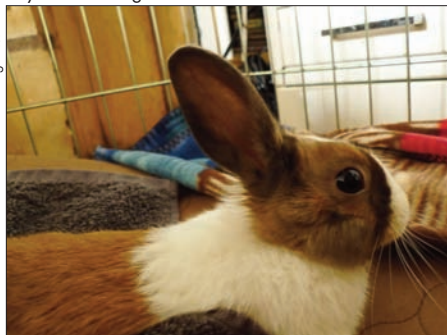
with him, and threw a lettuce leaf into the cage on the advice of my friend.

I watched the frightened creature in the cage. He didn't seem to want to come out of the cage and he was very quiet and actually seemed pretty clean. Was I missing something here? Were rabbits cooler than just cute storybook creatures

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Tilly is recovering from a broken back.

Photo: Abigail McCue

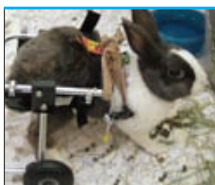


Tilly the Brave

By Abigail McCue

On June 5, volunteer Kerri wrote in her shelter report: "One bunny came in while we were there (A0934657), but never made it upstairs. A young (about 4-5 months), tiny & cute Dutch with

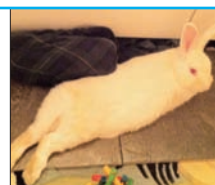
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Our masthead bunny, Jonah, was a stray in Seaford, Long Island, who lingered in a backyard because no one could take him indoors. When the homeowners got word that a rescue space had opened up, they went and simply scooped him up. He was completely trusting and friendly. His delightful personality is what saved his life. Photo: Mary Ann Maier.

Biting Bunnies

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adopted, she continually demonstrated her intelligence in other ways. Namely, she was an accomplished biter – one of the worst biters Cindy has seen after dealing with thousands of rabbits through the years.

Samantha had a healed broken leg and may have belonged to a child. In the first few weeks after Cindy had brought Samantha home, the bunny bit Cindy, her husband and two housekeepers. Cindy, who is no quitter and was never going to give up on Samantha, spent about half a year working with the bunny to end her biting habit. The rehabilitation worked, and Samantha eventually progressed to where she would roll against Cindy on the floor and kiss her mom's face.

While Cindy has an extraordinary ability to read rabbits, after years of working with them, she says that anyone can, with love and patience, teach a bunny that biting is not appropriate behavior. The payoff is huge, since these biters often become the most affectionate of rabbits.

“Rabbits aren't born biters,” Cindy says. “It's a learned behavior. Their natural instinct as prey animals is to run away, but a few have learned that by biting and boxing a human's hand, that human will leave them alone. Biters are sometimes the smartest of bunnies because they have taught themselves that biting gets them what they want.”

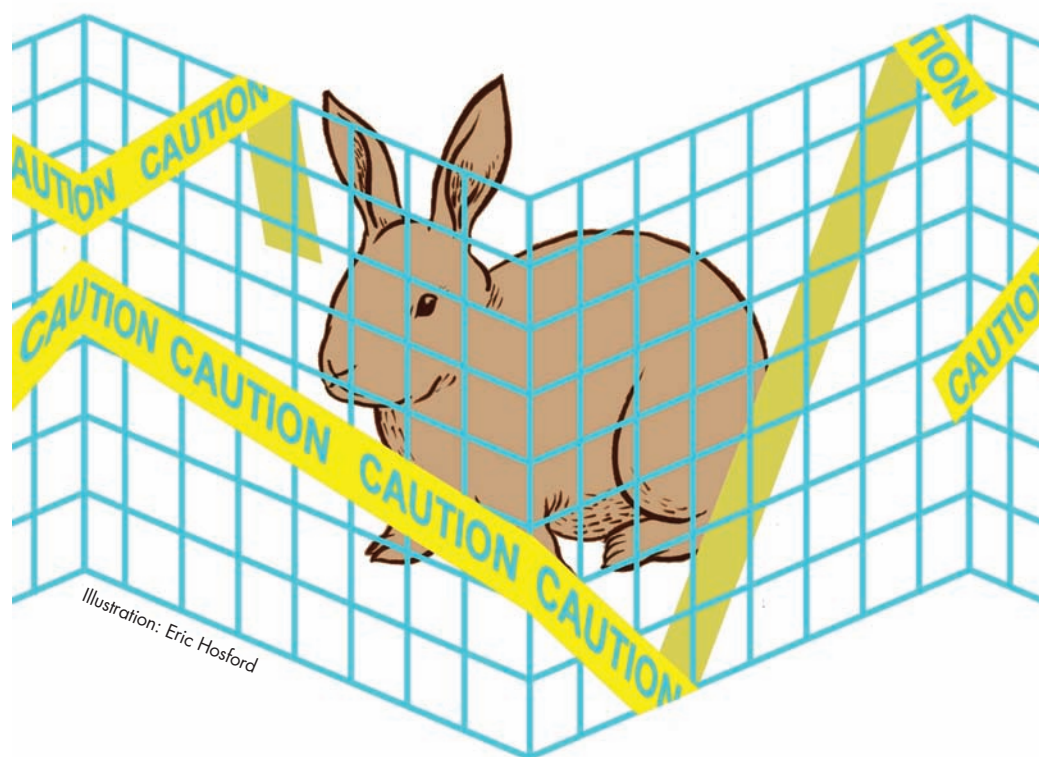
Sadly, many of the rabbits relinquished to the shelter are dumped because they were mishandled, which led them to bite. No specific breed bites more than another.

Cindy transformed Samantha from a biter to a lover using techniques that she developed through experience. Since Samantha would sometimes charge a human who entered her area, Cindy had

to use her head, literally, to safely approach Samantha's domain because she discovered that Samantha would not attack her head. Cindy would get on her knees with her head lowered as if she were praying to the floor. Once Samantha got used to Cindy's presence, Cindy would sit on the floor, read a book, and largely ignore Samantha. Cindy sometimes talked to the rabbit, but didn't try to touch her until Samantha made the first move. Gradually, Samantha learned to trust Cindy and started approaching her to be petted. Within a period of six months, Samantha was a changed bunny.

If the rabbit does not react fearfully or box, you may be able to place your elbow on the cage floor with the back of your hand facing the rabbit, and slowly drop it on the rabbit's forehead before you remove it. Do that a few times until the rabbit is comfortable with hand touching.

Through patience, any biting bunny should eventually be able to change his or her ways. The tips described here are intended to be used with healthy spayed or neutered rabbits. A bunny who has not been spayed or neutered or is feeling sick should be seen by a vet. If your



While Cindy's approach worked to stop biting behavior with Samantha, she warns that any rabbit, even one who rarely bites, can do so if approached in a way that scares the rabbit, such as when hands are put in his or her face. Cindy advises monitoring the rabbit's body language as you approach the cage. A scared rabbit will often retreat to the back of the cage. Approach the cage carefully before you reach toward the rabbit.

rabbit has been deemed healthy by a rabbit-savvy vet, Cindy's tips could make a world of difference. If you are having trouble dealing with an aggressive rabbit, please contact one of the people listed on the back page of Thump for further advice. Outside the New York City area, contact your nearest House Rabbit Society chapter or representative. You can find those links at rabbit.org.

If I Knew Then...

(Continued from page 1)

and Easter bunnies? Were they something other than what I thought they were? Was something happening to me?

