

Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc.

# Safe Haven Scoop

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## 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.



Donate



*By Karen Augustynowicz, Director*

## Bunnies in our lives.....

are always a blessing, especially now! Lately, I've been hearing people say "Thank goodness I have my bunnies! People who are lucky enough to have rabbit companions understand how much they add to our lives. Rabbits are never boring. Always keep us on our toes. Always keep us thinking of how to keep them entertained. Nowadays, nothing is more comforting than seeing our bunnies snuggled in their favorite spots, eagerly dancing on their toes when they hear pellets coming, or seeing them contently munching on hay for the longest time. All without a worry in the world. In these times, they have become as much comfort to us as we hope we are to them.

While our work at the rescue continues, we have adjusted our adoption policy in keeping with CDC Covid-19 protocols. We have conducted zoom meetings not only for the adoption process, but also for helping owners with nail trims, grooming and bonding tips.

We hope the stories and photos in this newsletter will bring a smile to your face and provide a bright spot in your day. Stay safe and stay healthy!

(ps. Our cover bunnies are a bonded pair of siblings ready for adoption)



**Wishing you, your family and bunnies a  
Blessed Holiday Season.  
Enjoy the Newsletter!**

*With sincere thanks,  
Karen Augustynowicz, Director*



## ***Educational Corner***

*by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*



Pumpkin is rich in beta-carotene which rabbits convert to Vitamin A. It's a great source of fiber, phosphorus, moisture, and other vitamins and minerals. However, it is also high in sugar and carbohydrates which becomes a problem for rabbits when consumed in excess.

Pumpkin should be considered a 'treat' food with a serving no more than 2 tablespoons per 6 pounds of body weight for a total of treat food given that day.

The rule always applies when introducing rabbits to a new food to do so slowly and cautiously and to check for signs of digestive upset. Some rabbits do not tolerate pumpkin well or much of it. Raw pumpkin is best but canned can be given and canned is often used to mix with medicine. If giving canned be sure it is 100% pure pumpkin and not the blend with added sugar meant to be used to make pie. Feeding pumpkin seeds, stems, or its leaves is not advised.

## ***Recent Adoptions***



**Herman**  
Adopted 10/3/20



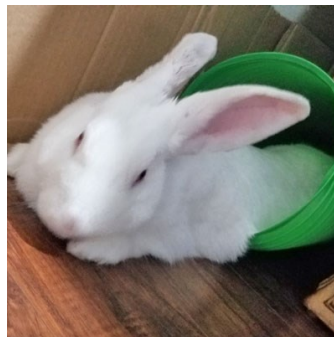
**Grace**  
Adopted 9/25/20



**Addison**  
Adopted 9/19/20



**Charlie**  
Adopted 8/15/20



**Lilly**  
Adopted 7/23/20



**Congratulations**

**To**

**All!**

## *Want to Grow you own Bunny Greens?*

*By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*

Over the years Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue has had some pretty amazing adopters who've stayed in touch and love sharing their experiences and stories.

For this newsletter, I was given the pleasure of interviewing the parents of Rosalie, a gorgeous Dutch mix girl who came to Safe Haven November 2016. While in foster care at Safe Haven, Rosalie was lovingly cared for and rehabilitated both emotionally and physically. In July 2018 another chapter of Rosalie's life unfolded when she was adopted by Emerald and Justin.



When a person opens their heart and home to an animal in need, and loves that animal, one often finds themselves striving to do their best to care for that animal. What some perceive as challenges become adventures for others like it did for Emerald and Justin who already had Bugs, a big beautiful Flemish Giant, and then adopting Rosalie, made for two hungry bunny tummies to keep filled.

Justin thought it would be fun to build a hydroponic garden so he and Emerald would have fresh homegrown greens for their bunnies. Justin did an amazing job and wanted to share the experience with Safe Haven's readers. I hope you enjoy learning something about hydroponic planting from the interview below.

