

# THUMP

NYC METRO RABBIT NEWS JUNE 2016

## Two Dutch Sisters Teach Us the Joy Of a Bonded Pair

By Elisabeth Vincentelli

When our beloved Chopper passed away, Robyn and I were distraught but we also knew we had become bunny people and would want to adopt another. The big decision was whether to adopt another solo rabbit or a bonded pair.

After reading up on the subject and weighing the pros and cons, we decided to

*(Continued on page 2)*

Photo: Amelia Wilson



Volunteers Sherry Riad, Nadine Heidinger, Neil Schaier, Thea Harting, Doug Lee, Cathe Crekis, Adrianne Hamilton and Dave Feld posing with giant rabbit sculpture at installation by artist Amanda Parer. **Page 4.**

Photo: Shane York



Lola.

## Whatever Lola Wants, Lola Gets

By Shane York

It was a dark, rainy night when the police found her loitering by some trash bins outside of a bowling alley in Yonkers. She

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Betsy's Happy Rescue on Long Island Leads to Unfortunate Medical Diagnosis

By Denise Bertolotti

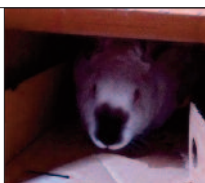
I thought Betsy's rescue was basic. We received an email from a woman in a local town who had found a domestic rabbit hopping down her block. The woman put on her dishwashing gloves, went outside and scooped up the rabbit.

She brought the rabbit inside, put the bunny in an old hamster cage and searched the Internet for a rabbit rescue. She found Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group and emailed, asking us to come pick up this rabbit. I replied with our

*(Continued on page 3)*



**Bunnies Take Part In Adoption Event At the Brooklyn Expo Center**  
Page 9



**Here Are Ways To Detect Signs of Illness In Your Rabbit**  
Pages 11-12



**Rabbit Rescue & Rehab Launches Fundraising Campaign Online**  
Pages 20-21

Our masthead bunnies, Bailey (tan) and Eddie (black) are a bonded pair of lops. Eddie was adopted from Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group in December 2014. Their proud mom, Dee, loves them very much! Photo illustration by Mary Ann Maier. Photo: Dee Carbone.

## Two Dutch Sisters

*(Continued from page 1)*

go for a pair. Robyn works from home so any bunny would have company during the day, but we always felt sad leaving Chopper on her own when we went on vacation, even with a friend bunny-sitting.

We ended up adopting two young Dutch sisters, Sara and Suzette (renamed Babs and Clover), from Rabbit Rescue & Rehab. When we visited them at Petco on East 86th Street, Babs jumped on Robyn's back in the pen and Clover crouched down to be petted. From that moment on, we were a family.

We'd gotten a new carrier to fit both of them comfortably, and when we got to our Brooklyn apartment they jumped out and put on quite a show: They ran laps at full speed and binkied. It was amazing to watch how happy they were!

After that initial greeting we all had a bit of a learning curve. Clover is fairly calm but Babs, the smaller one, is a little skittish and is especially wary of sudden noises. Good thing we'd bought a pen (Chopper was free range) because it helped the girls acclimate to their new surroundings. They immediately loved their duplex cage, and being able to play in a contained space right outside helped build their confidence.

Photo: Robyn Sunderland



Apple attack! Babs is at left, Clover is at right, with Elisabeth.

Gradually we started letting them out in the living room, always under our supervision. These two just love to explore and run laps, especially in the morning. Having two young, excitable bunnies sure keeps us on our toes!

We've discovered all the fun of having a bonded pair. In the morning they love to be petted together, with Clover nestling under Babs' chin. We love to watch them groom each other. Clover calms Babs down, but at the same time Babs tends to be dominant – she'll give Clover a nip on the butt to make her move

when Clover is lying in one of the coveted lounging areas. Watch out for those little ones!

Another big difference from a solo bun: it's much harder to fend off a joint attack! Clover and Babs are crazy about apples and you only need to pick one from the bowl to be instantaneously covered in frenzied rabbits. We know better than to let them have more than the tiniest little piece each, but their efforts to get more are highly enjoyable. Now we just can't imagine our home without Babs and Clover.

## Lola

*(Continued from page 1)*

was leaning against the wall, trying to look inconspicuous, but they knew as soon as they saw her, she didn't belong. I still can't imagine what possessed these officers to jump out of their car to try and apprehend a bunny, but I will be forever grateful they did. Once my girl was safe in the officer's arms, it would set off a chain of events that would eventually bring us together forever.

Photo: Shane York



Shane with Lola.

She was a Dutch bunny, gray and white, and was estimated to be about a year old. The volunteers at the local animal

shelter named her Lola and the name stuck like glue. We finally came together through Rabbit Rescue & Rehab in 2005 and it was love at first sight. I was a single girl living in the city, and after almost getting evicted for adopting a cockatoo, I decided I needed a very quiet roommate. It was Lola's first time in the city, and the constant shrill of police and fire sirens, along with honking cars, made her very jumpy. But within a week she was immune to the mantra of the city. Before long she was lounging

*(Continued on page 3)*

## Betsy

*(Continued from page 1)*

standard: “We don’t have a shelter facility; all of our rabbits are fostered in private homes. If you or someone you know can provide an indoor foster home, we can help with...”

And the woman replied back, “No.” And she was prepared to release the rabbit, who she was sure was infested with something that would take over her house. (Note: There was not a flea, tick or mite found on this rabbit after rescue.) So the scramble for a foster home began and I begged this woman to hang on to the rabbit for the night, imploring her

Photo: Mary Ann Moier



Betsy.

not to send the life she saved back out to a surely fatal destiny. She agreed. I found a foster home. I personally scheduled time the following morning

to pick up this rabbit and deliver her to the fosterer.

Upon my arrival, the finder family was kind and appreciative for the help in relieving them of this perceived burden. The rabbit appeared to be healthy, even with pristine white back feet. It was early March. I figured the rabbit was a holiday present cast away or even an early Easter gift, already dismissed. I scooted her into my pink carrier, thanked the family and was on my way.

Given the once-over by LIRRG President Nancy Schreiber, this little rabbit, whom I then named Betsy, seemed young and,

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Lola

*(Continued from page 2)*

comfortably on the couch, learning about tasty shoe leather used by Italian designers, and giving me the stink eye when the TV was too loud.

We were two wild and crazy girls in the city. I showed her how to make a cosmopolitan and she showed me how to laugh off hay as a hair accessory. When my dates came to the door she was always there to greet them, just in case anyone was traveling with a banana. She would quickly charm them with binkies and let them pet her head; within five minutes they were hooked. I would be standing at the door ready to go, while my date was lying prostrate on the floor, giving bunny kisses to Lola. Sometime she would peek over from the kissing session and give me the bunny finger and, laughing, say, “You go on – I’m good here.” If she didn’t like a prospective visitor sometimes she would look him right in the eye, turn, then “flick him off” – which was equivalent to giving him a 2 out of 10. It was hysterical – especially when she looked back to make sure he saw the flick. Bottom line: if Lola didn’t like you, you weren’t coming back.

Once a cable repairman was on his knees connecting service when Lola came running up and stopped right in front of him like the roadrunner. He fell backward and began crawling away screaming, “Look at the size of that rat!” I told him she wasn’t a rat – she was a rabbit – and he yelled, “How did it get in here?” I did, after all, live on the 17th floor of an apartment building. “She lives here,” I said. Then, dead silence. He looked confused, especially when I put a Craisin between my lips and leaned over to give her a treat. But when he saw her take it ever-so-gently from my lips, that was it: He wanted a bunny, too!

Everyone loves Lola – even Peapod! Our favorite home grocery delivery service is always a cause for celebration! When the delivery people come and put down the big bags of kale, romaine, parsley and cilantro, it’s just too much to resist, and she jumps in like Esther Williams jumping off a high dive. She gets a big laugh and a one-minute head start before I pull her out.

About two years ago my sassy girl even had the opportunity to star in a short House Rabbit Society video narrated by Amy Sedaris

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ev-5T3xEe9k>).

Photo: Shane York



Frank with Lola.

There are clips of Lola on an Indian rug and in her heart-shaped litter box. Of course like every screen actress, Lola took full advantage of her close-ups, especially at the end of the video, and she made me call her “Angelina” for the rest of the day.

Now my diva is in her dotage. At close to 13 years, signs of old age are starting to dominate her everyday life. Arthritis prevents her from reaching her ears or scratching and she’s now blind from a cataract that just developed in her right eye. I know there are more challenges down the road, but we’ve always taken life together, and I’m going to be right here for her to help and support her every step of the way. After all, that’s what BFFs are for!

# Giant Rabbit Sculptures: Beautiful Art Installation That Challenges Us to Explore Darker Realities

By Jane O'Wyatt

"BIG white buns!" in the subject line caught the eye, definitely. In the body of Cathie Rekis's April 17 email to the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab listserv was a link:

<http://www.artsbrookfield.com/event/intrude/#.VxPVBF6t4U.mailto>.

