



Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

Safe Haven Scoop

Roadside Rescue! *By Karen Augustynowicz, President*

Special points of interest:

- Roadside Rescue!
- Adoption Updates - Always A Favorite!
- The Bunny Petition

On Thursday, May 3rd 2007, a frantic phone message from Jennifer Frohlick initiated Safe Haven's most involved rescue to date. Jennifer's mother, Nora witnessed a white rabbit giving birth near a curbside at a highway park and ride. Knowing the danger these rabbits were in, Jennifer began making call after call trying to find someone to help.

When I spoke to her the next morning, Jenn said the local animal control did come out, but when "the rabbits ran away" there was "nothing they could do". Jenn mentioned that several other rabbits were also seen along with the large white birthing mother. Although everyone realized the probable fate of these poor babies, the hope remained that maybe we could get there in time.



Jennifer, Alison and Nora Frohlich at the location on Saturday hoping to bring these bunnies to safety.



Our first major obstacle was the fenced building enclosure which the rabbits could enter but we could not. In addition, a chain link fence ran along the border. Smart creatures these rabbits; they seemed to know where we could not get close to them. Having dug many burrows under the fences, they were very savvy about their ins and outs. All their food, though, was outside of the enclosure; so they did have to come out to eat. All we would have to do is wait and so we did; hour after hour, day after day.

On Sunday, we got lucky. The rabbits were seeking the coolness of the woods and grass. We fenced off little areas where they were. But as soon as the fences were in place, the rabbits ran in the opposite direction! The heavy traffic noise made

it impossible for us to hear each other. We tried to communicate with cell phones and hand signals



Barbara & Rick Bruyer sight one in the thicket.

for we knew losing sight of them would cost us hours.

As the sun began to set, Barbara and Rick located one hiding in the thicket and, moving quickly,

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When I arrived at the location that evening and saw the enormity of the run area, the close proximity of a 6 lane interstate highway, the fenced building enclosure, the woods and heavily thicketed area these rabbits were calling home, I knew the rescue effort would be an immense one.

It was then my turn to start making phone calls and plans. With luck and lots of people, I thought it would be possible to drive them to an area we could fence off. Once fenced, they would be easy to catch....it sounded like a good plan....the rabbits had other ideas.

Safe Haven volunteers, Barbara and Rick Bruyer, Wendy Milligan and Scott Gandolfe and I met

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wrapped a fence around her as she made a mad dash. Shouts of “we got one!” excited the tired group and bolstered our spirits. *It was possible!* With darkness approaching, the day ended happily and everyone went home planning to return the next day.

Monday evening, May 7th, Barbara and I arrived first to stake out the activity; the others would join us after work. The late start seemed to work in our favor. As we were learning, the rabbits came out of the enclosure early evenings to graze in the tall grass. Too close to the highway for comfort, but at least they were out in the open. The white Momma rabbit was happily munching clover while Barbara maneuvered through the thicket to get behind her. I closed in from the front with a fence. Now used to seeing us everyday, this rabbit must have thought we were pretty harmless and silly. “Who are these crazy people?” she must have thought. Whatever she was thinking, she wasn’t allowing us to get too close, but as she ran, she ran right to where I and my fence were waiting.

Catch #2!

Next in our sights were two black bunnies who we followed for an hour; in and out of the woods. As I trailed them, I could see they were beginning to tire. They scooted under a truck to lay down for a rest. Shouting for Barbara, I gathered as much fencing as I could. Wendy and Scott had just arrived and I motioned to them to grab more fencing and run it around the truck. We had them! If we just had enough fencing.... As Barbara and I crawled under



Wendy Milligan guards the fencing.



Barbara greets ‘Chuck’

Photos by Scott Gandolfe

the truck, Scott and Wendy kept closing in the fence. Open spaces were blocked by our bodies.

What a great team effort that was! The two black bunnies were soon in our carriers. We were on a roll and even though everyone was exhausted, no one was ready to call it a night. There was one more red bunny to catch.

About that time, Judy and Kevin Sutton arrived to lend a hand and quickly spotted the red bunny coming out for some grass. So, we caught our breath and joined in re-setting the fences. But, this red bunny was clever. She spotted an opening and zoomed down into the woods! Scott was as determined not to lose her as she was determined not to be caught and followed her through the woods. Once she settled down, Scott herded her back to the road where we were setting up the fence. Inch by inch she was headed in the right direction. As she came out of the woods and into the fence, barreling full speed, she broke through an opening and headed back under the building. *That stinker!* Although disappointed, we consoled ourselves with the three we caught that day and called it a night.

