



# THUMP

**NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS DECEMBER 2010**

Photo: Victor Simansky



Kerstin and Alex at their new home.

## Relocating Our Warren: New Baby, A New Home And Six Rabbits

By Kerstin Aumann

Rabbits are creatures of habit – they thrive on well-established routines. Many dislike, even abhor, any kind of change in their world. If you’ve tried small tweaks in your home, like relocating a litter box to a different corner of the room, you probably know what I’m talking about. How, then, can you help your rabbits navigate major changes that are bound to have a profound impact on their lives?

The year 2010 was a time of big change in our warren. Our son, Alex, was born

Photo: © Mary Colter, 2010



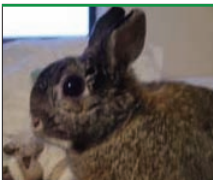
### Benita's Ready to Ring in the New Year

After her rescue on Labor Day, Benita’s recovery is complete. Page 9

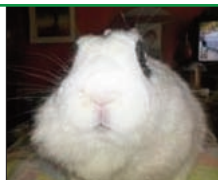
in mid-July and about five weeks later, we relocated our warren from a one-bedroom apartment in Manhattan to a one-family home in the suburbs. These major life changes were challenging enough for us humans, but what about our six rabbits?

It was a trying time for them, too. For starters, my husband, Vic, and I had a lot less time to devote to our bunny crew. I was big as a house toward the end of the pregnancy, barely able to get to the floor (and back up) to interact with my

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## Relocating *(Continued from page 1)*

gang – and forget about cleaning up bunny droppings from under the TV! Then, there was the endless packing and organizing of stuff, which made our fairly large apartment seem much smaller. On the upside, the buns had a blast playing with the moving boxes. But due to fears of losing or stepping on one of them in the chaos, they had to be confined for much of the time – something my free-spirited Bella especially detested.

Once Alex joined our warren, things got even more challenging. The round-the-clock care a newborn requires made it difficult to find time and energy to also take care of my bunnies, especially my elderly special-needs rabbit, Storm. Taking care of your family (including human and animal members) and your home during a time of transition requires some careful planning beforehand to make sure no one – including you – gets left behind. Below are some points to think about:

**Make your rabbit(s) an integral part of your plans.** We probably could have managed with a baby in our one-bedroom apartment, but throw three pairs of rabbits into the mix and the situation quickly gets out of hand. We had been anticipating and preparing for this next chapter in our lives for years, so we began house-hunting as soon as we found out about the human addition to our family. Still, the process was challenging emotionally, logistically and financially.

While moving to a larger home may not always be necessary or even be an option, do think carefully through various alternatives and plan ahead as early as possible to devise a plan that works for all members of your family.

If you do plan on moving, make sure your rabbits are with you every step of the way – at least mentally. If you're renting, make sure your new landlord allows small pets. When looking at potential new homes, think about where and how your rabbit(s) might live. We opted for a house that allowed us to create a bunny-proofed "rabbit room" with special flooring for the big white bun who never caught on to litter-box training,

Photo: Kerstin Aumann



Jerry, his girlfriend Bella (at rear) and Alex.

**Minimize stress.** When it comes to the logistics of a move, try to minimize stress. My own rabbits became very stressed out on moving weekend and I wish I had made arrangements for them to stay someplace else while the movers were doing their thing.

Move your rabbits yourself in your own car (rent one, if need be) if you're driving, or keep them with you in the cabin if you're flying. Never allow your rabbits to travel on a moving truck or in the cargo hold. (Note that not all airlines allow rabbits in the cabin, so make your travel arrangements accordingly.)

Make sure your rabbits can stay in a comfortable temperature (AC in the summer, heat in the winter) during the move. Fresh water and hay need to be available at all times.

Protect your rabbits from noise as much as possible, especially if your plans include noisy home improvements. Do not allow your rabbits to play among power tools, construction debris and other fun renovation messes. Keep rabbits confined to a small area, if need be...better safe than sorry. You can make it up to them later!

**Be prepared for emergencies.** Make sure you have a rabbit emergency kit ready – not buried deep down in one of your moving boxes. Know where to get help in case of an emergency in your new area – check [www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org) for the

nearest rabbit-savvy vet. Be prepared to adjust your own plans and "to do" lists if your rabbit needs help.

One of my rabbits became so stressed by the move, she had a three-day stasis episode. Needless to say, with a newborn and a new home, this was the last thing we needed at the time, but we worked together as a family to get through this episode. I'm happy report that my Bella now is a very happy and well-adjusted resident in our rabbit room.

**Line up help!** Draw on family, friends and even paid help if you can afford it, to help you take care of the important things in your life. We rearranged our responsibilities in the weeks following the birth of our son, with my husband taking over the bunny-related chores. My parents flew in from Germany to help with the baby and the move. Friends also pitched in with the move and bunny care. We couldn't have made it without all this help. Think about who can help out and how – and don't be shy to ask.

**Reach out to the rabbit-people network.** Having a baby? Need to manage rabbit care with a family member's allergies? Moving to another coast, or even to another continent? No matter what your situation, chances are someone has done it before with a rabbit or two. Use rabbit

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# My Personal Checklist for Bunny-Sitters

By Katelyn Belyus

With family spread between Pennsylvania, New Mexico and all spots in between, I spend the bulk of my holidays traveling. Since the change in surroundings – not to mention the physical travel – can make even the most fun-loving bunny a stress-head, I try to get sitters for Maya and Ollie as often as possible.

For me, the best sitters are friends who know Maya and Ollie, have spent time with them and know their personalities. They love it when Auntie Kristina visits and plays with them, luring them from beneath the couch with little chunks of banana. Ollie likes to climb in and out

of Lana's lap like a fuzzy little spelunker. Bunnysitter Gen tries to get them to exercise by rolling their hay ball around the floor. Uncle Mahdi talks politics with them, pressing for their views on Gov. Christie. But far and away the most excitement they had was when Auntie Savina showed up with her guitar and serenaded them with Neil Young tunes.

Sometimes, though, even their aunties need a vacation. Lana's spending the holidays in Hawaii while Savina is trekking through Iceland. So, time to call in the reinforcements: the local pet-sitter.

I admit: I'm a little neurotic. Even my friends think my notes are over-the-top

and super-detailed. I leave the pet-sitter an entire sheet of 8½-by-11 paper with typed instructions in bullet points. I assemble all the necessary cash on the counter in envelopes, along with key supplies: hay, pellets, newspapers, paper towels and cleaning supplies. I leave pre-rinsed greens in the fridge.

Back to my bullet points:

- Hay: Please top off the litter boxes with hay. They can get as much hay as they want. (If different rabbits get different hays, tell your sitter.)
- Food: How much they should get (one dish? one scoop?), and how often (each visit?).
- Water: Maya and Ollie drink from the water dish, so I ask that it be filled with fresh cold water. If there is a bottle (during the summertime, for instance), I advise the sitter to leave it on the lowest rung of the cage so the rabbits can easily reach it.
- Litter box: I'm often gone for weekends, so I change the litter boxes on Friday, and only ask that the sitter top off the box with hay.
- Greens: again, specify how much and how often. Indicate if the greens need to be washed or are pre-rinsed. Mention any greens in the fridge that the rabbits shouldn't get.

Then I write a little about the rabbits' personalities and how to handle each one.

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Ollie and Maya.

## Relocating *(Continued from page 2)*

networks and resources, including nycbuns on Yahoo! Groups, EtherBun and various House Rabbit Society chapters to help you connect with people who have been there and done that.

**If your rabbit is a singleton, consider adopting him or her a friend.** Nothing provides emotional support to a rabbit like the companionship of another rabbit. You will feel a lot less guilty about spending less time with your bunny if she has company of her own kind.

Granted, if you're going through a time of change, adding another rabbit to your home may be the last thing on your mind. So, it's best to think about adopting a friend for your bun well before a time of change in your life. But if you are able to build ample time into your plans for the bonding process – which can last anywhere from a couple of weeks to a couple of months – it may be worth considering, even when you're facing a transition. The bonding experts at Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and AC&C can help

you find the right companion for your rabbit and assist you throughout the bonding process.