I began collecting as much as I could to read and research about rabbits. I was obsessed with understanding everything and understanding it quickly. I came up with some great research through House Rabbit Society. I don't know how I found that organization but it was a very important find for me.

I started sitting with Skip (the name he came to me with) and kept him company. I took him out of the cage morning and evening to let him have some run-around time. He was always very cautious and never roamed too far out of his familiar area. I had to keep a close eye on him because I noticed he liked to chew things. We were quickly getting used to one another.

I ordered him a two-story condo to get him out of that horrible, rusty cage. I found a woven mat of coir at Pier 1 and a couple of puppy pens, and I started letting him play freely within the space set up for him. I bought him a litter box. I started incorporating more greens into his diet and fewer pellets. He quickly let me know what he liked and what he didn't like to eat.

I found a vet nearby who had experience with exotics. I thought it was a good idea to have the rabbit checked out. Skip was supposedly two and a half when he came to me. The vet checked him out, saying he was a healthy male who could indeed be two and a half. He was not neutered.

My readings led me to believe that you should avoid major surgery for rabbits, and since he was already over two I decided not to put him through the trauma. If I knew then what I know now, I would have made a very different decision about that. I didn't know that he was certainly young enough and healthy enough for the procedure, but I

also never dreamed that rabbits might live as long as Skip. I saw no real need at the time.

I fixed up my basement, adding lighting, ceiling fans and fresh paint, and I added a chair for me. I moved my computer and a TV down there. I set up Skip's new condo and expanded his pen. He was able to come and go into his condo or run around in his pen. His litter box was in the condo and I began using Carefresh (I learned early to not use pine or anything like that in the litter) and Oxbow hay. Skip was meticulous about his litter box from the start. I also found a spare ceramic tile that I set up as a placemat for his water and food. He moved everything else out of the way and established the tile as his resting place. That was a fortunate find. He has never been without that tile and has always used it for his daily sleep times. It really works for him when weather is warmer, too.

Photo: Robert Kulka



Skip sits on top of his castle, with his condo behind him, surveying his kingdom at about 4 years of age.

I began spending several hours a day with the little guy, and we got more and more accustomed to one another. I went from my original yuck feelings to knowing I would keep him forever. I sensed that his finding me was a very fortunate event in my life. I even began sitting in the pen with him in the evenings. I found a blanket he could dig into and chew on and crawl up under

while I read out loud to him. I bought him a cardboard castle with a ramp that he could climb up, and often he would come to the top of his castle to be at eye level with me while I was reading.

Over 10 years we have found many activities to share. We have even developed a language of sorts. Beyond the words he recognizes, I started grunting back to his grunts and somehow I think he understood that as well. Over the years I also found he responded to clicking sounds. I know I could have developed it further had I known earlier. And I bet he would have responded to a clicker as well.

Skip has long given up basement living, and as I moved from home to home his living arrangement has always been a major consideration. He sits with me up on the sofa now in the evenings, although I am unsure when that began. He likes to be able to see things and be a part of whatever is going on around him. He remains curious and is very brave about most things.

Watching how Skip has developed into a mature rabbit has been a wonderful process. He used to run and binky so much when he was younger. I remember marveling at his aerobatics the first few times I saw them. I will never forget the first time he did a flop-over on his side and my heart skipped a beat because I didn't know what was happening. He remains so adorable and as always he makes me smile no matter what might be going on in my life. He has given up binkies over the last few years, and he thumps less than before. But he will still play hide-and-seek, and jump out from boxes or corners of his pen when I come with dinner or treats. He also still does figure eights around my feet when I stand in his pen. Skip sleeps a great deal more than he used to and with his eyes shut tighter than when he was younger.

In hindsight I should have had him neutered. I think it would have made

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If I Knew Then...

(Continued from page 3)

him a little calmer about cuddle time and being picked up. I know that it would have meant fewer times of him “marking” me as his property. It also may have been nice to bond him with another rabbit. He might have enjoyed the company of another bunny as much as spending time with me, although I suspect he thinks he is more human than I am at times.

I know so much more now than I did when he first arrived that night a decade ago. Learning to detect little changes in behavior kept me alert to health issues. He has had gut stasis several times through the years, including the time I almost lost him four years ago. He has had a blocked tear duct, too, that we have seen the vet about. I wish I had learned some things more quickly through the years, but the discovery of his personality is a delight as he changes from year to year. I look at him now knowing I have been blessed with a very special friend, and I know that as he gets older and sleepier that our time may be coming to a close. I hope that time is not too soon.

If I knew then what I know now, I would have done a few things differently, I suppose. But the lessons he has taught me about myself and about rabbits could never have happened without our years together, watching out for one another. And if I knew then what I know now, I would have found him before he had to find me.

Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Bucky, Pecan, Annie, Jack and Janet, Baby, Brownie, Annie, DeNiro, Dora, Starburst, Pereso, Lara, Huck, Sugarplum and Spice, Snickers, Tootsie and Pepper, Francis, Barclay, Cocoa, Mel, Jordan, Lionel, Timothy, Amber, Bambi.

Tilly

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either a broken back or 2 broken rear legs... Say a prayer for this little bun!”

I read this message and cringed. Another sad story about cruelty. Another rabbit injured by the people supposed to be taking care of him. I read it and felt that pull in my chest, that sense of the futility of kindness that I often feel when I’m at the shelter, like nothing I do can ever make a real difference. Someone, somewhere is hurting an animal and I can’t stop them. I felt all that but, accustomed to it, I shook it off, hoped the little guy would be alright, and made myself forget about it.

Then, a few days later, I read this: “A0934657 sent to CAEM, broken back. Will make decision tomorrow to euthanize or not.”

Euthanize. It choked me to read that and almost without thinking, I replied: “If this little guy needs some extra TLC, my husband and I would be happy to help.”

And, as I hit send, I instantly regretted it. I didn’t have time to take care of a disabled rabbit. I have no veterinary experience. What was I thinking? I am not capable, I thought.

Honestly, I hoped my message would go unnoticed, or, if noticed, appreciated but deemed unnecessary. Surely, someone else would foster this rabbit, someone who knew what they were doing.

It didn’t go unnoticed. It was appreciated. And...it was necessary.

No one else could take him and if I didn’t, Cindy Stutts told me over the phone, the rabbit, called Thumper, would be euthanized. I was terrified, but I said yes, thinking all the while, “Abbie, are you crazy?!”

I picked Thumper up at the Center for Avian and Exotic Medicine on Thursday, June 14, and found out that “he” was a she. And she was beautiful. A perfect, tortoiseshell Dutch. Her heart was beating like a woodpecker against a tree,

her big eyes wide with confusion. Her bottom and back legs were wet with urine, but the rest of her was soft and clean. Katy Jo, the vet tech, told me how much everyone at CAEM loved this little girl and was rooting for her, though they doubted her back legs would ever regain full, if any, motion. Despite her obvious disability, however, Thumper moved very fast, dragging herself around using her forelegs. But that name, it was almost cruel in its irony: Thumper? This baby would not be thumping any time soon, if ever.

Katy Jo told me I would need to bathe her twice a day, and that she needed to move as much as possible to encourage recovery and prevent muscle atrophy. Also, she said, I would need to “express” her at least twice a day. Did that mean what I thought it meant?

