



NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS OCTOBER 2012

Necropsy: Knowledge After Death

By Mary E. Cotter

There is probably no more difficult a time for a rabbit owner than when a beloved bunny dies – especially if the death is sudden or unexpected. Caretakers are often so grief-stricken that it's hard for them to function, but this is the very time when an important decision needs to be made: whether or not to have a necropsy performed.

Many rabbit owners, trying to cope with all the emotions evoked by their loss, feel unable even to think about a necropsy, while others, unfamiliar with the procedure, make decisions based on partial (and often erroneous) information.

Through the years, I have had conversations with many rabbit owners who declined to permit a necropsy for a variety of reasons, such as “our rabbit has been through enough,” “we do not want to desecrate his body,” and “we have already spent a fortune, and paying for a necropsy will not bring our rabbit back, so why bother?”

The aim of this article is to shed some light on the topic of necropsy so that owners can be informed at a time when they can absorb and evaluate the information, instead of being faced with

Photo: Samantha Cerchero



One of the several tapeworm segments found inside a rabbit.

having to make critical decisions when they may be incapacitated by grief.

Here are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about necropsy:

1) “What is a necropsy, anyway?”

A necropsy, in simplest terms, is a kind of surgery performed after death in an effort to determine the cause of death. In humans, this procedure is usually referred to as an “autopsy.” A “naked-eye” examination of the body structures and major organ systems is called a “gross necropsy,” while a more comprehensive necropsy involves

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Juggling Work, Life and Bunnies

By Kerstin Aumann

Feeling crunched for time between work or school and everything else in your life? You're not alone, especially when your life includes rabbits.

Contrary to popular belief, rabbits are not low-maintenance pets. Rabbits are meticulously clean animals and need a clean habitat – not just a little cage that gets cleaned once in a blue moon. They also need daily exercise in a safe environment, a healthy dose of affection and social interaction in order to thrive.

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Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Kerstin's son Alex with Snowball.

Necropsy

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microscopic examination and sometimes laboratory testing of specimens taken from the body.

2) “When should a necropsy be performed?”

Autolysis (tissue breakdown) begins as soon as death occurs, and this can significantly impact the results of a necropsy. Therefore, the sooner a necropsy can be performed, the better. “Rabbit necropsies should be done, if at all possible, no later than six hours after death,” says Dr. Jennifer Saver of Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital, “as rabbit tissues deteriorate very rapidly. The body should be refrigerated until then, but not frozen, as the freezing and thawing process destroys the integrity of cells.”

‘Why should I consider a necropsy when it is not going to bring back my rabbit?’

3) “How is a necropsy performed and how long does it take?”

In a gross necropsy, an incision is made, and organs and structures are visually inspected for abnormalities. In a more comprehensive necropsy, tissue, and sometimes fluid, samples are taken (and photographs may be taken as well). Depending on what is done, the procedure can take anywhere from 30 to 60 minutes, and sometimes much longer. When the necropsy is completed, the rabbit’s body is sutured up, just as it is after surgery on a live animal. Then, depending on the owner’s wishes, the body is either returned to the owner for burial or cremation, or sent out directly for disposal.

4) “How much does a necropsy cost?”

Necropsy costs, as with other costs, vary somewhat from vet to vet. But typically, and depending on exactly what is done, the cost for the procedure itself, performed by your own veterinarian, will not be less than around \$100, and not more than around \$200. Many vets will perform a gross necropsy of animals who were their patients at a reduced (or even no) cost, as a courtesy to their clients.

However, the cost of the procedure that your vet performs does not include tests on all the tissues or body fluids that may be submitted to a pathology laboratory for examination, and these lab costs can add significantly to the overall cost. “Tissue sampling,” says Dr. Anthony Pilny of the Center for Avian & Exotic Medicine, “is what becomes expensive, and obtaining biopsy reports can run from \$130 to \$450 or more, depending on lesions seen.”

Necropsies involving neurologic evaluations of the rabbit’s brain or spinal cord (e.g., inspection for signs of *E. cuniculi*) are much more difficult, take considerably longer, are significantly more expensive, and therefore are rarely done.

5) “Do I really need all those lab tests?”

The answer to this question is “it depends.”

Although nothing can replace comprehensive lab work for those owners who want the most definitive answers possible, costs for many owners can be prohibitive. Says Dr. Rebecca Campbell of Symphony Veterinary Center, “It’s hard enough to convince a grieving owner to allow an educational, low- or no-cost necropsy, much less to agree to fund the microscopic pathology tests that are so important.”

That said, a gross necropsy is often enough to provide at least some answers. Tumors, for example, can often be seen on necropsy without microscopic examination, and this is useful information, even though owners may not be able to spend the additional money to identify the tumor type. Pyloric blockages (often involved in bloat cases) can also be found on gross necropsy. Organ abnormalities

(in color, size, shape, structure) can be noted as well, although additional lab tests may be required to determine the reason for the abnormality.

Necropsies, more often than not, result in a deep, and unexpected, peace of mind for a rabbit owner.

6) “Why should I consider a necropsy when it is not going to bring back my rabbit?”

A necropsy is valuable on several fronts, and determining the cause of death is only the most obvious. If the death is found to be from an infectious agent, the necropsy can make it possible to protect other rabbits in the same household. If the death was caused by an unrecognized toxin, this is useful information for preventing other deaths.

Necropsies also provide a phenomenal learning opportunity for your veterinarian. “I was taught in veterinary school that the necropsy is the clinician’s ‘trial by jury,’ ” says Dr. Pilny. “It’s more than just an opportunity to learn; it allows for definitive diagnoses, support of pre-death test results, recognition of unusual medical cases, and confirmation of the usefulness of treatment protocols.”

Says Dr. Campbell, “necropsies of any rabbit, healthy or unhealthy, are incredibly helpful tools. Very few books or videos can truly replace what you learn by seeing the structures yourself.” Dr. Gil Stanzione of Dakota Veterinary Center adds, “necropsies allow us to gather information that can help other bunnies in the same home, as well as bunnies elsewhere.” Necropsies offer a way for a vet to confirm (or not) his/her diagnosis, in those cases where owners have refused

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(often for financial reasons) diagnostic tests while the rabbit was alive.

A final reason for considering necropsies is that, more often than not, they bring a deep, and unexpected, peace of mind.

Without knowing the cause of a rabbit's death, many owners torment themselves worrying that they (or their vets) have done something wrong in caring for or treating the rabbit.

Donna Sheridan, a longtime volunteer for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and a licensed educator for House Rabbit Society, was bereft over the death of her bunny, Fred: "After a lifetime free of illness, Fred was gone in a flash, following a brief episode of stasis. Did I miss some symptom or sign? Why is Fred gone? I needed answers to these questions." A necropsy can provide such answers, and Fred's necropsy brought Donna enormous relief from her feeling that she was somehow responsible. "I will never forget Dr. Saver's words, when she called me with the results: 'Fred was riddled with cancer; he could not have been saved.' Fred's necropsy results were a gift to me." (See accompanying sidebar.)

Necropsies of two littermates showed that both rabbits had died of the same thing: a congenital heart defect.

Some years ago, two of our former foster rabbits, littermates who were around 2½ years old and who had been adopted into separate homes, died suddenly within 30 days of each other,

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An Owner's Perspective on Necropsy

By Donna Sheridan

As a longtime rabbit owner and educator for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, I have enjoyed the company of several special rabbits over the years, and I have faced terrible grief after their deaths. Some rabbits die after long illnesses, and those deaths can be slightly easier to bear because they are not unexpected. Other times, a seemingly perfect rabbit is fine in the morning and gone within the same day. When that happens, I have found that a necropsy has always provided a small measure of comfort rather than additional pain.

The first rabbit I ever had necropsied was Fred. I adopted him in 2002 and he introduced me to the world of rescue. He was a large English Spot who was "his own man." Fred was perfectly behaved, never chewed anything, and had immaculate litter habits. He ate voraciously every day without any signs of illness. He loved to cuddle and would hop away, flicking his paws, when he was done with me. His lordly composure was limitless.

One day his dignity slipped, with a tiny spot of urine on the rug, a bowl of untouched pellets nearby. I immediately took his temperature and began to treat him for stasis, something I had done with success for other rabbit owners. I worked on him all night, doing all the right things, but the next day he succumbed at Catnip & Carrots despite valiant efforts to save him. After a lifetime free of illness, Fred was gone in a flash.

I tormented myself over his death and all the accompanying unanswered questions. Did I miss some symptom or sign? How could I be unable to save my own rabbit from stasis? Why is Fred gone?

Fred was far beyond pain, but I was not. I needed answers to these

Photo: Donna Sheridan



Donna Sheridan's companion Fred.

questions, and so Drs. Saver and George performed a necropsy and took several tissue samples. The thought that I should have been able to save Fred tormented me until Dr. Saver called me with the results. I will never forget her words: Fred was "riddled with cancer." He could not have been saved, and I did nothing wrong. The necropsy results were a gift to me.

