



Safe Haven Scoop



September 14, 2011

Fall / Winter 2011



In This Issue

News About Safe Haven

- *Latest Rescue
- *Facebook
- *Welcome, Stacey!
- *Congratulations, Eleni

Inspirational Rabbits

- *Snowflake - The Therapy Rabbit

Thoughts on Fostering

Up Coming Events

Adoption Updates

Ask The Vet

Did you know?

Educational Corner

Photos To Share!



Fall time by Karen Augustynowicz, President

Welcome to Fall 2011! I hope everyone, their families and all their animals made it safely through the hurricane. It certainly was one we will not soon forget! Thankfully, all the Safe Haven bunnies were snug and safe in their foster or adoptive homes. One cannot help feel sad about all the animals who had to weather the storm out of doors. Safe Haven was called upon to help one very frightened rabbit just before the hurricane arrived. His story follows below.

Along with our rescue work, Safe Haven volunteers kept very busy this summer caring for the foster and sanctuary rabbits, bunny sitting, bonding and doing lots of fundraising activities to enable us to continue.

The Spring Bunny Spa was once again lots of fun. We had a great turnout with familiar faces as well as first time spa patrons. The bunnies all looked so spiffy and relaxed after their massage! If you missed it, don't worry, soon it will be time for the **Fall Bunny Spa!** You will find the event details and sign-up information in our 'Up Coming Events' section. Be sure to sign up early. (Space is limited). We are already looking forward to it and hope you are too!

Our second annual **'Bike for the Buns!'** event in June was a great success with more participants and volunteers than last year. It was a fun time for all. If you have not had the opportunity to participate yet, we would love to have you join us in June of 2012 - the Saturday before Father's Day. Stay tuned for event details! Check out our **photo videos** of this year's event in: [High Quality](#) or [Mobile](#).

I especially want to thank again all the volunteers who help throughout the year. Adoptions have been slow due to the economy while the calls for rabbits needing our help have increased. Unfortunately, there are many more bunnies needing help then we could possibly take in. We are hopeful that this fall and winter will bring new homes for those rabbits who have been waiting too long and thus allow us to bring more into our foster program.

I hope you will find this newsletter both informative and fun. As always, we welcome update stories and/or pictures from you! If you have photos to share or questions you would like to see answered in an up-coming newsletter, this edition will provides clickable links for you to send them to us. We always love hearing from you!



So Hare We Go!!



Sponsor

Javin!

Donate



Please enter any amount to help us with his vet bills. Thank you!

Going on Vacation?
?

Board your bunny with us !



Contact Us:

SafeHavenRR.org

or

[adopt@
website](mailto:adopt@website)

News about Safe Haven by Karen Augustynowicz, President

Our Latest Rescue

Safe Haven was called upon to help one very frightened rabbit just before the hurricane arrived.



Allow me to introduce you to '**Javin**'. This gorgeous little lion head was abandoned on the levee of the Rahway River just 2 days before "Irene" came to town. He would not be with us today if it were not for Julie P. who found him and brought him to the safety of her home. After many calls to multiple shelters, Julie frantically called us. Remembering a bunny she had as a child, Julie agreed to care for him until room could be found. The next day, Julie called again to say "there is something wrong with his back leg" - he was not putting weight on it and it seemed painful to her when she touched it. She was able to get a same day appt. at an animal hospital not too far from her home. X-rays showed it was fractured and the vet recommended that he be taken to a rabbit specialist. With instructions for strict rest, confinement, and pain medications, Julie brought him home to wait out the storm. The area where he had been found was soon flooded.

As soon as the roads allowed, Julie and I arranged to meet so I could take him for proper medical attention. Once home, I scheduled an appointment with Dr. Adelson of Community Animal Hospital. After her exam and review of the x-rays, she explained his injury. In simple terms, he has a "shattered ankle" and more specifically "multiple fractures of the calcaneus, displacement of the tarsal bones, and displacement of the calcaneal tuber". While it is a serious injury, she was optimistic that his body would fuse the bones so that amputation would not be necessary. His ankle would not bend, but it would be strong enough to allow him full use of his leg. This was very good news!

