

Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

Safe Haven Scoop

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By Karen Augustynowicz, Director

Welcome, Spring..... At least that is what the calendar says! Here in New Jersey I, for one, am still waiting for its arrival!

The bunnies are ALL shedding.... They think it's spring. I think they are having a shedding competition to see who can put the most dust bunnies on the floor. My sweeper is having a hard time keeping up!

I hope you will find this newsletter entertaining and educational. Special thanks to Linda Torlay for her always informative and fun contributions to each edition. And in this edition, we share our new friends Jack and Liz's story about "Juicebox". A little bun who touched so many hearts.



Questions about care?

Do you have questions about caring for your rabbit? Zoom call help available for nail trims, grooming, litter-box training, bonding, etc.

Please contact us via our [Contact form](#) if you have care question (*no medical questions, we are not vets*).

No charge.

With Easter approaching, the already overwhelming intake requests will escalate. Please join us in educating people that getting a real rabbit for Easter is not a good idea.

As always, we welcome update stories and/or pictures from you! If you have photos or stories to share or questions you would like to see answered in an up-coming newsletter, just email them to us!

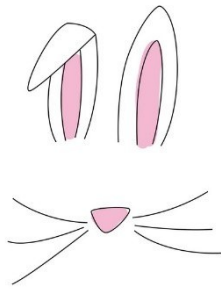
*Note: After clicking on links, use the back arrow to bring you back to the newsletter.

Have a Happy Spring!
Stay Safe & Keep Loving your Bunnies,

*With sincere thanks,
Karen Augustynowicz, Director*



★ *Educational Corner* ★
by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator



Do you ever just sit and watch your bunny, watch it breathe, watch its little nose twitch taking air in and letting it out? Watch its sides rise and fall?

In this article I will talk about a bunny's breath rate. What is normal, why it might be higher, and when to be concerned.

A bunny's breath rate when resting should be between 30 – 60 breaths per minute. It is simple to calculate, just observe your bunny's mid-section and sides rise and fall and count each breath for 15 seconds then multiply that number by 4. One full breath is the intake and output of air, not just in and not just out. Some bunnies are comfortable enough and will let you place your hands gently on their sides for you to feel the rise and fall of the breaths they take. It is best to monitor breath rate at home, when all is calm and familiar, and not at the vet's office that is usually a stressful environment for a bunny. In that a bunny's breath rate is about twice that of a human, the quicker intake and output of air, can make their body appear to vibrate a little.

A breath rate will be higher for several reasons. It will be higher after playtime when a bunny has been active. A stressed or frightened bunny will have an increased breath rate which is why it is important to provide a peaceful and secure environment for your bunny. A bunny that is not feeling well or who is in pain will have a higher breath rate. A faster breath rate may indicate that your bunny is too warm. Bunnies cannot perspire nor do they pant and part of how they regulate their body temperature is through their nasal passage. If you believe your bunny's breath rate is high because it is warm then get them to a cooler area. There is only so much a rabbit is able to cool themselves if they continue to stay in an environment that is too warm so please be mindful of the room temperature your bunny is in. You may even see a higher breath rate after eating. Once your bunny is calmed, rested, cooled, or ample enough time passes after eating, you should see a normal breath rate again.

Should you see an increased breath rate in your bunny accompanied by wheezing or other distressing symptoms or if breath rate continues to be high even while calm, rested, and cool then seeing a rabbit savvy veterinarian is needed. A veterinarian will do an examination to conclude or rule out things like respiratory illness, heart disease, shock, heat stroke, or pain which could be primary causes.

Adoptables

A few of the bunnies looking for their forever home.



Gwen was rescued in late July 2024. She had been seen running loose in a neighborhood for at least 2 months. Obviously not getting sufficient food, Gwen was

underweight and malnourished. We gave her an approximate birthday of July 30, 2022. She weighed just 5 lbs.

With unique markings and now a healthy weight of 6.8 lbs., Gwen is ready for her new forever home.

All adoptable rabbits are spayed/neutered, litterbox trained and vaccinated against RHDV2. To apply, read through our adoption [policy](#) and fill out our [application](#).



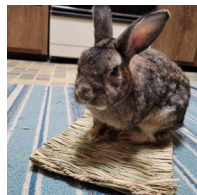
If you love the bigger, teddy bear bunnies, Ayden is your boy! **Ayden**, born July 1, 2023 is excellent with his litter box skills, and loves his hay.

A big, lovable boy at 11.6 lbs. (yes, you read that right)

Ayden is a mush who will flatten out for pets. He loves people and attention. Ayden is not kind to rugs, so he needs lots of cardboard and bags to amuse him. More pictures on page 7.

Ayden promises that if you pet and pet and pet him some more, he will be the best bunny ever!