Earlier this year, one of my 5-year-old Jersey Woollys, He-Poof, ate his treat in the morning before I left for work, and was near death when I returned home 12 hours later. He succumbed at Catnip a short time later. He always had neurological issues, but he was fine that morning and showed no signs of illness leading up to his last day. Again, samples were taken and the results showed he died of renal failure. Renal function is not something that a 5-year-old rabbit is routinely tested for, so there was no way I would have known he was so sick. Again, the

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Necropsy

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without any clinical signs whatsoever. Necropsies authorized by the respective owners revealed that both rabbits had died of the same thing: a congenital heart defect. Without these necropsies, the owners might have felt in some way responsible for the mysterious deaths of these very young animals.

Dr. Saver recently spayed a newly rescued female rabbit who had been found outdoors with a male rabbit. The female was slightly underweight, but the decision was made to proceed with the spay, since the possibility of pregnancy was so high. The surgery was routine and uneventful and the rabbit (who turned out not be pregnant) was discharged the next day. Three days later, the rabbit became anorexic and was hospitalized for treatment, but died the following day. Necropsy revealed several tapeworm segments, each around 1.5 feet in length, blocking a portion of her jejunum (a part of the intestine), which was swollen and discolored, and showed evidence of tissue necrosis. “Imagine how new owners would have felt if this rabbit had just been adopted,” says Dr. Saver. “Without a necropsy, they might have thought that there had been some problem with the spay surgery, or that they had failed to care for the rabbit properly during her recovery.”

Marinell Harriman, founder of HRS, reports that her daughter Tania was once house-sitting, caring for Rudy, a rabbit who was on long-term antibiotics and had difficulty moving. She placed him next to his water bottle, as usual, and when he didn't drink, she figured he simply wasn't thirsty. He died a couple of hours later. Tania felt terribly guilty, thinking she had missed something that could have saved him – until the necropsy.

The gross necropsy showed that, although the external ear canals were clean, both tympanic bullae (inner ears) were filled with pus. The rabbit's brain was submitted for biopsy, and the findings were significant meningoencephalitis. Nothing Tania could have done would have helped Rudy.

For most rabbit caretakers, necropsy is a difficult subject, which typically needs to be considered at a very difficult time. Thinking in advance about the issues involved can make it easier to arrive at an informed decision when the time comes. If the costs of a comprehensive necropsy are simply too high, then consider asking your veterinarian to perform at least a gross necropsy, which can yield worthwhile information not only for you, but also for your veterinarian. “Personally, I always want to know if we were right, and doing the right thing for the patient,” says Dr. Pilny. “There is nothing to lose at that point, and potential to gain.”

© Mary E. Cotter

Mary E. Cotter is vice president and education/outreach director of the international House Rabbit Society, founder of Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and adjunct assistant professor of veterinary technology at LaGuardia Community College.

Please Help!

HRS is compiling a worldwide database on rabbit health conditions, for the benefit of veterinarians, rabbit caretakers and the rabbits themselves.

Please help us by submitting your rabbit's health and/or necropsy records at the link you will find here:

<http://www.rabbit.org/health/healthdatabase.html>

Owner's Perspective

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samples taken after death brought me a great deal of peace that I wouldn't have had otherwise.

Once a rabbit has passed, he is beyond all pain, so you need not fear that you are somehow disrespecting or defiling your beloved rabbit's body. The caring vets who loved and respected your rabbit during life will do the same after death. They will make the body presentable once again for you to view. Although not everyone has the fortitude to watch a necropsy, I can tell you that the vets operate no differently than if the rabbit was alive, and carefully suture everything back in place as though their patient is expected to awaken again.

Nothing can bring your rabbit back to life, but an immediate necropsy can answer questions that, left unanswered, can torment you for a long time. A necropsy can bring peace to you in that you may learn that you did nothing to cause the death, and many times, you couldn't have prevented it either. More importantly, the necropsy results can also help to assure you that your rabbit didn't suffer for a prolonged time. Also, the necropsy may be able to help diagnose and treat other rabbits who present with the same symptoms. I have never regretted any necropsy, and have always gotten solace from the results, something that every grieving rabbit owner deserves.

Donna Sheridan, an HRS licensed educator, is a volunteer for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group.

Juggling

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Between shopping for fresh veggies and supplies, supervised exercise time and socializing with your bunny, routine rabbit care can take a significant chunk of your day.

And that's not counting any special-needs issues, medical care or emergency trips to the vet. A bout of gastrointestinal stasis can derail an entire week's schedule. Having rabbits as part of your family is not unlike having small children. It takes time, patience and flexibility to manage both daily routines and the unexpected.

Juggling caregiving responsibility – whether it's for kids, elderly or sick family members, or for pets – alongside work and other aspects of your life can be challenging. The time pinch can be particularly acute for volunteers who not only have rabbits of their own, but also provide care to rabbits at the shelter or at Petco and facilitate adoptions.

“There is just no down time,” says Marcie Frishberg, who coordinates rabbit volunteers and adoptions at our Petco locations, works in the New York City school system and shares her home with two rabbits of her own and several foster buns.

If you sometimes feel as if you have way too much on your plate juggling work, life and bunnies, consider the ideas below. While there is no silver bullet for managing work-life conflict, and there's certainly no one-size-fits-all approach, these suggestions may provide food for thought and, perhaps, spark some creative ideas that work for you and your family – furry and otherwise.

Experiment with alternative schedules.

If your current schedule is a challenge, be on the lookout for alternatives. For example, rabbit owner and volunteer Astrid Hesse volunteered for the night shift at her job when a spot became available. Working from 3 to 11 p.m. gave her more flexibility to take her special-needs rabbit Nellie to the vet, among other things.

The night shift may not be for you, but even a small change in schedule can make a difference. For example, working from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. instead of 9 to 5 gave me an extra hour in the morning to get all my bunny chores out of the way before work. Knowing everybunny had a clean condo, a full tummy and lots of fresh hay and water helped me focus at work, even when the workday ran into overtime.

If your job doesn't offer flexible scheduling, you can still speak with your supervisor and coworkers about trying out a new, or slightly revised, schedule. People may be more supportive than you had expected.

Astrid's job is to help build the Second Avenue subway. You might not expect much understanding for soft and fuzzy things like bunny rabbits among tunnel workers, engineers and construction trades, but Astrid has found her colleagues to be supportive when she had to adjust her schedule to take care of her rabbits.

If you want to ask for a different schedule or work arrangement (e.g., telecommuting) at your job, emphasize the notion of “trying it out.” If it doesn't work for you, your boss or your coworkers, you can always return to the old status quo.

Look for flexible solutions at work.

Too big a workload and long hours are challenges many of us face. Unfortunately, overwork is an epidemic in the U.S. and there are no easy remedies. Besides having a conversation with your supervisor about your responsibilities, you can try suggesting some creative solutions to help you get your work done more effectively. For example, having a little more autonomy at work – allowing you to decide how your work gets done, or how you use your time – can go a long way.

If you need some research to strengthen your case for flexibility at work, check out these websites:

<http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/main.html> and <http://www.whenworkworks.org>. The following research report discusses how things like greater autonomy, work-life fit and supervisor support can make a

big difference for both the employee and the employer:

http://familiesandwork.org/site/research/reports/HealthReport_9_11.pdf.

Family first.

Your “furry kids” are family, right? Putting family first isn't always easy in American workplaces, but data from a nationally representative survey show that we would all be better off if family comes first – or is on equal footing with work on our list of priorities:

<http://familiesandwork.org/blog/?p=1077>.

If you feel you can't devote as much time to your fur-kids as you'd like because of your job and other commitments, keep in mind that rabbits are crepuscular – which means daytime equals nap time. Rabbits are naturally active at dawn and dusk to forage for food, spending the rest of the day sleeping. This behavior pattern makes them the perfect pet for working folks.

If you are concerned about your rabbit spending too much time alone, the best solution is to adopt a partner for him. Yes, the bonding process will require some time and effort on your part, but after the rabbits are bonded and sharing a litter box, etc., you will find that the amount of time to care of a pair (or trio) is about the same as caring for a singleton.

Seasonal demands or travel may keep you away from your rabbits for days or even weeks. In these cases, it's a good idea to have some pre-planned alternatives. For example, develop relationships with a good rabbit sitter or some rabbit-savvy friends who can help care for your buns when things get busy.

Take care of yourself.

To borrow a line from flight-safety instructions: Put on your own oxygen mask before assisting other passengers.

Fortunately, rabbits can be like an oxygen mask. I can't think of many things as relaxing and soothing after a long day than sitting down to pet my big white bunny and get some “Snowball love.”

ADOPTIONS

River's New Home

River, an abandoned boy bunny with a fused hip and cataract, was rescued last May by Sari Krieger in Riverside Park. River spent the summer with Erick Rodriguez, who provided a great foster home for the friendly Dutch rabbit.