Yes, it did. Katy Jo showed me how and to my credit, I didn’t flinch. Help a rabbit pee? Okay, sure, ’cause I do that like, uh, all the time. It appeared to me to be a bit like milking a cow, except with the udder inside. “You can feel the bladder,” Katy Jo pointed, “Here. It’s like a small balloon.” I felt...rabbit. Nothing discernible. “Just squeeze around that area,” she said, “you’ll find it.”

Would I? Well, I’d have to, wouldn’t I? I nodded with a confidence I didn’t feel, wrote everything down but still, my brain pounded with uncertainty. Katy Jo was so happy, she said, to see Thumper going to a good home. “I can see you’ll be really good for her.”

No, I thought, no. I’m not capable.

But I said, “Thanks.” Then, with Thumper all packed away in her carrier, and Katy Jo assuring me that I could call any time, I left CAEM wondering if I’d been right to come here in the first place. Would I do more harm than good?

I washed Thumper twice a day, drying her with towels and a blow dryer. She washed me back, licking my arms as I bathed her. I applied HEALx to her

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Tilly

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urine scald and did physical therapy exercises with her, moving her back legs for her in their natural motion. I expressed her twice a day, until it became obvious she was peeing on her own. On her third day with me, she started doing something else on her own, too.

I thought it was my hopeful imagination at first, until I brought a friend over to see her. Antonia watched her for awhile, sitting on a blanket with her while I cleaned the cage. “Hey,” she said, “Did she just... She did!” Thumper had used her right hind leg. She’d pushed off with it. I was so happy; it hadn’t just been me. Antonia had seen it, too.

The next project was naming her. From the beginning we’d known she was not a Thumper; that was obvious. She needed a good, strong name. My husband, Tim, woke up one morning and told me that he’d had a dream that we’d named her Tilly. I, in the meantime, had been looking up other names and had found something I liked: Kekoa, which in Hawaiian means “the Brave.” I’m Native Hawaiian on my mother’s side, and my Hawaiian grandmother, Lani, had also suffered paralysis later in life. She had given me my Hawaiian middle name, Puanani (Beautiful Flower), and it seemed appropriate that this little rabbit also have a Hawaiian second name. Thumper was now Tilly Kekoa, Tilly the Brave.

And to make it all that much more interesting, I looked up the name Tilly, and discovered it is a derivative of Matilda, and means “mighty in battle.” Nothing could have been more apt. Tilly Kekoa was brave and mighty in her battle to survive.

Her right hind leg continued to improve and grow strong, but her left leg was little more than a hindrance to her. It dragged behind her, twisted under her and tripped her from time to time. I worked on it every day, with little result. Finally, it became so sore from scald that

Photo: Abigail McCue



Tilly is thriving at home.

she had to be brought back to CAEM to consider amputation.

She was there for a week. It was painful to me to see her empty cage and think of her in the hospital. They wanted to operate, but needed to heal the scald so that the skin would be strong enough to endure the surgery and close over the wound. I was still technically her fosterer, so I wasn’t privy to much information about her while she was in the hospital. Finally, five days after she’d been admitted, Cindy called me to ask if I really thought I was capable of caring for a special-needs bunny, and that if I felt I was, they’d do the surgery – but if not, they would euthanize her.

A month ago, I had been asked the same question and had said, “Yes,” even though I thought I might not be able to handle it. Now, I was able to give the same answer and feel no hesitation, and only a little fear. It was suddenly clear to me that Tilly Kekoa was my rabbit, my precious little gift given to me by an obscure universe; she’d survived a broken back, been saved from euthanasia by a compassionate vet tech, was handed over to me, endured constant bathing and physical therapy, and, against all odds, had regained motion in one of her back legs. If a little baby rabbit could weather all this and still find joy in eating a carrot, what couldn’t I do? Yes, I was capable.

I brought her home on Friday, July 20. I’d made her a cushy, comfy bed to convalesce in, a mattress topper, quilted wee-wee pads, soft towels and her own fleece blanket. They’d done a wonderful job on her surgery and the first thing I noticed when I lifted her from the carrier was how dry she was. She was warm and fuzzy like a peach and her skin was no longer that angry pink-red. She immediately climbed into her familiar hidey-box and fell fast asleep.

Tilly Kekoa is the bravest and most life-loving creature I have ever met. She’s already finding her new center, getting used to her absent limb, and is, in fact, moving much better without it. Tim and I are continually amazed by her curiosity and strength, her desire to climb and explore, her boundless energy. This surgery hasn’t left her depressed and this experience hasn’t caused her to be afraid. She is patient, loving, gentle and downright adorable and I think I can say, almost for a fact, that she’ll be alright. As I write this, she is lying outside her box on her blanket, taking an afternoon nap and it gives me great joy to see her there. Before they decided to do the surgery, Cindy had asked me if I felt sorry for Tilly, and said that pitying her wasn’t a good enough reason to keep her alive. And while I’m sad that her life has had such a traumatic start, I find I don’t feel sorry for Tilly.

I am in awe of her.

Resources for Guardians of Special-Needs Rabbits

By Natalie L. Reeves

Last summer, as one of my bunnies was recovering from a stasis episode, his left side weakened considerably. He looked like he had suffered a stroke, but it turned out that my little boy was suffering from an active *E. cuniculi* infection. With extensive treatment, my bunny eventually recovered most of the strength he had temporarily lost. It was touch-and-go, though, so I tried to learn as much as I could about caring for a disabled rabbit in case my bunny never regained full function.

While rabbit-savvy vets should always be the first people bunny parents seek for advice, the Internet provides great secondary resources for those with bunnies dealing with different challenges. Because rabbits have delicate skeletal structures, disabling injuries are all too common. When you add the population of rabbits that are incapacitated temporarily or permanently by diseases or sicknesses, the odds increase that many of us who share our lives with rabbits would benefit from having resources to help in these situations.

As you familiarize yourself with these groups, you'll notice a recurring theme: the people who care for disabled rabbits consider themselves lucky. Over and over again, people post about the extraordinarily close bond they've developed with their rabbits and that while they wouldn't have wished for

their rabbits to have become disabled, they have never regretted the extra time, work and expense they have invested in caring for their pets. And even though I don't currently have a disabled rabbit, I still belong to some of these groups because I am inspired by both the rabbits and the people who make sacrifices to care for them.

Some of the best resources include:

- **The Disabled Rabbits group on Yahoo** (<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/disabledrabbits>) is an excellent resource with an active group of more than 1,000 members who endeavor to answer every question with thoughtful and practical advice. The "Files" section of the group includes guides to carts, slings, balms, massage and more. The moderators keep posts on topic so that emails from people seeking help are not hidden in a flood of unrelated emails.
- **The "OnTheWonk" group on Yahoo** (<http://pets.groups.yahoo.com/group/OnTheWonk>) has more than 350 members and focuses on providing support for people who have bunnies with head tilt. While the group focuses on head-tilt bunnies, the tips shared have wide application for rabbits with varying special needs. The "Files" section of this group contains numerous case studies and copies of scientific research.
- **Links to Videos and Articles** (http://www.catsandrabbitsandmore.com/disabled_rabbits).

If your bunny has a "Cottontail Cottage" cardboard playhouse, you may already be familiar with the company that makes them, Cats & Rabbits & More. The California-based owner of this company, Amy Spintman, is also a licensed educator for the House Rabbit Society who has shared her life with disabled rabbits and has lectured and written on the topic. Her website contains numerous links to excellent resources for rabbit guardians seeking information. The links include videos on a variety of issues relating to disabled rabbits, such as how to diaper a disabled bunny, as well as links to makers of carts, products for urine scald and other helpful products designed with special-needs bunnies in mind.