### **How hard was it to build your hydroponic planter?**

It was surprisingly not that difficult to build the hydroponic planter as most of the parts are "plug and play". Also, the design is very flexible to fit the size that you may want for your household. This one was made

with 12 slots for plants but could very easily be expanded and contracted.

### **How are plants started?**

The plants were started from seed, and various lettuce types were used to test what grows best. They all start in a material called rock ash. This is a spongy but natural material that allows for the roots to push through and grow downward.

### **Is any dirt required? or are plants grown solely with water?**

No dirt is needed, and actually shouldn't be used in hydroponics as there could be material in the dirt that you don't want in your food. Instead, the plants are rooted in rocks and water runs through the rocks.

### **Is it kept indoors or outdoors?**

Ours is indoors but many people have outdoor setups. We set ours up too late in the gardening season to produce anything, so it is currently set up in the basement.

**(Continued Next Page)**



## *Want to Grow your own Bunny Greens? (continued)*

*By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*

### **What kind of light is needed to grow plants if the unit is indoors?**

Currently, we are using a full spectrum 600-watt LED grow light.



### **Would you explain the various parts of the unit?**

There are three parts to the set up. First is the grow light, which turns on hour cycles. Second is the water basin, which is a 27-gallon food grade

and off in 12-plastic bin. Inside is



a pump that pumps the water to the top of the stand. At the top there are holes cut out for the water to flow down the front of the PVC pipes. This turns on for 15 mins and off for 15 mins. Finally, there is the stand, which is comprised of wooden scaffolding to hold up the PVC. There are 12 PVC pipes on the stand. The plants sit perfectly in the opening and get water; they are all in special hydroponic baskets that have holes for the water to get into. The plants are put in these buckets in their rock ash starter cubes. Around the cube is just river rocks that you can get from any home goods store.

### **How do you clean it between plantings?**

Our garden continuously grows lettuce, and we cut the lettuce leaves off as they get too big. That way, we don't need to re-plant seeds or clean.

### **What is the care needed to be taken to keep it up and running?**

Not much! We just check that the water's PH is in a certain range and that the plant food levels are high enough. We also set the water for the system to be automated; it runs on a timer.

### **Is fertilizer required?**

Sort of! We dissolved tomato growth powder into the water to feed the plants and encourage growth.

### **Are you able to yield enough plant material to keep a bunny fed?**

As we all know, bunnies LOVE their salad. With two bunnies, they consume too much lettuce for the hydroponics to keep up with the demand! The hope is one day with more plants it could be possible. To give an idea of the yield,

we get about 1 pound of lettuce a week, and the bunnies eat two pounds a week.

After having been dumped along a busy highway and left to fend for herself Rosalie is one of the fortunate ones. Rescued by Safe Haven volunteer Astrid H; given shelter, care, and love within Safe Haven, to finding her furever home in which she is equally loved by her husband and parents, we know too she will never want for fresh greens because they can always be found growing in her family's hydroponic garden!



**Lilly - Adopted July 23, 2020— Story contributed by Terri Cottrell**

I have an elder bun named Topher who is going on 11 yrs old. I adopted Topher 9 yrs ago and he is my world. I've had a bunny or 2 since I was 15 and I am 61; they are my kids. Topher has arthritis (meds for life) and has to have dental surgery every 8 weeks. I am so grateful to have him this long and I know everyday is a gift. I've never done bonding and was very nervous about it but I really wanted to give Topher the chance of having a bunny friend before he left this world and at his age I also thought this might make him live longer.



I searched Petfinder and found one but when that rescue went to spay her, she turned into a he! So back to Petfinder because I wanted a she. And, then I came across Lily. After reading about her, I thought she may be the one. Even though she is only a year and a half (I really wanted one 3 or 4 yr old because I thought a younger one would be too much for Topher) there was something about her so I filled out an application

I spoke to Karen and explained to her that if she doesn't work out with Topher I need to be able to return her. After a few zoom meetings, Karen brought her to me on July 23, 2020.