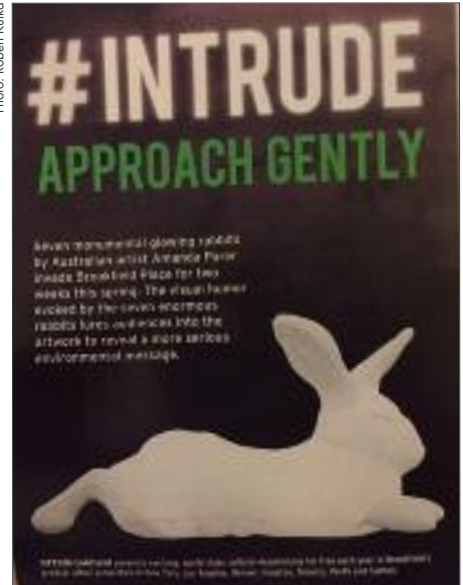
These bunnies didn't need rescuing. They were gigantic, inflated, white nylon rabbits in various idiomatic poses, internally illuminated at sunset. They composed a public art installation by Amanda Parer called "Intrude," in a part of the city concerned with finance and 9/11. Intrude's seven monumental rabbits would only be in town for two weeks (April 17-30) before they were

moved, in sequence, to Houston, Los Angeles and Denver.

Intrigued by Intrude's website, rabbit volunteers decided to investigate. On the RRR and ACC Rabbits listservs, Thea Harding announced that she, Sherry Riad and Nadine Heidinger were going to "coalesce around the giant bunny booty outside" at 6:30 p.m. on April 27, and other rabbit people were welcome to join them. At 7:51 that evening, Thea posted, "There's still time to come see the rabbits. The sun is going down and the bunnies are lit up!" After inspecting the bunny light sculptures, taking selfies and posing for group shots,

*(Continued on page 5)*

Photo: Robert Kalka



Sign at Intrude installation.

## Betsy

*(Continued from page 3)*

despite a slight percolating sound to her breathing, appeared healthy. Betsy took to her litter box within minutes of being set up in a pen in her foster home, and she began eating her Timothy hay and orchard grass right away, too. I envisioned we would schedule a checkup for her, a spay appointment and after her spay, post her for adoption on our website. Over some time, she would find her forever home and live happily ever after.

Here's the turn of events you've been dreading, from the tone of this piece. At Betsy's first checkup at Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital, the doctors detected something when palpating her for possible pregnancy, a precautionary exam done for all female rabbits that are rescued. What the vets detected didn't feel like babies, though. Betsy was given treatment for her respiratory issue and scheduled to be spayed as soon as the respiratory issue had cleared up.

Betsy's spay surgery went fine but Dr. Laura George found a "very large tumor"

Photo: Denise Bernoloff



Betsy on the day she was rescued.

in the uterus. Betsy's estimated age is 4 years old, compared to the typical 10- to 14-month-old abandoned rabbits that we usually rescue. Further medical testing

revealed the cancer had metastasized throughout Betsy's body, including her lungs. My visions of finding her a forever home shifted to finding her a "hospice foster home."

Betsy is as sweet as can be. Her litter-box habits are still solid. She hops and plays. She craves love and soaks up human attention. But her time with us likely won't be long. If she had been spayed at a younger age, chances are we wouldn't be discussing uterine cancer, hospice care and long-term medications. Yes, she's getting great care and lots of love, but she's battling a disease that could have been avoided. I'm still as grateful as I was on the day of Betsy's basic rescue, although her care is far from basic. I'm grateful that I get to visit her weekly at her foster home and help care for her. I'm grateful that I can share the story of Betsy's battle as a reminder for how important rabbit-savvy veterinary care is, and how important it is to have rabbits spayed and neutered. And I'm grateful that these tumors and nodules haven't taken over her darling spirit.

Photo: Amelie Wilson



Adrienne Hamilton, Dave Feld, Doug Lee, Thea Harting, Nadine Heidinger, Sherry Riad and Neil Schajer.

Photo: Robert Kulka



▲ Bunny in Atrium. ▼ Robert Kulka, selfie.

Photo: Kerstin Aumann



▲ Alex Sinansky. ▼ Anna Rose Sinansky.

Photo: Robert Kulka



Photo: Kerstin Aumann



## Giant Rabbit Sculptures

*(Continued from page 4)*

the gang adjourned to P.J. Clarke's, where outside tables had a view of the exhibition, the shimmering Hudson and the lights of coastal Jersey. But the breezes that ruffled the luminous giants in the plaza of Brookfield Place were too cool for comfort, so after a drink or two the group contentedly dispersed.

The following day a friend and I found the exhibition after some confusion about its location, the former World Financial Center, which neither of us had visited since the somber months following 9/11. It was now called Brookfield Place NY after its present owner, a "global real-estate corporation." Australian artist Amanda Parer had somehow managed to persuade Brookfield to sponsor a four-city U.S. tour of her seven "BIG white buns." And here they were, indoors and out, in what Brookfield Place's publicity touted as "the apotheosis of luxury shopping, dining and cultural arts in downtown Manhattan."

In midafternoon, the unlit sculptures lacked some of their nocturnal magic, yet their immense size, which dwarfed everything from palm trees to preschoolers, their serene, mostly rabbitlike poses and their tethered bouyancy were engaging. Briefly resisting their appeal, I listened to the pragmatic hum of the machines that kept the bunnies inflated (though it seemed quieter than the roar of the apparatus used to blow up 12-foot-tall union rats near picket lines). I noted that a couple of the sculptures were chimeric, with three-dimensional pads on the bottoms of the creatures' hind feet. Plus, in the Brookfield Place atrium, the sculpture's pose was that of a colossal teddy bear. Quibbles aside, I felt the bunnies had an unexpected, un-kitsch dignity.

Both children and adults seemed captivated by the rabbits, a majority interacting with them respectfully. Those who appeared intent on flinging them-

*(Continued on page 6)*

## Giant Rabbit Sculptures

(Continued from page 5)

selves into the sculptures were deterred by inconspicuous, vigilant guards in white hoodies. I had spent the previous afternoon at Petco Union Square ensuring that four Rabbit Rescue & Rehab house rabbits (species *Oryctolagus cuniculus*) got protected, out-of-cage exercise time, during which visitors, especially children, were only allowed to watch, keeping curious, bitable hands to themselves. If only I had told the kids who had asked to pet the bunnies about this installation!

A charming public art piece, *Intrude* was also an open photo shoot: everyone wanted to pose with the towering figures, in an ad lib demonstration of scale change.

Photo: Amanda Parer



Painting by Amanda Parer.

Why rabbits? According to *Intrude*'s publicity, "The visual humor of the large rabbits lures audiences into the artwork to reveal a more serious environmental message. For artist Amanda Parer, rabbits are an animal of contradiction. While they often connote furry innocence frolicking through idyllic fields, rabbits are considered an invasive pest in the artist's native Australia, where they have caused a great imbalance to the country's natural and delicately balanced ecosystems since they were first introduced by white settlers in 1788."

Parer's website reveals that she has long pondered the outsized rabbit presence in her homeland. In paintings from 2006-2011, giant rabbits pose in miniature landscapes, dominant yet sympathetically portrayed. In her artist's statement for *Intrude*, she writes: "I expect people will be drawn to the rabbits' playful appearance, and I hope they will also take the time to understand the deeper meaning in the work and discuss how our actions impact the environment."

The first European rabbits (species *Oryctolagus cuniculus*) arrived in Australia after a 250-day voyage aboard ships that also brought the first British convicts to

a new penal colony. The rabbits were probably intended as a food source, and their population didn't immediately increase to devastating numbers. However, in 1859, a wealthy British landowner named Thomas Austin imported 24 European rabbits and released them on the grounds of his estate in Victoria in order to hunt them, as he had enjoyed doing in England. (A member of one of the "acclimatization" societies of the 19th century, Austin shared their belief that the indigenous fauna and flora of colonized lands were weird and/or boring and that he and his fellow interlopers were entitled to bring familiar species from home into their new environments.) Austin's heedless, nostalgic decision, according to Columbia University biologist Flavia Schepmans, was a ruinous blow to Australia's ecosystem. Apart from *Homo sapiens*, European rabbits and their descendants (who evolved through selective pressure into hardy ferals) had virtually no predators. As an unintended consequence of an Englishman's desire to kill rabbits, the population of this involuntarily invasive species exploded, a situation that persists in all but the northernmost parts of Australia to this day.

The Queensland government blames the resultant feral rabbit overpopulation for the following:

Rabbits are one of Australia's major agricultural and environmental animal pests, costing between \$600 million and \$1 billion annually. Rabbits eat pastures and crops, compete with native animals, destroy the landscape and are a primary cause of soil erosion – preventing regeneration of native vegetation.

Heartbreakingly brutal (costly and not very effective) state-sponsored methods are employed to kill feral rabbits: warren ripping and above-ground harbor destruction (using tractors, bulldozers and explosives), shooting, poison baiting, fumigation, trapping, exclusion fencing, etc. Plus there is biological warfare: the release of myxomatosis and rabbit hemorrhagic disease (VHD) viruses. Pindone, an anti-coagulant/ hemorrhagic agent, is also commonly used.