- (<http://www.rabbit.org/care/drollery.html>). On the House Rabbit Society's website you can find a link to this newly revised DVD: "Assisted Living for Special-Needs Bunnies" by Marinell Harriman. The video, which comes with a booklet, gives information on the daily care of a special-needs bunny, with visually demonstrated techniques. (The direct link is <http://www.drollerypress.com/XHTML/assist3.html>).

If you have a special-needs bunny, you'll find that building a support network of people going through similar issues can be invaluable, and these groups are a good place to start.

Snowball's Photo Shoot

Snowball, who is available for adoption, took part in a photo shoot in May for an artist who does paintings on social justice. Here is a thank-you note from the artist, Fulvia Zambon.

Thank you very much for giving me the pleasure of working with Snowball. He was very cooperative and almost fell asleep in Iwona's arms. He seemed to like being with her. He is a precious fur beauty.

Best regards,
Fulvia

Photo: Fulvia Zambon



Thanks, Thump!

As someone who used to own many many rabbits, and with an extremely soft spot for them, I would like to commend your team on this wonderful newsletter. It was a joy looking at the many adorable pictures.

I just wanted to let the team know that they're doing a great job! Keep up the good work =)

Best regards,
Tania

What's in a Name? The Story of a Buddhist Master and a Little White Rabbit

By Abigail McCue

My husband, Tim, and I were newly engaged and while I knew he was preparing to become an official student of Zen Buddhism, I wasn't really ready for the long 14-day retreat he was about to go on to mark the start of his student-hood.

I'd just moved in to his East Village apartment and was still unpacking my boxes when the two-week separation was due to begin. It would be the longest time we'd ever been apart and he would only be able to call me if there was an emergency and vice versa.

I wanted to give him something of *me* to take with him and the day he left I grabbed the first thing I saw that was pocket-sized: a tiny white rabbit figurine, plastic with a poly-velvet coat. It was an old toy. I hadn't really remembered packing it and I felt silly giving it to him as a remembrance, but it was all I had at that moment.

I would later learn that the silly white rabbit had been a comfort, not only to him, but to others on the difficult retreat. His fellow students would dub it "Dharma Bunny" and to this day Tim keeps it on his personal Buddhist altar.

We were married a year later and six months after that, Dharma Bunny far from my mind, I met another white rabbit. He was a stray found in an abandoned building and the shelter called him Jordan.

Something about Jordan struck a chord with me and I knew I needed to adopt him. My husband was uncertain: we live in a not-so-big apartment. Where would we keep a rabbit? We have an 18-year-old ornery black cat who would, in all likelihood, hate him. I persisted and brought Tim to meet Jordan at Petco. "Oh," he said, seeing how beautiful he was and how lonely he seemed in the small cage, "we've got to get him out of here."

And we did. Jordan came to live with us in April. The cat was...well, annoyed with him. But Tim was enamored and Jordan seemed more in love with Tim than with me. The thing was, we knew "Jordan" was not his name. He wasn't a "Jordan." But what was he? Who was he? Where had he been? What had he experienced? What was his name?

It was "Bunny" for a few weeks while we thought it over. And occasionally, "Cutie," "Fun-Bun" and "Sweet-baby."

The "J" sounded right, so I wrote a list of "J" names, then gave up on that and tried to find a cool name – maybe something to do with winter since his fur is frosty white, or something epic from Greek or Roman myth.

Nothing fit.

Then, it hit me.

Joshu.

I almost fell out of my chair.

When Tim had first begun as a student, a year and a half before, he'd had to learn about a Buddhist monk named Master Joshu (JOE-shoo). I heard a lot about Joshu over those months, so the name had meaning for me, too. I ran to Tim, excited, and said:

"Joshu!"

He was bemused. "What?"

"Joshu!" I cried. "He's your Dharma Bunny!"

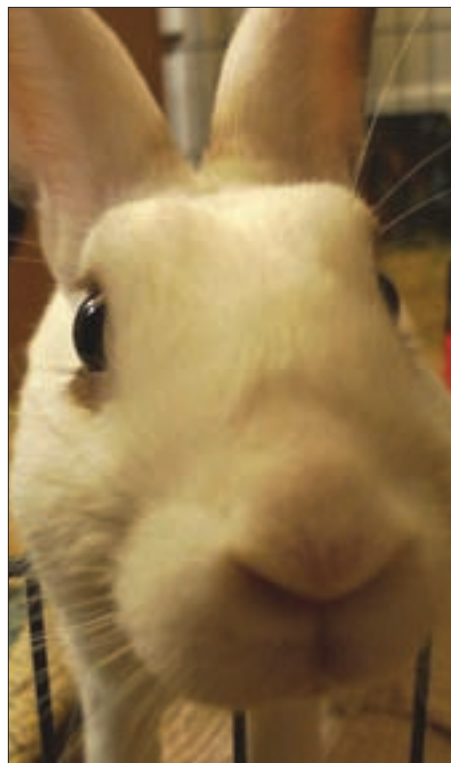
A look of realization filled Tim's face. "Joshu," he said. "He's Joshu."

Joshu is the second white rabbit I have, rather impulsively, brought into Tim's life, and, as with the first Dharma Bunny, his presence brings us both constant comfort and joy.

So, what's in a name?

Apparently, quite a lot.

Photos: Abigail McCue



Joshu is a joyful presence.

Lola: Looking for a Partner

By Jane O'Wyatt

A young white female named Lola arrived at AC&C toward the end of April 2012. Found in Central Park near the Harlem Meer, she was emaciated and dehydrated, her fur (including her face) splotchily yellow-matted with urine. Although she had been negligently treated in her previous home and then abandoned, she was not unfriendly: she was a nervous bunny who loved having her head and cheeks rubbed. As Lola recovered physically, though, she became increasingly skittish and cage-protective. Since it was hard to get her out of her cage, some rabbit volunteers simply cleaned around her.

Lola was moved from the shelter to Petco Union Square in May, but this wasn't a good fit, and on June 1 she bit one of the team of volunteers who take care of the Petco rabbits in residence. Because Lola needed to be in foster care, I took her home and set her up in my bathroom. She quickly claimed this bigger cage, and my partner and I had to enter and move around her domain cautiously. Lola was not really an attack bunny (like some I could name) but she did for a time charge and bite invasive human hands at floor level, e.g., when I tried to sweep up stray poops with a brush and dust pan. Since she wouldn't allow this, I resorted temporarily to a Dustbuster – from which she distanced herself.

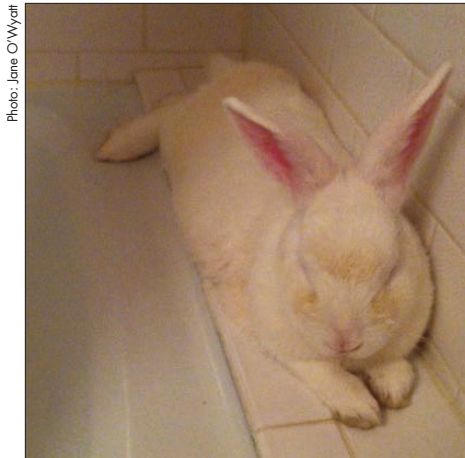
I have been fostering Lola for over two months, and she now occupies a 4' x 8' pen in my living room. Although she still doesn't like to be picked up and remains somewhat hypervigilant (sudden moves and loud noises alarm her), the non-emergency biting has stopped. Lola is now a confiding, affectionate, energetic, inquisitive bunny. She has a hide box in her pen but she never hides in it. She moves it around, usually turning it upside down. Her litter box skills are exemplary. And Lola is so pretty! Her



April 23. Lola at AC&C.