River was adopted on Sept. 25 by Shelley Zhang, a rabbit volunteer at the Union Square Petco. Shelley previously had cared for a bunny with a broken back.

River's adoption took place at the Union Square Petco, with Sari, Erick and Shelley joining Marcie Frishberg, Larry Marion, Douglas Lee and Cathe Rekis in the farewell celebration. Congratulations to River and Shelley.

Photo: Marcie Frishberg



River with Erick Rodriguez, Sari Krieger, Shelley Zhang.

Photo: Sari Krieger



River.

Bonbon at Petco, Columbus Square.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Bert, Raja, Biggie and Wilson, Shadow and Patches, Dempsey, Desmond, Bonbon, Xena, Steve, Harper, Chloe, Oreo, Jack, Nan, Findlay and Lucy, Rosie, Thumper, Chocolate and Vanilla, Jackie, River, Billi, Olivia, River, Paolo, Pasquale, Ludwig, Sherman, Savannah, Nicholas, Lili, Kimberly and Moon, Mushe aka Babette, Goldie, Leonora, Shadow, Helga.

Hare ye! Hare ye!

RRR/HRS 18th Annual Rabbit Care Conference

WHEN: Sunday, October 28, 2012, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

WHERE: Radisson Hotel • One Radisson Plaza
New Rochelle, NY • Hotel: (914) 576-3700



PRE-REGISTRATION through 10/14; see coupon below: \$35 (includes local NYC HRS membership cost), \$10 each additional family member;

SAME-DAY REGISTRATION: \$40, (\$10/ family member) **PLEASE REGISTER EARLY! SPACE IS LIMITED!**

- **Featured Topic: STASIS 2012: Are we better off now than we were 4 years ago? presentation by Jennifer Saver, DVM**
 - ✓ How can I tell if my bunny is in stasis?
 - ✓ What do I do if I can't reach my vet?
 - ✓ Have we made any progress in treating stasis?
 - ✓ How can I help my bunny recover?
 - ✓ Do we know any more about preventing stasis?
- **Safe Bunny Speed-Dating:** A live demonstration of what we do and how we do it, by RRR/HRS licensed educators
- **Q&A SESSION** with vets and HRS educators, demos on temperature taking and nail cutting
- **BUNNY BOUTIQUE:** goodies to buy for your bunny, proceeds support RRR/HRS

Lunch available for purchase on or off premises

* PLEASE NOTE: No children under 13 will be admitted. Please do not bring your rabbit!



TO PRE-REGISTER: mail this section by 10/14 to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, 12 Grace Ct. North, Great Neck, NY 11021. Include check or money order (\$35 per person and \$10 per add'l family member) payable to "Rabbit Rescue & Rehab."

NAMES OF PEOPLE ATTENDING: _____

ADDRESS(ES) _____

PHONE # (S) () _____

EMAIL (S) _____

() _____

 Note: For **NATIONAL HRS** membership, check here and include a **SEPARATE** check made out to "House Rabbit Society" for \$18. Thanks.

You will not receive tickets or confirmation of your registration, but you will receive your entrance tag at the door. For more info, contact Mary Cotter (mec@cloud9.net) or Nancy Schreiber (nschreibmd@aol.com) or visit www.rabbitcare.org

We'd Love to Meet You!

By Kirsten Ott

For more information about our adoptable rabbits, email nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com.

Alexa

Alexa is a medium-sized silver marten girl who was surrendered because her owner was moving. This bunny is very sociable and will make fast friends with anyone who's good at petting! But her most outstanding feature must be her striking looks: her gorgeous, ultra-soft coat is of the blackest black, creating a stunning contrast with her creamy underside. You'll love to watch Alexa show off her coat as she hops around on her tiny, cute feet.

Odin

Odin is a darling little black bunny who was surrendered by his owners because they were moving. This guy is very lively and curious, but also gentle and affectionate. He loves to be petted, and his shiny, jet-black coat is irresistible! Odin will charm and delight you with his personality as well as the cute little white spot on his wriggling nose.

Wilhelmina

Wilhelmina is a medium-sized lionhead beauty with a distinctive and distinguished look. She is white, but has soft gray patches all over her body. Her "mane" is very long, and she has delicate little eyes. Wilhelmina may look regal, but on the inside she's a love bug. She is very friendly and adores affection – she'll practically jump on you if you dare to stop petting her! Because she's so sociable, this unusual and delightful girl would be good for a family or as a partner for another rabbit.

Mercury

Mercury is a medium-sized lop-eared lionhead who was surrendered when her owner lost her job. It cannot have been easy to give up this gorgeous girl! The combination of long cheek "whiskers" and lop ears is truly adorable, and her deep brownish-black coat is stunning.

Best of all, she's got a great personality! Mercury is perhaps named for her slightly mercurial ability to switch quickly between love and play mode. She loves affection, but also likes to toss toys around.

Josie

Josie is a medium-sized creamy white bunny who was found on a street in Brooklyn. This girl has a very feminine appearance: she has a slender face, delicate features, and soft brown "eye makeup." Her ears have a pretty light brown mottled pattern. Josie's sweet demeanor matches her looks; she likes to have her forehead and ears stroked. Josie would probably do best in a calm home.

Whitey

A volunteer wrote: Whitey is a medium-sized Himalayan boy who was found on a street in Brooklyn. This guy is one of the most endearing bunnies you'll ever meet! He responds to human attention immediately, searching for and submitting to a gentle, comforting hand. Whitey is very curious – about his surroundings, humans and other rabbits – so he would benefit from a stimulating environment, and would make a good family bunny and/or partner for another rabbit. Whitey has glistening red eyes and beautiful pinkish-brown coloring on his ears, nose and feet.

Rain

A volunteer wrote: Rain is a young black-and-white Dutch girl who was found on the street. Because she was abandoned at such a young age, Rain is a little skittish and seems unaccustomed to human attention – though she is curious and hesitantly accepting of some gentle petting. She will need a home with patient humans who can help her get used to the awesome house-rabbit life! Rain's size is likely to be medium to large when she is fully grown.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Alexa.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Odin.

Photo: Natalie Reeves



Wilhelmina.

Photo: Natalie Reeves



Mercury.

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We'd Love to Meet You!

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Photo: Natalie Reeves



Josie.

Photo: Zhen Heinemann



Whitey.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Rain.

Photo: Zhen Heinemann



Derek.

Photo: Mary Christine Basile



Divina.

Photo: Casey Easterling



Rizzo.

Derek

A volunteer wrote: Derek is a medium-sized black bunny who was found in someone's backyard. What a cute boy! Derek has an incredibly soft coat, with a bit of lionhead lineage evident around his cheeks, and an adorable white nose that wiggles constantly. He is a tiny bit tentative when you first meet him, but that doesn't last long; before you know it, he's presenting his sweet head for rubs and kisses. Derek is a very active and playful bunny, and will need lots of space for exercise and exploration.

Divina

Divina is a lovely large lady who was abandoned at the city shelter in East Harlem. This girl is absolutely stunning.

She has a coat in multiple shades of brown – it looks like marble cake! She also has beautiful reddish-brown eyes with striking white eyeliner. Best of all, though, Divina has a wonderful personality. She craves attention, and will seek out your hand whenever you are nearby. She loves cheek rubs and is the consummate tooth purrer. This gorgeous, good-natured girl is currently in foster care. She has been spayed.

Rizzo

Rizzo is an adorable Californian girl who was rescued from a backyard in Brooklyn by an NYC Metro Rabbit volunteer. Born in April, she has lived with her foster family since she was a few months old. Rizzo is one of the sweetest rabbits you will ever meet. She enjoys petting, cuddles and kisses and will be a wonderful companion. Now weighing a little over six pounds, she is likely to be a large bunny when fully grown. Rizzo loves to jump and explore, and enjoys a variety of toys including paper bags, pieces of cardboard, toilet paper tubes stuffed with hay, and phonebooks. As a baby, Rizzo's face reminded her foster family of Rizzo the Rat from the Muppets. She is now strong and beautiful with a cute gray nose, gray ears and pretty red eyes.

Wilson

Wilson is a lovely, medium-sized English spot mix from a group of three litters found in a backyard in Brooklyn. He was born in April, has been neutered, and has excellent litter-box skills. Wilson is likely to be fairly large when fully grown. He has a delightful and playful personality, like a puppy, so he'd make a wonderful family bunny. Wilson enjoys charming people with his good looks and binkies! He's currently in a foster home.

Olga

Olga, a beautiful, medium-sized black-and-white bunny, lived in a backyard in Brooklyn with about 40 other bunnies until she was rescued. She is now

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We'd Love to Meet You!

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approximately two years old and has been spayed. She is comfortable around people, loves attention, and also likes to lounge and relax. She has good litter-box skills and would love to find her forever home. Olga is now in residence at the Petco store on Union Square in Manhattan.