In Queensland (though not in other territories), ownership of pet rabbits is illegal, punishable by a fine from \$3,750 to \$30,000 – and the rabbits are killed. There

(Continued on page 7)

## Giant Rabbit Sculptures

(Continued from page 6)

are, however, a few exploitative exceptions: “Limited numbers of permits for domestic rabbits are only available from Biosecurity Queensland for research purposes, public display, magic acts or circuses.”

The House Rabbit Society of Australia comments:

Pet rabbits are the most common illegal pet in Queensland. Why is this so? Many people love their pet rabbits. Rabbits can be house trained and kept in the house. They are environmentally better pets than dogs and cats. Rabbits make little noise (they don't bark), and rabbits do not kill native animals and birds as cats do. Making pet rabbits so illegal as to attract a \$30,000 fine will only make most people in Queensland less likely to take a sick rabbit to the vet and some people may be more likely to dispose of sick rabbits inhumanely or to let them

die when they could be treated. This is a cruel state of affairs. Queensland used to be said to be beautiful one day and perfect the next (describing the weather etc.). Perhaps the logo should be changed to ... “Queensland, beautiful one day, cruel the next.”

HRS Australia is fighting for access to a vaccine to protect domestic rabbits against myxomatosis, used in the government's war against their feral relatives. Claiming that “immunity from the live myxoma vaccine ... could somehow transfer from pet rabbits to wild rabbits,” Australian authorities oppose making a myxoma vaccine available for pet rabbits. At the same time, the government wants to legalize adding the already widespread rabbit hemorrhagic disease virus (VHD) to food baits for feral rabbits. A vaccine to protect pet rabbits from VHD is available, but not all owners have their bunnies vaccinated. HRS Australia opposes the government's plan because “an increased level of VHD in the environment due to food baits

will cause more VHD deaths in pet rabbits (mosquitoes, fleas and other vectors will transmit the disease from wild to pet rabbits).” In theory and practice, the biotechnologies of feral rabbit infection and pet rabbit immunity overlap.

When biotechnology succeeds in developing humane methods by which the legendary reproductive capacity of *Oryctolagus cuniculus* can be curbed, Australia's horrific war against feral rabbits may end. A number of immunocontraceptive vaccines are under development for nonhuman animals (particularly wildlife), including vaccines that act against various hormones and a method called PZP (porcine *zona pellucida*), which leads to the production of antibodies that block fertilization.

Flavia Schepmans writes:

Researchers ... are currently investigating the possibility of controlling the rabbit population through birth rather than death...

(Continued on page 8)

Photo: Jane O'Wyatt



One of the two biggest sculptures, unlit.



A light sculpture faces west.

## Giant Rabbit Sculptures

(Continued from page 7)

Immunocontraception involves injecting a manufactured virus that fools the rabbit's body into thinking that certain proteins found on sperm and egg cells are foreign. The body's immune system would then produce antibodies that bond on to these proteins, which would prevent recognition between sperm and egg, preventing fertilization. Some of the rabbits would be purposefully infected with this manufactured virus, mate with other rabbits, and spread the immunodeficiency virus throughout the population, keeping it in check. This form of population control, unlike the previous forms, would be humane and not affect the rabbits' social structure.

At first glance, Amanda Parer's giant rabbit sculptures made me almost giddy with pleasure. Then I took up the artist's challenge "to understand the deeper meaning in the work." I was appalled to learn that ancestors of our beloved house rabbits, prized for their fecundity when they were brought to Australia to be bred for eating or shot for sport, quickly overbred their welcome and became known as invasive pests. The story of their maladaptive survival and Australia's multimillion-dollar feral-rabbit-eradication industry is the dark side of Amanda Parer's beautiful *Intrude* installation.

### Sources:

<http://www.artsbrookfield.com/event/intrude/#.VxPVBVF6t4U.mailto>

<http://amandaparer.com.au/2008-2006/>

<http://amandaparer.com.au/2012-2011/>

[http://www.columbia.edu/itc/cerc/danoff-burg/invasion\\_bio/inv\\_spp\\_summ/Oryctolagus\\_cuniculus.htm](http://www.columbia.edu/itc/cerc/danoff-burg/invasion_bio/inv_spp_summ/Oryctolagus_cuniculus.htm)

<https://www.daf.qld.gov.au/plants/weeds-pest-animals-ants/pest-animals/a-z-listing-of-pest-animals/photo-guide-to-pest-animals/rabbit>

<http://members.iinet.net.au/%7Erabbit/hrsaus.htm>

[http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/wildlife\\_overpopulation/qa/q\\_and\\_a\\_pzp.html](http://www.humanesociety.org/issues/wildlife_overpopulation/qa/q_and_a_pzp.html)



## Bunnies at Brooklyn Expo Center

A group of fun-loving Animal Care Center rabbits took part in the Best Friends Pet Super Adoption event on May 13-15 in Brooklyn.

Shelter rabbit volunteers spent the spring weekend with the bunnies at Brooklyn Expo Center, educating the public about rabbit care and introducing some adoptable shelter bunnies. On Saturday, the group included Cocoa, Elliott, Bloomie, Twist, Ash and Roxy. Many of the rabbits got mani-pedis, and they had lots of exercise time and attention during the event.

Cats and dogs were also in attendance. Best Friends Animal Society collaborated with rescue groups and shelters to organize the event.

Nadine Heindinger said it was a “very positive adoption event,” adding that there were “some good potential adopters and speed-dating options, which

hopefully will result in adoptions during the week.”

The event was sponsored by BOBS from Skechers, with support from the Petco Foundation.

On Saturday, May 28, the New York Police Department and the Animal Care Centers of NYC sponsored a rabbit adoption event in Central Park. Rabbit volunteers assisted at the event by introducing the bunnies and educating potential adopters.

## Local Bunnies In the Media

The Facebook program, “Dodo Live,” reached out to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab about filming some of our foster rabbits and giving the public information about proper rabbit care. Rabbit volunteer Nadine Heindinger allowed Dodo to film inside her home, where viewers could see Pippi and Carmela, both former Manhattan shelter bunnies. Volunteer Marcie Frishberg appeared on the May 11 show to answer questions posted by Facebook viewers. The live program was carried on Dodo’s Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/thedodosite>

Photo: Nadine Heindinger



Elliott, who got a mani/pedi.

Photo: Neil Schraier



Nadine Heindinger with Cocoa.

Photo: Neil Schraier



Cocoa.



Sprinkles.

Sprinkles, a wonderful bunny at the Manhattan Animal Care Center, was featured on a Saturday morning segment for WNBC-TV promoting bunny adoptions. The May 14 TV segment was part of a regular series on NBC that showcases shelter animals for adoption. Sprinkles loved appearing on television, and happily demonstrated that rabbits can make great companion animals.

# Ira Inspires Painting By Volunteer's Mother

By Jenna Watson

A portrait of Ira, one of the bunnies at the 86th Street Petco, was painted by my mother, Elizabeth Spears. The painting was part of a larger piece of art that incorporated a letter my grandfather wrote to my grandmother, and pieces of bunny-rabbit wallpaper from my mother's childhood bedroom.

My mom is a pediatric audiologist at the Oregon Health and Sciences University in Portland, where she and my father live. She often paints or draws to create gifts for family and friends, and as a creative outlet.



Painting by Elizabeth Spears.

She is an incredibly talented artist, and I have always admired her talent and ability to translate what she imagines or sees around her onto paper or canvas.

I may not have inherited this talent, but we both share a deep love of animals, and she is well aware of the special place rabbits hold in my heart. So, when I sent her several pictures of the rabbits at 86th Street (Ira, Stuart, Carly and Alfie), she decided to create a painting of Ira for me.

To see a photo of Ira playing at Petco, please turn to page 27.

Photo: Mary Harnett



George.

## Little George Is On the Mend

By Mary Harnett

Since George was featured in the February issue of Thump (<http://www.rabbitcare.org/Thump%20Feb.%202016.pdf>), his celebrity status has gone to his little head. The number of people who were

interested in his medical progress was overwhelming and truly heartwarming. I think George likes having his own fan club!

In early April, four months after his urethrotomy (a delicate procedure undertaken to remove a large stone in his penile urethra), George returned to visit with Drs. Jennifer Saver and Laura George at Catnip & Carrots Veterinary Hospital. We are excited to report that George's X-ray was normal and he continues to gain weight. There is no evidence of a recurring stone (urolith). George has earned a clean bill of health! Of course, we will continue to monitor him. For now, we are just thrilled with his post-operative recuperation.

He, of course, has no idea how serious his condition was and spends a lot of time (when he is not eating) perfecting his latest trick. He has learned to toss one of his stacking cups and get it to float in his water bowl. George is very proud of this accomplishment and grateful to all of Thump's readers for their well wishes during his recovery.

## Ears Haiku

Pushed back or forward

High pointed and searching sound

Touch only gently

— Robert Kulka



Lara.