Sponsorships Needed



Wyatt joined Safe Haven on Jan 31, 2023. Coming from a hoarder situation, he was very underweight and dehydrated. He could hardly move from being confined in a tiny cage all his life. About 9 years old, he seems years older. Surprisingly, he is not afraid or timid at all. He loves food and is almost perfect with his litterbox skills.

Wyatt is getting stronger everyday and we know your sponsorship will give him a big smile!

[Sponsor](#) Wyatt Today!



Merry Lee We do not know anything about her background or why she was dumped on a busy street, but it seemed she had a rough start in life. Whatever happened before left its mark on her. Merry Lee quickly became known as a fear biter. Being so tiny, it is her way of protecting herself from expected harm.

She really does seem to like be fussed over and she likes for her fancy coat to be kept tidy. She would love to have you sponsor her so she can show you how pretty she is!

[Sponsor](#) Merry Lee Today!

Juicebox

Contributed by Liz Verna & Jack Hvizdos

Our journey with Juicebox started when Jack saw a posting that read: “FREE to good home. Adorable Hotot Dwarf Bunny...the picture showed a seemly healthy white bunny.

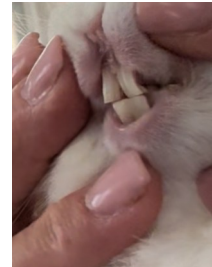
I still remember vividly the moment when we met Juicebox and his previous owner - I held him and he nuzzled my neck. I was struck by the stench - he smelled like a barnyard animal - and at that point, maybe some would've cut and run, declining to accept this animal. But my instinct was to get him out of there ASAP, as something was very, very wrong. “She” was said to be 6 years old, and no vet records were available. Juicebox (our name) was an unneutered male.

Before we even got home, I had an appointment scheduled with our vet. Once home and settled in, I took a good look at him and was shocked when I saw the condition of his incisors.



When we took him to the vet just two days after that, and fully realized the poor health he was in, we were convinced that if we hadn't taken him when we did, he would not have survived.

Our vet said Juicebox was a very sick bunny and in GI stasis. She was not sure how long he had not been able to eat with his teeth as they were. She put him on multiple meds for pain and GI stasis and arthritis.



She was able to do the first incisor trim on 8/17/24 which gave him a lot of relief, but the rest of his mouth was also in terrible condition.

Juicebox was only ours for 5 months, during which he was in poor health, but he astonished us with his sweet, loving, funny personality. He took his medicines like a champ, wore his booties to protect his feet, and seemed fascinated by his new environment.



Juicebox (continued)
Contributed by Liz Verna & Jack Hvizdos

After all he had been through, we could understand if he never trusted another human. But he bonded, not only with both of us, but with our other rescues, Phoebe, his dog sister, and Benny, his cat brother. He has left a lasting impression on all our hearts.



We could never have done all we did in regards to Juicebox's care without Karen A and Dr. Adelson from Community Animal Hospital. Having had very little experience with a sick bunny -- our previous bunny, Barley, lived to age 7 with not one episode of GI stasis -- we relied heavily on the sometimes-daily advice from Karen A. This was especially so in Juicebox's last days, when we really weren't sure what to do other than keep him warm, cozy, and comfortable.

It was Karen A. who recommended Dr. Adelson to us, though our family members also brought their many bunnies to her as well. We instantly felt in good hands with Dr. Adelson -- we trusted her judgement, appreciated her honesty, and valued the care she gave to Juicebox. The CAH staff gets a mention as well -- everyone there was professional and kind, the facility was super-clean, and a returned phone call from a frantic bunny mom on New Years Day was unexpected and so very amazing.

Juicebox (continued)
Contributed by Liz Verna & Jack Hvizdos

Juicebox's journey ended the morning of January 2, 2025 as we rushed him to CAH. In the hours previous, Jack held him cuddled in a warm blanket. We wanted to make sure he felt safe, warm and as comfortable as possible. I held him in the car as Jack drove and I texted Karen to let her know. Juicebox passed in my arms a few miles before the hospital. Karen texted that she was sorry, but glad Juicebox got to know love and tenderness before he had to leave. She thanked us both for loving him.



If WE were a gift in Juicebox's life, then no doubt, Karen A. and Dr. Adelson were gifts in ours. Who would think a less-than-2-lb bunny could require so many humans for his care?

WE were truly blessed by the entire experience.

Did You Know...

By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator

Did You Know the Silver Fox breed of rabbit was the third breed of rabbit to be developed in the United States. Originally known as the ‘American Heavyweight Silver’ the breed was accepted by ARBA (American Rabbit Breeders Association) in 1925. The name was changed to ‘Silver Fox’ in 1929.