June 3. Next to frozen water bottle in Jane's bathroom.



June 16. At edge of Jane's bathtub.

weight is perfect, and having patiently endured a lot of grooming, she now wears a silky, bright-white coat.

Lola visited the Union Square Petco on a Saturday afternoon about a month ago, and both Cathe and Marcie remarked that although she was anxious in the pen at first, she was much more outgoing and active than she had been in May. A



July 16. Litter-box skills!



July 29. When Jane was out of town for a few days, Lola stayed with Cathe Rekis. Lola made herself comfortable on Cathe's bed.



Aug. 18. Favorite greens are parsley and cilantro.

quiet, gentle admirer with a bonded pair of bunnies at home gave a smooshed-down Lola a leisurely massage. Last weekend, during a speed date with a handsome, interested male lop (see photo on page 9), Lola's confidence (but not pushiness), amiability and playfulness impressed everyone but the lop's guardians, who couldn't make up their minds.

Why Can't I Just Adopt a Second Rabbit?

By Lisa Carley

Most of us have had pets where we can just go and get another of the species; eventually, they'll get along. Well, rabbits are rarely like that.

Those sweet, adorable little things that personify cuteness are actually very territorial beings – sort of like humans. Imagine for a moment that someone plopped another person onto your living room sofa and said, “Meet your new mate.” Like you, a rabbit would have a problem with that.

Unlike you, a rabbit shows this less-than-enthusiastic state by attacking the other rabbit. We expect you would be more diplomatic.

So, how do you adopt a second or third rabbit into your home? You could keep them separately forever, but why?

At Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, we do something called “bunny speed dating.” It's just like the human kind, but with people who can assess compatibility. Think of it as eHarmony for rabbits.

While none of us are able to give your rabbit a 50-point compatibility survey, some of us are able to watch bunny behavior and assess compatibility. This doesn't happen in a one-bunny scenario; hence, the speed dating.

Basically, rabbits pick their own partners. Humans do not come into play here. Your two-pound rabbit might pick a 12-pound rabbit as his partner. You have no control over this.

My favorite bonding story involves a gay couple who brought in their male rabbit to find a mate. They would have preferred a male partner. It was with great sadness that I had to inform them that their rabbit was straight. They handled it well, and went home with the rabbit's choice of girl bunnies. I believe everyone is living happily ever after.

So if you have one lonely bunny who needs a partner, please feel free to let us know. As long as your rabbit is spayed or neutered, we will find a rabbit mate for her or him.

Your next thought, I'm sure, is, “Why would I bother? This is all so complicated.” And you would be correct. I would imagine, though, if you love your pet, you would sustain a bit of inconvenience for his or her long-term happiness.

When you're out all day, your rabbit can get lonely. I happen to own one of the few rabbits who would rather be alone than with another rabbit. My two-pound Jersey Woolly, Wabbit, is so alpha that he would never stand the company of another rabbit. He tolerates my dog because he has no idea what that is.

Odds are that your rabbit is not quite as extreme. What matters to you is that a bonded pair is the equivalent of 1.5 rabbits. They live in the same space, use the same litter box and eat the same food. They also entertain each other, and you.

There is nothing cuter than a bonded pair of rabbits. They will play together, groom each other, play with you, and relieve you of the guilt of not being home all the time.

If you find an already-bonded pair, I suggest you go for that. It relieves you of the burden of the home part of bonding. If you're not ready for that commitment when you adopt a first rabbit, call us later. We'll get it right for you.

Cindy Stutts supervising speed dates at Petco Union Square on Aug. 12.

Top, male lop, in litter box, has come to Lola's end of the pen. Cindy and Lola watch him calmly.

Middle, Divina has joined male lop in litter box. Cindy strokes Divina's head.

Bottom, Divina prepares to get up close and personal with male rex.

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Pokey Hyacinth and Benjamin Bunny

Photo: Cathy Zelonis



Hyacinth munches away while Benjamin eyes the camera.

By Catherine Zelonis

In late January of 2010, I traveled to Brooklyn to get a bonded pair of older rabbits from someone who, after having them for a few months, wanted to give them up. The reason I even responded was that the possibility existed that they might be split up, and I don't like splitting up a bonded pair, especially an older pair.

They were eight and seven years old, I was told. Pokey became Pokey Hyacinth, and Bunny became Benjamin Bunny. I put them in a pen in the living room, but since they had lived their lives in a cage together, I figured it might be hard to give that up. So I did put a cage inside the pen, which Benjamin immediately rushed into, where he sat like a statue. After weeks of being shy

beyond words and holding onto his frozen stance, I thought it might be better to take the wire-bottom cage out and replace it with a hidey box. Of course, Benjamin went right in and stayed there. Eventually, he did start coming out for a more interesting view of his very limited world.

Benjamin depended on Hyacinth for solace, and they made a very sweet couple. They eventually moved into the bedroom, and I put a carpet runner outside the pen so Benny could leave his safe home with Hyacinth and do a little exploring. In the meantime, I took in Shaddy as a foster.

Shaddy made her home in the living room. A few more runners were added, and after much approach/avoidance, Benny finally worked up the nerve to

make his way to Shaddy's pen. Eventually they made friends, and she was always excited when he would visit her. They would run alongside each other up and down – she inside and he outside. She eventually left, but Benny continued his romps on the runners and got faster and faster, even doing binkies. I started wondering if he was really as old as I had been told.

Fast forward to Hin Sung, a very unhappy bunny at Petco. I used to read the volunteers' emails about her every day and how unhappy she was there. So I suggested to Cindy Stutts that Hin Sung come to Staten Island for a change of scene. She did come, and after months, she still wasn't crazy about me, but she felt safe and relaxed here.

Benny and Hyacinth were still with me, and I decided to let Benny pay a visit. That was the charm that pushed Hin Sung past calm and into happy. She loved him. So there he was again romping with his latest friend, renamed Heather – she on the inside of the pen and he on the outside.

Heather was finally cured of her fear of the world. And she was adopted as a partner bun. Happy day!

Hyacinth is a very friendly bunny and likes visiting, too. But allowing Benny out on his own for half the time opened up life to him and showed him that he could do wild jumps and run...well, like a rabbit! I feel lucky to have these two charmers. They take good care of each other every day. The look of bliss on each of their faces as they are being groomed is a sight to behold!



We are grateful to all of our wonderful hay donors. A special thanks to Best Pet Rx and Robin Sternberg for donations of large bales of hay to the shelter. Also, a heartfelt thank you to volunteers and others who purchase hay for our bunnies on a regular basis. Your generosity is inspiring.

RIP: Maya Ollie and I Mourn Her Loss

By Katelyn Belyus

This past March, my temperamental Maya became curiously ill. She stopped grooming herself and started making strange yawning motions. An emergency trip to the vet confirmed that she was actually gasping for air and had not groomed herself because it was painful. Maya was diagnosed with a heart condition; fluid had built up around her lungs, which the vet tapped and drained. There had been evidence of a prior heart attack. She was in the hospital for three days, and when she returned home, she was weary and tired. We were given oral medications to keep the fluid out of her lungs and to treat her heart. My little Maya was given anywhere from three to six months to live. She passed away a month later.