Dr. Adelson wrapped his leg in the spiffy blue bandage you see in the photo to keep his ankle in as normal a position as possible. Thankfully, Javin has been a very good boy and does not chew on the bandage. It has been two weeks now, so the bandage has been changed (to a pretty purple one :)). After another two weeks, the leg will be x-rayed again to see how the bones are healing. We will keep you posted via facebook.

[Donations](#) to help pay his medical expenses would be greatly appreciated! *And, the name?* Javin is Sanskrit meaning "Hurricane".



So, now even **we** have an official Safe Haven Facebook url! A special "Thank You!" to Michelle Manderski for all her work in setting up our Facebook account and keeping the page fresh and up-to-date. Check it out! www.facebook.com/SafeHavenRabbitRescue

Please "Like" us to become a fan!



Welcome, Stacey!

Please join us in welcoming Stacey Bavos as the newest Safe Haven foster parent! Stacey has been a volunteer at several of the past Bunny Spas and also designed and developed the "**Bike for the**

Buns!" website last year. And, now she has become foster Mom to our "Marcus". *Thank you, Stacey!*



Congratulation, Eleni!

Super Congrats! To Eleni Scurletis for winning the 2011 NESAs Haas/Hansen Student Award!



This prestigious honor recognizes middle school students (Eleni was a 7th grader) of Near East South Asia (NESAs) member schools who model the character traits most valued in students: "consistency, persistence, a willingness to take risks, acceptance of other cultures/points of view and a genuine interest in and commitment to the welfare of others".

Eleni was enrolled at ACS Athens while her family spent a year living in Greece for the cultural experience. I first heard about this adventure when her mom emailed to say: "The girls are enrolled in an International School and despite a rough first two months, seem to be quite happy. We're living in a tiny apartment (with only one shower and no dryer) in the north of Athens – our children will never take their lives in New Jersey for granted again!" After describing the troubles they were seeing, especially concerning the animals in the streets, she told about Eleni's nomination for this award and that as part of her application she wanted to include her fundraising efforts for Safe Haven and talk about her beloved rabbit, "Tugger". The Scurletis family adopted "Tugger" from Safe Haven in August 2008. The portfolio, Eleni put together for the award application highlighted her work on: Conservation efforts, Commitment to Animal Rescue, Personal Campaign to stop puppy mills, Dedication to assisting the less fortunate, Sponsoring a child in Uganda, and extensive volunteering in food banks, nursing homes and animal shelters.

For this prestigious win, Eleni was awarded a \$500 check and a trip for her and a family member to Bangkok, Thailand, where she spoke to the conference of over 600 educators sharing her thoughts and inspirations with teachers throughout the Near East South Asia region. (*Did I mention she was in the 7th grade?*) You can read her acceptance speech [here](#).

And, knowing Eleni, without a moments hesitation, decided to split the \$500 award money between five of her favorite charities including Safe Haven. *So, thank you Eleni, we all wish you the very best! Tugger is one very lucky bunny. Keep up the terrific work!*



Inspirational Rabbits

SNOWFLAKE, THE THERAPY RABBIT

By Maryanne Guenther (guenthermm@aol.com)

Snowflake, my mini-lop/lionhead rabbit has a job—she's a therapy rabbit. Together we visit nursing homes, libraries, schools, and mental hospitals through the Paws for People program at St. Hubert's Animal Welfare Center. We spread cheer, help kids learn to read and generally try to brighten the day for everyone we encounter. I think we succeed.

As a volunteer at St. Hubert's, I had been part of the "crowd" used for temperament testing would-be therapy dogs for the Paws for People program. When I adopted Snowflake from St. Hubert's and learned that rabbits can also be certified for the program, I applied for certification

for us. I had to attend a one-hour training class, and Snowflake had to pass the temperament test. She had the same test the dogs get, including having the noisy crowd surround her and having a food bowl suddenly dropped near her to see how she would react. The only thing she did not need to do was sit on command and come when called. She came through the test with flying colors.

Since passing the test in October, we have visited numerous facilities in Somerset, Morris and Union Counties. She knows two tricks, which she performs over and over to the delight of the children and adults we encounter. She throws a cat toy with her mouth and hits a ball with her paws. She also sits passively and patiently in her cat bed while people pet her or kids read to her. She is a trooper!



