



Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

# Safe Haven Scoop

By Karen Augustynowicz, Director

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### Foster Homes Needed!

Do you have room for just one more bunny? Foster home care is always needed as our "Adoptables" wait for their forever home.

Please contact us via our [Volunteer form](#) if you are interested in fostering. All needed supplies are provided.



And [Twitter](#)



## Time to Celebrate...

It is that time of year when our thoughts turn to the holidays, time with friends and good cheer. I wanted to take a moment to *Thank You* all for your continued support of our rescue buns.

I am truly always grateful to everyone for their efforts. Whether that be through volunteering, fostering, adopting, participating in our events, sponsoring, or donating—every bit helps and it is only with your support that Safe Haven can continue to help bunnies and educate their owners.

We have two new Special Needs rescues that we hope you will consider

### *Sponsoring for the Holidays!*

#### *Bunsy*



This bunny had been seen running loose since "Feb. or March" and after many attempts was finally caught by two very

caring women on Nov. 5th. Her poor condition, injuries and hunger indicated how much she suffered. Bunsy's personality is of one who just wants to love. She is sweet and melting everyone's heart. You can read details on our [SPONSORSHIP](#) page. We hope you will want to help her too!

#### *Maisey*



Maisey has been our little girl in hiding since Oct. 9<sup>th</sup>, because of a known possible heart problem. At

6 months of age her owner took her for spay exam and an abnormally slow heart rate was detected. The owner decided against further testing due to the expense and surrendered her to Safe Haven to give her the best chance at life.

Her details are also on our [SPONSORSHIP](#) page. Maybe Maisey will be the one you will choose!

We look forward to our challenges of finding new ways to educate and encourage our supporters and alumni to help us spread the word about the joys of having a companion rabbit and the knowledge of caring for them. Rabbits truly are deserving of our best efforts and reward our efforts many times over.

**Wishing you a Blessed Holiday Season!  
Enjoy the Newsletter!**

*With sincere thanks,*

*Karen Augustynowicz, Director*

*Recent Event Photos. . .*

*Our 6th Annual Bun-nanza! Held November 4, 2018*



This year's Bun-nanza was the biggest and most successful yet! We had a wonderful turn-out and welcomed a lot of newcomers! Special "Thank You's" go to all our Sponsors! And to all the vendors who came to spread a little bunny joy. Everyone and every bun really seemed to be having a lot of fun. There were lots of shopping opportunities for bunny food and toys! And of course, we hope everyone learned some new ways to care for their rabbits. There are about 50 more photos on our facebook page and soon will be added to the website. Check them out [Here](#).

**Thank you to all our Volunteers!**



**Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.**  
**2018 Bun-nanza!**  
**November 4, 2018**  
**Event Sponsors!**



*In Memory of*  
**Doodles, Joy, Jingles,**  
**Belle & Bohdi**  
*from*  
**Toby, Baxter, Teddy Bear,**  
**Wendy & Scott**



**Dr. Marc Sandberg**



- Bernadette Danner (Educational Tables)
- Lauren Corley (Shirt Sales)
- Mrs. Corley (Shirt Sales)
- Jacqui Crown (Pre-event Prep)
- Stacey Bavos (Publicity & Bunny Course)
- Astrid Hesse (Grooming)
- Shana Hurley (Safe Haven Sales Tables)
- Sherry Totaro (Busy Bunny Sales)
- Maria Sgourdas (Busy Bunny Sales)
- Peggy Macaoay (Willow Sales)
- Diane Romano (Refreshments)
- Gail Peterson (Planning, Photo Booth & Maze)
- Bill Mack (Video Corner & Maze attendant)
- Catherine Eubanks (Check in – Registration)
- Madeleine Eichorn (Checkin—Registration)
- Michelle Manderski (Grooming)
- Yumi Nakayama (Photographer)



## Ask the Vet . . .

**Question:** My rabbit's eye is tearing. Is it anything to be concerned about? What might be the cause?

Rebecca Lorig, DVM at Community Animal Hospital in Morris Plains, NJ replied:

Eye discharge is a very common problem in rabbits and should be evaluated by your veterinarian. There are a number of problems that can cause your rabbit's eyes to tear:

**Corneal ulcers (scratches) or foreign bodies** can be an inciting factor for eye discharge. Rabbits are constantly exposed to particles of rough hay that can contact the surface of the eyeball, creating irritation and pain that lead to tearing, especially if the cornea is scratched. This is even more likely if the rabbit cannot blink its eyelid, a common sign of **middle ear disease** when the facial nerve (which runs through the middle ear) is damaged or inflamed. The rabbit may also hold its eye closed if it is uncomfortable from corneal irritation.

**Conjunctivitis** is an inflammation of the tissues surrounding the eyeball. It can be caused by many different bacteria and viruses, including *Pasteurella*, as well as irritants, such as high dust and ammonia content in the air from poor hygiene. Hallmarks of this condition are reddened, irritated membranes surrounding the eyeball as well as clear, white, or yellow-green discharge from the eyes. Most of the time, this is seen in both eyes at the same time.

**Tear (nasolacrimal) duct obstruction** is also a common cause of eye discharge in rabbits. The tear duct in a rabbit extends from the corner of the lower eyelid, through the bone of the nose, and out a small hole in the nostril. Tears made by the eye normally drain through this duct and out the nose. Inflammation or infection anywhere along this duct can cause an obstruction, which causes tears to well up and pour over, out of the corner of

the eye. The discharge can be clear, milky white, or pus if there is infection. This can happen in one eye or both eyes, and one of the most common causes is **dental disease**. When the roots of the upper teeth, especially the incisors, are elongated, it can cause a blockage of the tear duct, preventing normal flow of tears into the nostrils. Sometimes, there is also a bacterial infection associated with this problem.

Rabbits are also prone to abscesses (pockets of infection), and one of the most common places for this to form is behind the eye. A **retrobulbar abscess** often forms from dental root disease, but not always, and can push the eyeball out slightly, preventing tears from draining properly. This can result in excessive eye discharge, which may be the first sign prompting a trip to the vet.

When presented with a bunny with eye discharge, your veterinarian will do a good exam to try to pinpoint the problem. Oftentimes, a topical antibiotic drop is prescribed if bacterial conjunctivitis is suspected, or a tear duct flush is recommended if an obstruction is likely. Flushing the tear ducts is a relatively simple procedure in rabbits, and usually does not necessitate sedation or anesthesia. Sometimes, an oral antibiotic is indicated. Because of the many causes of eye discharge in rabbits, it is always recommended to see your veterinarian for diagnosis and treatment.

**Community Animal Hospital is located at  
921 Route 53/Tabor Rd.,  
Morris Plains, NJ 07950  
#973-267-4220  
[www.communityanimalhosp.com](http://www.communityanimalhosp.com)**

## *Update on Boo*

*by Karen Augustynowicz and Gail Peterson*

Many of you who knew about Safe Haven back in June 2010 may remember the baby pet store throw away we rescued with a broken leg. He was brought to us from Jersey City by train to Morris Plains and by foot to Community Animal Hospital where I first met him and his rescuers. You'll remember his leg was so damaged it could not be saved, but he was only weeks old and too young for surgery. So, we kept him comfortable until he was old enough and on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2010, Boo had his left hind leg amputated mid-femur.