Ultimately, a time of change is an opportunity for personal growth and learning – and to reaffirm your commitment to your family members. Thinking ahead, planning carefully and reaching out for help are keys to navigating life transitions and change successfully, especially when your dependents include rabbits.

## Checklist *(Continued from page 3)*

For instance, when the two were still in the bonding stages, it was important for me to make sure the sitter knew to avoid any potential problems. I would say: “Ollie is easy; he loves people and likes to be out of his pen. When he’s out and if he pushes his face to Maya’s bars, be sure to oversee and nudge him away from the bars if she’s aggressive. When putting Ollie back, be sure to secure the roof of his cage.”

And for Maya, I might say: “Maya is more difficult. To get her, move the box out of her cage. Squat for a bit, and let her calm down. You can pet her if you approach with the back of your hand and go for the middle of her head and stroke down through her ears. She loves the crook of her ears to be rubbed.”

Are there problem behaviors that your rabbit-sitter should watch out for (i.e., biting)? Write it down. Do they have favorite toys? Write it down. Your sitters will never know unless you tell them.

Sitters who don’t have much knowledge about rabbits should be told what to look for that might signal a bun is not well. We all know how rabbits hide their symptoms, and we are tuned in to subtle changes in behavior and eating. If sitters aren’t made aware of this, an illness like GI stasis may not be picked up in its early stages. By the time someone notices that the rabbit is sick, it may be too late. Sitters should know the warning signs.

Other things I remind them: Bunnies are very delicate. Don’t let them fall! Don’t pick them up if you’re not comfortable!

Be sure to leave your contact info and emergency info. I leave my cell number, my partner’s cell number, the number for the person I’m visiting, info for a local bunny-smart friend, info for a local friend with a car, and my vet’s number.

Do you want your rabbit-sitter giving out treats? If so, let the sitter know exactly what they can give, and how much (i.e.,

a chunk of banana the size of your thumbnail or one slice of dried pineapple).

Better safe than sorry. In the summer, I specify that the sitter should not turn off the air-conditioner. In the winter, I note that the sitter shouldn’t change the thermostat. And I always ask to be texted or called so that I don’t worry about how Maya and Ollie are doing.

Photo: Helen Chen



Photo: Natalie Reeves



Photo: © Mary Cotter 2010



Top, Kirby: “I checked! This present is for you.”  
Middle, Mopsy meets a reindeer.  
Bottom, Martha inspects the tree.

A final note: remember that the New York City bunny community is pretty close-knit. We lean on each other for advice. Pay attention to the sitter’s notes and comments upon your return, especially if the sitter is also a bunny owner. Perhaps the bunny-sitter has comments on cage hygiene or better carpets – this is part of the job, part of why you hired the sitter in the first place – to make sure that your rabbits are as comfortable as possible. I caution people not to balk at any constructive criticism, because we all want to work together to improve the livelihoods of our buns. So if you come home and your sitter suggests that you switch to different pellets, look it up, call your vet, try it out. Your buns will most likely be better for it.

Photo: Jane O’Wyatt



Two boys from Dash’s litter of eight devoured their cage cards as well as their hay.

# Hay!

Heartfelt thanks to  
all of our generous  
hay donors!

# Bedbugs and Bunnies: Advice on Getting Rid of One While Keeping the Other

By Erin McElhinney

In a year in which much has gone wrong for me, I found myself wondering, what next? The answer came swiftly: an army of invisible and bloodthirsty bedbugs arrived at my apartment. Scratching my bites until they bled, I have to say I was surprised it took them this long to arrive. Bedbugs have been stealthily invading New York City, and my apartment – filled with six rabbits, too many tchotchkes and piles of New Yorker magazines – would seem to be a haven for these creatures. Indeed, they made themselves at home right away.

Let me just put it out there from the start that this is no hero story. Unlike the time in 2007 when my little Dutch foster bun, Buddy, gored a cockroach with his teeth, my rabbits remained passive and indifferent to my suffering. In fact, they seemed to be mildly annoyed that I would keep all the lights on all night as I flopped over in a plastic IKEA chair in the kitchen, counting the hours until dawn when my furry kids awoke fully and demanded pets and pellets, and I could safely sleep, knowing that the bedbugs would never dare show their hideous selves in the light of day. Let me also warn that if you ever have bedbugs, your rabbits won't be of any assistance. If you try cuddling them at midnight and they're not used to being cuddled at midnight, you can add a rabbit bite to the bedbug bites slowly taking over your entire body. (Really, Mocha Jane, a nip would have been sufficient!)

But now, back to the blood and the gore. I realized I had bedbugs one night when I saw my entire stomach covered in what appeared to be tiny welts with holes in the center. The holes, as I now know, were where the bugs injected me with a serum that would delay the onset of the itchiness. This allows them to feed on human flesh for up to 15 minutes at a time before making their creepy crawly getaways. I saw the bites and I immediately

went into denial. Hives, I told myself; I have hives again. Damn Oxbow, and their occasional dusty hay bale; I am really allergic to this batch of hay. And then: moths are biting me; and then, fleas: please Lord, make it be fleas. This went on for almost a full weekend until I decided to mark all of the (ever-increasing) welts on my body with a black magic marker before going to sleep. This way, I would be able to tell if I had any new bites in the morning. And when I woke up and had new, unmarked bites, I looked at the trusting, wide-eyed innocence of my four buns and the two fosters I pledged to be there for, and knew I had no more time to spare.

These are the steps I took and the things that worked for me.

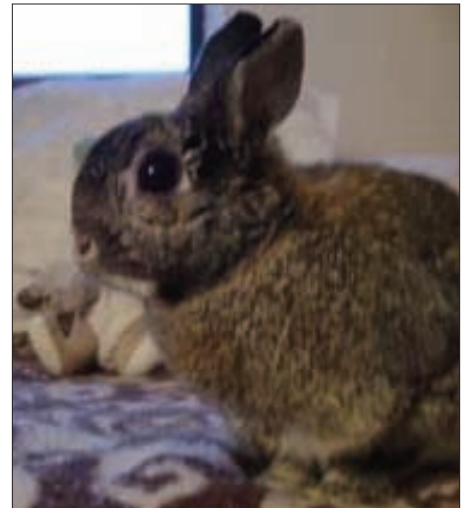
## Preparation

The first step is to put all your clothes in trash bags and airtight containers. Once the clothes are packed up, take them to the laundromat, where everything has to be washed in hot water and dried in high heat. Vacuum everything in your apartment twice, and mop the floors. Then you will have to explain the rabbit situation to your landlord, who of course two years ago at the lease signing, cash in hand, said yes, you can have more than one pet – but probably didn't realize at the time that three of these great beasts have declared full-out war on your baseboards. Your landlord also will be involved in the next step.

## Fumigation

It has to be done. Although heat is the only way to actually kill all stages of bedbugs, fumigation will do a decent number on the ones that are creeping and crawling. Alternative accommodations will need to be made for you and your buns. I was fortunate in that a friend volunteered to watch Ginger Madeleine for me and I was confident boarding the other buns. Ginger Mad has abandonment issues and will develop poop

Photos: Erin McElhinney



Top, Joshua, before bedbugs arrived.  
Bottom, Ginger Madeleine.

bottom and will refuse to eat or drink when put in a boarding environment, so it saved me a lot of stress to know she was being looked after.

Oh, and your whole building ideally should be fumigated. Some neighbors will hate you and blame your rabbits and your bales of hay for the inconvenience. All you can do is smile, except you can't because you're covered in bug bites and you haven't slept. (To this day, I still have never physically seen one of these bugs, although I most definitely had them.)

## Getting On With Your Life

Aside from recycling magazines and newspapers a lot more frequently than I had in the past, the following things proved invaluable in keeping these bloodsuckers away from me and my buns:

**Food-grade diatomaceous earth.** Food-grade DE is organic and safe for pets (we all ingest it regularly as it is used in

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## My Weekend With Ginger Madeleine

By Benjy Caplan

Ginger Madeleine needed a rabbit-friendly place to live during Erin McElhinney's bedbug fumigation, and so she stayed with me.

As I set down Ginger's litter box, bowls and portable gate inside my apartment, Erin stood in the doorway with both arms wrapped tightly around the pink carrier bag. "It's cozy here," Erin said. Still, she didn't let Ginger out of the carrier. "I've never had her stay with anyone else but the vet," Erin explained. "I'm not sure how I feel about this."