Photo: Robert Kulka

# Detecting Illness Before It's an Emergency

By Dana Krempels

Probably because of their evolutionary history as prey animals, rabbits often show few outward signs of distress when they are ill or in pain. In nature, predators cue in on animals that act sick, instinctively knowing that these particular individuals will be easier to capture. Presumably, over evolutionary time, sick rabbits who had an inborn tendency to hide obvious outward signs of illness were less likely to be selected by predators while they were sick. These “genetically stoic” individuals thus have been more likely to survive an illness and leave more offspring to future generations than others who showed more obvious signs of weakness. The unfortunate side effect of this evolutionary marvel is that it takes a very attentive “bunny parent” to notice when Bunny is feeling poorly. A symptom as seemingly insignificant as hiding in an unusual place, sitting in a hunched position or refusing a favorite treat can signal that something is seriously wrong. Once you notice these subtle signs, there are several simple diagnostic measures you can take to determine whether an emergency trip to your rabbit-experienced veterinarian is warranted:

## 1. Offer a Favorite Treat

If Bunny refuses it, try another. If he absolutely won't eat, it's time to move to step two.

## 2. Take the Rabbit's Temperature

If you do not know how to take your rabbit's rectal temperature, it's a good idea to have your veterinarian show you how to do so before you have an emergency. Always use a plastic thermometer, to eliminate the danger of the thermometer breaking off inside if the bunny gives a strong kick or wriggle. Here is a link to an instructive temperature-taking video by an HRS licensed educator:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YZd10Hk0maA>

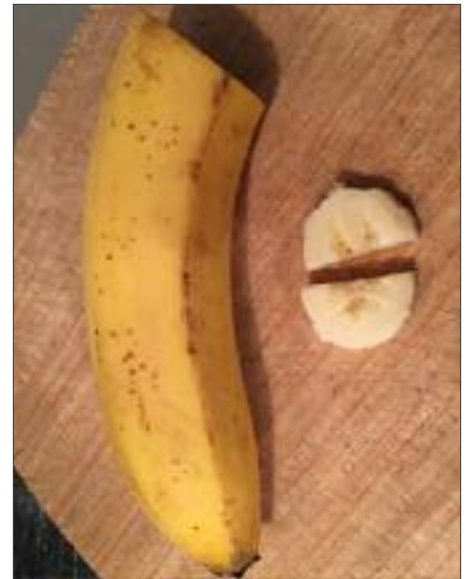
### Instructions: How to Take Your Bunny's Temperature

Normal rabbit body temperature ranges between 101°F - 103°F (38.3°C - 39.4°C).

We've found that a good way to take the temperature is to gently cradle the bunny on his back – either in your lap or on a secure countertop with soft padding. The bunny's head and shoulders should be held gently against your abdomen, and the back allowed to curl into a “C” position, with the footpads facing the ceiling. Be sure the hindquarters and back legs are securely supported so that the bunny doesn't kick suddenly and injure himself. Once bunny is in position and calm, very gently and carefully insert a well-lubricated plastic thermometer no deeper than about 1 inch. If you aren't sure which of the two openings to use, note that the anus is the one that “winks back at you” when you touch it lightly with the thermometer tip, and that it is behind the urogenital opening (i.e., closer to the base of the tail).

The path of the rectum is almost parallel with the lower spine, and when bunny is cradled in a “C” position as described, the thermometer will naturally travel almost straight down, perpendicular to your lap.

Be sure to securely support the bunny's back end, and do not allow him to kick or struggle. If he does, carefully release him to a sternal (on his belly) position, supporting his back and hindquarters at all times. Talk reassuringly to him, and stroke him gently, and don't try again until he has calmed down. Depending on the rabbit's personality, you might have to try several times before you're successful, and if you are having trouble doing this alone, get a second person to “spot” for you. Never force anything. If you feel resistance, pull back, change position slightly, and try again. Be very gentle, as the rabbit colon and rectum are very delicate and easily damaged.



A small piece of banana is a good treat.



Use a well-lubricated plastic thermometer.

### – What to do in case of fever:

A slightly elevated temperature (around 104°F/39.9°C) can be caused by emotional stress (such as a trip to the vet's office or the discomfort of a health problem), heat stress or the early stages of an infection. A very high temperature (105°F/40.5°C or higher) should be considered an emergency. Lifesaving cooling measures should be begun even before you leave for the veterinarian's office. If the body temperature remains too high for too long, irreversible brain

*(Continued on page 12)*

## Detecting Illness

*(Continued from page 11)*

damage can occur, even if the bunny survives the ordeal. A good way to cool the bunny is to use cold packs or even bags of frozen vegetables, placing them under his belly and around his sides. You can rub his ears with an ice cube, but be sure not to cause frostbite by holding the cube there too long, or over-cooling. Rubbing alcohol swabbed on the ears will also help cool the bunny. It will usually take five to ten minutes of ice packs to bring a severe fever to lower levels, and you should continue to monitor bunny's temperature throughout the procedure, as long as it does not seem to be stressing him unduly.

### – What to do in case of hypothermia:

A temperature lower than normal may be even more dangerous than a slight fever. Abnormally low body temperature (below 100°F/38.1°C) can signify shock or the very late stages of systemic infection, and should be considered an emergency.

It is of utmost importance to get the bunny's temperature up to normal levels, as most other medical treatments will not be as effective if the rabbit is hypothermic. To raise the body temperature, fill plastic bottles or Ziploc bags with hot water, and wrap them in towels to protect the bunny from being burned. Place the hot water bottles under and around the bunny, and monitor temperature until it is at least 100°F/38.1°C. At that point, loosely wrap the bunny in towels warm from the dryer, and get him to the vet right away.

If the hypothermia is due to the late stages of a systemic infection, it means that bacteria in the bloodstream have used up so much of the rabbit's glucose (blood sugar) that he cannot maintain a normal body temperature on his own. This must be treated immediately and aggressively, sometimes with intravenous antibiotics



An inexpensive stethoscope is a good investment.

and dextrose solution, which must be administered by your veterinarian.

If the bunny is refusing treats, but body temperature is normal, it's time to move to step three.

### **3. Listen for Normal Intestinal Sounds**

It's worthwhile for every bunny parent to invest in an inexpensive stethoscope. Place the tympanum low on the abdomen, well below the ribs, and listen for soft, intermittent gurgling sounds. If the tummy is silent, you may be facing Gastrointestinal Stasis (ileus).

If the tummy is making very loud gurgles, your bunny might have a bad case of gas, sometimes associated with ileus. Gas pain alone can cause enough stress to send a rabbit into ileus, and it is important to get the gas and its associated pain under control immediately. The simplest home emergency procedures to

control gas pain (while waiting for your vet to call you back) are the following:

- Administer 1-3 cc of pediatric simethicone drops (available at most pharmacies).
- Begin very gentle abdominal massage. Place the bunny on a secure countertop and start very gradually, rubbing the sides of the belly, and gradually working your way deeper by actually holding the belly in one hand and gently kneading it in both forward and backward directions. If bunny shows any sign of pain, back off and massage more gently. It also helps to periodically raise the bunny up on his hindquarters as you massage, so gas bubbles can move about more freely. You can also do the reverse, carefully lifting his hindquarters into the air while gently massaging, being careful to not let him kick, jump, or hurt himself.

If your bunny is truly suffering from ileus, then your vet will probably want to prescribe additional medication, including:

- Analgesia: Banamine (flunixin meglumine) or meloxicam are excellent and safe for rabbits
- Intestinal motility drugs: Reglan (metoclopramide) and/or cisapride

Remember: If you are in doubt about your bunny's condition, don't hesitate to call your veterinarian immediately. Don't wait for an emergency to find a good rabbit-experienced vet who will be available at odd hours. For a referral to rabbit-savvy veterinarians in your area please visit the House Rabbit Society's site for veterinary recommendations.

---

*Copyright – Dana Krempels, Ph.D.  
Senior Lecturer;  
Director of Undergraduate Studies  
Department of Biology,  
University of Miami*

## We Are Looking for Loving Homes:

### These Rabbits Are Available At Manhattan and Brooklyn Animal Care Centers (NYC ACC)

By Kirsten Ott

#### Amirah

Amirah is a small white male bunny who was clearly neglected or traumatized by his prior people. This guy is very scared right now, and he'll definitely need a rabbit-savvy home with people who can gradually socialize him. He'll be worth it for sure – he has lots of spunk and he's awfully cute, with beautiful dark blue eyes.



Amirah.

#### Lucy

Lucy is a medium-sized reddish brown bunny who was named after Lucille Ball because of her coloring. This girl was very scared when she first came in to the shelter, but now she'll approach people with interest, and will snuggle down for gentle petting. Lucy also likes to redecorate her habitat, so she'll need stimulating toys and materials in her forever home.



Lucy.

#### Jona

Jona is a medium-to-large female strawberry blond bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits. This girl is a little nervous when first approached, but she will let you pet her. To make the petting extra delicious, she'll scrunch herself into a ball and flatten her head against her nice, smooshy dewlap, which looks like a big ruffled collar. Jona would probably do best in a quiet home.



Jona.

#### Tyra

Tyra is a small female bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits. This girl is very pretty, with a beautiful pastel tan coat. However, she is very nervous. She'll hunker behind her litter box and look at you with a wary expression. Like a number of her former housemates, she has a shy personality and seems not to have been well socialized. Therefore, she will need experienced bunny owners who can help her gradually build trust.



Tyra.



Cersei.



Freya.

#### Freya

Freya is a small orange Rex bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits, just two of which are Rexes. Freya is on the young side, and though she's not fearful, she isn't particularly interested in people at this point. She's very curious and active, and her forever home will clearly need good bunny-proofing! Freya would do best in a bunny-savvy home where she can be expertly socialized.