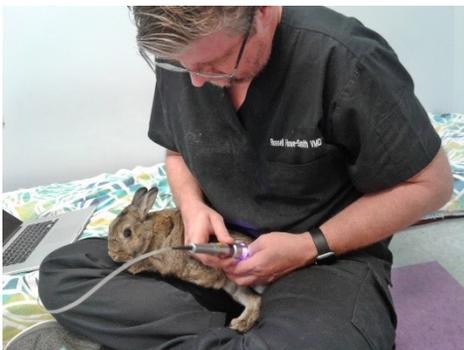
Many dogs and cats live normal lives and get around well with only three legs. But that is harder for a rabbit. Knowing the on-going care and expense he would require, I adopted Boo for my birthday that same August. For seven years, Boo did exceptionally well with only three legs. He never hopped like a normal rabbit, but his front legs were strong, and he managed to just pull himself around. His tail became his 4<sup>th</sup> leg; almost. Along with his normal vet care by Dr. Adelson, he also saw Dr. Marx in Yardley for acupuncture which helped him keep his spine straight and alleviated the pain from his constant twisting to balance himself.

Over the past year, as he has become a more senior rabbit, his muscles had tightened and his skeletal alignment changed. He began to splay all three legs out to the side; unable to get them under himself in a normal position. This had resulted in poor hygiene and an inability to get where he wanted to go. He also seemed in a lot of pain. He began chewing on his stump to the point where it was constantly wet and the fur knotted.

While researching Boo's situation, I found several options that might help him regain his former strength. Wheels, carts, harnesses, and hygiene options like baby diapers were all researched. Finding out what was the best option for him required an expert.

Enter Dr. Russell Howe-Smith, from Pet PT of Cherry Hill, NJ. His group specializes in veterinary rehabilitation and physical therapy.

After the first visit on Sept 6, 2018, which was a very comprehensive review of Boo's muscle and bone structure, we were sent home with a regimen of upright walking exercises and cross muscle massage instructions. He was also scheduled for three laser treatments within the next 14 days.



Unlike surgical lasers that cut through tissue, therapy lasers—or “cold” lasers—stimulate the body's cells to promote healing and alleviate pain.

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## *Update on Boo (continued)* *by Karen Augustynowicz and Gail Peterson*

The results were amazing! After just the first laser treatment, you could see the relief in Boo's face. The pain eased. The muscles relaxed. He was able to keep his front legs under him again and the soreness in his stump was gone. He stopped chewing at himself and his fur soon grew back. The old Boo was back.



Boo continued his laser treatments with vet tech, Beth who has been wonderful with him. Boo looks forward to each visit and Beth always comments on how co-operative he is.

Right now, Boo must be exercised and massaged every day to keep up the level of relief. And, he is still going for laser treatments every three weeks. But, it truly has been worth all the work to see him regain the muscle strength he had before.

He gets around better in his pen on his own now, but for the exercises I still have to hold him up by the stump. Dr. Howe-Smith, Gail Peterson, Alice Shoppe and I have all been trying to come up with a contraption to help hold him up another way - but, Boo is a RABBIT and he has his own thoughts about



what he thinks of these things - No Way!! He can get out of anything. And, so his trial pile continues to grow.



Check out [his Video](#) - this was taken the day after his first laser treatment.

We continue to use the yoga mat for traction and the little box to loop around. He is much faster now too!

## Educational Corner

by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator



Sugar and spice and everything nice ... that's what a popular children's rhyme says however sugar is not so nice when too much is part of your rabbit's diet.

All plants contain sugars and/or starches (which break down into sugars) otherwise known as carbohydrates, some more than others, and maintaining a healthy balance is important for the good health of your rabbit. Knowing the general carbohydrate value of vegetables and fruits will help you to make good decisions when providing fresh foods and of what amount. Even pellet food contains carbohydrates because of the plant matter and added ingredients.

You may have heard the term "Carbohydrate Overload". It simply means too many sugars and starches in the diet. For rabbits it can lead to digestive issues, weight issues, soft cecotrops and/or fecals, and/or a dangerous imbalance of proper gut bacteria. Cecal Dysbiosis (disruption of the balance of organisms in a rabbit's digestive track) and Enterotoxemia (severe diarrhea) are medical conditions associated with carbohydrate overload. It's debated if these conditions, when adult aged, are due solely to diet or environmental conditions like those of rabbits raised in large groups commercially. Regardless, carbohydrate overload is not good.