But with the food and water bowls soon filled, and the bucolic scent of hay wafting around us, Erin relaxed. "It'll be okay," she said softly into the carrier.

If Ginger Madeleine had any expectations for her weekend away from home, they probably included carpeting. But here the carpet was rolled up and leaning against the wall. And so when Ginger bounded from her carrier, she hit the wood flooring hard, her frantic paws flailing. She slid across the floor, coming to a stop with a half-rotation that ended with her staring up.

"Hi, Ginger," I said.

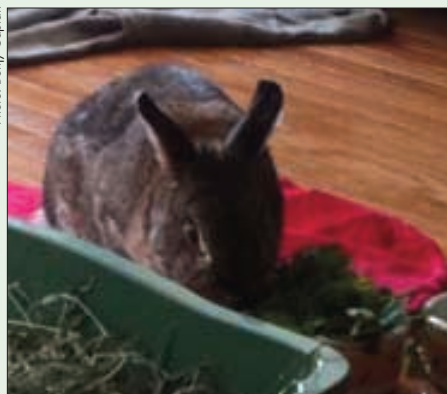
Erin demonstrated how to pick up and carry Ginger so as to not break her spine. Rabbits kick out their legs when grabbed, and the force of the kick is so strong that, if you don't support rabbits correctly, their backs can snap.

"Well, Ginger," I said after Erin left, "It's just you and me. What do you want to do first?"

She squirmed a bit in my arms. I kept her squeezed against my chest and, knees on wood, lowered my whole body to the floor until her paws touched down. She soft-shoed over to a loose piece of hay by the litter box. She took hold of one end of the hay and swung it side-to-side, pulling it into her mouth in a series of metronomic twitches. When she was done, she just stared at the rest of the hay, able to read some sense in the crisscrossing lines.

And then she plopped her belly down on the floor, her body pooling around her. She stayed like this for some time and gave no indication of dissatisfaction with the situation. I set up the gate around Ginger, her litter box and her bowls.

In the morning, she was exactly as she had been when I'd seen her last, although now her food bowl was empty and scraps of kale floated in her water bowl. I refilled the bowls and sautéed some of the extra kale for myself in some olive oil and garlic.



Ginger Madeleine during her stay with Benjy.

The apartment felt like a home for the first time perhaps since I'd moved there and it seemed a shame to have that ugly gate casting a gridded shadow over it all. I folded the gate against the wall. Though Ginger did little with her newfound freedom, she seemed to spread across the floor in deeper relaxation. We watched a soccer match. We returned some emails and listened to the least lethal music in my collection. The fresh smell of hay was comforting.

"Ginger, are you hungry? How's your day been so far?" I slid my hand along her spine, smoothing her ears down and watching them spring back up. I wondered what that sounded like to her.

Down on my belly now to see the world from her eyes. The world is a dusty place that is much less tidy close up than it appears from on high. Ginger lifted her stubby little head and brushed her cheek against mine. She stayed there, laying beside me, cheek-to-cheek.

I picked her up and she didn't kick. Instead, she let me hold her close and carry her to the couch. We sank in and she walked about on the sofa cushions, considering their lunar bounce for awhile before returning to my side. I read a few magazines with her, the pages flopping over like a lop's ear because I was holding the magazines with one hand and rubbing Ginger with the other

Then I made a trip to the grocer's to replenish our kale supply.

Sunday night swooped in much too quickly and soon Erin arrived to collect Ginger. By the time Erin got there, I'd scrubbed the floors clean, washed out all of Ginger's stuff so as to send her off in style, and had everything else ready for a speedy departure. Erin seemed grateful to be reunited with Ginger and to return home with her.

After the scent of the hay left the apartment, and after I stopped finding chew marks and other presents along the baseboards, after all of that, it still felt like Ginger was in the apartment, maybe hiding under the bed or in the corner. And when I was outside, overwhelmed among the other people, I was glad to know that there were rabbits out there somewhere, too, and that some of them were being picked up (but held the right way).

Rabbits are useless. Not even the smallest among us can ride them. Rabbits don't help with the chores, even though they are perfectly suited for dusting. What they can do is the one thing we all claim to want but conspire as a species to keep ourselves from doing: rabbits love and they ask for nothing in return.

*Benjy Caplan doesn't have any pets of his own but sometimes goes to the dog park and pretends that he does. He can be emailed at [benjy.caplan@gmail.com](mailto:benjy.caplan@gmail.com). To see a video Benjy took of Ginger during her stay, go to: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/gingermadeleine/5199350481/>*

# 15th Annual Rabbit Conference: Amy Sedaris, Benita, Battle of the Bulge

By: Natalie L. Reeves

High-school student Nora Beard was one of the more than 120 attendees at October's annual rabbit conference in New Rochelle, sponsored by New York's Rabbit Rescue & Rehab. With a journey of approximately seven hours round-trip, Nora likely traveled the farthest. "I enjoyed seeing Benita, and I thought the prices on rabbit products were just right for someone on a budget," she said.

## Celebrity Sightings

Celebrities Amy Sedaris and Benita the bunny charmed attendees. Amy drew laughs when she read from the rabbit-proofing section of her new book, "Simple Times: Crafts for Poor People." Benita the bunny, who was profiled in the October 2010 issue of Thump, provided proof to everyone who saw her that miracles can happen. Benita looked

healthy and happy and absolutely nothing like the pathetic, oil-soaked bunny who was rescued from an alley in September and subsequently nursed back to health by Mary Cotter and other volunteers.

## Dr. Saver's Presentation: Bulging Bunnies

Jennifer Saver from Long Island's Catnip & Carrots emphasized that our pets don't choose to be fat; their caregivers make them that way. Since rabbits can range from two to 22 pounds and their weight varies according to age, breed and other factors, each rabbit must be assessed as an individual.

Dr. Saver explained that a rabbit's body should be lean through the midsection, but that the ribs should not be easily palpable. Weight on a rabbit should be

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## Bedbugs *(Continued from page 5)*

foods to keep mealworms and other insects out of grains and pet food). I saw only the toxic kind on shelves of hardware stores, so you will have to buy this product online. You sprinkle powder along baseboards and anywhere you think bedbugs might be walking. As bugs walk over DE, they become coated in the powder of organic materials. It dehydrates them to death.

**Mattress and pillow covers.** The bonus effect is that they supposedly prevent dust mites, too. These can be purchased at Bed Bath & Beyond, IKEA and Target.

To prevent bedbugs from crawling up into your bed, remove the bed skirt and position your bed away from the wall. Removal of the bed skirt also forces you to face the realization that there is a lot of stray rabbit poop under your bed, and having to see it will force you to vacuum underneath more frequently. If you can identify the offending pooper,

then the little fuzzy guy or girl should be punished with kisses accordingly.

Spiders and house centipedes are your friends. They eat cockroaches and bedbugs!! Keep them around and they will do the dirty work for you. I didn't know this until I began to research the insect ecosystem in New York City apartments.

Post-bedbug life for me is finally starting to resemble pre-bedbug life, and I am grateful. I do not miss the sleepless nights and my endless inspection of



Top, Drs. Pilny, Saver and Hoefer.  
Bottom, Fern Cohen, a volunteer list manager for Etherbun.



Erin McElhinney, right, with RR&R's Cindy Stutts at the 2010 rabbit conference.

meaty little bun bodies, tugging each rabbit's fur this way and that in my search for signs of a bedbug bite. As scared as I was about my own bites, it tortured me to imagine my rabbits soundlessly enduring the bites that I had to deal with.

Having the support of my friends in Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, some of whom shared their own bedbug experiences, and the support of my colleagues and my friend Benjy who took care of Ginger for an entire weekend, helped me make it through this unfortunate episode.

The fact that I had a home full of innocent little faces also forced me to do the work necessary to beat this, battling back my gut desire to just walk away from everything and never look back. Once again, these gentle, formerly homeless and abandoned, vegan souls have a lot to teach me about strength, courage and perseverance.

