



HARELINES



Volume 11 Number 1 THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BUCKEYE HOUSE RABBIT SOCIETY

Winter 2007

Live and Learn

By Keni Morris

People have asked me why I foster? Isn't it a lot of work? How do you let go emotionally when someone wants to adopt? Let me tell you my story.

One day my husband and I were out shopping; it was just before Easter and we came across a small pen with about five baby bunnies in it. Being a huge animal lover, I just had to stop and pick one up. That little black bundle snuggled up to my chin and I was hooked. We bought that little girl on the spot and proudly took her home. I clearly did not know that you could adopt a rabbit.

As kids, my husband and his brother had rescued a wild baby bunny while mowing their yard. They had that rabbit for many years and he assured me that rabbits were easier than dogs and cats. So with that confidence, we proceeded to do what we thought was correct. We built Bonnie Bunny, as she was now called, an outdoor hutch with a hiding tunnel, provided the necessary bowls and a resting board for her feet. He placed the hutch way back in our yard, saying that any odors would



Introducing Keni Morris, our newest Cincinnati-area volunteer! Here's how she became interested in rabbits and, eventually, in fostering.

be less noticeable. I didn't like it, but he had had a bunny for years, so I trusted that he knew how to take care of one.

Eager to learn more about my new family addition, I began surfing the web. One article I discovered contradicted what I thought I knew. It stated that summer heat was very dangerous for a rabbit. I did not understand this. As a child,

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I saw pictures of jackrabbits in the deserts out west. There were rabbits in my own backyard during the hot and humid Cincinnati summers. To my surprise, the article explained that all rabbits were not the same. The difference was that my husband had had a wild cottontail and not a domestic rabbit. By this time, Bonnie was displaying her unique personality and she was more than just a pet. She was an individual and I could not bear to lose her to heat stroke. The summer would soon be upon us, so I laid down the law with my husband. Bonnie was coming indoors!

My husband, Dana, understood I had a legitimate fear. He also understood my emotional side and my devotion to our multi-species family.

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We know our members value their privacy and that's why we never, ever, sell our mailing list or distribute it to any other party. All of our members' information is held in the strictest confidence.

Special Thanks to:

Rhonda and Mike Wadsworth, for their thoughtful donation in memory of their beloved **Casandra**.

Andrea and Mike Markey and **Jodie Butler** for their generous gifts in tribute to **Joey Markey**.

Sidelia Reyna and **Todd Bennett**, for their contribution in memory of their first house rabbit, **Floppy**.

Kathy Mottola, for her donation in honor of her precious bunny, **Cuddles**.

Pam Loch's 5th grade students, who once again honored their teacher with generous holiday donations to the Buckeye HRS!

The following members, whose monetary and in-kind donations allow us to meet our ongoing fostering and educational goals:

Amanda Hall, Ann Zimmerman and Ray Vasvari, Mary and Kelly Bastian, Stevi Kovalik, Sunna Babar, the kind folks at Craft Solutions, Anita Watson, Bonnie Hagerman, Michael Romanik, Ann Landon, the Brumbaughs, Cherie Walsh, Germaine Weis and her rescued horse Patches, Sue Milewski, Adriana and Doris Mastroguiseppe, Marcia Baker, Jennifer Lockmiller, Linda Gardner, Carrie Goglin and Michael Lipinski, Laura and Jim Brown, Joyce Weaver, Jim and Laura Gills, Tracy Soltesz and Harold Chittum, Mary Zimmerman, Marjorie Aleva, Cathy and Alan Montiegel.

As always, our new and continuing **Sanctuary Rabbit Sponsors!** This program would not be possible without your compassion and generosity. We wish we could acknowledge each of you individually!

And, last but certainly not least, a very special thank you to **Ellen Eder**, our layout and design specialist, who meticulously and tirelessly put together *Harelines* for the past seven years. We all wish her the very best as she explores new opportunities.

Welcome Aboard!

We are very pleased to introduce our new layout and design expert for *Harelines* - **Rebecca Nagley**. Rebecca has a lot of experience and has volunteered her time and skills for a number of nonprofits, so we are most fortunate to have her with us. Welcome Rebecca!



Bathing a Rabbit's Messy Bottom

By Dana Krempels
HRS Chapter Manager,
Miami, FL

Reprinted with permission

If your rabbit has a messy bottom due to either runny stool or urine leakage, the most important thing to do is to determine the source of the problem, starting with a full exam by your rabbit-experienced veterinarian, and including a full dental examination and blood chemistry and blood cell counts.

A messy bottom is both uncomfortable and unsanitary, inviting worse problems such as skin scalding and even fly strike. While your vet does the detective work, it's up to you to keep the bunny comfortable. One way is with a careful, gentle "butt bath" to keep caustic bodily fluids away from the skin. There are two methods one can safely use to clean a messy bunny, and of the two, a DRY BATH is preferable. If the bunny is extremely soiled and very smelly, a wet bath may be necessary. Instructions for this procedure follow those of the Dry Bath.

Dry Bath Procedure

1. Purchase a container of Baby Cornstarch Powder from the grocery store baby section

(DO NOT use Baby Powder or any sort of powder that contains talc, as talc is a respiratory irritant and may even be carcinogenic!). You can use either unscented or scented cornstarch powder. DO NOT use commercial flea powders or other pesticides on your bunny. Use only baby-safe cornstarch powder for best, safest results.

2. Place bunny in a comfortable position so that the soiled parts are easily accessible. This may involve placing him in your lap on a bunched towel so that he feels secure, or simply laying him on the floor in a comfortable position, if he's calm and won't try to run off.