Snowflake is an unusual looking rabbit with her blue eyes, floppy ears and lion’s mane, and many people we meet insist she is a dog until they take a closer look. Speaking of dogs, St. Hubert’s staff makes sure that if we are working with another team that includes a dog, the dog is not aggressive toward rabbits. So far, we have had no problems with the dogs (or cats for that matter) in the program and, in fact, a few of the dogs have fallen in love with Snowflake. In the photo accompanying this article, Snowflake is pictured with Shea, who will not leave a classroom we are visiting unless he is sure Snowflake is coming too.

I am thrilled when Snowflake brings a smile to the face of an Alzheimer’s patient or an autistic child. I am also delighted when people who meet Snowflake see what a great pet she is and say they, too, might adopt a rabbit. I hope on some level we are making the world a better place.



If you would like to learn more about therapy rabbits, Maryanne welcomes your questions via email : guenthermm@aol.com

Thoughts on Fostering Michelle Manderski, Safe Haven Foster Parent

The Tortures and Rewards of Fostering

By Michelle Manderski

I entered my first rabbit fostering experience with excitement and optimism. I was eager to help out rescued rabbits and couldn’t wait to get started. Naively, I swore that I would not get attached to my temporary pets... but as soon as Chase and Zoey hopped into my life, I knew that would be impossible! Chase, with his outgoing and inquisitive nature, and Zoey, shy but sweet with an adorable lionhead mane, made the perfect rabbit couple. During their 7 months with me, they learned how to be house rabbits. They perfected their litter box skills, figured out what “petting” was all about, discovered a love for fresh greens, and would contently sit on my lap during TV time. It didn’t take long to begin loving them as my own, and I seriously considered adopting them into my family.

When an adoption inquiry was made for my furry friends, I had to decide whether or not I should adopt them. Already having 2 rabbits of my own, I knew that finding room for 2 more in our home’s main living space would be a challenge. I also knew that it would be difficult to give Chase and

Ways To Help

Donate



Please help us by making a secure, tax-deductible donation today!

Zoey the attention they deserved without neglecting my other pets. After all, adoption means including them as part of the family, not just providing food, litter and an occasional petting. Still, I couldn't bear the thought of giving them away. To say that I struggled with this decision would be an understatement – it was torture! However, after much deliberation, I decided that I loved them too much to NOT let them go. If they could find a home where they could have lots of space to play and all the attention they want, I didn't want to stand in the way of that.

Soon after I reached my decision, Chase and Zoey were adopted by a wonderful family. They have their own room to play in and get to be the center of attention. Adoption Day wasn't easy for me – I cried like a baby upon returning home to their empty enclosure – but I still knew it was the right thing to do. Their new family stays in touch, and during my follow-up visit I was happy to see them dashing around and doing binkies with joy in their forever home. Now, I look back fondly on my experience with Chase and Zoey, ready to start the process again with another rabbit in need. Fostering turned out to be a lot harder than I anticipated, but the rewards are incalculable.



***Update: Michelle is now fostering "Monroe" a very sweet, male, English spot mix, who will be available for adoption very soon!*

Upcoming Events.....



Fall Bunny Spa Day!



Make your appt. today!

Saturday, October 15, 2011

11 am - 4 pm

*Being held at: Country Pet Specialties,
1271 Rt. 22 East, Lebanon Plaza
Lebanon, NJ 08833*

[Read More.....](#)

*Treat your bunny to a well-deserved,
relaxing Spa treatment!*

[Register Now!](#)

Adoption Updates..... Stories contributed by new parents:

Christina

Adopted February 20, 2011
By Ben Barrios & Kelly Walsh

Since adopting Christina in February 2011, her personality has bloomed. Christina was a shy bunny girl when we first met her and when she came to her forever home. Christina was gradually introduced to our home, room by room, and we gave her the opportunity to explore, while praising her for being brave. Christina became used to our voices and our routine over time. The more comfortable she became in her forever home, the more her own personality began to shine.



Christina loves running around in the morning while her breakfast is being prepared. She quickly runs into her pen when she hears me coming up the stairs because she knows it's banana time. In the evening, Christina loves to play with her toys and on "her blanket"- jumping and dancing while we chase her. She lays down when she's tired and insists on being pet until she falls asleep. She also loves when we lay on the floor and she can jump on our backs (which she happens to be doing as I type this). Her sweet and stubborn personality constantly keeps us laughing.