Mario

Mario is a very affectionate and delightful Californian boy. He was one of a group of three litters of babies rescued from a backyard in Brooklyn. Born in April, he is young and active. He comes right up to his fosterers for petting and climbs on them when they sit with him. He is neutered, demonstrates good litter-box skills, has a hearty appetite, and would make a great family pet. He will likely be a fairly large bunny when fully grown.

Luigi

Luigi is a curious and sometimes rambunctious young Californian boy. He is one of a mix of three litters found in a backyard in Brooklyn. He was born in April, has been neutered, and will likely be fairly large when fully grown. Luigi is currently in foster care with a family, and gets along great with their two 8-year-old girls, so he is an excellent candidate for a family pet.

Buddy

Buddy is a very handsome Californian boy who comes from a mix of three litters, all of whom were found in a backyard in Brooklyn. Born in April, this charmer is still young, but has been neutered and has excellent litter-box skills. He'll be a fairly large bunny when fully grown. Buddy is as sweet and playful as can be. He is currently in foster care, but his fosterer will be leaving the country in December, so he needs a new home soon! Buddy would make a sensational family pet.

Biggie

Biggie is a beautiful medium-large Californian boy from a group of three litters rescued from a backyard in Brooklyn. Born in April, he is still young, but he has been neutered and demonstrates very good litter-box skills. Biggie is very sweet, loves to be petted, and would make a terrific family pet. He has a hearty appetite and lovely personality. Biggie is currently in residence at the Petco store on Union Square in Manhattan.

Charlene

Charlene is a gorgeous big girl who was found on First Avenue. The poor dear is still somewhat traumatized from her recent experiences; she'll let you pet her velvety fur, but she's very wary, and it'll take her time to fully trust people again. Charlene is a true beauty: she has a creamy white coat with striking brownish-grey markings and large shining eyes. She will need a quiet home--preferably without small children--where she can get lots of gentle attention and a chance to come out of her shell.

Blair

Blair is a medium-sized boy who was surrendered by his owner. This guy has a beautiful light, creamy tan fur that's especially beautiful around his cheeks. Blair is very outgoing and enthusiastic: he loves head and neck rubs, and will lean his little head into your hand to fully enjoy the experience! In addition to a lot of socializing, Blair will need a stimulating habitat.

Carolyn

Carolyn is a wonderful large Californian bunny whose owner could no longer afford to care for her. Carolyn is a people person, and will run to greet you like a dog. Once you've made friends with her, she'll follow you around with her eyes, longingly awaiting your return to her side. Carolyn has very long mottled ears and a slender, youthful-

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Wilson.



Olga.



Buddy.

looking face, and though she's already a strong, sturdy lady, she may get even

(Continued on page 11)

We'd Love to Meet You!

(Continued from page 10)

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Charlene.



Carolyn.



Donovan.

bigger in the coming months. Carolyn would make a very good family bunny.

Flash

Flash is an adorable spunky Californian boy who came from a group of three litters that were rescued from a backyard in Brooklyn. He has been neutered and is looking for a forever home or someone who might be willing to foster him while he awaits a permanent adopter. He is faster than a speeding bullet – hence the name Flash – and is becoming very social since his rescue. Good litter-box skills and a hearty appetite make him a good candid as a

family pet. Flash loves to chew his cardboard toys and run around a lot. He will likely be a medium-large bunny when fully grown. He's currently in foster care. (submitted by Larry Marion)

Riff and Raff

Riff and Raff are a pair of sweet Californian boys (probably brothers) who came from a mixed group of three litters that were rescued from a backyard in Brooklyn. They were born in April, have both been neutered and are probably going to be fairly big bunnies when fully grown. They like a lot of space and love to run up and down their foster parents' long hallway and do lots of binkies! Riff and Raff are very sweet, are becoming well socialized, and like lots of attention and nose pets. They love to groom each other, and have seemingly endless appetites. Riff and Raff would probably do best with someone who has rabbit experience and plenty of space and time for them. A great pair of darling boys! They are currently in foster care but need a loving forever home or an experienced rabbit person to foster them until they find one. (submitted by Larry Marion)

Donovan

A volunteer wrote: Donovan is a slender, small-to-medium-sized boy who was found on the street. This sweet guy is probably on the young side. He is a little tentative with new people, but is curious all the same: he'll cock his head while observing you with great interest, as though he's trying to figure out whether you're friend or foe. Donovan has a white coat with orange markings, and some of his fur is on the long side, suggesting a mixed heritage. He would do best in a child-free home where he can get a lot of TLC and play space.

Three Speed Dates for Lola

By Jane O'Wyatt

Now that Lola's coat is no longer a mess and she has stopped growling and biting, I take her to Petco stores, where I hope she will meet the perfect adopter. All the Petco rabbit volunteers exclaim about her makeover in foster care, and she is calm amid the tumult. Lola maintains her composure whether she is being petted by a casual adult admirer or ogled by a child begging his parents for a bunny.

Aside from the rabbit-rescue volunteers, who would be the perfect adopter for Lola?

– A person who loves house rabbits and appreciates the species' idiosyncrasies, who already lives with at least one rabbit and has years of experience in bunny care (as defined by House Rabbit Society).

– A highly observant person who instantly takes a bunny who is not eating to a rabbit-savvy vet.

– A person who is dazzled by Lola's bright-white coat and who knows that the lilac irises and carnelian pupils of her eyes are glorious.

– A person who enjoys being with rabbits who don't like being picked up.

Although Lola is meeting people who might adopt her as a single rabbit, I pin my hopes on speed dating. Most people who are genuinely interested in finding partners for their rabbits have observed first-hand the mutual devotion and poignant contentment of paired bunnies, and these people are often excellent caretakers.

In many cases, despite attentive, knowledgeable care, rabbits have lost partners to illness. Aware of the danger of depression in mourning rabbits, many owners quickly contact NYC Metro Rabbits to set up a speed date. When entrusted with a new partner for

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Lola with an admirer at Union Square Petco.

their bunny, they are advised to follow instructions for bonding precisely, with caution and patience.

On a Saturday in mid-August I bring Lola uptown to the Columbus Square Petco for a speed date supervised by Cindy Stutts. Lola doesn't throw herself at Richard, a recent widower: she approaches him slowly, with benevolence and mild curiosity. And he's evidently

Cindy, Lola and Richard.



Below, Divina and Richard.



okay with that. This pairing could work, Cindy says. But since the goal of speed dating is to discover the best bunny-to-bunny chemistry, Richard, holding court in his litter box, also meets eager Divina, demure Pammy and gentle Bonbon. Bonbon gets to go home with Richard and his excited owner, a personal trainer. Lola and I take the M7 bus back downtown.

About 10 days later, a laid-back Californian named Ernie is scheduled for a speed date at the Union Square Petco, supervised by Marcie Frishberg. Ernie will meet Lola, Cathy Zeloni's foster Xena and one of Xena's daughters, plus Olga, who is in residence at Union Square Petco. Ernie and his human family (a woman and three young children) are delayed in traffic on their way into the city from Westchester, but the bunny show proves worth the wait. Lola is up first, and she and Ernie are cheek to cheek before I can get close enough to take a good picture. Okay, Marcie says, this pair is compatible.

(Continued on page 13)

Richard with Bonbon, his favorite.



Three Dates

(Continued from page 12)

Next! Xena joins Ernie in the pen, and right away she makes her wish to be with him abundantly clear. He quickly decides that he likes her, too. Marcie pronounces the pair very promising but wants to make sure. Xena's skittish daughter and even-tempered Olga meet Ernie, but these encounters don't register nearly as high on the intensity scale as that of Ernie and Xena. When put together again, these two serenely share a litter box, and Ernie responds graciously to Xena's desire to sniff his butt. Remembering Xena's arrival at AC&C in May 2011, her sudden litter of seven, her adoption and subsequent return, Marcie, Cathy and I are so happy for Xena! She goes home with Ernie and his family, and, once again, Lola comes home with me.

Lola's next speed date occurs on Sept. 9 during Adoptapalooza, a massive adoption event in Union Square, sponsored by the Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals. Initially caged outside, under a tent with other adoptable NYC Metro Rabbits, Lola receives a call to audition at Petco, across the street. A male bunny is waiting with his people to meet potential partners. Third time lucky? Seeing Lola in all her splendor, the potential adopter, owner of a handsome agouti lop, remarks that she has a problem with pink-eyed rabbits. Galvanically indignant on Lola's behalf, I accuse the lop's owner of prejudice and remind her that the choice of a partner should be up to her rabbit, not her! Startled by my vehemence, she sort of apologizes for being "a jerk."

When her bunny and Lola meet in the pen, he immediately starts humping her – and Lola appears to acquiesce. But Lola changes her mind and wiggles out from under the lop, who then gives chase. Speed-date savant Amy Odum intercedes and says this skirmish may

Photos: Jane O'Wyatt



Marcie with Ernie and Lola.