The minute I met Lily I was in love and knew she'd be staying no matter what happened with the bonding! Lily is so sweet and gentle I've been kissing her face and bonding with her myself since day one and she has never nipped me or shown any aggression at all and she came from a hoarding situation. I do notice she is scared of certain noises and I am a loud person but each day she gets braver and braver. She is really sweet with Topher too it's like she knows he is old and needs to be looked after and she does an excellent job, she was definitely made to be with us.

Karen was amazing and walked me step by step throughout the bonding process. At first I was worried, but after a little over a month I could tell it was working. Topher and Lily are bonded and I couldn't be happier. I do keep separate pens be-



cause she eats quick and he takes all day to eat; plus the age difference. Topher sleeps a lot, but I leave their pens open throughout the day and evenings and they do nap, play together and groom each other, I'd say they are in love and so am I.

I can't thank Karen enough. She was a text/call away at all times and now I know this was the right thing to do for Topher and me. I will always have two buns. I believe they live longer, are healthier and do less bad things when they have each other. Best part of my day is laying on the floor with them kissing and petting both at the same time; it's definitely my piece of Heaven. Lesson I learned is that age and size (Topher is tiny compared to Lilly) does not matter. If you put the time in, the results are so worth it. Now I can

leave the house and I know Topher is never alone. I sure love my buns. Thank you Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue for making my family complete.♥





**Christina - Adopted Feb. 20, 2011— Story contributed by Kelly Walsh**

Ben and I adopted Christina 2/20/2011. She was the perfect, little (at only 2.5lbs) addition to our family.

Since that time, she's matured and grown into a sassy little bunny girl. She loves rubs and playing with her blankets and toys. She loves to be chased and doing binkies. She loves special treats at night and thrives on her routine. She makes sure everyone knows she's in charge - our princess!

In 2014, we added another bunny to our home and within three weeks Christina and Elliot were bonded. These two are truly best friends.



In July, Christina was 10 years old. She's just as feisty and sweet as the day we met her!



**Elvira** (formerly Alayna)—  
Adopted by Jen Holsman wanted to  
wish everyone a  
***Happy Halloween!***

## *Keeping the Peace*

*By Gail Petersen, Safe Haven Officer*

We all have our favorite place to sit in the living room or in front of television. A lounge chair, the couch, or a spot on the floor. My husband has his side of the couch and I have my side with the ottoman at my feet. It is a comforting habit.

### **The Smaller Residents**

Our rabbits, Bri and Lena, have their favorite places too. Bri sits behind the lounge chair, Lena sits under the shelves in the living room. They hang there during the day or in the evening when we are in the room with them. Everyone is cool right?

Until one day this month when we bought a piece of furniture for the living room. We were thrilled with our perfect find. Exactly what we wanted. We moved the bookcase, the television, the chairs and the ottoman. It was exactly how I hoped it would look. We were so thrilled to have found this mid-century antique that worked with our other furniture.



### **Until...**

The first night after the living room was changed, Bri and Lena were obviously exploring the arrangement and the new piece. Lots of sniffing, licking and up and down head movements. We watched them with comfort of knowing that we had moved house several times and they would adjust.

### **Maybe not.**



We hadn't checked with our bunny brains when we made the changes. What was this change to them? Did they like the new furniture? The room reorganization? The short answer. No.

Bri started first. Licking the legs of the furniture, taking off the teak oiled polish and possibly making herself sick. We enticed her away. Then she went to the back of the lounge chair. Oh, now there a wooden rocking chair. Looks like a root, looks like something that should be removed so she could have her "spot" back. Eat it. Chew it. Hard chomping was heard. We reacted badly. Telling her to go to bed. She

did. But every day she returned.

### **Resident Respect**

Our wills battled. She was relentless chewing on the chair. I was relentless telling her to go to her bed. She snuck out of her house and I put towels over the chair legs. She pulled them off. I put them back on. She was mad. So was I.

I don't want my rabbits to be unhappy. So I watched, observed, made mental notes of their behavior. Put my bunny brain in action.