Christina still has some growing to do. She is timid when we have visitors and does not like to be picked up. She does not like the sound of the front door closing and loud noises. We feel that with continued love, these fears may ease or she may overcome them.



Ben and I feel so blessed to have adopted Christina from Safe Have Rabbit Rescue. She brings so much joy to our lives and we know that she was meant to share our home.

Kelly Walsh

Her [little video](#) is sure to make you smile! For the volunteers who know her history and the fear she knew, it will make you cry (with joy). It is the end result we all work so hard toward. KA



Merry & Banner

Adopted Oct. 10, 2010 & February 11, 2011

By Alexandra Garbeck

The moment I saw the [video](#) on the Safe Haven site of Merry throwing around her little basket and falling over, I was in love. I wasn't sure if taking in one rabbit instead of two would be a fair thing for her, but in the end, I had to have her! She came into my home a few days after my birthday and promptly took over. Merry is such a good girl - she was never destructive, very sweet, and she was absolutely trustworthy in the house... so she ended up taking over a bedroom and my dining room!

After spending time with her and learning about the joys of rabbit ownership, I decided it was time to take the plunge to see if she would be willing to bond with anyone. On a whim I did a search on "mini rex" (one of my favorite types of bunnies!) and when Safe Haven popped up at the top of the list I was ecstatic! Unfortunately they were still little ones so we weren't sure if it was going to be a good idea. I brought Merry over to meet a few bunnies, but the moment Karen brought me upstairs to meet the "3 B's" I was in love! So we decided to see how Banner (the little baldy) and Merry would react to each other. There was sniffing and interest, and no fighting, so I took Banner home that day!





I can't deny that it was a tough bond, but one day, after putting them together in a smaller space than the bathtub I had been using, Banner finally groomed Merry. I must admit I cried, I was so happy. From then on in it was easy, and now they're both grooming each other. Banner's my little explorer and loves to run around and run around and I swear I have the cleanest face on Earth because of his loving kisses. Merry's more sedate and loves her pets, but every once in a while, if she thinks I'm not looking, she gets sneaky and tries to go under my bed!

I love these guys so much - adopting them was the best thing that I've done in a long time. Merry recently celebrated her fourth birthday, and Banner's going to be a year old in a few months. They grow up so fast! :)



Ask The Vet..... *Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Educator*



Question: I am familiar with fecal exams for dogs and cats but is it important that my rabbit have a fecal exam as part of her yearly exam? How is rabbit fecal examined and what is being looked for?

Dr. Deborah Adelsohn, DVM at Community Animal Hospital in Morris Plains, NJ replied:

Gross as it may seem, yes, there are good reasons your veterinarian asks you to bring along a little poop sample when you bring in your rabbit for his check up. Fecal examinations are an important step in keeping your rabbit healthy and avoiding intestinal parasites that can pose a serious threat.

Fecal samples (a few fresh pellets in a baggie will do) should be brought to the veterinarian for every new pet and anytime your rabbit is having digestive problems (especially diarrhea). For outdoor rabbits or house rabbits that spend some time outdoors, fecals should be run yearly. With exclusively indoor pets, several initial checks then any time a new rabbit is added or if there are gastro-intestinal ("GI") problems, may suffice. Our practice also requires fecal examination prior to all spays and neuter surgeries - over the years we have found eliminating parasites makes for smoother post operative recovery. Based on your pet's lifestyle and diet, discuss how frequent your pet should have fecal exams with your veterinarian.

Examinations can be performed via two methods- direct smears or flotation. For a direct smear, your veterinarian will take a small amount of fresh feces and mix it with saline on a glass slide. The slide is then examined under the microscope for parasite eggs or mobile organisms, such as giardia.

Flotation techniques are more commonly performed and have the benefit of concentrating any eggs present. A small amount of stool is mixed with one of several solutions and allowed to sit for 10 -15 minutes with a glass slide covering it. This test allows more parasites and eggs to be recovered.

So what are we looking for? Coccidia are by far the most common rabbit intestinal parasite. These single cell organisms fall into the category protozoa and are not visible to the naked eye. Coccidia infections can lead to diarrhea, bloody stool, weight loss and general poor condition, especially in young rabbits. In more severe cases, it can even lead to hypoglycemia and death. One form of coccidia, *Eimeria stiedae*, affects rabbit's liver and can cause serious damage. Coccidiosis is usually treated with sulfa drugs such as trimethoprim-sulfa (Sulfatrim[®]), sulfadimethoxine or others medications such as amprolium.