The most common conditions seen for a house rabbit that is consuming too many sugars and/or starches are soft fecals, soft and uneaten cecotrops, and becoming overweight. Carbohydrate rich foods lack high indigestible fiber and thus change the consistency of cecotrops and/or fecals to that which is less desirable. Overweight rabbits have a harder time bending to consume cecotrops and when left uneaten tend to "stick" to the rabbit's bottom or are left on the ground and then become "stuck" to something else.

The general rule for feeding carbohydrate rich vegetables and fruits is no more than a tablespoon daily per five pounds of weight. The top carbohydrate rich vegetables that rabbits eat are carrots and pumpkin and all fruits are high in sugar. There are many sites on the internet that provide rabbit feeding guidelines noting safe and recommended vegetables and fruits. Not all parts of a plant or fruit are safe food for rabbit consumption and some rabbits may not have a tolerance for all vegetables and fruits listed. An appropriate example of such a list is <https://rabbit.org/suggested-vegetables-and-fruits-for-a-rabbit-diet>

Just as care should be taken when feeding fresh vegetables and fruits the same needs to apply for feeding commercial pellet food. Not all brands are quality feed. Some add dried fruit, nuts and seeds, grains like corn, colored pieces of who knows what, and additional sugar. It looks appealing to the human consumer but has no reason to be part of a rabbit's diet and does more harm than good. The best pellets are those made of simply hays with nutritional supplementation.

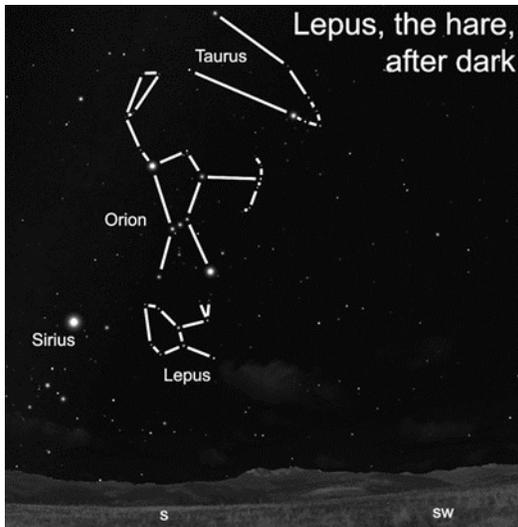
When it comes to sugar, it's safe to say, less is best.

Primary resource: <https://www.harcourt-brown.co.uk/articles/free-food-for-rabbits/are-sugars-and-starches-dangerous-for-rabbits>

*This article is written to provide basic information and taken from source(s) considered reliable. Always consult with a Veterinarian who has knowledge and experience with rabbits regarding your rabbit's health and needs.*

## Did You Know?

By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator



Twinkle, Twinkle, little star ...

**Did You Know** there is a constellation of stars whose name means “The Hare” in Latin. Lepus is visible in the northern hemisphere, in Winter thru Spring, popping up around midnight in the southwest sky.

Lepus (pronounced LEE-pus) sits just under the feet of the constellation Orion named after a hunter in Greek mythology. Orion’s hunting dogs, the constellations Canis Major and Canis Minor look to be chasing Lepus as they appear to the left of Orion and Lepus.

The brightest star in Lepus’ constellation is the supergiant Alpha Leporis, also known as Arneb, which is Arabic for “The Hare”. Believed to be about 13 million years old Arneb is more than 100 times the diameter of the sun and over 2,000 light-years from earth. 11 stars make up the outline of Lepus and the constellation has 1 Messier object which is a spherical cluster that contains thousands of other stars. Other notable characteristics within the constellation are a planetary nebula, an irregular galaxy, a supernova, an asterism, double, variable, and red stars, and many of the stars are larger, more luminous, and have a greater mass than our sun.

The world of astronomy is fascinating but complex and I hope I was able to shed a little information that is understandable about the constellation Lepus.