Throughout the week the results were the same. That little red bunny was a hard one to catch! On Friday, May 11th we were sickened to find a white bunny dead. It was a real blow to the team. We ended the week with a burial instead of a rescue. We were exhausted, discouraged and out of ideas. *If we could only get into the building enclosure!* Jenn had called the tower company several times, but, they said no; the state police came by several times and were ok with our being there “as long as we did not try to go inside the enclosure”. It was padlocked and off-limits. I called Jenn that night to tell her about the sad find. There was one red bunny left alone. We just couldn’t get her. I was very sorry, but just didn’t know what else to do.

Through the weekend, my phone rang constantlyeveryone offering new ideas - *obviously no one was getting much sleep!* We had to try again! Judy called to say she could bring “lots of fencing”.....Jenn was going to call the tower company again on Monday.....Wendy knew someone who traps and rescues birds.....Jenn, Nora and Alison could all be there on Monday.....no one wanted to leave this red bunny there alone.

On Monday morning, I got the best news possible. Jenn’s tower contact granted us access! *We could go into the enclosure!!* We were to call him when we arrived and follow his instruction. Once inside, we found our lone red bunny sitting safely (she thought) under the end building....”*they can’t get me in here*” While she rested, we encircled the building with over 200 ft. of fencing. We also fenced the burrow escape through which I was sure she would dart. This time the fence was securely staked into the ground.

When we were sure everyone was ready, Kevin gently tapped her with the net pole and she flew out from under the building, through the burrow and into the fenced in grassy area where I was standing. I don’t know who was more startled, her or I. We looked at each other for a second, then I crouched down

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Adoption Updates (Stories contributed by new parents)

Minnie

Adopted 9/2/2006

by Elaine Campbell and Family

Minnie was rescued by a friend of Safe Haven when her former owners tried to return her to the pet store from which she was originally purchased. She is a tiny thing, just over 3 pounds, and approximately 18 months old. Karen asked us a lot of questions about how we were equipped to house our rabbit (in a cage while we are away and in an exercise pen when we're home). She led us to Minnie because she was small enough and accustomed to a cage/pen situation and because she was less likely to hop over the walls of a two-foot enclosure.



Minnie was a bit timid at first but soon got used to us and her new digs, which are right in our family room so she gets lots of people time. Minnie likes cardboard boxes in her pen to chew and hide in, and after a bit she pushes them to the center of the pen so she can make a track around which she can do leaping laps! The kids often sit in the pen and let Minnie climb on their laps and they roll things to her that she rolls back. But the biggest surprise of all is the bond Minnie and my husband John have formed!

We lost our dog Champ last year and it was especially tough on John. But since Minnie has come to live with us, John sits with her every night and she appears genuinely thrilled when he heads toward the pen. They play their "got to fix this towel" game; Minnie scoots and messes up the towel and then John smooths it out. Then she scoots it into a ball again. They seem to be able to do this forever! I never thought a bunny would replace John's dog but he adores this rabbit! As for me, I don't care so much for being in the pen but Minnie and I have our own relationship. She lets me hold her and she looks to me to fulfill the expected routine - food, toys, papaya, the occasional bit of banana.

Minnie is quite smart and has found ways to communicate with me when she needs something or when she doesn't care for a change in the routine. I daresay she gets the occasional attitude, and once in a while I have dubbed her the crab-bit, but we all love her exactly as she is!

Minnie also has an unexpected fan. Our 90-pound mixed breed dog, Brandy, was very curious about her for a day or so, but never showed any aggression.

Brandy is too large and Minnie is too small for me to relax with them being in the same room, but they will go nose-to-nose through the bars of the exercise pen with no problem. If you have a dog and are wondering if it will get along with a rabbit, I will tell you about the qualities that I sought in Brandy that made me feel comfortable bringing Minnie into the house.

Brandy is a gentle soul with people and especially with children. She pays very little mind to birds, squirrels and ducks that frequent our property, though she did chase a chipmunk once that nearly landed on her nose. She plays with towels and scarves but does not like stuffed animals as did our other dogs. Those other dogs always did the "kill-shake" with those stuffed animals; I suggest you do not get a rabbit if your dog plays in this way, as even the gentlest animals operate on pure instinct. If you do decide to adopt a bun, I hope your story is as happy as ours!

Abby

Adopted 10/8/2006

by Alison Tamborlane

Where to start with our "new" girl Abby? We contacted Karen because our girl bunny died and we were worried our boy bunny would be lonely.