Other common parasites found during fecal examination include pinworms (*Passalurus ambiguus*).

Adult pinworms are large white worms that can occasionally be passed with fresh feces. While they don't cause huge problems, most veterinarians will eradicate them. Rabbit pinworms are not passed to humans. Rabbit stomach worms (*Obelicoides cuniculi*) are also encountered. Large numbers of this parasite can cause loss of appetite and weight as well as stomach wall thickening. Tapeworms are occasionally found in pet rabbits and may be found on or in the stool. Tapeworms can also lead to weight loss, poor coat and condition. Other parasites are less common but routine testing allows us to make sure we rule out all possible causes of trouble.

One last thought on fecal samples - even if parasite exam is not needed for your bunny, bringing a fresh stool sample with you might be helpful. Just looking at a small amount of stool can provide a lot of information about your rabbit's gastrointestinal health. String of pearls appearance may help diagnose excessive hair or carpet ingestion. Small dry, dark feces may occur with GI stasis. Black tarry stool can be sign of stomach ulceration or bleeding. And it never ceases to amaze the foreign material we can identify rabbits having ingested. So when in doubt, it's never a bad idea to bring a *gift* of poop to your veterinary appointment.

Reference:

Quesenberry, Katherine, and James Carpenter. *Ferrets, Rabbits and Rodents: Clinical Medicine and Surgery*, Second Editions. St Louis: Saunders, 2004.

If you have questions, you would like to see answered by one of our veterinarians, please [let us know!](#)



Did You Know??by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven Volunteer and Educator

Hay ... did you know that hay is essential to a rabbit's diet? Did you know that some hays are more beneficial to a young rabbit but not to those who are mature? It's important to know your hay and grasses as hay is a general term referring to plant matter that has been cut and dried for herbivorous use.

Hay, as we refer to it, is broken down into two types ... grass and legume. Timothy, Meadow and Orchard are three common grass hays used for rabbits. The lesser common are Ryegrass, Brome, Bermuda and Fescues. Alfalfa is the most common legume used for rabbits with Clover also being included in this category.

Our main concern when our pet rabbit is consuming hay (aside from the quality) is the nutritional value it is providing considering it is the main part of their diet and should be available always as should water. Rabbits, just like people, have different nutritional needs depending on their age. Protein, fiber and calcium content are primarily considered when evaluating what type of hay to feed our rabbits and at what stage of life.

A "kit" is a baby rabbit that is still on mother's milk. This period lasts between 5 weeks to 8 weeks of age depending on the breeder or circumstances for the kit. Optimal nursing time is the full eight weeks. A juvenile rabbit is a rabbit that is no longer feeding on mother's milk and under 7 months old. They begin to eat solid foods after about 3 weeks and introduced to and fed alfalfa hay along with the grass hays and pellets designed to support growth. Fresh vegetables¹ are also introduced during this period.

Did you know alfalfa hay is highest in protein, calories and calcium than the grass hays? It is a very good source of food for a juvenile rabbit but not so good for mature adults and seniors.

Young adults are rabbits considered between 7 months and 1 year old. At this age they should be eating primarily grass hays such as Timothy, Orchard and Meadow which too should be made

available all day and getting just a taste of the alfalfa. Their pellet² should be a mix of a pellet for adults and the one fed at the juvenile stage as you want to begin to decrease the amount of alfalfa he is getting.

Mature adults are rabbits between 1 and 6 years old. At this age he should be off of alfalfa and alfalfa based pellets and eating only the grass hays and grass based pellets supplemented with a variety of fresh vegetables. Grass hay should be fed freely and a standard guide indicates to feed 1 cup of dark leafy greens per 3 pounds of body weight which includes at least three different kinds daily in addition to some orange and yellow vegetables. Fiber is essential at this stage of life and grass hays provide an abundance of fiber.

Did you know Timothy Hay is very high in fiber, low in protein and calcium and is the ideal hay to feed a rabbit in its later young adult, mature and senior years? Meadow and Orchard grasses are comparable in values to Timothy and can be used in addition for variety.