#### Stark

Stark is a small orange Rex bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits, just two of which are Rexes. This cute guy is still on the young side,

#### Cersei

Cersei is a small male bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits. Unlike some of his former housemates, this little guy is very well-mannered and well-socialized – he will sit perfectly still as you pet him, drinking in the affection. Cersei's tan-and-cream fur is very fluffy and particularly soft on his head and ears, and he has beautiful dark gray eyes. He's still on the young side, and may yet grow and fill out a bit.

*(Continued on page 14)*

## Looking for Loving Homes

*(Continued from page 13)*

and has tons of energy, curiosity and spunk. He's not afraid of anything, and ready to conquer his new forever home! Stark is more interested in activity than in affection at this point, and would probably do best in an experienced bunny home where he can be gradually socialized.

### Jaime

Jaime is a small light brown Lionhead mix female who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits. Like her apparent siblings, she is very active, but quite uninterested in human interaction at this point in her young life. Jaime needs a home with lots of room for exercise and bunny-savvy people who can socialize her as she matures.

### Theon

Theon is a medium-sized tan bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits (and is believed to be the father of at least four of them). This guy is very handsome, but quite standoffish right now. It's possible that, having lived with other rabbits, he would benefit from a bunny partner. At the very least, he should be adopted by a bunny-savvy home with people who are willing to patiently socialize him.

### Margaery

Margaery is a small orange-y/tan bunny who was surrendered along with 13 other rabbits. This girl is definitely part Lionhead – she has cute tufts of longer fur around her cheeks and ears, and perfect triangles for ears. Margaery is curious about human interaction but quite shy. She'll hang back and look at you sweetly, nose wiggling and teeth crunching. She'll let you pet her briefly, then think better of it and pull away. This cute girl would do best in a bunny-savvy home, and is likely to be socialized quickly.

### Coco

Coco is a small- to medium-sized light brown Lionhead. This girl is nervous, but she does like to be petted. Coco is



Stark.



Jaime.



Theon.

very good looking, with a slender face, ears that look like perfect isosceles triangles, and long, wispy Lionhead whiskers. She will definitely need a quiet forever home with gentle people.

### Jessie

Jessie is a medium-sized lop girl who was found outdoors. Volunteers have been helping her get acclimated to the shelter and cleaning her up, and she's doing better every day. This poor girl is still somewhat tense, and hesitant to approach people, but she likes to be petted very much, especially on her forehead and cheeks. Jessie is white with dark brown and black markings. She has black eye rings that make her eyes look extra large for her small face, and dark reddish-



Margaery.



Coco.



Jessie.

brown ears. Best of all, she has two round beauty marks – the Mercury-sized one is just above her nose, and the Jupiter-sized one is to the left side of her nose.

### Twist

Twist is a large black female bunny with a mellow personality. This girl is a real love sponge – she stretches right out for petting as soon as she sees you coming. She's very bright, too – if you divert your attention, she'll sit up, look at you, licking her chops and wiggling her nose, and then stretch out again as if to remind you of your responsibilities. Twist has nice jowly cheeks and a big cozy dewlap. She would make a good choice for a first-time bunny home.

*(Continued on page 15)*

## Looking for Loving Homes

(Continued from page 14)

### Apollo

Apollo is a small black dwarf bunny. His name is sort of funny, because he's so little, and actually quite timid. Apollo is very curious about people – he'll watch you with great interest as you're going about your business. But as soon as you direct your attention to him, he gets cold feet and hunkers in a corner or in his litter box. He does like having his head rubbed – but doesn't like his nose rubbed for whatever reason. When you leave, he'll get his courage up again and approach his cage door. This sensitive guy will likely warm up quickly in his forever home.

### Elliot

Elliot is a very nice large Himalayan mix. This guy is super easygoing and friendly, and he adores affection. He loves to stretch out hedonistically while you pet him! Elliot has a creamy white coat with light grayish-brown highlights on his ears, face, and down his back – they look like freckles. He has a nice sturdy body and beautiful dark eyes. This laid-back guy would make an excellent choice for a first-time bunny owner.

### Tammy

Tammy is a medium-sized, very pretty redhead. This girl is quite uncertain about people. She'll be totally irresistible when she comes around. She has adorable little tufts of fur sticking up between her ears and a cute little white "pencil mark" down her nose.

### Tori

Tori is a large black and white female. This girl is sweet but rather nervous around new people, but she will let you pet her. Tori's coat has dramatic black markings, including large eye patches and a big smudge on the right side of her nose. She would do best in a quiet home with no small children.

### Tamora

Tamora is a large black female bunny. This girl will let you pet her silky coat,



Twist.



Apollo.



Elliot.



Tammy.

and it seems to relax her. Tamora appears to have a rather reserved personality, but she may just be reacting to her current circumstances and will probably open up a lot in her forever home. However,



Tori.



Tamora.



Ikea.

she would probably do best in a quiet home with gentle adults.

### Ikea

Ikea is a large Himalayan female who was surrendered with 10 family members, most of whom are not particularly well-socialized. This is definitely true of Ikea. She's curious about people, but very wary, and not interested in affection at this point in time. She does like to get out and explore, though! She'll need a bunny-savvy home where she can gradually get used to humans.

### Igor

Igor is a large Himalayan male who was surrendered with 10 family members. He's a magnificent-looking guy, but he's

(Continued on page 16)

## ADOPT US!

### Looking for Loving Homes

(Continued from page 15)

wary of people. He's curious, and will approach you to get a sniff, but he'll quickly back off. Igor has particularly great round cheeks – in a bunny-savvy home, he's sure to let his forever humans rub them in good time.

#### Iskra

Iskra is an extra-large Himalayan male who was surrendered with 10 family members. This giant guy has a lovely, gentle disposition. He adores being petted—he'll bliss out with his eyes closed and gradually go into a trance. Iskra has a pristine white coat; his classic pink Himmy ears have a gray cast to them, as does his nice big nose. And he's got a wonderfully beefy body and great round cheeks. Bottom line: Iskra is lots of bun to love!

#### Wonder

Wonder is a medium-sized female and a total love sponge. This girl greets you enthusiastically at her cage door, nose shoved through the bars. She pancakes right down for petting, as if she's been programmed to cuddle! Wonder has a truly wonderful personality, and would make a great choice for a first-time bunny home. Her coat is white with brown markings, including brown ears and eye patches, a smudge on the right side of her nose, and assorted brown spots on her lower back.

#### Spots

Spots is a medium-sized black and white Dutch mix with a great disposition. This girl is very friendly and clearly hungry for human affection. She loves attention and petting, and will quickly attach herself to a kind person. Spots, being mostly Dutch, doesn't really have any spots – but she does have an irregular bib that winds around her body like a shawl.

#### Big Momma

Big Momma is a medium-sized (not big!) agouti female with a cute cottontail. This girl is a little nervous around new



Igor.



Iskra.



Wonder.



Spots.

people, but she will let you pet her. She particularly likes head and ear scratches, and if you do a good job you may catch her tooth purring! Big Momma has beautiful dark eyes accentuated by dark lashes.



Big Momma.



Weldon.



Buddy.

#### Weldon

Weldon is a large helicopter lop with a sweet, vulnerable personality. This guy may be big, but he doesn't appear to feel that way – he seems to know he needs comforting, and it's incredibly touching. When you approach Weldon, he quickly comes up to you and then immediately retreats to a corner of his cage, behind his litter box, curling up like a baby and summoning you to pet him in that safe, cozy spot. He'll even smush his face into the wall to make himself feel more secure. Weldon loves having the base of his ears scratched. If you stop petting him, he will poke his head up and look

(Continued on page 17)



## ADOPT US!

### Looking for Loving Homes

*(Continued from page 16)*

at you with mild alarm. This sweet, sensitive guy would clearly do best in a quiet home.

#### Buddy

Buddy is a small, fluffy brown boy with vestigial white Dutch markings. His partial bib dribbles down along his right leg, and he has white socks and a bit of white fur on his nose. Buddy is very alert and smart. He's perpetually tuned in to everything and everyone around him, and if he's not getting your undivided attention he'll make a point of getting it back, in a sweet way. This adorable guy is super friendly and would make a good choice for a first-time bunny owner.

#### Melo

Melo is a small pale gray and white boy with very unusual looks. He probably has some Dutch blood, because he has vestiges of a triangle on his face that make him look kind of like a badger! He also has stunning eyes, with blue irises and deep red pupils. Melo is curious about people and very alert. He would do best in a quiet, bunny-savvy home.

#### Rush

Rush is a large, very handsome silvery gray male with a great personality. This guy pancakes right down for petting, as though he's been waiting for you all his life. You'll be happy to oblige, because in addition to being super sweet, he has a gorgeous million-dollar coat, accented by beautiful long whiskers and a little white glove on his right front foot. This prince of a bunny would make a great choice for a first-time bunny home.

#### Jerry

Jerry is an absolutely stunning medium-sized Lionhead. This guy is very lively and friendly and likes being petted, but he has trouble sitting still for any length of time – that is likely to change somewhat as his hormones subside post-neuter. Jerry is white with gray markings, including eye patches, gray ears, and a



Melo.