## Conference *(Continued from page 7)*

assessed when rabbits are stretched out, rather than when they are in a hunched position. Overweight rabbits often have fat folds in places such as their abdomens, underarm and shoulder areas, and dewlaps (in females). Dr. Saver identified the rex and Dutch (the “linebackers of the rabbit world”) breeds as being prone to weight problems. Thus, owners of these breeds should pay particular attention to their bunnies’ weight maintenance.

Some signs that your rabbit may have a weight problem are that he:

- has difficulty grooming;
- has reduced his activity;
- has sore hocks;
- has difficulty ambulating; or
- has a dirty bottom.

Problems with the feet, urinary system, spine and joints, heart, skin and liver can all be consequences of rabbit obesity. Rabbits with sore hocks are in pain and need treatment by a veterinarian. In addition, rabbits with sore hocks should be given softer and thicker flooring and bedding, such as fake sheepskin, flannel sheets or lots of soft fleece.

Underweight rabbits have bodies that appear narrow with protruding spines. These rabbits usually are underweight because they have insufficient food, dental disease, GI motility problems, systemic disease (renal, hepatic or neurological) or cancer (not very common).

Dr. Saver relayed the good news that she sees a lot of healthy 11-, 12- and 13-year-old rabbits in her practice.

## Hands-On Techniques, Veterinarian Q&A

House Rabbit Society licensed educators, including Mary Cotter and Mary Ann Maier, demonstrated hands-on techniques, including temperature-taking, nail-clipping, safe ways to pick up rabbits and bonding. If you weren’t able to attend, you should always feel

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Amy Sedaris reading from her new book, “Simple Times.”

comfortable asking your rabbit’s vet to demonstrate these techniques (other than bonding). Alternatively, one of the educators (whose names and contact information are listed on the last page of Thump), can show you.

At least nine New York veterinarians attended the conference and answered questions during an afternoon panel discussion. Thank you to Drs. Becky Campbell, Laura George, Laurie Hess, Heidi Hoefler, Deborah Levison, Anthony Pilny, Katherine Quesenberry, Jennifer Saver and Jeff Rose for attending.

## Shopping

Many attendees shopped for themselves and for their bunnies. Sequin, a jewelry company whose pieces are sold at places such as Henri Bendel, donated jewelry customized with rabbit charms, with proceeds benefitting Rabbit Rescue & Rehab. Organic Hay Co. ([www.organichayco.com](http://www.organichayco.com)), a new company selling organic Timothy and alfalfa hay started by Dr. Laura George, was a huge hit and sold out its hay within the first five minutes of opening. Organic Hay Co. also distributed many free samples. Attendees bought calendars, knickknacks and T-shirts for themselves, and willow balls and other goodies for their bunnies.

Photo: Helen Chen



Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Top, shopping.  
Bottom, Benita with admirer.

# Benita Bounces Back

By Susan Lillo

Benita is making an amazing recovery, both physically and mentally. Benita's story, told in the October Thump, began on Labor Day, when writer Ben McCool found her in an abandoned cage outside his apartment building. Covered with urine and an unidentified brownish chemical, she was suffering from severe malnutrition and was barely able to stand. Ben brought her to the AC&C shelter, where her intake photos showed a scrawny, wet, terrified bunny.

Benita, already improving in rehab, made a guest appearance at the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab conference in October, where a sign on her puppy pen said, "Yes, I am the famous BENITA."

Since then, Benita has grown into a feisty, beautiful creature with spectacular ears and soft, shiny, golden fur. She has a strong personality in an equally strong body. She eats with great gusto, and moves constantly, leaping to the front of her cage and standing on tiptoes to greet any passerby. She is looking forward to the New Year, which, according to the Chinese calendar, is the year of the rabbit – HER year!

Photo: Mary Ann Maier



Photo: © Mary Cotter 2010

Photo: © Mary Cotter 2010



Photo: © Mary Cotter 2010



Photo: © Mary Cotter 2010



Benita at an adoption/education event in Westchester in early October.

Top left, Benita costarring with Mary Cotter in a temperature-taking demonstration at the 2010 rabbit conference.

Top right, hopping up stairs.

Middle, humbling Mary Cotter's dog, Murphy.

Bottom, sniffing Santa Claus.

## Davey's Battle With the Tooth-Root Abscess

By Robin Sternberg, LVT

I returned home from my annual camping trip to the Finger Lakes region of New York in the early evening of Sept. 6, badly in need of a hot shower and 12 hours of uninterrupted sleep in a bed with an actual mattress. Exhausted, I crawled into bed with Davey, my tiny hotot mix, for some post-vacation snuggling. Unlike Jay, my 5-year-old orange tabby, who is resentful when I travel and even more so when I return, Davey bore me no ill will and happily buried his head under my arm. Immediately, I knew that something was terribly wrong with his little face.

A mass, the approximate size of a walnut, had sprung up along Davey's lower right jaw line. When palpated, the mass was hard and round, and clearly causing my bunny substantial discomfort. At the animal hospital where I work as a licensed veterinary technician, we see many different species of animals with assorted lumps and bumps, often accompanied by the owner's declaration that "It just popped up overnight!" I was often skeptical of these claims, keeping in mind that small animal owners don't routinely examine every inch of their pets daily. But I KNEW that Davey's lump hadn't been there the week before; I spent an inordinate amount of time cuddling him an hour before I left for my six-day trip. And during the trip I received twice-daily updates from the extraordinary woman who tends to all seven of my pets when I travel. Surely *she* would have noticed if something had been amiss. Nevertheless, Davey was going to have to accompany me to work in the morning for a medical exam.

My first encounter with Davey, a Rabbit Rescue & Rehab bunny, had been in early July at Veterinary Internal Medicine and Allergy Specialists, the hospital where I work. I performed anesthesia as Dr. Anthony Pilny, our avian and exotics vet, neutered him and removed his badly maloccluded incisors. I fell

madly in love with him at that time, and, by late August, had adopted him from Rabbit Rescue & Rehab.

Davey had been enjoying his third-cut Timothy hay and daily ration of Timothy pellets with gusto. However, the new swelling along his jaw line made me worry that the molars on the right-hand side of his face may have been maloccluded, and that additional surgery would be in order.

On Sept. 7, Dr. Pilny completed a thorough checkup of Davey, including an oral exam under light sedation, and X-rays. The good news: his molars were

not maloccluded; in fact, they were in perfect shape. The bad news: Davey was diagnosed with a tooth-root abscess, which could require surgery. Also, his peg teeth (a secondary set of two teeth that grow behind the upper incisors) had erupted, and eventually would also have to be removed.

An abscess is defined as a pus-filled pocket or cavity – in this case, within the gums of the bunny. The removal of a rabbit's incisor leaves an elongated hole where the root of the tooth used to be. If bacteria become lodged within this hole, an abscess can form. Abscesses can also form if the rabbit's teeth become overgrown, puncturing the surrounding tissue and allowing bacteria to take hold in the wound. Pus forms as a result of

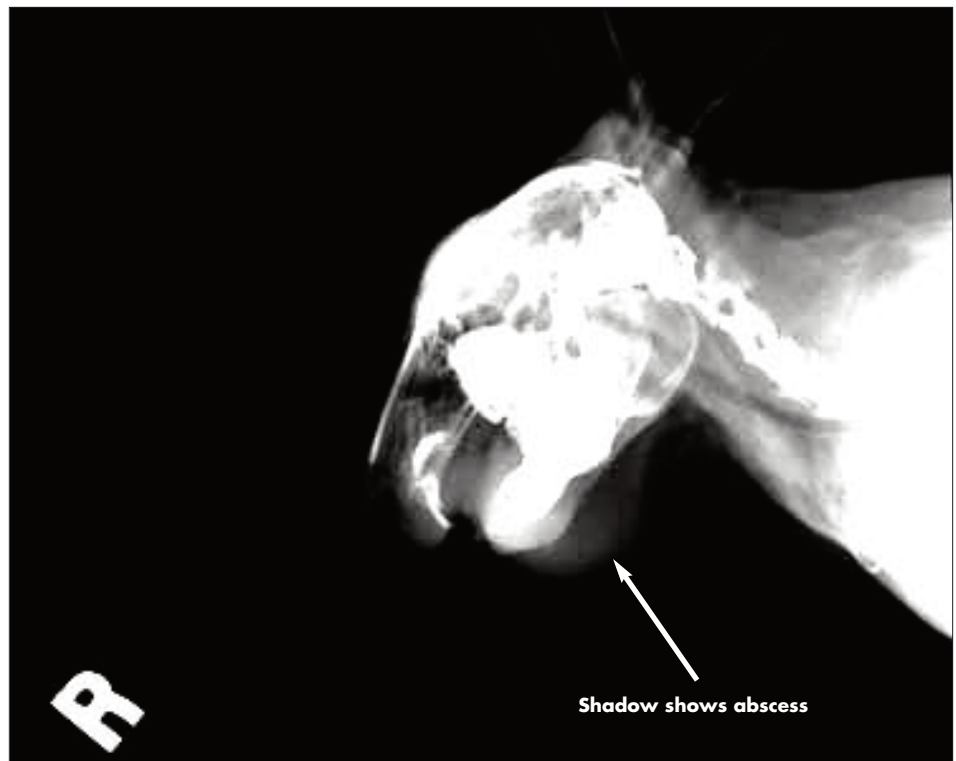
*(Continued on page 11)*

Photo: Robin Sternberg



Right, Davey, seen the night of Sept. 6, had an enormous bulge that was the undiagnosed abscess in his lower right jaw.