Senior rabbits are rabbits over 6 years of age. Their diet is like that of a mature rabbit unless health problems have developed. A rabbit savvy veterinarian would then make the best determination for feeding and care.

It is advisable to know the nutritional analysis for the hay you are purchasing. Most all companies that package and sell hay provide this information. Remember for late stage young adult and mature rabbits to opt for hay that is lowest in protein, fat and calcium and highest in fiber. Different cuts of the same hay will have a different analysis. If you can get your rabbit to eat the same type of hay from different sources that is a plus! Your rabbit may be less inclined to developing a finicky palette and different soils will yield different trace minerals. Always purchase from a reputable supplier.

When storing hay, be sure it is kept dry and gets lots of air circulation. You'll want to be sure it is green, smells fresh and is free of weeds. While some "dust" is normal, avoid hays with large quantities of dust. ***If you see any signs of mold, be sure not to use that hay and report the finding to your supplier!*** This issue's "Educational Corner" provides more information.

¹When introducing your rabbit to fresh vegetables do so one at a time and watch for any indication of sensitivity, digestive upset or dislike.

²When feeding pellets it is advisable to follow the manufacturer's guidelines for weight and age. Always consult with a rabbit savvy veterinarian for advice.

Reference:

<http://www.peteducation.com/article.cfm?c=18+1803&aid=1638>



Educational Corner.... by Linda Torlay, Safe Haven volunteer and educator

In today's environment, one that produces foods in mass quantity and often turning a blind eye to quality, we need to talk about Mycotoxins. Mycotoxins are poisonous chemical compounds produced by fungus, molds and toxins from molds. You're asking "what does this have to do with my companion rabbit?". Most of us feed our rabbits pellets in addition to hay and fresh greens. Pellets are manufactured from grains and grasses and those grains and grasses could have been exposed to

Ways To Help

Donate



Please help us by making a secure, tax-deductible donation today!

mold as could your hay. Even when mold is no longer visible, its poisons can live on in the form of Mycotoxins causing numerous health issues and even death. And Organic products are just as subjective to this problem as those that are not.

Mycotoxins are broken down into 6 major groups. Aflatoxins (a known carcinogen) associated primarily with peanuts (found often in rabbit pelleted mixes) and corn, Ochratoxin, Citrinin associated primarily with wheat, rice, corn, barley, oats and rye, Ergot, Patulin associated primarily with moldy fruits and vegetables, and Fusarium associated primarily with wheat and corn.

The most common sources of contamination are found in corn, wheat middlings and soybeans. Grains and by-products that are unfit for human consumption are often sold to the pet food industry and used to produce product that are consumed by our beloved companion animals. Mycotoxicosis is usually misdiagnosed and can often go unnoticed until significant damage to the internal organs has occurred. Systems include but are not limited to severe abdomen pain that can occur suddenly, low body temperature, abnormal blood counts, internal bleeding and ulcers.

Supportive care does exist for Mycotoxicosis and a rabbit savvy veterinarian will know how to properly administer Sucralfate. Antibiotics and Subcutaneous fluids while monitoring your rabbit's vital signs for improvement. Avoiding this trauma is ideal and common sense measures can be taken such as not feeding your rabbit wet hay or hay that had gotten wet, properly storing quality hay in a dry and cool location while allowing that hay to breath, purchasing hay and pellets from a reputable dealer as well as more invasive steps such as laboratory testing.

The above information is only an introduction to a subject that is more complex. I encourage you to further explore Mycotoxins in more depth and have noted 3 sites/links for reference.

References:

<http://homepage.mac.com/mattocks/morfz/myco.html>

<http://www.micotoxinas.com.br/boletim44.pdf>

<http://world-rabbit-science.com/WRSA-Proceedings/Congress-2008-Verona/Papers/N2-Mezes.pdf>

Photos to Share.....A few of our latest adoptees in their new homes!



Dickens..Adopted March 25, 2011

Honey - Adopted June 5, 2011



Chase & Zoey...Adopted June 6, 2011

Madelyn - Adopted August 30, 2011



We look forward to sharing their Adoption Update stories in a future newsletter!



The bunnies *Thank You* for your attention and support! We can't do it without *you*!

[Donate](#)



Copyright 2010 Safe Haven Rabbit Rescue, Inc. All Rights Reserved