Xena and Ernie.

not necessarily mean the two bunnies can't get along. But after a short cooling-off period, the chase resumes. Amy swiftly scoops up Lola. This pairing, she says, probably won't work. Next, under Cindy's eye, Amy's feisty harlequin foster Tippy meets the same boy and they make an unexpectedly tender connection. A done deal, I think, erroneously. After bringing the lop all the way from suburban New Jersey, his owner isn't sure. So Tippy returns home with Amy and, once again, Lola comes home with me.

Relieved to return to her pen, Lola zooms through her five-foot cardboard tunnel and flops on the ceramic tiles in her favorite corner. Although I am disappointed that in three speed dates



Agouti lop with Lola.



Agouti lop with Tippy.

my lovable foster bunny still hasn't met the right rabbit, much less the perfect (or good-enough) adopter, I believe she will, and soon.

Bonded Buddies, Finally

By Susan Lillo

Commander Melvin was adopted in early November 2011 as a partner bun for our bunny Rhonda.

My daughter Heather brought Commander home and we started the bonding regimen, getting the two rabbits to be more comfortable with each other. Melvin was very mellow with Rhonda, but she would nip him and chase him whenever they were together.

Short dates between the two rabbits continued for weeks, but there seemed to be no progress. After months of trying, we decided to take a break. Neither rabbit seemed interested in spending time with the other, and that was something we accepted.

Over the summer, we noticed that Rhonda was grooming Melvin through the bars of her pen, but the grooming was rather rough and I wondered if she was hurting him.

The breakthrough came in early September. My husband, Roger, brought the rabbits down to the Jersey Shore with him, and something clicked. He was alone with them for several days, and the change of scenery did its magic. The rabbits decided to be bonded friends.

Melvin and Rhonda are totally bonded now. They took their time, and they made peace with each other after nearly a year of disinterest and recalcitrance. The long wait finally paid off.

Commander Melvin and Rhonda.



Photo: Susan Lillo



Photo: Zhen Heinemann

Brownie.

'Beautiful Stories'

We received this email from a former volunteer, Karina Yuen, thanking us for the August issue of Thump.

Thank you for these beautiful stories. I look forward to them every time.

This is the reason why my husband, Norman, and I sacrifice everything to protect and care for our five beautiful rabbits, even when sometimes we feel like we are in over our heads.

These stories give us so much hope and strength that we need sometimes. We have zero regret.

I am so grateful to have been part of such a wonderful group of human beings at the shelter. I think about you guys all the time and the shelter bunnies. Working at AC&C was the best thing I have ever done :)

Karina

Bunnies Star at Adoptapalooza

By Larry Marion

The Mayor's Alliance for NYC's Animals, in conjunction with Petco, held an event called Adoptapalooza at the north side of Union Square Park on Sunday, Sept. 9, featuring activities, entertainment, training and advice on pet care. More than 200 cats, dogs and rabbits were available for adoption.

NYC Metro Rabbits brought in 12 bunnies from foster care plus the two current resident adoptable rabbits from the Union Square Petco store. The rabbits got lots of love and attention and brought oohs and aahs and smiles to the faces of lots of small children who were very eager to pet a bunny.

(Continued on page 16)

Bottom, a bonded pair, Chocolate and Vanilla, cuddle. Below, left, a friendly local cat visits with the bunnies. Below, right, Tippy, a shelter rabbit, has an admirer.

Far right column, top to bottom, volunteer Marcie Frishberg, at right, educates a woman who rescued a bunny; volunteer Will Leung set up cage cards at the adoption booth; many New Yorkers visited foster rabbits Houdini and Squicky; volunteer Sari Krieger takes a break.

Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Jane O'Wyatt

Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Adoptapaloosa

(Continued from page 15)

Although none of the rabbits were adopted that day, it was a great opportunity for outreach and education. Dozens of people stopped by to see and pet the rabbits, and many of the visitors had no idea that rabbits make great house pets and that they are available for adoption at several of the Petco stores and at the Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C) shelter in Manhattan. One of our bonded pairs, Chocolate and Vanilla, got some serious interest, and they were adopted a week later by the family that met them at the event.

Rabbit volunteers at the event included Douglas Lee, Mike and Casey Easterling, Marcie Frishberg, Lisette Pizarro, Cindy Stutts, Natalya Tatasciore, Thea Harting, Amy Odum, Will Leung, Cathe Rekis, Sari Krieger and Larry Marion.

Natalya made up some great flyers about rabbit adoption, and Lisette distributed them to people at the event. Several of our adopters showed up to say hello and visit with the buns.

We also helped educate several people who unfortunately had bought rabbits from pet stores that didn't provide proper education about rabbits' needs.

Counter-clockwise from below: the grandson of a rescued meat rabbit awaits his forever home; Houdini uses his water bowl to cool off; Houdini and Squicky waited at the adoption booth after their TV debut; volunteer Cindy Stutts, at left, swaps cages as foster parents arrived with their bunnies.

Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Sari Krieger



Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Photo: Sari Krieger



CockTAILS to Help NYC Metro Rabbits

By Casey Easterling

NYC Metro Rabbits will be the beneficiary of October's Vegan Drinks event.

Vegan Drinks is a monthly social-networking event for people interested in promoting veganism and advocating for animal rights. Vegan Drinks' mission is to bring together a diverse group of people to build new coalitions and promote the sharing of resources.

Every month, Vegan Drinks NYC selects an animal-rights-oriented nonprofit organization to benefit, and NYC Metro Rabbits will be the beneficiary for the month of October. As such, NYC

Metro Rabbits will get an opportunity to promote its life-saving work to a room of approximately 100 people, seek donations, encourage attendees to become volunteers and foster parents, and run a raffle benefiting the bunnies.

Vegan Drinks will take place at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 25 at Fontana's, located at 105 Eldridge St. in Manhattan. Admission is free (ages 21+ only). Drinks as well as vegan food will be available for purchase.

For more information about the event, visit www.vegandrinks.org or email me at cde0901@gmail.com.

One-Woman Show Benefits Our Many Rescued Rabbits

Lisa Balestracci is staging her one-woman musical production, "It's Me," to benefit Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group. Lisa adopted her rabbit Fulton from LIRRG in 2010.

Show dates are Saturday, Nov. 3, and Sunday, Nov. 11, at 4 p.m. at Don't Tell Mama, 343 West 46th St., NYC.

"It's Me" celebrates Lisa's return to the stage.

For reservations, visit www.donttellmamanyc.com or call 212-757-0788 (after 4 p.m. daily).

Lisa will donate all her net profits to LIRRG.

AC&C Rabbit Room Gets New Cages

Volunteer Mark Terna has donated to AC&C's rabbit room two Ferret Nation duplex cages with add-on levels that transform them into triplexes. The cages, designed for – yes – ferrets, were strongly recommended for house rabbits by Drs. Saver and George of Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital. The cages are sturdy and easy to clean, and they have shelves which the bunnies love – for reconnaissance and for napping.

Many thanks, Mark!



Mark Terna with cages he donated for the shelter bunnies.

HAY

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.

Why Can't I Give My Rabbit All the Carrots He Wants?

By Lisa Carley

Bugs Bunny aside, carrots are not the best of food choices for your bunny. They are considered treats, and treats need to be dispensed judiciously. Just like little children, rabbits crave sweets – they're yummy. But as we have all had to learn, sweets are unhealthy when eaten in large quantities. They lead to obesity, and excess weight can cause all sorts of health problems in your bunny.

Your rabbit's diet should consist of unlimited bright green hay. My rabbit's personal favorite is Oxbow Orchard Grass, which is a variation on Timothy Hay. Leafy greens are also part of a healthy rabbit's diet, and you can find a wide variety of greens to keep your pet from getting bored with his salad. So instead of focusing on carrots, offer your bunny new types of leafy greens. You can

experiment to see what your rabbit prefers. Remember that it may take several tries before he will accept a new food.

As rabbits get older, they slow down. You should expect to see fewer binkies and bunny dances than when your rabbit was younger. Because of that, they need fewer calories. Just like in humans, weight is a factor of energy vs. activity. If you get too many calories with too little activity, you get fat. A three-pound rabbit requires fewer calories than a 10-pound rabbit.

Rabbits should have a limited amount of hay pellets, a couple of servings of green leafy veggies and unlimited hay every day. Treats should be restricted.

One important fact to consider is that your rabbit is an herbivore, which is pretty much the same as a vegan. When you do give your bunny treats, make sure they don't contain animal products. Cookies are not appropriate treats; most fruits are. You should limit them to approximately a teaspoon for small rabbits or a tablespoon for larger ones each day. This is not in addition to carrots; it is in place of carrots.

If you feed your rabbit properly and make sure he gets enough exercise, you should expect a long and happy relationship together. Instead of giving in to his sweet tooth, entertain him with new and different leafy greens. He will have a lot of fun picking out the ones he likes the best, and you may even find yourself eating more leafy vegetables.