We had adopted our girl bunny through Safe Haven's "private adoption program" and now wanted to visit Safe Haven in person.

I guess we jumped the gun a bit, because it turned out our boy bunny felt perfectly content being a bachelor. Still, we were so WOW-ed by Karen's home-rescue operation, we found ourselves visiting a couple times (to pop in to talk, learn and give her bunnies extra pets).

One day, a newcomer arrived. She was instantly friendly and did not seem to be a "chewer". She was also the funniest-looking bunny we ever saw (Dalmatian-like polka dots!)

Still, "Abby" won our hearts and we knew we had enough room to bring home another bun.

Karen is a true mother to her "kids" She will tell you everything she believes and everything you need to know (and



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Adoption Updates *(Continued)*

change) in order to make life easier, healthier and safer for rabbits.

For those of you new to bunny-caretaking -- Be prepared! A bunny in the house is like a toddler. You need to "rabbit-proof" your home and it helps not to be overly attached to "things" (Bunnies, like kids, seem to find your most cherished possessions straight away!) As it turns out, Abby is something of a "chewer"!

Still, if you are adventurous -- dive in! And be ready to fall in love! Bunnies seem to be choc-full of personality! We tried bonding Abby and our boy bunny. I'm pretty sure with time we could make this happen. However, our boy bunny is older and very docile and has no front teeth, so we don't believe it is worth the stress on him. So presently, our boy bunny lives in our bedroom, while energetic Abby has open run of the rest of our apartment.

Karen is a great person to keep in touch with. Any questions, you can call and she will give you her expert advice. Which is wonderful-- because there is so much to know.

Life with a bunny is sure to surprise you -- and we hope inspire you

Sincerely, the Scheffers-Tamborlane family

Nibbles (formerly Candi)

Adopted 9/3/2006

by Kathleen Stefanik-Gregory



In August of 2006, our dear friend Jan called to tell me that one of her clients, Bev, had the cutest little rabbit for adoption. I was told that her name was Candi and that she was a Netherland Dwarf, black, with a white nose. They sent me a few pictures and you just had to fall in love with her. Jan, my husband and myself went for a visit. Well, she was cute,

and spent most of the visit sitting on my husbands shoulder, like a parrot. The decision was made that we would like to adopt her.

We currently had two other rabbits, Tilly, a New Jersey Wooley and Riley, a lop. We had lost our third rabbit, Humpy a few months before and while I thought we would hold off on getting another one, once we met her, I knew that she had to be part of our family. My husband agreed, like he really had a choice, and the decision was made to bring her home. Karen and Bev were great through the process and I would have to say that I would never purchase from a breeder again. There are too many cute

animals that need homes and we are fortunate to have one of them!

Candi arrived home Labor Day Weekend, 2006. She was given the run of the living room, after bunny proofing. Candi loved to run around our living room table. She would do passes to make sure that everything was clear, and then would tear around at high speed, creating wind. If you happened to have your feet on the floor, she would nibble at you and push you out of the way. She would hop on top of you and nibble at your clothing and if you had a blanket on, she would pull it off! She has even perfected the art of undoing your shoe laces. It did not take long before we realized that Candi was meant to be named Nibbles and the name change was made.

Nibbles likes to try and steal "people food"! She will climb on top of you to see what you have and make a grab. She also has decided that containers of iced tea are interesting. The other night we turned to find her with her head in the container, licking the rim. We have had rabbits for 7 years, and none of them tried to steal people food, with the exception of Nibbles! Don't worry, though....we do know how bad that would be for her!

In November of 2006 she gave us quite a scare. She did not eat all her breakfast, which was very unlike her. She loves baby carrots and when you open her door to feed her she flops out, looking for the carrot. She did not do this on this particular morning, but all rabbits have their moments. She took an apple piece from me and I decided to watch her. She did eat most of the food throughout the day, but when I let her out for some exercise, I saw her lose her balance and began to watch her more closely. She is actually quite clumsy normally. She often falls off the couch, or runs into things, but this was different. After she did it again, I called the vet who was able to take us that evening. He believed it to be Wry Neck/Tilt Head, or E. Cuniculi. We began 28 days of medications and we are happy to report that we have a clean bill of health! Our Dr. reminds us that she will never be normal, as normal and rabbit do not go well in the same sentence!

Nibbles rules our home. Nothing goes on without her inspection. She is a joy to have and continually reminds us that she is the princess. As long as we remember that it is all about her, we will remain happy!