It hurts me to write this. As much as I have grieved and come to terms with Maya's death, and the guilt surrounding it (Had I given her enough care? What if I had caught it sooner?), I have not explicitly spoken to anyone about my mourning process.

It is strange to write this, because she leaves behind her partner bun, Ollie,

who has been dealing with her absence in the only way he knows how.

I certainly am not a vet or rabbit specialist; none of us knows what a rabbit is thinking, or his ability to process memory or emotion. Certainly a rabbit notices another's absence on a certain level, but I do not know to what extent a bun can internalize that absence emotionally.

After Maya died, I showed Ollie her body to say "goodbye" as it were. Did

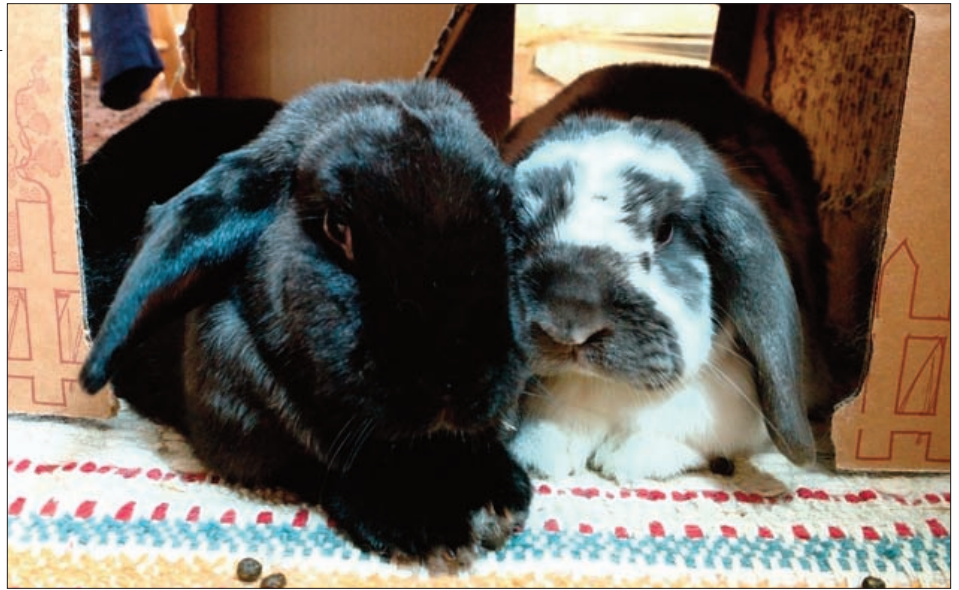
Ollie make closure? I have no idea. But it was important to me – and to our friend Philip, who was staying with me at the time and caring for Maya – that I give Ollie that opportunity.

In the days that followed, I was inconsolable. I held Ollie and cried, apologizing for not having been able to keep Maya alive. Friends, family, and many lovely people in the NYC rabbit community all offered me condolences and kind words. I knew I'd be okay. But what about Ollie? I had no idea how he'd react.

Indeed, he was grumpy; he would nip and lunge at me, and Phil and I would

(Continued on page 12)

Photo: Philip Forrest



Maya with Ollie shortly before she died.

Portraits to Help Bunnies

By Emma Mullins

I have started a new project to raise money for rabbit-rescue work. I am doing watercolor portraits of people's rabbits or other pets and donating all profits to rabbit-rescue activities. I have completed two so far and have three more in the works. I started an Etsy shop and Paypal to sell the work. The shop is called Teeny Tiny Rabbits and the website is www.etsy.com/shop/teenytinyrabbits. I hope that my work will benefit



Paintings: Emma Mullins

abandoned bunnies and help them find great homes. My email address is emmamullins107@gmail.com.



Letters From Adopters

Penny

Penny, previously known as Edith, was adopted by Rebecca, who sent us this letter recently.

Since I brought Edith (now called Penny) home in November, she has become an irreplaceable part of my life.

During the first few months, I watched her grow more and more accustomed to her surroundings, and am confident that she now feels completely at home. I was so excited as she transitioned from being timid and easily startled into a mischievous little bun with a mind of her own.

She loves to play, racing around the obstacle course that my couch and bed create, running behind the couch, under the bed, and then hopping back up onto it and down to the floor.

She also loves to lounge around with me, and exchange bunny kisses for pets on her head and ears. She always greets me when she hears me coming up the



Penny.

stairs into my room, and I'm elated to see how happy she is with me in her new home.

Rebecca



Coyote.

Coyote

Coyote, previously known as DeNiro, was adopted by Jennifer in June. Here is her update.

When I first met Coyote at the Manhattan shelter, I was immediately impressed by

(Continued on page 13)

Maya

(Continued from page 11)

comfort him with cheek rubs and extensive grooming, which had gone southward. We quickly realized that he had relied heavily on Maya for grooming, and that we would have to pick up the slack. We also learned which of the greens she had favored; when I presented him with the chard I thought he liked, he ignored it for the dill.

Until this point, I had never had Ollie without Maya, and though he was always playful and loveable, I began to learn the quirks of his own personality. He likes being held and rocked; he likes playing hide-and-seek in my pant legs. Desperate for attention, he began following me around more and more. I could not use the bathroom without Ollie pushing open the door. At nights, I moved his Cottontail Cottage next to

my bed, so that he could visit me whenever he wanted, which he took advantage of fully. (Many a night I woke to find a bunny standing on my bed looking at me.)

Ollie's behavior was perfect while Phil was in town and could give him undivided attention. But as soon as Phil left, Ollie began nipping again. He wanted a friend to be with him round the clock, to keep him company, to groom him, and to play with.

One morning shortly after Phil's departure, I was headed to work when I noticed that Ollie wasn't eating. I took his temperature and confirmed it – in the dead heat of summer, the little guy was in the middle of stasis. I sighed and began the warming process – hot towels on his head, baby gas drops, constant temperature checks. I called my boss to say I'd be working from

home. An hour later, Ollie was better, hopping around, eating hay and happily munching greens.

My little bun had played me.

Ollie has since been better, but if I have a houseguest for any extensive time, I make sure that when the guest leaves, Ollie gets anti-anxiety herbs rubbed into his ears to ease the transition. It breaks my heart that he wants a friend, but I cannot yet bring myself to "get another one," as my non-bunny friends say, as if I can just replace a bun when she passes on. It's been an adjustment, sure, but Ollie's been doing well, slowly and steadily. Three months later, he races around the house and has cut back on his visits to me in bed while I'm sleeping. We're working on our loss together, in our own ways, and we're learning about ourselves in the process.

Letters *(Continued from page 12)*

his confidence and sense of curiosity. He's an assertive rabbit with an impeccable organizational sense; that is, he knows exactly where his domain is and how it should be arranged. When he explores the rest of the house, he does so with an air of authority and privilege as though making sure all affairs are in order. With that said, Coyote is a true New Yorker rabbit in that he will nudge you out of his way if he thinks you're straggling.

After receiving a clean bill of health from the vet, Coyote has now settled happily into the household hierarchy. I admire and respect his sense of dignity, assertiveness, and resilient intelligence, and I hope he holds me in the same regard!