(Continues next page)

## *Keeping the Peace*

*By Gail Petersen, Safe Haven Officer* (continued from previous page)

### **Eureka!**

We had removed their “spot” – the place they were comfortable sitting or sleeping outside of their house. They were removing the debris to get back to their comfort spot. It was a natural reaction. Cutting roots, digging soil, moving obstacles to their safe place. They were doing what rabbits do.

### **Apologies and Reparations**

Once we realized what we had done, I knew we had to repair the situation. But, although a slave to my rabbits, I still want to enjoy my home. So there had to be compromise.

We moved the offensive chair to a different spot, not one they used. We put some temporary barriers around the new furniture to stop the licking and allow them time to get used to the piece. We put out new [willow](#) chew toys and encouraged them to chew the right stuff.

### **Peace**

The living room functions just fine the way it is now. For us and the rabbits. Everyone has kissed (licked) and made up. Bri allowed me to rest my forehead on hers and we apologized to each other for the bad behavior. Lena went back to her normal routine.



### **The Moral to the Story**

Sharing your home with rabbits means thinking of their needs as well as your own. Knowing to observe slowly and carefully when there is a problem. Making sure you don't overreact. Putting on your bunny brain to solve the problem.

In the end...  
...we get our spot and they get theirs!



## ***Did You Know?***

*By Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*

***Did You Know*** in European folklore rabbits were regarded as a favorite familiar of witches. A familiar is a supernatural entity that assist a witch when she practices magic. Familiars are a witches' best friend and said to be seen clearly and three-dimensional unlike ghosts that appear clouded like an evaporated image. Witches were even said to be able to take the shape of a rabbit to travel undetected.

Dartmoor, a region in Devon, England, has a legend of witches that congregated on a heath after dark. People left them alone but a hunter named Bowerman would not. Having had enough harassment one of the witches transformed herself into a rabbit and when Bowerman and his dogs gave chase, they found themselves lured into an ambush in which he and his dogs were then turned to stone.

The large rock formations are in a heath that can still be seen today. There are slight variations of the story and another tells of the tale of Bowerman out hunting with his dogs chasing a hare and unknowingly happening upon the coven of witches overturning their cauldron and disrupting them. To punish him the next time he was out hunting one of the witches turned herself into a rabbit luring Bowerman and his dogs into the mire and turning them all to stone.



Rock formation known as  
Bowerman's Nose.



Rock Formation known as Hound Tor or  
Bowerman's Dogs.

## *A Tribute—Poppy and Molly—Forever in our Hearts*

*By Karen Augustynowicz*

"Everyone is taught that Angels have wings,  
But the lucky ones of us find they have 4 paws"

*Author Unknown*

And, if I might add "and a fluffy tail"

Poppy and Molly were two of the seven babies rescued in late March. Sadly, both inherited a genetic disorder known as megacolon syndrome and left us way too soon. Poppy and Molly were very much alike; very much loved and are so very missed.

Poppy was the smallest of the siblings and even as a baby there was just something special about this tiny girl. She'd often be somewhat apart from the group. She seemed fragile and in need of protection from her bigger and more rambunctious siblings.

Molly was a very sweet and easy-going girl. She had been very loving and trusting from the very beginning. She loved to be petted and would lick you with gratitude in return.

They left this world just 3 days apart. Their cherished memories will live on.

*Poppy Mae*



*Joined the Angels  
August 11, 2020*



*Molly*



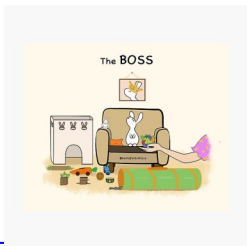
*Joined the Angels  
August 14, 2020*

## *Need a Pick-Me-Up? Or a Gift for the Holidays?*

Visit our new found friends at:



You will find tons of items - All with Bunny designs (of course) and all Adorable!



## *Or.....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 finish your holiday shopping or buy a special gift for yourself.

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

*[Go to Store!](#)*

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**Stay Safe Everyone!**