Rush.



Jerry.



Polka Dot.

tuft of gray fur emanating from his left cheek. Even when he's not in the mood for affection, you'll love just admiring his incredible beauty.

#### Polka Dot

Polka Dot is a medium-sized brown and white Dutch female and total love bug. This girl immediately snuggles down for petting; she'll lie perfectly still and tooth purr a bit between strokes of her little head. She's likely to get attached to her new people very quickly. Polka Dot has darker brown fur around her face and ears, and her bib seems to have taken over the entire front half of her body! When she's not busy being loved, she likes to redecorate her habitat, tearing paper into ribbons. Polka Dot would make a good choice for a first-time bunny owner.

### Forever Homes Found!

Rabbits adopted since the last newsletter include: Fluffynutter, Russell, Daisy Duck, Bun Luv, Shelly, Georgia, Penny, Tristan, Furball, Alfreda, Shadow, Humphrey, Nova, Poppy, Alex, Jess, Michaela, Rosey, Babsy, Roxy and Ash, Jimmy, Napoleon, Wolverine, Ashley, Frijole, Chequer, Cocoa, Fairmount, Peter Rabbit, Bran, Tywin, Sandor, Prince, Snuffy, Sean Bunnery, Robert and Disco.

Ashley.



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

### Buster and Emilia

Buster and Emilia are the sweetest pair of bonded medium-sized rabbits. They are gentle and sensitive to their human caretaker and to each other. Buster, a brown Rex, is the clown of the duo; he has a goofy and lovable personality and adores petting from human friends. His favorite hobbies include chilling out and playing with soft fabrics of all varieties. Emilia, a black and white Dutch mix, is a street-smart and sensitive girl who may have had a tough start. She is always alert and aware, watching her surroundings intently. When she feels at home, she will reward you with binkies and 180s and the occasional nuzzle. She also loves fabrics and will spend her playtime gliding and plowing through blankets with her front paws. They are affectionate toward each other: grooming each other's faces and licking each other's ears. Buster makes Emilia feel comfortable and safe, and Emilia returns the gesture with all the warmth and cuddles Buster could desire. When they get excited, they will set each other off in a show of leaps, jumps and races around the flat. It's a loving bond and they have an abundance of love to share with an equally sensitive and loving caretaker. Buster is 5 years old and Emilia is about 6. They must go to home that can provide several hours of exercise time each day. They are presently in foster care. For more information and/or to arrange a meeting with Buster and Emilia, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

### Pancakes

We are pleased to introduce Pancakes! Pancakes is a beautiful, petite, sable and charcoal-gray agouti girl. She was abandoned at a vet clinic in Queens, and one of our adopters rescued her from there. In the comfort of her foster home (and with an appropriate diet), she has

flourished. This sweet, outgoing girl is either relaxed or full of energy when it comes to playtime. Pancakes loves to race around and show off her binky skills, especially when she knows that she is about to receive her morning and evening salads. When she tires herself out, she likes to wind down with a nice petting session and will show her contentment with lots of soft tooth purring. Pancakes is spayed and has great litter-box skills. She is currently living in foster care. If interested in adopting this long-lashed beauty, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

### Lex

Lex is a medium-sized male harlequin Rex, approximately 2 years of age. He has a medium to high energy level. He is a shy guy when meeting new people, but quickly warms up. This sweet, gentle boy is very inquisitive, likes to play with his toys and due to his sweet demeanor would make a great companion rabbit. Lex is an excellent eater, loves his greens and hay and has exceptional litter box-skills. He is very well behaved and enjoys petting and hanging out with his foster mom in her kitchen during playtime. If interested in adopting Lex, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

### Bob

Introducing BOB (a/k/a Big Orange Bunny!). All rabbits are beautiful and special, and this sweet guy is no exception. Bob came to us after being abandoned outside in NYC with a group of other rabbits. A testament as to why it is so important to never expose domesticated rabbits to the outdoors, all of these young rabbits had terrible ear mites, parasites like coccidia and giardia, as well as other infections and abscesses. Bob has received extensive veterinary care and is now free of mites, parasites and abscesses. We continue to monitor



Buster and Emilia.



Pancakes.



Lex.

his health to ensure that he remains on the right track after such unimaginable neglect. He is a large, friendly and active

*(Continued on page 19)*

## ADOPT US!

### Looking for Loving Homes

*(Continued from page 18)*

rabbit who is appreciating every moment of his new life. Bob is the kind of rabbit who reminds us why we do rescue – no matter how stressful, difficult and expensive this work is, these rabbits are worth all of it. Seeing him living happily ever after in a home where someone will adore him as much as we do would be the icing on the cake. He has been neutered and is living in temporary foster care. If interested in long-term fostering or adopting Bob, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

#### Izzie and Arnie

Isabella (Izzie) and Arnie are a bonded pair of middle-aged to senior brown and white Dutch bunnies who desperately need a new home. Arnie, an affectionate, docile Dutch mix, was diagnosed with kidney disease in 2015; however, he has stabilized and presently behaves like a healthy older bunny. Izzie is a strong-minded, hand-shy, territorial girl who can be defensive toward humans, but is always lovely with Arnie. She is a couple of years younger than Arnie and in apparent good health. Izzie and Arnie have been spayed/neutered and are in foster care. They will need extra-special care in their forever home. If interested in adopting this sweet older couple, please reach out to [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

#### Marco

Marco is a small- to medium-sized male black and white Dutch mix. This guy is super friendly and really smart. He's high-energy and will do everything he can think of to get your attention, including climbing on his cage or pen apertures and sticking as much of his face through the bars as possible. When he finally gets you to come and pet him, it seems as though he can't really believe



Bob.



Izzie and Arnie.

it – he sort of freezes in place. Marco has the earmarks of Dutch heritage – vestiges of a Dutch triangle on his face and a bib that cutely doesn't make it all the way around his shoulders. He has a very mild case of head tilt, but it's clearly not an impediment in any way. Marco has been neutered and is currently in foster care. For more information and/or to arrange a meeting with Marco, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).

#### Cadwell

We are pleased to introduce Cadwell. Cadwell is a young, large handsome male Lop we pulled from the shelter when he was suffering with pneumonia.



Marco.



Cadwell.

We got him the vet care that he needed and he has recovered well. Cadwell is in great need of a foster or forever home where he can learn to relax and enjoy life. He's quite a grunter and will let you know that he needs time to learn to trust you. However, once you earn that trust, he relaxes and enjoys being petted. Cadwell needs to be in a quiet, rabbit-experienced home with no children. Please contact us at [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com) if interested in adopting or fostering this handsome gentleman.

# Please Donate to Rabbit Rescue & Rehab's Latest YouCaring Fundraising Campaign Online:

<https://www.youcaring.com/rabbitrescueandrehab>

For over a decade, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab (d/b/a NYC Metro Rabbit), an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) charity registered in New York State, has rescued countless severely injured, neglected and special needs domesticated rabbits abandoned outdoors and in NYC's shelters.

Just this past winter, when we were experiencing temperatures in the single digits, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab received pleas about a group of rabbits abandoned and suffering outdoors in NYC. They were injured, weak, terrified and it was a miracle they were still alive. We immediately moved them to the care of a veterinarian who determined that they were five males, each suffering from a range of injuries and illnesses, including: bite wounds, abscesses, infections, parasites and near-starvation. All five were hospitalized and received intensive treatment for several months. The "Fabulous Five" are all now abscess and parasite free. Four of the five continue to receive treatment for other conditions, which may prove to be chronic. Yet, in that inexplicably resilient way that rabbits have, Alf, Ernie, Bob, Lex and Luke each seem to have left the misery of the past behind – they are now the handsome, playful, social, joy-spreading bunnies they were born to be, hardly recognizable as the sickly, starving rabbits we first encountered.

Just before the Fab Five were rescued, we took in a severely injured, tiny, baby rabbit (approximately eight weeks old) that had been found under a car. Little Oliver weighed less than a pound and had a horrendous wound on his head. It looked like a severe burn with blunt force trauma from an object and, unimaginably, it was suspected that the little guy had been tasered or burned with a cigarette. The tissue under the burn was traumatized and was badly



Luke's ear when he was rescued.



Luke today.

infected. Oliver required much veterinary care both for his head wound and for a severe upper respiratory infection. When we started caring for him he was so small and weak, we doubted Oliver would be strong enough to survive. He surprised us all by hanging on and growing into a beautiful six-pound boy. The deformity of his skull is the only outward sign of his hellish start in life.

As these recoveries were unfolding, we already had another rabbit in treatment



Oliver when rescued.



Oliver today.

at a veterinary hospital. Scarlett is a beautiful girl who was rescued from a municipal shelter where she was slated for euthanasia due to a misdiagnosed eye infection. To save her life, we transferred her to our vet. Her infection actually accompanied a serious but overlooked injury to her eye, thought to be a deep puncture wound. Scarlett remained in the hospital for a long time receiving daily therapy, including a course of platelet-rich plasma therapy, (made from her own blood) administered directly into her eye. After months of care, Scarlett's infection was eradicated, but sadly, she has been left without vision in the affected eye. She is still

*(Continued on page 21)*

## Please Donate

*(Continued from page 20)*

receiving treatment from a veterinary ophthalmologist, and is due to have a test to determine if enucleation of that eye is warranted. Nonetheless, true to her kind, Scarlett carries on with the happy, loving bounce that rabbits never seem to lose completely.