Jennifer

Photo: Rea Dabell



Brownie.

Brownie

Rea adopted Brownie in June as a partner for Napoleon. The bunnies are doing well, Rea reports here.

Brownie was picked out by Napoleon (Nappy), my one-and-a-half-year-old bunny, on a speed-dating session at the Petco on Columbus Avenue a couple of weeks ago. Napoleon seemed to like Brownie the best out of the three rabbits that she met, so we took him home.

Their homes are set up right next to each other so they can get used to each other's presence and scents. Nappy is a very sassy little bunny, and she did not take kindly to being put in her house after having free roam of the apartment for a long time.

Initially, when I put Nappy and Brownie together, they did okay for a couple of minutes at a time. After the third day, they got into a fight and I was scared to put them together again. With the help of Amy Odum, a volunteer from the Rabbit Rescue, they went on another date and it went really well.

They have been going on mini-dates every night since then, and we are having mixed results. Brownie always wants to play with Nappy, but Nappy doesn't really want to play with Brownie. He will go over to her and give her bunny kisses, and she runs away from him.

Eventually they tire of the chase and Brownie lies down with his legs behind him. That's when Nappy will come over to investigate what he's doing, and she will flop down right next to him! Then they get lots of bunny love from the human because they're being good, and the date is over.

It has been two weeks now that we have been doing this, so we will keep it up and hopefully they will be BFFs soon. Brownie is the sweetest little bunny and he loves to cuddle with me. When I let him out to exercise, he likes to run circles around me and nibble on my toes. He had surgery on his leg to correct his kneecap, and you would never know it happened if you just watched him run around and binky like a perfectly normal bunny. I'm so happy he is in our lives, and I can't wait to give you an update when the two of them are finally bonded.

Lots of love,
Rea,
Nappy and Brownie

Photo: Cynthia Medranda



Brody.

Brody

Paul and Cynthia, who adopted Brody, sent us this update in June.

I've attached a couple of photos of Brody for you to take a look at.

Brody is always full of energy and loves exploring around the apartment. He especially enjoys jumping up on the sofa to sit with us :)

Thanks again for all your help. We look forward to staying in touch with more photos and news.

Cynthia
P.S. from Paul: Brody is an awesome rabbit.

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Letters *(Continued from page 13)*

Photo: Andrew Yood



As usual these days, Bucky and Sniffles wind down their day snuggling and watching TV.

Bucky

Bucky was adopted as a partner for Sniffles by Ruth Helfrich, who sent this letter immediately after taking Bucky home.

Bucky is doing fine, both on his own and with Sniffles – also with us. Their first supervised date here last night was quiet but uneventful. Then, Sniffles had a wonderful evening with Auntie Ann petting her for several hours as we all ate and watched TV, while I snuggled and petted Bucky. As long as Auntie Ann was here, Sniffles didn't seem to even notice Bucky, much less get jealous.

This morning, I got up to find that Bucky can jump freely over a 24-inch fence and had done so overnight, so he was in Sniffles' burrow while she (looking miffed at me) was in the critter-litter house she is used to sharing with Sasha the cat (who looked even more annoyed with all of it). But nobody was hurt or really upset (fortunately), so I guess they had managed to work out some understanding overnight. He seemed a bit abashed (he had bounded back over the fence into his own designated domain the moment he saw me this morning, so he knew he had gone over the line).

I then separated them securely, vacuumed the whole hall, put up the full crate for Bucky, fed them all, and let them all calm down for five hours. After that, their second supervised date early this evening went very well, with both seeking each other out repeatedly, snuggling along half their bodies for a quiet minute

or two, repeated nuzzling, and some acting casual about it all on both sides. Bucky tried a few times to nuzzle under Sniffles' belly (almost like a nursling looking for milk), but with me and my hand right there, he didn't actually try to get too fresh with her again (e.g., mount her)

Back in their separate but adjoining areas, with dinner served, Sniffles seemed more interested in spending time down alongside his crate (provocatively rattling cardboard tubes) instead of eating or burrowing in her own area. We'll try another short supervised contact visit before bedtime tonight.

Ruth Helfrich

[Ruth reported two weeks later: Bucky and Sniffles are pretty much bonded now, spending as much time together as they can, sharing food, etc., and I even caught him licking her ear last night.

She is much more relaxed and, in particular, seems much happier now.]

Photo: Rosalia Abreu



Rumi.

Rumi

Rosalia, who adopted Rumi, sent this letter in June to Will Leung, Jane O'Wyatt and Susan Lillo.

Dear Susan, William and Jane,

I hope you are all doing well. It is hard to believe that in just 10 days I will have already had Rumi for four entire months. I am happy to report that he remains the love of my life and brings me endless amounts of joy, companionship and genuine affection. He's got such

personality and is so playful with me, the camera does not even begin to capture it. Below is a picture of a favorite habit of his, going through Mommy's purse when I get home to see what treats I may have in there for him.

He is growing SO big and continues to eat so well. By now he should be about seven months old. I've read that I should decrease the amount of pellets I give him each day since he isn't really a baby anymore. I've also noticed that Rumi will only drink water when he is in the car (a rare occurrence). I have a water bottle for him as well as the water bowl, but he ignores both. So far what I've done is just wet his vegetables so that he gets adequate water intake. He seems in great health. :)

Rosalia Abreu



Sam.

Sam

Julia and her family adopted Sam in May. She sent Susan Lillo this letter just after the adoption.

Hi Susan,

Sam is quite happy and ate all of the veggies we brought home with us last night, and made lots of poop as well. We just adore the little guy!

I'm sure I'll be emailing you with questions as time goes on. Thanks for your patience.

Julia

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Letters (Continued from page 13)

[Julia said a month later: Sammy (as we now call him) has settled in quite nicely into his new home. We all adore him and love watching him do binkies on the carpet. My son now even eats more salads because he sees Sammy munching on leafy greens every day!]

Photo: Melissa Barry



Lucky.

Lucky: The Artist Formerly Known as Wendy

Melissa adopted Lucky in May and sent us this letter one week after the adoption.

I just wanted to send you an update and some photos.

Week one with Lucky (a.k.a. Wendy) has been great. I changed her name, which was lovely, but this seems to fit how I feel about both of us finding each other – plus now I can say I have four Lucky rabbit's feet. ;)

I ended up getting the puppy pen, and when she's not in there, she's commandeering my desk chair or scaling the couch. Her new favorite thing to do (and my new favorite thing to watch) is to carry around her carrots like a dog with a bone and snack on them all over the house.

Thanks again for all your help. Lucky/Wendy says hello.

Best,
Melissa Barry

Photo: Ninibeth Alvarado



Bunnita and Huck in their carrier when they were taken to meet the rest of the family.

Huck

Huck was adopted on July 1 by Patrick and Ninibeth, who sent us this update.

All is well with Huck. We have other nicknames for him now, like Poppy and Hop. He and our other rabbit, Bunnita, are getting along great. They enjoy flopping in their fleece cage and grooming each other. We also took Huck and Bunnita out to the backyard and found that he loves to dig.

Huck and Bunnita would like to thank the volunteers at Animal Care & Control of NYC, where we adopted Huck, for taking their time in caring for the rabbits and setting up the first date.

We wish all the best to the rabbits that still need a home and hope they all find one.

Ninibeth

Photo: Margaret Harris



Blanche.