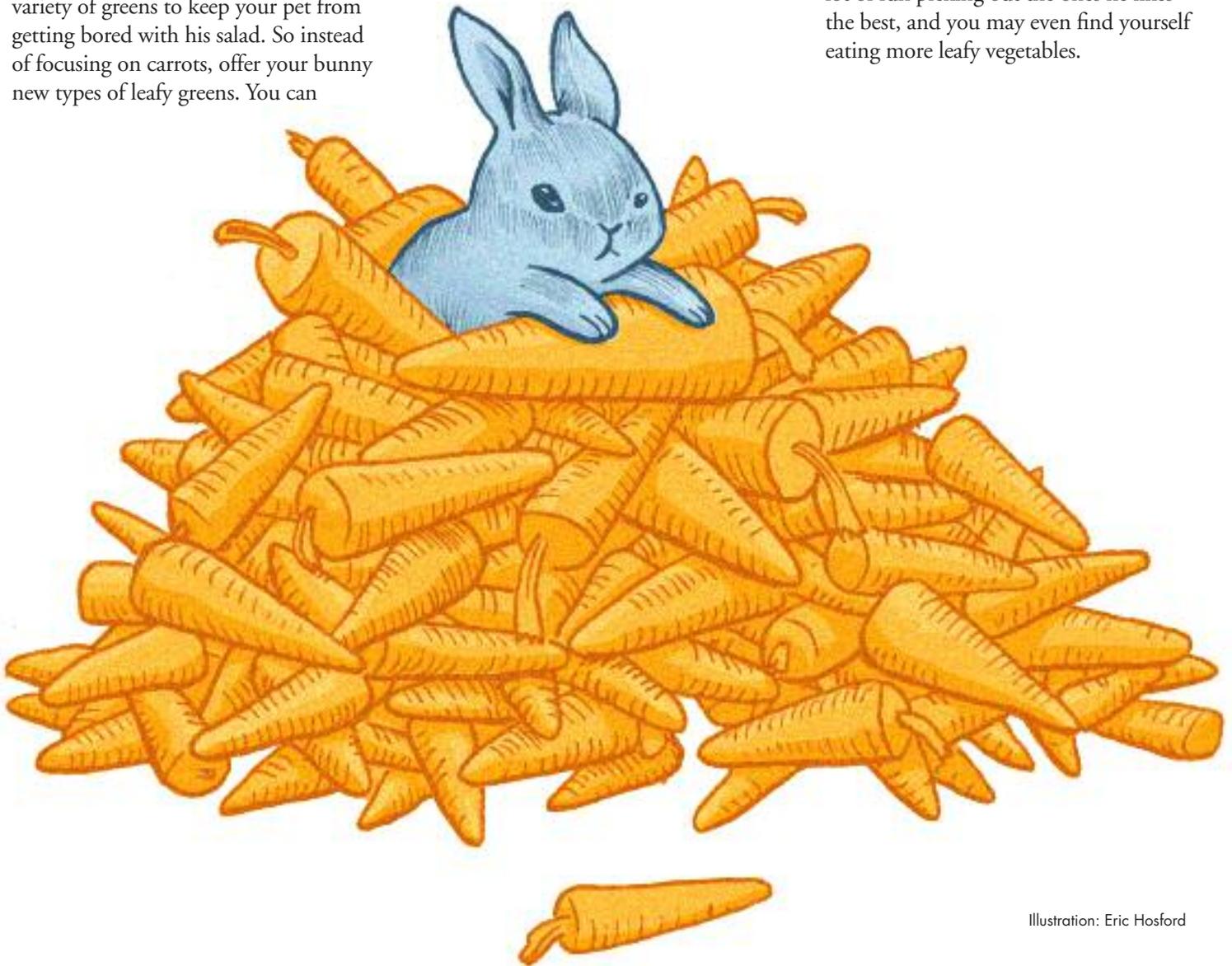


Illustration: Eric Hosford

Robin Mulcahy Manhattan Reeves April 4, 2007–July 20, 2012

By Natalie L. Reeves

Every single moment with my precious boy – Robin Mulcahy Manhattan Reeves – was a treasured gift. When Robin passed away at only 5 years old, my world lost much of its luster.

I first saw Robin in August 2007 on a local NBC-TV segment featuring Cindy Stutts and Loraine Kopf holding adoptable rabbits. I fell in love with him at first sight and became his stalker, visiting him at a Central Park adoption event and later at other events. I was so thrilled when Mopsy, my first bunny, chose Robin to be her partner at a speed date arranged by Rabbit Rescue & Rehab on Nov. 9, 2007.

Robin provided more joy to me and to Mopsy than we can ever express. He was smart, funny, sweet and goofy. All my bunnies are friendly and loving almost all of the time, but my girls will occasionally

nip me to show their annoyance if I am grooming them too much. Robin hated grooming as much as they did, but never nipped – never. Instead, he would grunt like a little piglet and act like a big baby.

Robin was quite the athlete and could jump high distances, even after his mobility was hindered by an *E. cuniculi* attack last year. Robin jumped on my bed many times a day and even ate his food at the foot of my bed so that Mopsy wouldn't get it first.

Robin was silly. Although he usually trusted me completely and liked for me to hold him, he sometimes got it into his head that I was trying to poison him. For example, when I tried to introduce him to organic canned pumpkin, he thought that it was laced with arsenic and would not only not try it – he would run as fast as he could in the other direction when I would bring it out to

Mopsy. She didn't mind because she loved having her pumpkin to herself. We went through this routine for months, when all of a sudden for some inexplicable reason, Robin chose one night to go eat some of the pumpkin with Mopsy after thinking it was poison for months before. From that day on, it became his favorite treat and he would run from wherever he was in the apartment when I called out, "Pumpkin, pumpkin-time!"

Robin was a night owl and, since I'm unfortunately an insomniac, we were a perfect fit. He would keep me company at night and let me cuddle and hold him. He'd often jump on my bed, give me a few kisses, and then jump off. He also was my alarm clock – he would wake me up at the same time every day by kissing my feet. If I didn't move quickly enough, he'd sometimes nudge my feet or he'd come up and kiss my face. I hadn't needed an alarm clock in years.

Robin was the man of our house. Poor guy was sometimes confused for a girl due to his name, but it was the name he had when I adopted him and I didn't think I should change it. I lost one of my closest friends – a human named Robin – suddenly when he was in his early 30s a few years before I adopted Robin. I often wondered what my human friend Robin would have thought of his namesake; they were actually very much alike – even, sadly, with their very premature deaths.

Cute pictures of Robin do not do justice to how adorable he was in real life. He was truly soft and cuddly, with brown eyes that seemed like they could look right through to your soul. Robin's looks garnered many admirers – he was named "Mr. October 2011" in the "Hot Buns" calendar contest and will be featured in the 2013 ASPCA calendar. He was a good sport about having his picture taken by many professional photographers through the years, but if the shoots interfered with his nap, he would just sprawl out asleep for the cameras, never

(Continued on page 20)

Robin Mulcahy Manhattan Reeves.



Robin

(Continued from page 19)

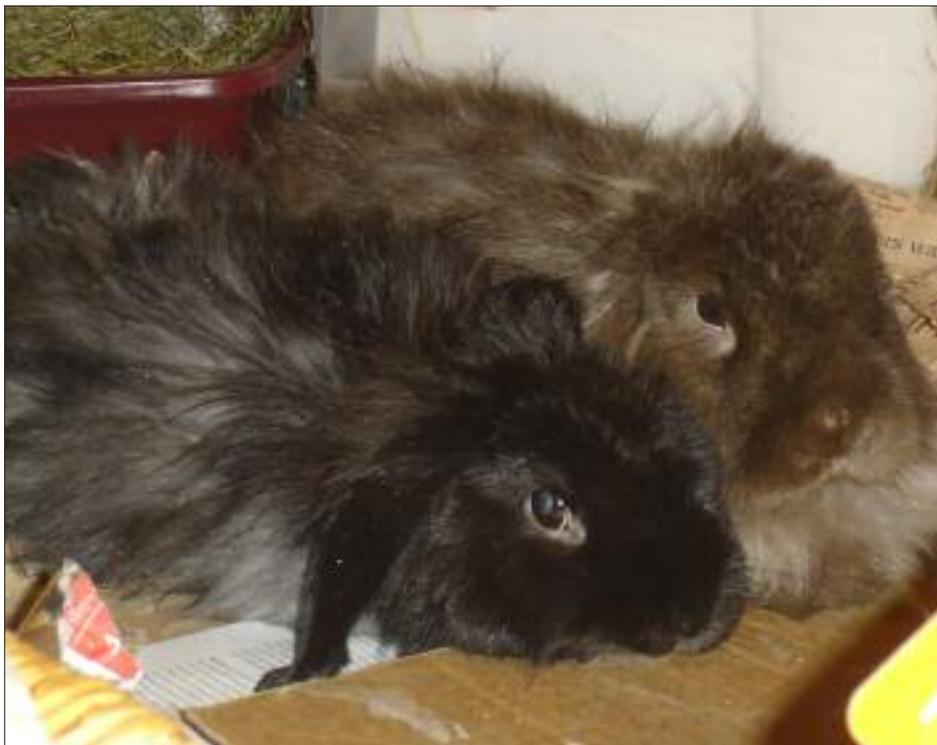
one to let bright lights and cameras disrupt his sleep.