Below, this X-ray of Davey's skull, taken by Dr. Pilny, shows a bulging shadow under his chin, which is the abscess. There is virtually no bone deterioration along the lower jaw.



Shadow shows abscess

## **Abscess** *(Continued from page 10)*

white blood cells migrating to the area of infection, and is not quite like the pus we see in an abscess of a dog or cat. Instead of being “liquidy,” it has the consistency of *really* old toothpaste, making it difficult to clean out the wound pocket. Also, rabbit abscesses tend not to rupture on their own; hence the possibility of additional surgery for poor little Davey.

However, there *was* another bit of good news: X-rays revealed that the bone of Davey’s lower jaw was virtually intact. Tooth-root abscesses frequently encroach upon the jawbone, again necessitating surgery. Dr. Pilny and I agreed upon a conservative course of treatment, which included daily injections of penicillin G for two weeks, in an attempt to eradicate the bacterial infection.

I returned home with Davey and had high hopes – along with enough prefilled penicillin syringes to start my own STD clinic. As an LVT, I had administered literally hundreds of injections to many different species over the course of my (second) career. I had not, however,

had the experience of administering an injection to any of my own beloved animals. Back in 2005, before I even knew what a veterinary technician was, I brought my (then) kitten Jay to Dr. Jennifer Chaitman, the veterinarian and owner of the hospital where I am now employed, for a routine checkup. I turned green and had to leave the room before she gave Jay his first rabies vaccine. He remembers, and still hasn’t forgiven her, nor me.

I prepared to administer the first injection to Davey. I removed the syringe cap and tented the skin between Davey’s shoulder blades. Then I broke out in a cold sweat. I released Davey, recapped the syringe and called my next-door neighbor (a vet tech student) for help. Eventually, my extremely patient “patient” received his medication. And I got better at it over the course of the next few days.

Five days after Davey was seen by Dr. Pilny, I came home from dinner out with my boyfriend and entered my bedroom, where I detected a vile smell.

Besides Davey, I also have another bunny, three rats and a chinchilla living in my bedroom. I carefully checked each

litter box, cage and enclosure for the source of the smell. Nothing. And then I saw it: Davey’s abscess had ruptured.

Exercising my doctor-nurse privileges, I placed a panicked late-night call to Dr. Pilny, who reassured me that the ruptured abscess was the best-case scenario. I rushed Davey back to the hospital. Thankfully, we have a tech on duty there 24-7! Wonderful Nii Koteii, the overnight technician, carefully shaved the fur from around the abscess, and then meticulously scooped what he could of the thick pus from the open pocket. He then cleansed the wound with a dilute chlorhexidine solution. Uncomfortable as he was, brave little Davey barely protested.

For the next week, I repeated the procedure on a daily basis. An abscess needs to be kept open in order to heal properly; if the skin closes over before the infection is gone, secondary pockets of pus can form. Slowly, the abscess healed. The fur grew back. And, fortunately, Davey’s appetite and ability to eat and drink never diminished throughout his entire ordeal, which can be a real concern in abscesses occurring in the oral cavity.

Davey’s peg teeth were removed by Dr. Pilny on Oct. 19, along with an additional lower incisor that may have broken during the initial surgery. And if you think giving your own animal an injection is tough, try putting and keeping your own bunny under anesthesia as you watch your vet perform surgery on him right before your very eyes. I found myself talking to him throughout the procedure, though I doubt he heard me through the anesthesia and my own surgical mask.

I syringe-fed him Oxbow Critical Care for the next day, and had to retrain him in ‘Sipper Tube 101.’ He has completely healed and is fine now. And best of all, he does not hold any of it against me!

Left, Davey’s infection is gone and his jaw line is back to normal. Life is good again!



## Prospect Park Patty Comes Indoors to Stay

By Marcie Frishberg

It started with a post on the nycbuns Yahoo! Groups listserv in June, from a Brooklyn rabbit owner named Nina. “Just tried unsuccessfully to catch an abandoned rabbit” in Prospect Park, she said, describing the rabbit as “small, black, quite tame but obviously terrified.” Nina asked for help in rescuing the rabbit, and said she’d be willing to foster the bun.

I arranged to meet two members of the Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group at Prospect Park. The volunteers, Donna Sheridan and Nancy Schreiber, brought along a net and other gear, and we decided to use a piece of banana to lure the bunny toward us so that we could use the net.

After about an hour of crouching in the bushes, the bunny was safely in the pet carrier.

Nancy did a quick medical exam, checking for ticks and mites and giving the rabbit a dose of Revolution. We clipped the bunny’s nails and found that she was a female. Since it was late, I agreed to keep the rabbit and bring her to Nina’s house over the weekend.

I put her in the top two levels of my Leith Petwerks condo, setting her up with a litter box filled with hay, a second box to hide in, and some pellets and greens.

I noticed that the rabbit didn’t want to leave the litter box, and the next day

when I took her out for exercise, I could see that she was favoring one leg. I gave her Metacam and brought her to be seen by Sara Neuman at the Vinegar Hill Veterinary Group in Brooklyn. After an examination and X-rays of the leg, Dr. Neuman said there was a fracture of the right front ulna and a partial radial fracture. Since she didn’t want to add to the rabbit’s already stressed state by splinting the leg, Dr. Neuman recommended six weeks of confinement, rest and Metacam.

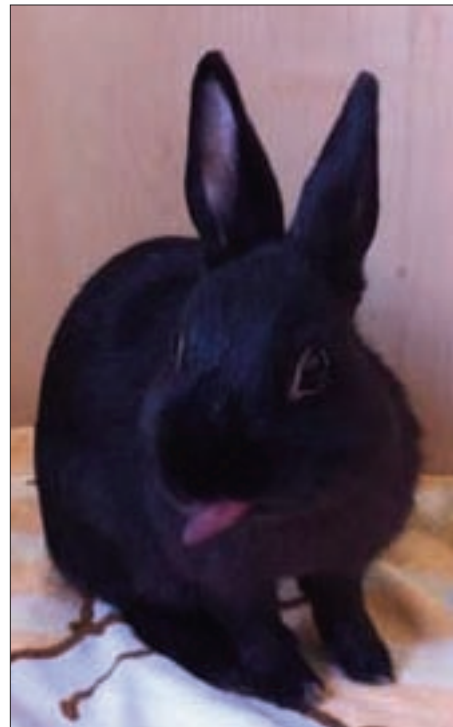
I named the rabbit Prospect Park Patty.

Because Patty was injured, I contacted Nina and we agreed that Prospect Park Patty should stay with me.

For six weeks, Patty stayed in the upper level of the condo, taking her Metacam. Then I started letting her out in a small area for exercise. I brought her to AC&C in Manhattan to get spayed, and within a couple of hours after surgery, she was jumping and running around.

Now it was time to get her socialized and ready to be adopted. I started bringing Patty with me to Petco on Saturdays so that she could become more comfortable around people. At first she stared nervously at visitors with her big round eyes, but she became more trusting. She even started showing off with binkies and bunny dancing.