Among these rabbits are many others who we have also rescued and taken in this year, with varying health issues requiring significant veterinary treatment. Painful as it is to witness the misery these innocent animals have endured, each of them would have continued to suffer had we not taken them into our care. One of the most important aspects of our work is to provide all of our rabbits with the veterinary care that they need, without exception. We will never compromise on this. As you can imagine, it is very difficult for any small rescue group to meet a financial challenge as great as this one. Our mission is continually challenged by the exorbitant cost of veterinary care in the NYC area. Unless suitable permanent homes are found, RRR will continue to be both financially and physically responsible for each of them for the rest of their lives. We have reached a point where we cannot continue on this path without your help.

These sweet, smart, brave and trusting spirits are often subjected to the absolute worst conditions that human beings can create. But our human world is also full of people who understand the scale of the challenge and realize that, together, we really can bring relief, healing and enduring safety to so many tormented creatures. Some of us contribute to this effort by taking direct action: rescuing,



Bob's infected eye and ears when he was rescued.



Bob's eye and ears today.

fostering and adopting. Some donate resources to others who already have efforts underway. Still many of us are doing both.

Rabbits freely repay us with joy and inspiration but can do nothing to help us meet the bills. For that, we turn to

you. In order to respond when a rabbit is found to be in need, and to fulfill our commitment to ensuring that no rabbit in our care is ever allowed to fall victim to cruelty or neglect again, we need your immediate and generous support. What we are asking for here is only a fraction of the costs we have incurred in the past few months.

With that in mind, we would like to ask you to please support RR&R in moving forward in our mission. Please, dig deep, and help us as we go about the distressing but rewarding work of making this human world safer for our beloved friends, one bunny at a time!

Your contribution is tax-deductible! If you prefer to donate by check, please indicate your offline donation on this site, make the check payable to "Rabbit Rescue and Rehab" and mail the check to: Rabbit Rescue and Rehab, 333 Mamaroneck Avenue, Suite #363, White Plains, NY 10605. Please send an email to us at [NYCRabbitRescueRehab@gmail.com](mailto:NYCRabbitRescueRehab@gmail.com) to indicate the amount of your donation, so we may add it to our online total. If you would like to volunteer with us or have additional questions, please contact us at the same email address. Thank you for your generous support!

---

Our website: [www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org)

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/RabbitRescueRehab/>

Instagram:

[https://www.instagram.com/rabbit\\_rescue\\_and\\_rehab/](https://www.instagram.com/rabbit_rescue_and_rehab/)

# Letters From Adopters

## Toast

*Toast was adopted in April by Lakya Roberts. Toast had been abandoned outside a residential building on the East Side, and she was rescued by Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers. Her story appeared in the April 2016 Thump. ([http://www.rabbitcare.org/Thump\\_April2016.pdf](http://www.rabbitcare.org/Thump_April2016.pdf)) Lakya sent us this great letter.*

THANK YOU, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab!

I have just adopted Toast from Rabbit Rescue & Rehab and she is my first rabbit. I had an absolutely wonderful experience with the team and the process was worth it. I did my research before starting the process because I wanted to make sure I was able to care for a rabbit. I had my first conversation

Photo: Lakya Roberts



Toast.

with Jeanine and we talked for almost two hours. First, she made sure I knew what I was getting into and if I was the right fit to have a rabbit. I understood

why this was important and I had no problem answering any questions she had. She taught me a lot and I'm happy to know I have someone so knowledgeable about rabbits to keep in touch with.

My baby Toast (I started calling her Toasty or Toasty Bear) is amazing! I first wanted to adopt her because of her story and how she was rescued. I just wanted to give her a home and make sure she was healthy and happy. She has a big space to run around in, and boy does she! She follows us around and sits next to us on the floor while my son and I are watching TV or doing homework.

I believe she is very special.

Thank you again Rabbit Rescue & Rehab!

Lakya, Cade, Toasty

Photo: Daryl Esterday



Jasper.

## Jasper

*Jasper, formerly known as Fudge, was adopted in March by Daryl Esterday and his partner Brandon. Jasper sent us his own letter to update everyone on his adventures.*

Dear Thumpers,

I've infiltrated my new home. My life as the rogue rabbit "Fudge" is no more; I'm now called Jasper.

During my days, I spend time stretched out on plush mats and fleece blankets around the home trying to exude inner tranquility. This façade will mask my assiduous plotting for pellets. I constantly attempt to silently hop under the feet of

the Two-legs; when they fall I will snatch the mint, basil, or other vegetable and flee wildly to my hideout.

I bide my time by nudging the Two-legs and constantly diverting their attention to me. They often pet me and sit with me and talk to me; it is during these interactions that I glean the most information.

After I've had enough I run and jump into the air to celebrate my success at fooling these Two-legs into thinking I'm a loving companion.

The Two-legs brought me to a white coat and it turns out I have an excellent physique and am a muscular 7 pounds.

I've come to like it here. They know that I'm an heir to the rabbit throne and allow me to roam as I wish. I will stay here as my feet are now soft and well acquainted with these rugs and I relish the time I spend on the couch with the Two-legs. I might venture to say I will allow them to be my companions forever.

Sincerely,

Jasper and dads, Daryl and Brandon

Photo: Sara Cosimano



Elliot.

## Elliot

*Sara adopted Elliot, formerly known as Mocha, in April, and she sent this update soon afterward.*

I am super excited to have adopted Mocha (renamed Elliot). It's been fun getting to know him and starting to bond with him.

Sara Cosimano

*(Continued on page 23)*

## Duke

*Duke was adopted by Bethani Angell at the Adoptapalooza event in April. Bethani sent us this great update about Duke and his partner bunny, Gigi.*

Duke, now known as Wild E Bunny (Whylie) since he looks so much like the Bugs Bunny cartoon character Wile E. Coyote, has been such a happy addition to our family.

Two years ago, we adopted two bonded sisters, Gigi and Georgina, through Rabbit Rescue & Rehab. This past January, Georgina suddenly got very sick and had to be put to sleep due to an aggressive cancer that was taking over her body. We were devastated. Gigi showed signs of depression, wanting to eat quite a bit and sleeping most of the time. She and Georgina had been inseparable. They slept in a tight snuggle, raced up and down the hallway, played endlessly with their toys.

We knew we had to find another partner for her, but who? Based on Gigi's easy-going personality, M.C. Basile suggested



Gigi and Duke.

Duke because his partner rabbit had rejected him. Maybe he and Gigi would be a good match. We decided to foster Duke and give it a try.

The first play date lasted one minute, and at the end Gigi snuggled up to Duke and they both lay down, snuggling close to the other. We increased the dates with much success, and now after three months they are best buddies, napping together, playing together, chewing hay, Lady and the Tramp style.

Whylie has made such a difference in our lives. He brought life back to a very sad bunny. Gigi has lost weight and is back to being her old active self. Her



Duke.

facial expression even looks happier! Duke is the silly, gentle guy we needed! We couldn't be happier!

Bethani

## Michaela

*Joelle adopted Michaela in April, and she sent us this great update. Michaela's parents are Romeo and Juliet.*

Michaela was found in a park with her two brothers, mother and father. She was picked up by a wonderful bunny foster mom on Staten Island.

When I was looking to adopt, I thought I would end up with a lop. However, after sitting with Michaela for a few minutes, her curious personality won me over, and I knew from that moment that she was my bun.

She came to her forever home on Monday afternoon, April 25, and has completely stolen my heart. She loves to explore and do laps around her pen. She is soft as can be and it's so hard for me not to



Michaela.



Michaela.

scoop her up and keep her in my arms forever.

She isn't afraid of anything, and her curious personality hasn't changed a bit. She smells everything and loves to explore new toys and places.

She stole my heart and I am so happy she found her way into my family. She is definitely in her forever home and will stay joyful and curious as ever.

Joelle Useche

(Continued on page 24)

## Peter

*David and Kristin adopted Peter in April, and they report that he is doing really well.*

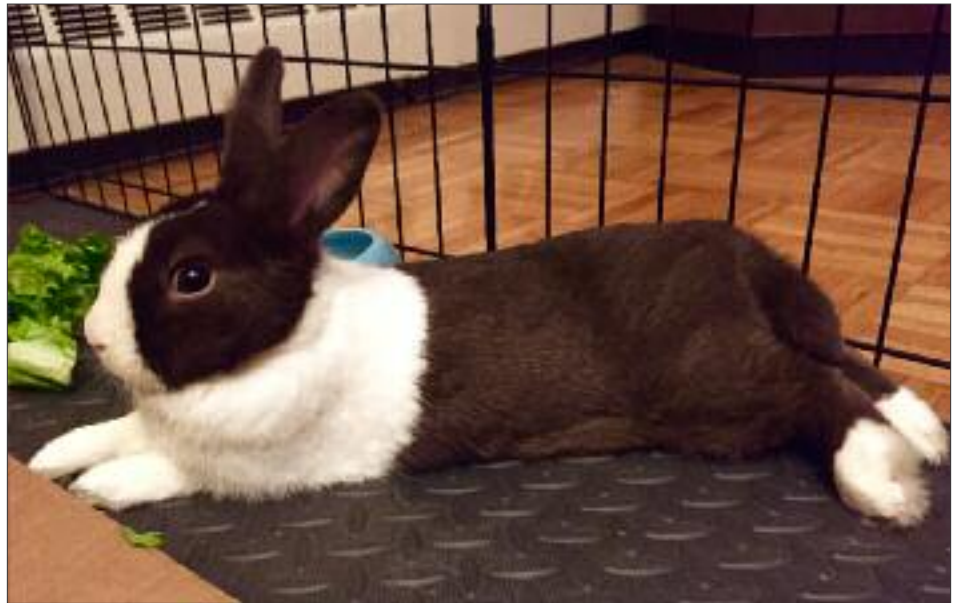
Peter has been living with us for about a month, and we couldn't imagine our home without him now.