Robin was the perfect son – I loved him with my entire heart as did Mopsy, Goldie and Queenie. I think that sometimes, though, when people describe their departed friends (human or animal) as being perfect as I have with Robin, that perhaps it makes them seem too good to be real. Robin was every bit as wonderful as I describe, but I've tried to rack my brain to think of his faults so that I won't seem completely unobjective.

He snored. Mopsy was always a silent little girl, so when I adopted Robin I was shocked that he snored. He went to the vet to be checked out for a respiratory problem and I just found out he was a snorer. It was really quite adorable, though.

And he was the best boyfriend to Mopsy – he kissed her constantly and always wanted to be by her side – but I guess occasionally he could be annoying. Sometimes if he finished a favorite treat quickly and Mopsy still had hers, he might stick his head in her mouth to steal the treat from her. And occasionally Mopsy might be asleep in a place that Robin wanted to be. Instead of just sitting in the vacant place next to her, he'd nudge her awake, she'd get up and move, he'd take her place, and she'd snuggle up next to him and go back to sleep. She loved him endlessly and he loved her every bit as much or more so.

I'm terribly sorry that I couldn't give Robin more than five years. I fought and fought to save him. Robin had health problems throughout his life. He had been to many rabbit vets in NYC and the surrounding area for his health problems. He'd suffered from numerous ear infections, *E. cuniculi* and repeated stasis episodes. Although Robin had at least 16 documented stasis episodes through the years, vets could never determine the cause.



Mopsy and Robin.

When I adopted Robin, I planned to love him for at least 13 years (but of course I'll love him forever). I'm shocked to have lost him at five. The only comfort I have is that Robin was loved every day of his far too short life, and I know that I'll need to be strong for my three girls.

Robin leaves behind his loving mate, Mopsy McGillicuddy, his sisters, Goldie Lochs Brooklyn and Queenie Kitty Kat Houdini, his parents Mocha Jane and Thaddeus Joseph McElhinney, and me, his mom.

Please give extra love to your bunnies in memory of Robin.

Two Sad Good-byes

We are sorry to report that Skip, who graced page one of Thump's August 2012 issue, died at home on Aug. 31 at the age of 12. Robert Kulka had said of Skip, "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." To read Robert's entire article about Skip, go to

http://rabbitcare.org/Thump_Aug%202012.pdf

Astrid Hesse's rabbit Nellie died on Sept. 4. Nellie and another girl bunny, Niamh, had been rescued from a Manhattan rooftop. Astrid's recounting of the rescue appeared in the December 2011 Thump:

<http://www.rabbitcare.org/ThumpDEC16.2011.pdf>,

page 7. A few months later, Astrid wrote that Nellie had "come a long way in the few short months she has been with me, and I am thankful for every ounce of trust she is willing to give."

Nutmeg, World Traveler

Nutmeg, beloved rescued mini lop, died in Birmingham, U.K., in August 2012. Nutmeg was adopted at the Petco Union Square store by the Karlcut family in June 2011. After Harpal Kalcut's employer relocated him (with his wife and two daughters) from New York City to Birmingham, England, Harpal – in order to reunite Nutmeg with his family – accompanied her on a 4,000-plus-mile trip from New York City to Helsinki to Paris to Birmingham. Nutmeg's story, "The Incredible Journey of Angela, Who Changed Her Name to Nutmeg and Started Over," appeared in December 2011's Thump

(<http://rabbitcare.org/ThumpDEC16.2011.pdf>, page 3)

In "A Hop of Hope," a short illustrated work in honor of Nutmeg, Harpal Karlcut's daughter Gurpreet writes: "Nutmeg meant the whole world to me. She was cute, funny, loving and cheeky. I met her thanks to three very special people called Marcie Frishberg, Jane O'Wyatt and Cathe Rekis. Thanks to them, rabbits like Nutmeg can be loved and live a happier life."

After learning from Gurpreet that Nutmeg had died, Cathe Rekis replied, "I cannot express how sad I am that our beloved friend Nutmeg is gone. She was one of our dearest bunnies. I loved her very much and find her loss very painful. Rabbits are very special creatures. They listen quietly to our problems but keep silent about their own. I will never forget our little friend. We love all the buns we take care of, but some, like Nutmeg, just hold onto our heart strings a little tighter."

Jane O'Wyatt wrote to Gurpreet, who referred to herself as Nutmeg's sister: "When your email arrived, I was so sad that I couldn't concentrate on anything. All I could do was walk over to Whiskers in the East Village and buy a bag of Nutmeg's favorite Oxbow Botanical

Hay. This hay, I realized, was a gift from Nutmeg to the bunny I am fostering now."

Marcie Frishberg wrote: "When I got your email I just cried for you and your

family and your sweet girl. Even though Nutmeg was with you only a short time, you made up for it with abundant love and care. No bunny could have had a better family to care for her than yours. She knew she was loved and very, very wanted and was lucky to have found you. I don't know anyone who would have gone through as much to keep her with you as your family did. Both you and Nutmeg have touched our lives and we are proud to have met you."

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Left, Gurpreet with Nutmeg, Petco Union Square. Middle, Nutmeg's adoption paperwork. Bottom, Nutmeg on her seagrass rug.

Illustration: Gurpreet Karlcut

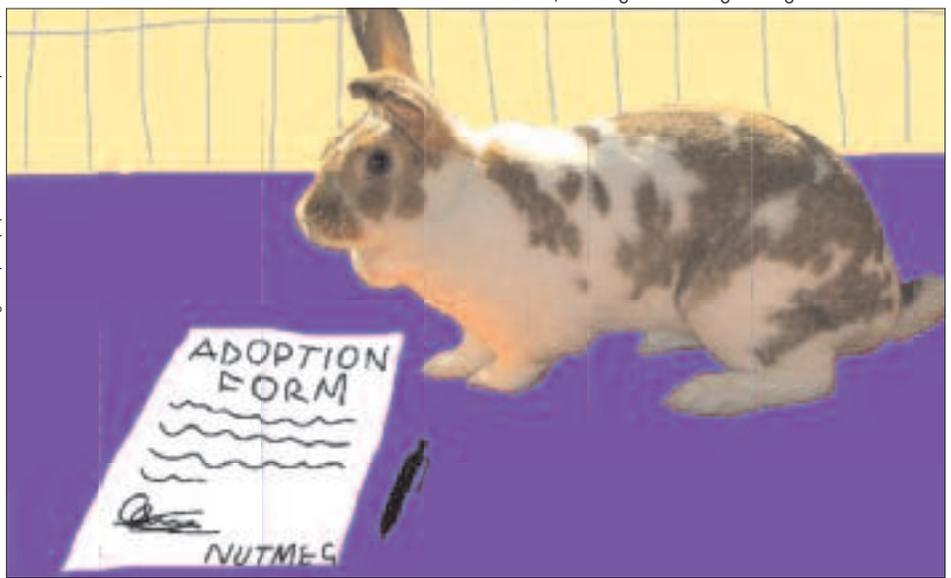


Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



GONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN

(Continued from page 21)

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Jerry, a very special bunny with a great personality who lived with Kerstin Aumann and her family, along with their two other rabbits, Snowball and Luna, died on Aug. 21 at the age of 6.

Photos: Alisa Christopher



Ivana, found in Van Cortlandt Park, was dirty and scared when she first came to the shelter. She spent the last month of her life being fostered by Alisa Christopher, in whose care her real beauty became evident: Ivana had a slender, deerlike face and a refined spirit. She died knowing she was loved and cared for maybe for the first time in her life.

Letters From Adopters

Gilbert

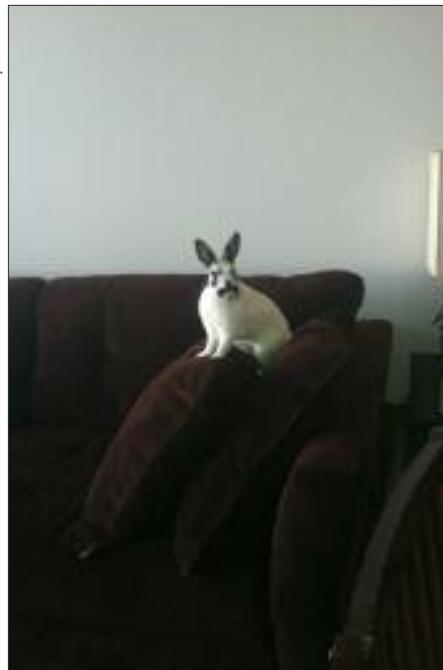
Gilbert, formerly known as Timothy, was adopted in early August by Kevin and Lesley, who sent this update.

Timothy (now renamed Gilbert) has been an absolute joy since the moment we brought him home from Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C). He is cuddly, rambunctious, affectionate and very smart.