Photos: Joy Chang



Patty relaxes at home.

In late October, Justin and Joy met Patty at Petco and decided to adopt her. A short time later, they wrote, “Patty is doing great! She is very sweet, and she’s adjusting well to her new home.”

## Good Luck Arrived Inside a Paper Bag in the Snow

By Missy K

The Ben McCool story in the last issue of Thump made me want to congratulate him for doing the right thing by rescuing Benita.

I, too, found my first bunny by doing something off the beaten path. My car had been towed in December 2008 and I had no way of getting to work the next morning. I intended to use the day making screaming phone calls to city agencies.

I got up early and walked 10 blocks in the snow to get milk. As I left the store, I saw a group of people outside who were staring into paper bag that had rope handles. As I approached, I heard one man say, “Oh, throw it in the dumpster.” I looked in the bag, and saw a terrified white rabbit looking up. I had six cats at home, but I pushed everyone aside and said, “Give her to me!” I carried her home in the paper bag, along with my quart of milk.

Photo: Missy K



Yuki enjoys greens.

(Continued on page 13)

**Yuki** (Continued from page 12)

She shivered in the bag; there was no blanket to shield her from the snow and ice. The rope on the bag broke. I clutched her to my chest and we continued home along the slippery path.

I had no idea what to do with her, considering that I already was caring for so many cats. I knew Dr. Jennifer Saver, though, so I contacted her and she told me about Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group.

That evening, my oldest cat, who was 17, died in my arms. It was heart-breaking for me, but somehow I knew this meant that I was destined to keep the rabbit I'd found that day. She was in a box with blankets, and the cats didn't seem to mind having her in our home.

I called Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group and said, "I found a rabbit and I think I want to keep her, not give her over to a shelter." I heard excited squeals and then the person on the other end said, "No one ever says that. Where are you?"

A volunteer from the group came to my house a few days later. I received a cage, toys, food, diet guidelines, lots of rabbit literature and a hearty thank you.

I named the rabbit Yuki, which means snow in Japanese. I later adopted a dwarf boy, Topaz, as a partner for her. More recently, I adopted a little lionhead bunny, GinGin, from the Hop A Long Hollow rescue group in Connecticut.

I saved enough money to start my own business, and I named it after Yuki. She's my good-luck charm. I have an office now, and I am able to keep all my rabbits and cats spoiled and happy. The bunnies and the cats play tag, and no one has ever hurt anyone else.

It wasn't fun having my car towed, but I was happy to bring Yuki home with me that winter day. Everything happens for a reason.

## Why Does My Bunny Thump?

By Lisa Carley

Isn't it odd when your bunny stamps his feet? It's quite loud, and sort of strange, from a predator's point of view.

From a prey animal's point of view, it's not so unusual.

What makes your little one do this?

Because I've spent the past nine years explaining to my two-pound rabbit that he's "not for eating purposes,"

I feel personally offended by thumping.

In fact, I've tried to explain to him that our home is a "no-thump zone." Sometimes he listens; other times, not so much.

In the wild, thumping was a signal to other rabbits that there was danger around. It could have also been a warning to the ones scaring the rabbit that the rabbit was big and strong and couldn't be intimidated.

In house rabbits, it often stems from something odd in their environment – say, a curious smell or sound. Rabbits can also thump if you annoy them. Rabbits who don't want to be picked up are often known to thump to show their disapproval.

We imagine this harkens back to the "big and strong and cannot be intimidated" behavior.

Do you have any great stories about your bunny's thumping habits? If so, please share them with us (attn: Lisa Carley) at [nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com).

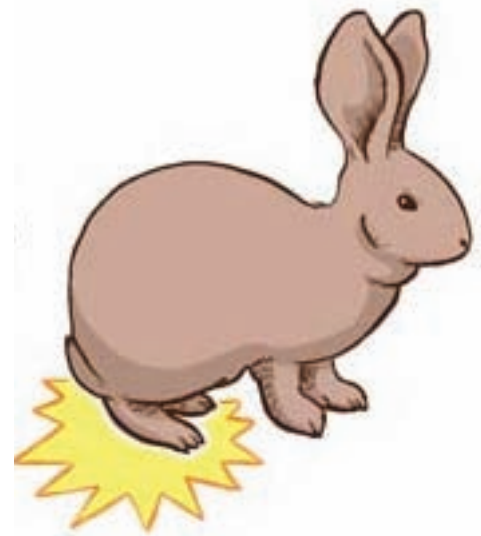
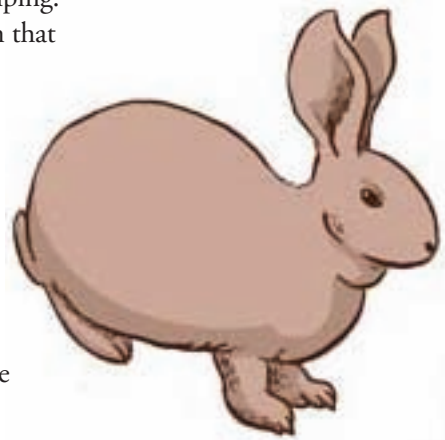
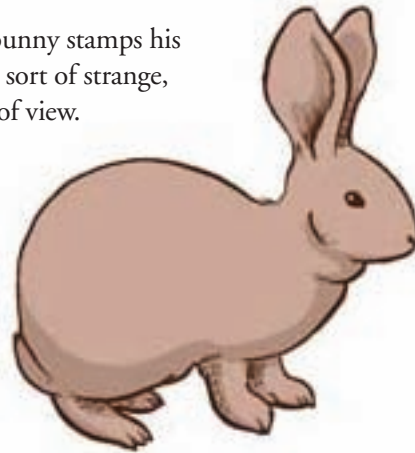


Illustration: Eric Hosford

## It's the Season for Year-End Giving: Donations Help Our Rabbits, Not Us

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers put in long hours, for which none of us receives any financial reimbursement. We donate our time. We donate greens for the bunnies, along with toys, grooming items and giant bags of hay. Some volunteers transport bunnies to local veterinarians for emergency care or checkups. We do not receive any remuneration for any of this. As volunteers, we want to help the rabbits in any way we can. We foster some of our rabbits at home, paying for their food ourselves.

What is surprising to us is that many people assume that we are paid for our work. We are not. All donations that we receive go directly to our rabbits and their care.

Amy Odum, who fosters many rabbits, said: "A 'rabbit person' I know once asked me a few years back how much of a stipend I got paid by RR&R for fostering rabbits!"

Marcie Frishberg, who organizes RR&R's volunteer work at the Petco stores in Manhattan, said it is important to let people know that volunteers do not receive any money for what they do. "When the people say nice job you have, I say, 'I wish I got paid for this. That would be so cool,'" and then I go on and tell them how much time I give and how much money we put out for the buns, so they feel guilty and give a donation!"

Much of the money goes for special vet care, such as eye surgery, amputations, or emergency intervention to save a bunny's life. Our rabbit-savvy vets often help us for free, or charge less to treat a shelter rabbit. Many vets provide countless hours of free consultations.

Most RR&R volunteers have regular 9-5 jobs in fields unrelated to rabbits. After work, some of us rush to the shelter or to one of the Petcos in order to check on our rabbits, clean their cages and provide them with fresh lettuce, parsley or other greens. Weekend volunteers devote entire afternoons to the rabbits, playing with them and speaking to

potential adopters. This is unpaid work, but this is wonderful work. We would not trade this volunteer work for anything in the world. Our goal is to rescue and rehabilitate all of our rabbits, and then to find great homes for all of them.

We provide support and information for all rabbit owners, not just those who have adopted a rabbit from us. Often we can help people learn more about a rabbit's diet, or about medical issues or grooming. We regularly follow up when we are asked questions about rabbit care. Our phone numbers are listed as resources for rabbit owners, and we freely answer all questions we receive.

Many people have purchased rabbits at pet stores, and then come to us when there are problems. Of course, we try to assist these people, as well as their rabbits, but often people assume that they are entitled to our help. Many of these people have done little research about rabbits, and have many questions. This kind of work keeps us from focusing on our primary tasks, which are the rescue and rehabilitation of abandoned and unwanted rabbits. For instance, people may demand that we return their calls immediately. They may have the false assumption that we are manning the phones throughout the day, or that we are always able to rush out and rescue a poor bunny in distress.