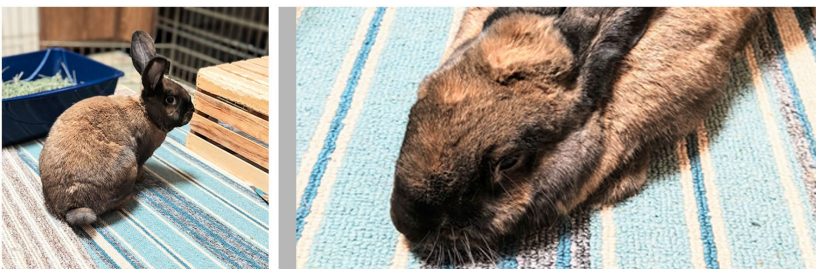
The Silver Fox was developed by Walter B. Garland of North Canton, Ohio but the lineage was not recorded and there is debate today regarding what breeds were actually used to create the Silver Fox.

The Silver Fox is a large breed with males weighing in at maturity between 9 – 11 pounds and females between 10 -12 pounds. The fur is dense and stands on end unless smoothed down into place. The Silver Fox is the only breed in ARBA that has stand up fur and the ideal standard is fur measuring 1.5 inches in length. The Silver Fox got its name because its coloring resembles that of the canine Silver Fox in that it’s dark fur blends out to a beautiful silver color at the tips.

Silver Fox rabbits are known to be docile, friendly, easy to handle, and enjoy receiving attention. They come in a variety of colors but only the chocolate and black colored rabbits are judged at conventions, any other color is for ‘exhibition only’. They have no known genetic health problems and their lifespan, like that of all larger rabbits, is on average about 7 years but they can live longer (up to 10 years).

For unknown reasons the breed is not popular and is now considered threatened and is in danger of extinction.

Did You Know Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue has a beautiful Silver Fox mix looking for his forever home? His name is **Ayden** and he is gorgeous! Born on July 1, 2023 this boy has been patiently waiting to be adopted into a loving home. Ayden’s mother looks very much like a Silver Fox rabbit but his father’s breed, or mix of, is unknown.



Ayden is a big ‘Teddy Bun’ weighing in at 11.6 pounds. His coat is a soft tan/brown color and his ears, face, and feet blend into a rich dark brown color that is almost black. He is excellent with his litterbox and loves a good paper bag or cardboard box for entertainment.



Like all young bunnies Ayden is full of energy, he loves attention and being petted, and has a strong desire to be amongst humans.

If you would like to meet this special boy please read through our [policies](#) and fill out an [application](#).

What You Can Make With A Cookie Cutter Besides Cookies ...

Submitted by Linda Torlay

Sandwiches!! Soft fillings like peanut butter and jelly, egg or tuna salad, or even thinly sliced cucumber and cream cheese works best.



A savory and warm breakfast known as 'egg in a hole'. Butter one side of bread. Use a cookie cutter to cut out shape, place buttered side bread down in warm frying pan, crack an egg into the cut out, and cook to desired likeness.

If you should choose to have your breakfast over easy you can do that too!

Hand Pies. Use your favorite pie crust recipe. Use a large bunny shaped cookie cutter. Spoon a little filling of your choice onto a cut out leaving a clean edge.

Lay another cut on top and crimp edges with a fork to close, cut a slit, create a pie, and bake.



*All ideas noted can be explored further doing an internet search for recipes.
All pictures are from various sites/blogs.*

Update on Medgene RHDV2 Vaccines

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Medgene's RHDV2 Vaccine Now Available in Single-Dose Vials (March 18, 2025)

(Brookings, SD) – Medgene will now have single-dose vials for vaccination against Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV2), protecting rabbits from this fatal disease. This new presentation will assist veterinarians in better protecting their rabbit clientele.

“Medgene’s single-dose vials represent an important advancement in RHDV2 vaccines,” said Medgene’s rabbit specialist, Gary Anderson DVM, MS, PhD. “This innovative technology goes well beyond concentrating existing product and putting it in a smaller bottle.”

“It’s easier using a single-dose vial for an individual patient,” said Dr. Anthony Pilny, Medical Director, Arizona Exotic Animal Hospital and Medgene advisory board member. “RHD is still an important disease, and we still hear about new cases in new counties. This is the only vaccine we have available, and we’re grateful for it.”

It's a new day for Rabbit health! Check with your veterinarian and be sure to continue to keep your rabbit's vaccines up-to-date. The virus continues to spread.

Need a bunny themed gift? Check out our [On-line Store!](#)



Many of the items are handmade or created just to help the bunnies of Safe Haven. Just in time to help you find that unique present or buy a special gift for yourself.

All proceeds go directly toward caring for our foster & sanctuary bunnies!

[Go to Store!](#)

*Take care - Happy Spring Holidays!!
Enjoy the warmer weather—whenever it gets here !*