We were wary about adopting a new bunny so soon after one of our other beloved rabbits sadly passed away, but it's impossible not to fall in love with Gilbert the moment you meet him.

From running around the kitchen to "help" us cook, jumping up onto the couch while we are watching television and burrowing into our arms, or laying sprawled out on our bed looking out of the window, Gilbert has made himself very comfortable in his new, forever home.

Photo: Lesley Johannsen



Gilbert.

Thank you so much for introducing us to such a sweet boy.

Sincerely,
Kevin & Lesley Johannsen

Photo: Dasha Romer



Lionel.

Lionel

Lionel was adopted by Dasha Romer in early August. He is doing well, the family says.

Lionel is fine. He likes to jump and kiss me. He sniffs me all the time.

He is the best. I love him so much.

Lionel is so sweet. I Promise to take good care of him.

Thank you so much,
Dasha Romer

(Continued on page 23)

Letters (Continued from page 22)

Photo: Marimar Ortega



Austin.

Austin

Austin, who used to be known as Steve, was adopted in August by Marimar Ortega. She sent us this letter a few days later.

I am so happy with Steven but his new name is Austin :) He was a bit shy at first but he has warmed up to me and is already hopping everywhere!

Austin is a great rabbit and he loves to lie under my bed as a hideaway. His big brother Scotty, my Yorkie, loves to lie next to Austin under the bed, which is so cute. I love Austin and I am so glad I chose him.

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity to have adopted such a great rabbit!!

Marimar

Photo: Svetlana Kriskaya



Chloe.

Chloe

Chloe was adopted in early September by Lana and her daughter. Lana sent this email the following day.

Thank you so much. Chloe is so adorable and we love her soooo much. She is mostly out of her pen and plays with us on the bed :)

She played with us all Sunday :))

She is sooo lovable. We just can't leave her alone, and she likes it. She feels like a princess.

We call her Princess Chloe :) She's such a Lady!

We are sooo happy to have her and will take the best care of her.

Chloe brought lots of love and joy into our house, and we are very happy and grateful.

She was looking for love and a home and she found it :))

We will keep in touch :)

Thanks again.

Lana

Photo: Regina Scotton



Oreo.

Oreo

Oreo was adopted in early September by Regina, who sent this letter a short time afterward.

It was a dreary Saturday with the rain pouring down outside the windows of Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C), but it was nevertheless a cheerful day when Oreo came into my life.

I am very grateful to AC&C/NYC Metro Rabbit volunteer Will Leung, who was extremely knowledgeable and helped my sister and me in picking a rabbit based on

Will's knowledge of their unique personalities and temperaments.

I immediately fell in love with Oreo, who allowed me to gently pet his head and ultimately hold him. It was great to bring him home and have him already neutered.

Oreo loves his new home and his assortment of hay, pellets and romaine lettuce, and also his new mommy. I want to say many thanks to Susan Lillo and Cindy Stutts for answering all my rabbit questions in a wink-of-an-eye via email.

The amount of support I have received from NYC Metro Rabbits has been amazing. Oreo brings much happiness into my household and into my heart!

Regina Scotton

Photo: Lise Lindvall



Bonnie and Clyde.

Bonnie and Clyde

Bonnie and Clyde were adopted in mid-September by Lisa Lindvall and her family. She sent us this letter shortly after bringing them home.

We adopted "partners in crime" Bonnie and Clyde (formerly known as Chocolate and Vanilla) a week ago. Our very large English lop, Snugs (formerly known as Cassie), went to bunny heaven last Father's Day after a very short debilitating illness.

We brought Bonnie and Clyde home with trepidation as the two of them had a bit of a, shall we say, "reputation" as a couple of hooligans (speak to Cindy

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Stutts and her team to get the skinny on them!).

My husband was not sure that two buns was a good idea--although my children and I were secretly convinced he wanted just the one bunny because he didn't think he would get the level of love he got from Snugs if we had two. How wrong he was!

We were surprised at how quickly "the kids" settled in. Within a few days, we were able to transition them from a pen to having total free range of the kitchen, living and dining areas. So far so good, and I have spotted only a few signs of bunny presence on the baseboards, which seem particularly tasty to Bonnie.

Clyde is the more "out there" and daring of the two. Last night he decided to "help out" in the kitchen, and I found him in the dishwasher when I turned around to load the plates! They both manage to appear out of nowhere when they hear any rustling that may indicate feeding time.

You try not to compare new pets with former but when I "lost" Bonnie the other day, I spotted her under the dining-room table, hopping from one chair to another all the way around the table. Strangely enough, this was one thing that Snugs did but at great speed! Intrepid Clyde has not ventured up onto the chairs. Perhaps it is just a female thing, or Bonnie has taken on Snug's persona! No doubt Clyde will stick to the adventuring and escape planning! We are loving having them and thank all the volunteers, particularly Cindy and Thea, for their support and for allowing us to bring more joy into our home. We will keep you posted on the next episode of Bonnie and Clyde's antics. Who knows what mischief is in store for us!

Lisa Lindvall

Photos: Ryan Malene



Billi.

Billi

Ryan, who adopted Billi in September, sent us this letter to say she is doing well.

Billi is doing great. I have only had her four days and she's already making herself at home.

When I first brought her home, she was extremely shy and nervous. But after spending some time with her, by the second day her whole personality has changed. She is a very happy, playful and outgoing bunny.

This is my first experience of ever having a rabbit and I am very happy about my decision to adopt her. She loves to run around, jump on my bed, and play with her toys.

She is very affectionate and loves to be petted. Billi is a great addition to the family and everyone loves her!

I would really like to thank the volunteers and staff at Animal Care & Control of NYC for their care and support in helping me bring Billi home.

Thank you,
Ryan

Our Dedicated Volunteers

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers in Manhattan work at the shelter and at Petco stores. They also foster rabbits and assist in education, adoption screening, medical issues and special projects. The volunteers at the East 110th Street shelter are under the wing of Animal Care & Control of NYC (to get more information, go to <http://www.nycacc.org>), and the Petco volunteers are supervised by Marcie Frishberg (mfrish57bun@yahoo.com). The Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group is also active in rescue, rehab and education (contact Mary Ann Maier at altitude8@yahoo.com or Nancy Schreiber at nnschreibmd@aol.com). Thank you.

Manhattan Volunteers

Paige Anderson	Thea Harting	Amy Odum
Kerstin Aumann	Zhen	Kirsten Ott
Vivian Barna	Heinemann	Jane O'Wyatt
Mary Christine Basile	Astrid Hesse	Nadine Pascual
Katelyn Belyus	Lyssa Howells	Jackie Penny
Lisa Carley	Mindy Jackson	Lisette Pizarro
Mabel Casado	Hilary	Natalie Reeves
Jennifer Case	Kastleman	Cathe Rekis
Christina Chen	Alice Kim	Aminah Roberts
Helen Chen	Sandhya Kolge	Erick Rodriguez
Alisa Christopher	Sari Krieger	Emma Roth
Nona Cleland	Megan Krieman	Lauren Rudolph
Courtney Collins	Loraine Kopf	Natalie Russo
Mary Cotter	Robert Kulka	Kiva Ryan
Maddy DeLeon	Doug Lee	Melissa Shoupe
Kerri Driscoll	William Leung	Richard Smith
Valerie Dumova	Susan Lillo	Cindy Stutts
Casey Easterling	Melissa Liquet	David Sydlík
Mike Easterling	Larry Marion	Mark Terna
Marcie Frishberg	Abigail McCue	Melissa
Taryn Halata	Erin McElhinney	Van Wijk
Genevieve Hannon	Misha McKay	Ellen Wang
Sheri Harrison	Minnie Miller	Cathy Zelonis
	Krysten Morales	Shelley Zhang
	Emma Mullins	
	Scott Nelson	

Long Island Volunteers

Cheryl Egan	Irina Kulak	Michael Schornstein
Christine Roche	Mary Ann Maier	Donna Sheridan
Renee Fischer	Erin McCauley	Nancy Schreiber
Damir Galzina	Mahir Nisar	Lisa Signorelli
Barbara Hausman	Jean Mellano	Michael Simons
Carlina Jarmel	Ana Otero	Margeaux Walter
Hilary Kastleman	Gina Pipia	
Kimberly	Lanette	
Kerwin	Raymond	
Rumiko	Denise	
Kimura	Rodriguez	
	Kathie Rokita	

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 Stanzione, DVM

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

Laurie Hess, DVM

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

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

THUMP October 2012

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS

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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).

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

Adoptable NYC Metro rabbits are at Petco's Lexington Avenue (86th-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.

You can also visit Animal Care & Control of NYC (AC&C) at 326 East 110th St., between First and Second avenues.

Rabbits for adoption can be found by going to: <http://www.nycacc.org/> and doing an

adoption search. Volunteers are there every weekday evening and on Saturday and Sunday afternoons, but it is best to arrange an appointment first.

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 mec@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.