He is such a joy to be around. He's always very curious and loves exploring the different areas of the apartment. He quickly found his favorite spot on the rug under the dining table to take his afternoon nap.

He makes us laugh with his binkies and running as he zooms around the room. Peter loves getting head scratches and massages, and he loves giving us licks in return.

We've enjoyed introducing him to new fruits and veggies. His favorites so far are pear and cilantro.

Photo: Kristin Trover



Peter.

He never ceases to amuse us with his silly ways. Even when he sleeps he has a cute little whistling snore.

Peter is such a sweet and fun little guy, and we are so happy he is a part of our family!

David & Kristin

## Terrance and Luna

*Terrance and Luna were adopted by Arabella and Dan, who are happy to report that he two buns have finally found happiness together as a duo.*

Here is a timeline of how Terrance and Luna finally became a bonded pair:

A little over a year after adopting Luna as a partner for Terrance, she and he warily began courting. They were coy, nervous but very interested.

During the blizzard this past winter, they had their first kiss. And from then on they have been inseparable. They spend their days cuddling, preening one another and creating all kinds of mischief together. But most of all, they have a wonderful partnership.

When I first saw Terrance, I fell deeply in love. I had been drawn to the online posting about Luna online, which is how I found my way to the Petco store. She however, was not interested, and I didn't blame her. When I adopted Terrance, just as we were taking him

home, Luna peered out sweetly from her cage and my heart sank. I never forgot her. Nearly a year later, I was out shopping and went to visit the rabbits. To my complete surprise, she was still there. I knew we needed to take her home. She was meant to come home with us.

I cannot express the words to thank the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab volunteers for your love and care over these amazing creatures. I was so weary after the speed dating (it was strange to imagine that Luna simply not attempting to kill Terrance meant a match), and subsequent bunny battling at home. They were and are both incredibly strong-willed. However, in their own time they developed a leery camaraderie, and then friendship, bonding...and love.

It has made Luna comfortable in being vulnerable – and very loving. And it has made Terrance very protective. She is still feisty and he is his still his funny charming self. But they are always together and I cannot imagine our lives without them.

Photo: Arabella Friedland



Luna and Terrance.

So here they are, from two cages atop one another at the 86th Street Petco, to a condo-sized pen built for two (and all the cardboard boxes they can prance on). Thank you so, so very much.

Love,  
Arabella and Dan  
And Terrance and Luna!

P.S. She still gives kisses and he still is a little piggy

(Continued on page 25)



Photo: Elisha Wang



Annie and Sebastian.

## Sebastian and Annie

*Elisha and Vincent adopted Sebastian and Annie at April's Adoptapalooza. Here is an update on how these wonderful bunnies are doing.*

Sebastian and Annie are doing great! They took a while to settle down but now that they have, they're playing tag with each other and binkying as they run in our living room.

Watching them interact with each other is the sweetest thing as they adore each other. Sebastian loves digging in his tunnel while Annie spends her evenings exploring every nook and cranny of her new home.

Lots of thanks and love to everyone who's cared for them along their journey!

Love,  
Elisha and Vincent

Photo: Cora Joe Anderson



Tristan.

## Tristan

*Tristan was adopted in early May by Cora Joe Anderson, who sent us this update a few days later.*

I have been interested in adopting a rabbit for a while now (my childhood pets were two bunnies that roamed in our house like cats.) So I went to the Animal Care Center in Manhattan, and my decision was clear: ADOPT ONE OF THE BEAUTIFUL RESCUE BUNNIES! Unfortunately, there are too many rescued rabbits to count. The volunteers were clearly rabbit aficionados, with a love for fostering and caring for the species. I knew right then that I wanted to help the cause in a small way. I saw Tristan and the connection was immediate – he's a calm, charming and trusting bunny. He's 3 years old and had been returned twice by adopters. He was the one.

Since bringing him home, I've learned to always keep it gentle, to show my respect for his trust! His gorgeous pink-tinted ears make him look more like a cat or dog from behind! He's the newest member of my family, and I can't wait to share many years with him.

A million thanks to the care providers at the Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, a brilliant organization! I am a happy bunny mama!

Cora Joe Anderson

Photo: Jeannette Faye



Jeannette with Butternut.

## Butternut

*Butternut, formerly known as Frijole, was adopted in May by Jeannette Faye, who sent us this nice update.*

Frijole has chosen another name to go by and now responds quite happily to Butternut.

Since I brought Butternut home, she has been nothing but a joy to our household. I love her more and more every day.

She is just about completely litter trained and loves roaming about our apartment. Under the couch has become her favorite burrow. She loves her cheek pets and head massages.

If you lie on the carpet, she'll come and sniff your face or lift your hand for more pets!

My boyfriend and I love Butternut. She is the best friend to come home to!

Jeannette



Carly.



Stuart.



Willow.



Alfie.



Bunnito.



Abraham.



Bongo.



Ira.



Daisy Duck.



Brittany.

## Rabbit-Savvy Veterinarians

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

### Manhattan:

Becky Campbell, DVM  
Deborah Levison, DVM  
Symphony Veterinary Center  
170 West 96th Street, New York, NY 10025  
(212) 866-8000

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

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

### Westchester County (cont.):

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

### Long Island:

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

Heidi Hofer, DVM  
Island Exotic Vet Care  
591 East Jericho Turnpike  
Huntington Station, NY 11746  
(631) 424-0300

Jeff Rose, DVM  
Jefferson Animal Hospital  
606 Patchogue Rd. (Route 112)  
Port Jefferson Station, NY 11776  
(631) 473-0415

## Licensed HRS Educators

### NYC/Westchester:

M.C. Basile, Esq., President, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, BunnyTorts@gmail.com

Mary Cotter, Founder, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, Chapter Manager, NYC House Rabbit Society, Adviser to Thump, mec@cloud9.net, (914) 337-6146, rabbitcare.org

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

Mary Harnett, mmharnett@optonline.net, (914) 948-7976

Marcie Frishberg, mfrish57bun@yahoo.com, (718) 724-4105

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

Kerstin Aumann

Monica Shepherd, DVM

### Long Island:

Nancy Schreiber, President, Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, nschreibmd@aol.com, (516) 510-3637, LongIslandRabbitRescue.org

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

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

Jennifer Saver, DVM

Laura George, DVM

## THUMP June 2016

Newsletter of RRR/NYC HRS  
56 West Pondfield Road #5C  
Bronxville, NY 10708  
[www.rabbitcare.org](http://www.rabbitcare.org)

Editor: Susan Lillo

Creative Director: Jane O'Wyatt

Masthead Logo Designer: Mary Ann Maier

Rabbit Rescue & Rehab is a not-for-profit, tax-exempt corporation in New York State. Our purpose is to rescue, rehabilitate and find permanent homes for abandoned, abused and neglected rabbits, and to educate the public on rabbit care through publications, phone consultations, home visits and presentations. This newsletter is published by RRR/NYC HRS, which is solely responsible for its content. We retain the right to edit all submissions, which become the property of the NYC Chapter and cannot be returned.

All donations go directly to caring for our foster rabbits and are tax-deductible. Please help us help them. Mailing address for contributions: Rabbit Rescue & Rehab/NYC Metro Rabbit, 333 Mamaroneck Ave, PMB 363, White Plains NY 10605. To contribute to Long Island Rabbit Rescue Group, please go to [www.longislandrabbitrescue.org](http://www.longislandrabbitrescue.org).

## Adoptable Rabbits 🐰

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

To adopt a rabbit in **New York City** or **Westchester**, contact [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com). On **Long Island**, contact Nancy Schreiber at [nanschreibmd@aol.com](mailto:nanschreibmd@aol.com) or at 516-510-3637 ([www.longislandrabbitrescue.org](http://www.longislandrabbitrescue.org)).

**If interested in volunteering or fostering for Rabbit Rescue & Rehab, please email [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com).**

Adoptable Rabbit Rescue & Rehab 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 four rabbits living at each of those stores.

In addition, Rabbit Rescue & Rehab rabbits are at the Petland Discounts store on West 72nd Street.

You can also visit Manhattan Animal Care Center (NYC ACC) 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 can be arranged by appointment only on weekend afternoons at Union Square. Please contact [nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com](mailto:nyc.metro.rabbits@gmail.com) to make arrangements.

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