Roadside Rescue *(continued from pg. 2)*

over her and gathered her in my arms.

So on the eleventh day, May 14th, the rescue effort was successfully completed. The last surviving bunny was safe - thanks to the countless hours, sleepless nights, numerous cuts, bruises, thorn pokes and ticks everyone involved endured.

I truly do not know how to express all the thanks and gratitude due to:

- * **Jennifer, Nora and Alison Frohlich** - for caring enough to not just look the other way and for taking action;
- * **Barbara and Rick Bruyer, Wendy Milligan and Scott Gandolfe, Kevin and Judy Sutton** for spending countless hours at the site and putting their personal lives on hold for eleven days;
- * **Tracey Turner** for taking in the first three rabbits rescued;
- * **Alice Shoppe** for taking in "Chuck" - who was caught under the truck
- * and to **David**, our tower contact, whose trust in us was instrumental in our final success.

Their dedication not only saved the lives of five adult rabbits, but also the lives of twenty lucky little babies who were being carried along in this journey. Because they cared, these babies did survive. The multiple litters born prior never had a chance.

Our red bunny, named "Nora" in honor of Mrs. Frohlich is a happy, healthy, grateful girl, who by the way, delivered 10 babies just 7 days after being rescued! And Nora - now prefers her "greens" served on a plate, with a touch of fruit on the side!



Ten babies were also born to one of the girls taken in by Tracy Turner, bringing the total of rabbits rescued to 25!

Twenty five lives saved is a huge contribution in life and something of which you all can be very proud!

I cannot thank you all enough.

Sincerely,
Karen Augustynowicz

Raeline, Ricky and Buca

On Oct. 15, 2006, I received an email from Melissa Johnston saying that she had caught a little grey bunny who was running loose in her neighborhood. Melissa reported that there were two others as well and she would continue to try and catch them.

Since Melissa was already a bunny parent, she knew these bunnies would not survive for long and made it her task to rescue all three. With the help of her neighbor, Melissa set up have-a-heart traps. As the weather was getting cold and food was scarce, the two other bunnies sought out the food supply Melissa had provided.

Buca, the first one caught, won Melissa's heart and she decided to add him to her family. The other two, Ricky and Raeline, joined Safe Haven on Nov. 2nd. Raeline's babies were born on Nov. 19th, 2006. Happily, most of Raeline's six babies have been adopted while she, Biggles and Brodie still wait for permanent homes. Ricky, adopted in January, doesn't write much, but we still get to see "Uncle Buca" as he comes for boarding when his parents are out of town!



Momma Raeline

A well deserved "Thank you!" goes to Melissa for her kindness to them all. *Nine lives saved! Well, done!*

The Bunny Petition

Most people do not realize that rabbits are the third most abandoned animal. Since the policy of most "animal shelters" is that they "do not take in rabbits", people dump them - in the streets, in parks, in parking lots....wherever.

It is a tragedy that repeats over and over. With gestation being 28-32 days, the ability to become pregnant only hours after giving birth, and the possibility of producing up to 14 babies per litter you can imagine how many rabbits can be born to a pair of pet store rabbits that were "set free".

It was bad enough when pet stores were just selling rabbits around Easter time. Now the horror is being advocated for year round profit.

Sadly, PetSmart stores, once advocates of adoptions, have begun selling rabbits in their stores. Please become a voice by signing the Best Friends petition urging PetSmart to reconsider this decision. Our website's home page will link you to the petition, or you can visit BestFriends.org

Please let PetSmart and other pet stores who sell rabbits know that you will take your business elsewhere!



Thoughts on Fostering

It Hurts So Good !!! ***By Barbara Bruyer***



I will honestly admit that the first time I heard the expression "It hurts so good" I was quite confused. It reminds me of other famous sayings such as "you'll thank me when you grow up" and "this is going to hurt me more than it will hurt you." How could anything hurtful possibly make you feel good? When a doctor gives you a needle, it may cure your illness. . .but it doesn't feel good. If you touch something hot, your hand recoils which prevents a bad burn . . .but it doesn't feel good.

A foster caregiver knows what it means!! There aren't many things that make you feel as good as being a foster caregiver. Helping a frightened little rabbit feel loved and safe, perhaps for the first time in her life is almost too fantastic to describe.

Once any medical issues have been addressed, the socialization process can begin. It's the little victories that would normally go unnoticed that are giant steps for these abused/neglected little ones. Eating normally instead of attacking the food and gobbling it down, coming to see you instead of hiding in the corner, sniffing your hand and not running away from it, allowing you to pick them up for some cuddles without fighting and trying to escape in fear, and learning to use the litterbox are great milestones of achievement for those who have not been in a loving environment. Some rabbits have an easy time; others will take many months to feel relaxed and confident that they are safe.