The sad realization is that we are stretched thin, with a limited number of volunteers and a limited amount of available time. We have our hands full already, and we are doing our rabbit-rescue work in our spare hours, which is usually in the evening or on weekends. RR&R has no facility of our own where we can care for rabbits; we rely on the city shelter system, and on a small group of great people who can foster some of the rabbits. We are unable to hurry out with a cage or supplies on a second's notice, just because a person has purchased a rabbit without thinking about the responsibility and commitment entailed in the purchase of any pet.

Photo: Yan Sehir



Petco employee Anthony Patterson, dressed as Santa, holds Oreo as Dante Martinez sits with Honey, during a Dec. 4 holiday photo shoot at the Lexington Ave. store.

Donna, Sheridan, a Long Island Rabbit Rescue volunteer for many years, summed it up this way: "Sometimes when people call with general questions about rabbit care, we may be coping with a life-or-death emergency. For instance, a rabbit may be in stasis (a deadly condition) and we may be racing out to administer meds and take temperature to keep the animal alive until vet care is obtained."

She added, "Many people who didn't adopt from us (a process that includes an informational booklet and hands-on instruction concerning handling, nail-clipping and temperature-taking) don't hesitate to call us as soon as trouble arises, and the result is that we are swamped all the time and sometimes it takes a while for an inquiry to be answered. But we are diligent in answering all phone calls and emails."

**Rabbit Rescue & Rehab is a not-for-profit tax-exempt organization in New York State. All donations go to caring for our rabbits and are tax-deductible. Checks should be made out to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and mailed to: Nancy Schreiber, 12 Grace Court North, Great Neck, NY 11021**

# RIP: Flopsy

By Will Leung

Flopsy Mopsie. That is what I named my bunny when I adopted her from a family who gave her up after an uncle returned home from military service and had an allergic reaction.

“Flopsy” referred to the way she moved. “Mopsie” was appropriate because she was an American fuzzy lop and looked like a mop sometimes. She was 2 1/2 years old, or so I was told, and was herself adopted from an animal shelter on Long Island.

The first day I took her home, I realized that Flopsy had a passion for food. It took her no time to figure out where the fridge was, and she promptly jumped right into the fridge when I opened it for her first breakfast.

She would always be the first in line at the fridge (I subsequently brought home three other rabbits: Pickles, Nibbles and Duchess), and would start her food dance around my feet, or on her own like a puppy chasing her own tail.

She was always the easiest to befriend by the others, and generously offered grooming, and she was the only one who would thank me after a petting.

She had good manners, too. She never chewed on walls, corners or wires. And she used to lie next to my feet when I slept. She also loved cheek rubs, and instantly offered teeth grinding to let me know her enjoyment.

Photo: Will Leung



Flopsy, Nibbles and Pickles.

But almost as soon as I got her, I also realized that something wasn't right with her digestive system. While the others excreted normally, she would put out little eggs that were three times larger than normal. I used to laugh and call her a chicken rabbit.

I have always offered my rabbits generous amounts of vegetables, and measured amounts of pellets. But as Flopsy grew older, she started having soft stools, and eventually that got worse. Knowing that she had a delicate digestive system, I tried to vary the type of veggies she ate, pellet amounts and water intake. However, trying to control her diet meant disrupting the diet of my other rabbits. And for some reason she just loved water. I used to give all my rabbits water bottles, and sometimes she would just sit there and drink for half an hour. And what also was a mystery to me was that she loved to pee on soft stuff – beds, sofas, the doggie bed I got for them, pillows, any cardboard I put down or magazines I gave them to chew. So it

became a constant battle to clean up after her.

I still don't understand why I would be blessed to have a rabbit with such a delightful personality but with such poor health.

Until I started volunteering with the rabbit group, I thought that Flopsy was unique in having bad health all the time. But I learned that this could be a genetic disease. Something I learned about was a condition called megacolon.

When she wasn't feeling well on a recent morning, I hugged her, petted her, massaged her tummy and gave her simethicone. Her tummy wasn't hard, and she poked my hand away to tell me to let her go.

She often would run around from one side of the room to the other to try to get comfortable, and she did this on that last day. I left for work thinking she would be fine, like the few other times she'd had tummy aches. She was actually more active than all the other times. So I left her. And then she left me.

Pickles and Nibbles said their goodbyes. Nibbles snuggled with Flopsy briefly and Pickles groomed her for 10 to 15 minutes – the longest I have ever seen him groom, if he groomed anyone at all.

Flopsy had been with me since July 2005. She was my first real pet, and my first loss. I like to think she had eight wonderful years.

## Litter Box Skills: Do Not Despair!

By Genevieve Hannon

In terms of litter training, I always advise new adopters, do not despair!! Your bunny is likely just marking his territory in his first week home. This should cease as soon as he's settled. I would make sure to help him by picking up all stray poops and placing them in his box. Clean up all urine with white vinegar, a weak acetic acid that neutralizes rabbit urine. Praise your bunny after he's come

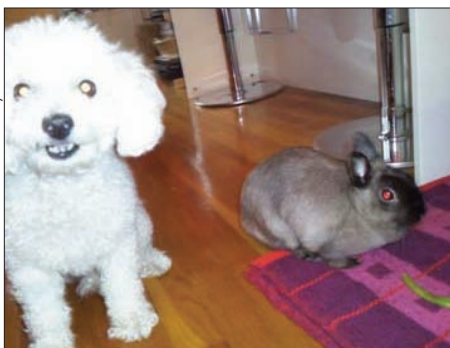
out of the litter box after peeing and pooping there. Do not scold him when he pees and poops in other places. You are trying to establish trust right now and scolding doesn't usually work, even when he is caught directly in the act. Keep his box clean daily with a new paper lining and fresh Timothy hay. Clean the litter box with a nontoxic spray like Seventh Generation or just plain vinegar and water. Be patient. You can also invest in a couple litter boxes and place them

where he's inclined to go a lot; slowly take them away as he gets more focused on one. The single most important fact to remember about litter training is this: Territory must be carefully restricted, with a rabbit kept in a cage or pen until his litter-box habits are strongly established. This usually doesn't take long. To learn more, go to the House Rabbit Society's Web page on litter training:

<http://www.rabbit.org/faq/sections/litter.html>

# Letters

Photo: Raymond DeBuono



Leeloo with poodle Patch.

## Leeloo

*Leeloo, who used to be called Chocolate, was adopted by Margarita and Raymond. They sent us this letter in late September.*

Chocolate, now called Leeloo after the “fifth element,” love, is doing great! She adjusted so quickly to her crate and our home and we slowly (well it was on the first day) introduced her to our poodle. It went perfectly.

Leeloo is a remarkably brave little bunny. She didn't have the least fear of the dog. We were ready for anything, but Leeloo made it the easiest thing in the world. They have bonded really well and have had some playtime together already. Leeloo actually looks for him when he walks away! We definitely look forward to years of loving them as our furry babies.

Leeloo has the perfect mellow attitude we were looking for. She made herself at home and marked everything as belonging to her with her little chin, maybe even the dog!

Upon reading about the personality types of bunnies, we have discovered Leeloo to be a Queen Bunny! She is so independent yet likes to cuddle as long as it's on her terms. :)

Margarita and Raymond

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Nugget at AC&C.

Photo: Lindsay Soderman



Nugget gets pampered at home by Jamie.

## Nugget

*Eric and Laurie adopted Nugget in mid-October, and they sent this update to Genevieve Hannon.*

Genevieve,

Thanks for your help. Nugget came home on Saturday and is loving his home as much as we love having him.

Eric

Photo: Brook Helmer



Louis lounging.

## Louis

*Louis was adopted by Brook, who sent us this email in early October.*

We're totally in love with Louis! He seems to be doing well and getting adjusted to his new environment.

He's claimed a big area rug we have in the living room as his own. Every time he gets on it he jumps up in the air and hops all over it. He's so adorable! There are many times throughout the evening when he'll sprawl out over his rug and watch TV.