Blanche

Blanche, formerly known as Lolita, was adopted by Margaret, who sent this update to Nancy Schreiber.

We changed Lolita's name to Blanche (like the Golden Girl). She is the best pet! My fiancé and I could not be more obsessed with her if we tried.

She is suspiciously well behaved. She is unlike most bunnies: aside from being diligently litter trained (thanks to you guys, I think), she lives cage-free (in a cordless, wireless room, of course) and prefers napping, stretching and hanging out instead of chewing on anything she isn't supposed to. (She never does! So weird for a bunny!)

She is also unlike other bunnies who are normally nocturnal. When I wake up for a glass of water in the middle of the night, I find her just snoozing away in her little bed. What a gal.

Just wanted to give an update since I got her a few months back with Susan at Petco.

;)
Margaret

Photo: Stephanie Stewart



Tallulah.

Tallulah

Tallulah, formerly known as Jackie, was adopted in February after being abandoned in Brooklyn with her two daughters, Serena and Venus. (See article on page one of the December 2011 Thump at rabbitcare.org). This letter is from Stephanie Stewart.

To begin, Jackie now renamed Tallulah, is doing quite well. Our son is Jack and we often call him Jackie so we thought a new name was the way to go.

We got Tallulah on Super Bowl Sunday. She lives in our family room right in the middle of the action. She has her own

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Letters *(Continued from page 15)*

crate but it's open, so her home is basically the entire room.

We have two dogs, Seamus and Dakota. We kept them separate out of concern at first, but we soon learned that the three were destined to be friends. Whenever one or both of our dogs enters the room, Tallulah greets them and then goes back to her business. She has often been seen napping with Seamus but whenever I attempt to get a photo, they move.

My sister has a Chihuahua named Mojo. Mojo seems to have a crush on Tallulah. Whenever Mojo is at my house, he has to be near her. They playfully chase each other around and then sack out for a nap when they have had enough.

Tallulah's business consists of chewing, napping, eating, playing and investigating. Tallulah is queen of her castle and she must know what is happening at all times. Whoever enters the room gets greeted and/or checked out by Tallulah.

We have two children, Hannah, five years old, and Jack 20 months. My children adore Tallulah and she truly enjoys them. My son loves to pet her but he is less than graceful at times and he often goes right for her out of sheer delight when he sees her. Tallulah, to our surprise, tolerates our son extremely well. When my children enter the room, she is right there to greet them and play until she, of course, needs a nap.

Tallulah has many toys but some of her favorites are my son's toys. She pushes toy cars from one side of the room to the other. She pushes, tosses and carries plastic balls all over the room. She is constantly pushing over and getting into my son's toys or snatching one for herself when he is playing in the room. Everyday Tallulah naps across my son's train set; after all, it is her room. She loves my laptop and she attempts to sit on the keyboard every time I open it.

As for me, I truly enjoy Tallulah. She loves to be petted and she is as soft as velvet. She loves to play and I get such a kick watching her. She runs around and often jumps straight up in the air.

Tallulah has truly become a part of our family and I think she is very happy and comfortable here.

Thank you,
The Stewart Family
Keith, Stephanie, Hannah and Jack

Photo: Nicholas Fox



Heppi and George.

Captain Vegetable and Queen Heppi

Captain Vegetable, formerly known as George, was adopted as a partner for Queen Heppi by Nicholas and Alaine. Here is their update.

Ever since we adopted Heppi Bunnycakes last summer, we have been overjoyed bunny parents. Heppi loves her "human servants" and she's grown particularly attached to her mom and her home in New York. But with change on the horizon (a move to Stamford, and less time to bond with bunnies at home) we knew that Heppi would need some company.

Heppi came to our home as a single bunny, but she had been previously bonded to another female. That bond, unfortunately, broke when the pair was abandoned before coming to the shelter. So we knew that it would take some time for Heppi to warm up to another friend.

In May we took Heppi to the Petco at Columbus Square to meet some potential friends. We knew that an easygoing young male would be the best chance for success. It was there that we fell in love with George, a big friendly boy (part of the litter of five born in January). And, even better, of the three rabbits we speed-dated with Heppi, George was the only one who was compatible (or perhaps he was the smartest – he won by keeping his distance from Heppi and ignoring her!)

Memorial Day weekend, we took home George and gave him the royal title of "Captain Georgie Vegetable Crunch Crunch Handox."

Two months in, he has grown into a feisty, curious, and surprisingly assertive little bunny. He loves tunneling, chewing up his favorite boards (either cardboard or baseboard), and goes absolutely nuts for fruit (raspberries, cranberries, raisins).

Heppi was very scared of this wild bunny at first, afraid he might be a threat. But Captain Vegetable fell in love. Unfortunately, it's not yet a mutual love. While Heppi and Captain Vegetable tolerate each other well as roommates, it will be some time before they learn to love each other and pair together. Until then, their parents give them all the love, Timothy hay and bonding sessions that they can handle.

Nick Fox

Photo: Suzy Exposito



Wallace and Bonnie.

Bonnie and Wallace

Bonnie was adopted as a partner for Wallace earlier this year. Cathy Zelonis, who had fostered Bonnie, called her a "high-energy love." Matt Presto and Suzy Exposito, Bonnie's adopters, sent this letter to Cathy in early July.

Hi Catherine,

Bonnie and Wallace spend much of their time now cuddling and grooming one another. We took them both to the vet yesterday for a checkup and they are in excellent condition! Bonnie's also become much friendlier with us, too – still a bit of a troublemaker but nothing too disastrous. Also, unlike Wallace, she doesn't mind being held, which is nice.

Matt and Suz

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

Manhattan (continued):

Katherine Quesenberry, DVM

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

Alexandra Wilson, DVM

Anthony Pilny, DVM

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

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

Licensed HRS Representatives

Mary Cotter, HRS Licensed Educator,
Chapter Manager, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab,
mcc@cloud9.net, (914) 337-6146, rabbitcare.org

Nancy Schreiber, HRS Licensed Educator,
Co-Chapter Manager-in-Training, Rabbit
Rescue & Rehab, Long Island Rabbit Rescue
Group Volunteer, nschreibmd@aol.com,
(516) 510-3637, LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

Cindy Stutts, HRS Licensed Educator,
Manager NYC Metro Rabbit Program,
bygolyoly@yahoo.com, (646) 319-4766,
nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com

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

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

Kerstin Aumann, HRS Licensed Educator,
NYC/AC&C Volunteer,
nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com, nycacc.org

Gabrielle LaManna, HRS Educator-in-
training at large, New Fairfield, CT,
gabbysbunnies@yahoo.com, (203) 746-7548

Jennifer Saver, DVM, HRS Licensed Educator

Laura George, DVM, HRS Licensed Educator

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Editor: Susan Lillo

Creative Director: Jane O'Wyatt

Masthead Logo Designer: Mary Ann Maier

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation in New York State. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and find permanent homes for abandoned, abused and neglected rabbits, and to educate the 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 mcc@cloud9.net or 914-337-6146 (www.rabbitcare.org).

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

You can visit **Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C)** 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.

Bunny speed dates take place 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturdays at the Petco store at Columbus Avenue and West 100th Street. To arrange a speed date so that your rabbit can find a buddy, contact Cindy Stutts at bygolyoly@yahoo.com. The bonding sessions sometimes take an hour or more, so only three speed dates are scheduled each Saturday.

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 mcc@cloud9.net or Cindy Stutts at 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.