Once starting to feel secure, its time to learn to play!! Running through a tube, digging in a box of shredded newspaper, rolling a ball, and playing in a paper bag means they are on their way. The hours are too many to count. The constant, persistent promises that they are OK and that you love them have allowed them to once again trust a human and be a happy bunny.

Then it happens. You get that call which says a person wants to come see YOUR bunny for a possible adoption. How can that be? He is just starting to enjoy being a happy bunny! Will they love you as much as I do? Will they take you to the vet immediately if there is a problem? Will they pet your nose in just the right place that you like so much? Will they let you sit on their chest instead of holding you on their lap cause you don't like that? Will they give you the right food? Will they get angry with you if you miss the litterbox? Will they give you too many snacks. . . .or heaven forbid, not any? You start to get a mild panicky feeling and think "no, he is just not ready yet." Or is it YOU that isn't ready to let go?

The potential new family comes to see the bunny and you talk 1000 miles per hour telling everything there is to tell about your little friend. You know in your heart that they aren't listening, but are focusing on YOUR bunny. They seem nice, they seem

gentle, they say they are patient, they say YOUR bunny will have lots of play time outside the cage in a safe play area, and they say "yes" to this and "yes" to that.

Suddenly you relax just a bit and stop thinking of yourself and watch the interaction of your bunny with the other people. Hey, he isn't afraid of them. They speak softly and move slowly. No one is grabbing for your bunny. They are respectful of his wishes and get down on the floor eye-to-eye. Perhaps they aren't too bad after all.

Yes, the little bunny you've fostered is going to have a new home. Yes, a new family of his very own who will love him and care for him for the rest of his life. Yes, you will never see this little bunny again. . . . and yes

It hurts so good!!!!



Loving them all, ***By Beverly Kistler***

It has been a year and a half ago since I first visited Safe Haven's website. I was instantly hooked. Now, after 10 fosters behind me, and soon to get my 11th, I would like to express how rewarding it is to foster these buns. Sometimes we know their background and sometimes they are strays, but ultimately the goal is the same. . . .fostering them until their "fur-ever" home is found. In the beginning of my "rabbit fostering career", I fell in love with each and every rabbit. Soon you realize by letting them go. . .they have an opportunity for a wonderful life with their new family. Each applicant is screened to make sure bunny and family are a good match. I am thankful I had the opportunity to foster and care for Ryan (my 1st), Tina, Benji (couldn't help myself, I adopted him), Puzzle, Candi (Nibbles), Greta, Max, Bridget, Harley and Brodie. And now, I welcome Ms. Raeline the mother of Harley and Brodie.

Would you like to foster for Safe Haven? As the saying goes. . . .It is the toughest job you'll ever love!

Foster homes are always needed.

There are always many more bunnies who need us than we have foster homes for. For more information, please call 908-238-0814 or email adopt@SafeHavenRR.org

The bunnies do need you!

Most Recent Adoptions



Greta
Adopted by
Deanna Matthews
11/27/2006



Ricky
Adopted by
Candice Milford
1/21/2007



Max
Adopted by
Ken & Barbara Wedeen
3/15/2007



Millie
Adopted by
Russ & Kathe Fisher
4/1/2007



Morgan
Adopted by
Donna Wasserman &
Family
4/6/2007



Mindy & Brandi
Adopted by
Bob & Judy Coniglio
4/29/2006



Bridget
Adopted by
Megan Merdinger
5/13/2006

We look forward to sharing their stories in an upcoming newsletter!

Join Us Today!

\$15 Annual Membership includes official membership card, newsletters, and early notification of special events!

Foster Homes Needed!

There are many bunnies needing care! If you can take in one or two, please let us know.

Love-A-Bun? Please Sponsor One!

We cannot do it without you! With vet bills especially high as of late, our bunnies really need your support. You can choose a specific bunny to sponsor or let us choose the most needy. Either way, you will receive a key fob, complete with a picture of your sponsored bun!



Please Print Clearly!

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____ Telephone: _____

1 year membership - \$15

Sponsorship - \$15 for _____ (Bunny's Name)

Donation - Any amount greatly appreciated!!



Please make check payable to: Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.
and mail to PO 5057, Clinton, NJ 08809

THANK YOU!

Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc. is a federally recognized,
tax-deductible 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.