He's thoroughly enjoying his bunny condo. I found a pet store very close to me that sells Oxbow products and for a much cheaper price than I was paying for other brands of hay and pellets. We visited Dr. Saver last week and she gave Louis a clean bill of health. She said he's probably still hormonal and suggested I wait a couple more weeks before getting him a friend. So, hopefully you will be seeing us within the next few months.

Louis is already a part of our home and family and we're all having a great time.

Please don't forget about us. We haven't forgotten about you!

Brook and Tem

*(Continued on page 17)*

## Letters

(Continued from page 16)

Photo: Helen Chen



Xiao Erhei fka Baxter at the shelter.

### Xiao Erhei

*Xiao Erhei, formerly known as Baxter, was adopted by Cindy, who sent us her news in early October.*

I gave Baxter a Chinese name, Xiao Erhei, a well-known handsome male character in a Chinese film. He is part of the family now. There are two tricks he loves to do: luring us to run after him, and digging tunnels with our quilts in bed. Thank you for your help with Xiao Erhei.

Cindy

### Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Claire, Maizy, Louis, Trix, Hop, Jojo, India, Nugget, Milano, Scooter, Rhombus, Luke & Mark, Aimee, Radcliffe, Prospect Park Patty, Beauford, Goldie, Augustus, Angelica, Trevor, Rhubarb, Isis, Edwina, Lola, Dario, Brittany, Cindy Lou, Lupe and Veronica.

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



Edwina.

Photo: Jen Ziefert



Stella is a very popular bun.

### Stella

*Stella, formerly known as Madeline, was adopted by Jen, who gave us this update in early October.*

Stella has been getting settled and adjusting to her new life in our home. She is so sweet and loving. It took a week or so for her to adjust. I think the hardest part for her was getting used to the loud screech of our lovebird, but now she doesn't seem to notice it.

She is eating a ton of fresh veggies and some pellets every day. She runs to the kitchen whenever anyone goes there and hangs around the fridge hoping for greens.

She is so gentle and sweet with the kids. They absolutely adore her. A common conversation between my kids goes like this:

Lucy (2 yrs): Stella is my bunny.

Charlie (5 yrs): No, Lucy, Stella is OUR bunny.

Lucy: No, MY BUNNY.

Charlie: NO, she is all of ours, not just yours.

Lucy: NO, my bunny!!

Charlie: Actually, Lucy, Stella loves me the best.

It might be true. Stella seems to really love Charlie the most. Lucy loves to lay down next to her and give her big bear hugs, which Stella totally tolerates. Charlie sits patiently and pets her and gives her lettuce or a carrot.

I'm taking Stella this weekend to see our vet, who is amazing, to get a baseline checkup and introduce them to each other. All in all, it's going well. Stella is a welcome and lovely addition to our family.

Jen

Photo: John Castillo



Spartacus chillin' with a good book.

### Spartacus

*Spartacus, formerly known as Reese, was adopted by Lenny and her husband, John. She sent this email in late October.*

This coming weekend marks a month since John and I adopted Spartacus. I have to thank Gen and Cindy for helping to bring another rabbit into my life after so many years without the company of one. My husband also confessed to me that he's crazy about our rabbit. He never had a pet before and is allergic to cats and dogs.

We're still working on litter-box skills with Spartacus. It's a work in progress. I still don't understand how his previous family could bring him back. He's gorgeous. He's always a pleasure to watch when he binkies and races around like he's on fast forward.

To complete our little family, we look forward to bringing home a friend for Spartacus. Thank you for all that you do for the bunnies and the homes that become their forever homes, like ours.

Lenny & John & Spartacus

P.S. On Oct. 30, Lenny and John adopted Beauford as a partner for Spartacus.

(Continued on page 18)

## Letters

(Continued from page 17)

Photo: Mitch Abramson



Muffin (aka Thumper) with Stew.

## Muffin

*Mitch adopted Muffin as a partner bun in September, and he sent us this report.*

Everything went great. The rabbits took a couple of days to get used to each other, but less than a week later they were getting along really well. They are sitting together and eating together and they have started to clean each other.

Mitch

---

Photo: Sylvia Herrera



Penny with Josie.

## Penny

*Sylvia adopted Aimee, now known as Penny, in late October. We received this update a short time later.*

We renamed Aimee and now call her Penny. She is settling in at home very well, has a hearty appetite and is very curious. She is quite interested in her new sister, our Maltese Josie, and likes to hang out with her.

Josie is doing very well also. She wants to play with Penny but she is realizing Penny just likes to relax most of the time.

Sylvia

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Photo: Helen Chien



Isis at AC&C.

Photo: Bonnie Chachkes



Talia and Isis.

## Isis

*Isis was adopted in early November by the Chachkes family. Isis now spends her days relaxing in Talia's room, getting lots of loving hugs. Here is an update.*

Isis is a very affectionate rabbit and we are enjoying her lots. She seems to be happy here as well. Talia is a very loving owner. Thanks again.

Jake

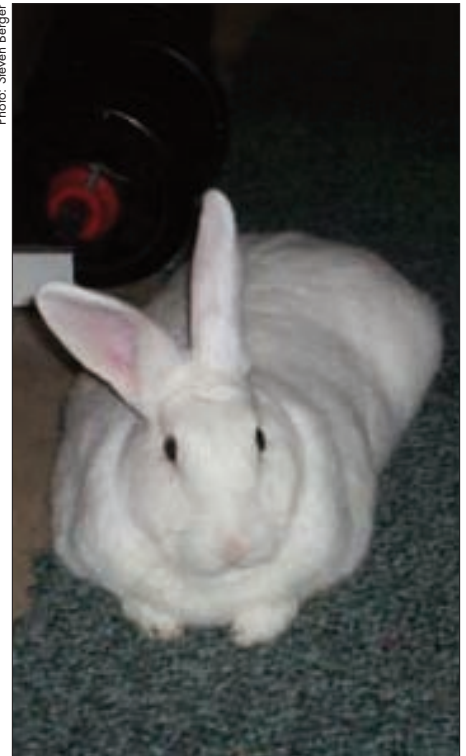
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Photo: Helen Chien



Felicia at AC&C.

Photo: Steven Berger



Felicia.

## Felicia

*Felicia was adopted by Steven Berger in early July, and he recently sent us an email to tell us how she was enjoying her new home.*

She's doing wonderfully. We changed her name to Cadbury the Bunnygirl because she looks like the Cadbury Bunny. She is so mellow. When I'm by the computer, she lies by my feet so I can pet her. She makes the best company.

Steven

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## Rabbit-Savvy Veterinarians

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

### 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  
698 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10025  
(212) 866-8000

Katherine Quesenberry, DVM

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

### Manhattan (continued):

Alex Wilson, DVM

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

Anthony Pilny, DVM

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

Shachar Malka, DVM

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

### Westchester County:

Gil Stanzone, DVM

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

Laurie Hess, DVM

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

## 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/AC&C Rabbit Program,  
bygolyoly@yahoo.com, (646) 319-4766,  
nycacc.org

Mary Ann Maier, HRS Licensed Educator,  
Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group Volunteer,  
altitude8@yahoo.com, (516) 671-6654,  
LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

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

Kerstin Aumann, HRS Licensed Educator,  
NYC/AC&C Volunteer,  
nyc.acc.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 December 2010

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS  
56 West Pondfield Road #5C  
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[www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org)

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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](mailto:bygolyoly@yahoo.com) or call her at 646-319-4766. On **Long Island**, contact Nancy Schreiber at [nschreibmd@aol.com](mailto:nschreibmd@aol.com) or at 516-510-3637 ([www.longislandrabbitrescue.org](http://www.longislandrabbitrescue.org)), and in **Westchester** contact Mary Cotter at [mec@cloud9.net](mailto:mec@cloud9.net) or 914-337-6146 ([www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org)).

Our group's email address in New York City is [nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com).

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

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

Many of our rabbits are living in foster homes and you can meet them as well. You also can arrange to foster a rabbit until he or she finds a permanent home. Contact Amy Odum at [amy@adoptabunny.info](mailto:amy@adoptabunny.info) or [nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.acc.rabbits@gmail.com).

For basic information about rabbits as pets, go to [www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org), [www.longislandrabbitrescue.org](http://www.longislandrabbitrescue.org) and the House Rabbit Society main site, [www.rabbit.org](http://www.rabbit.org).