3. Liberally apply the cornstarch to the soiled areas, and gently work the powder down into the fur, around messy poops, and

down to the skin.

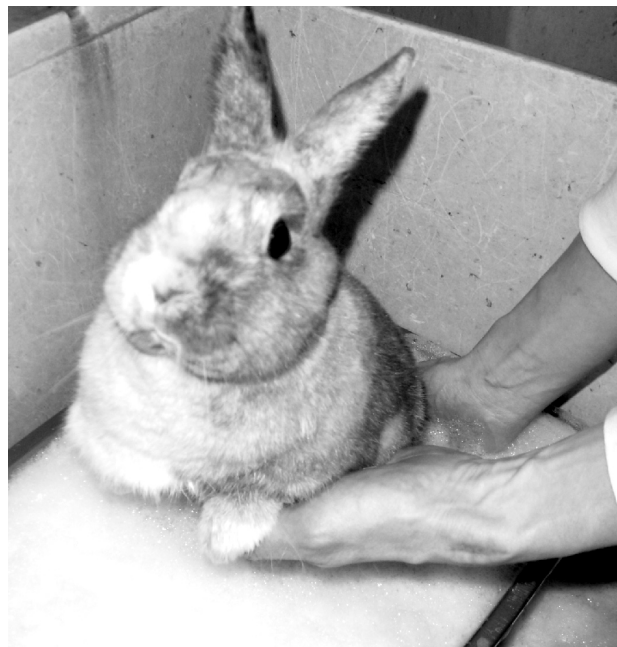
4. Gently work the powder around any stubborn clumps of debris. As the cornstarch coats the mess, it will slide away easily.

5. Once the largest bits of mess have been removed, use a soft-tipped brush to gently loosen any remaining dirt and debris.

6. Pat the powdered areas well to remove loose powder.

Bunny should be clean and fragrant in just a few minutes! Rabbits generally enjoy a dry bath, and will sit quietly as the soothing powder takes away the sting of urine burn.

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Lyle, a Buckeye HRS sanctuary rabbit, needs frequent wet baths to keep his bottom clean and dry. Look how relaxed he is! He's obviously comfortable with the whole process.



Rabbitat Contest Winners!

One look at these amazing “rabbitats” and you’ll know why they’re our contest winners!

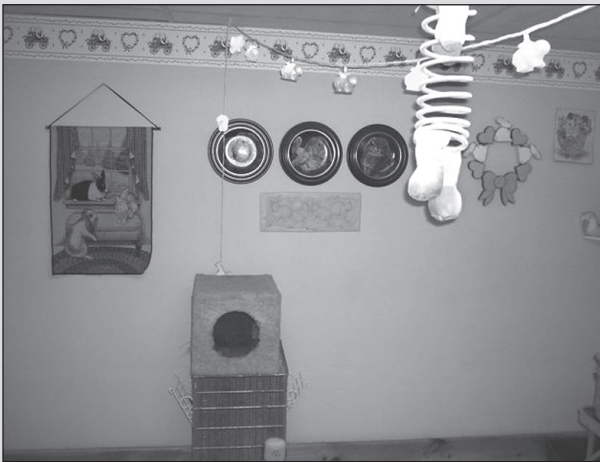
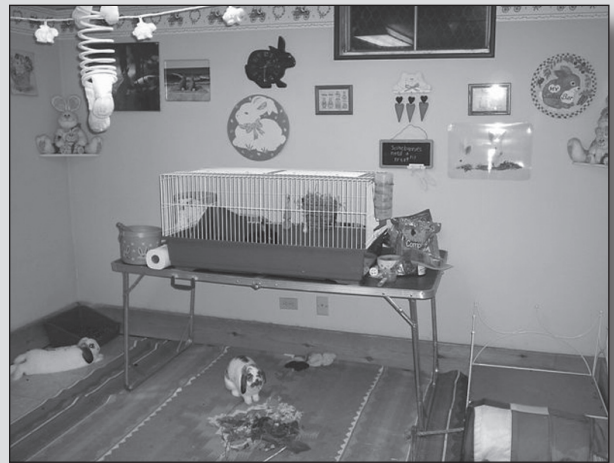
Paul and Jeannie Eash built this house for Snooks, the Easherbunny, who bonded with Rustie (pictured with house).

Sadly, 8.5 year-old Snooks passed away recently. Soon Rustie will have a new bunny companion.



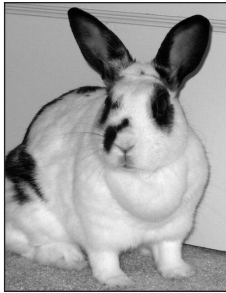


There's certainly no mistaking where the rabbit room is in **John and Mary Jo Mayfield's** home! All the amenities and a tasteful design would satisfy even the most discerning bunny.

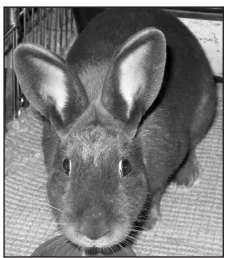




Somebunny Needs YOU!



Belle is a real cutie! She loves to be petted on her little nose. Belle also enjoys digging in her hay box and napping in her cardboard tunnel. She is a bit on the shy side but is really coming around. Can you welcome Belle into your home? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



This is **Pumpkin!** She is a very sweet young lady. Just look at her awesome blue/gray fur! What a beautiful bunny! Pumpkin enjoys playing with her toys and she especially loves to chomp on hay. Wouldn't you love to make Pumpkin a member of your family? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Meet **Benji.** He's a domestic bun who looks a lot like a wild cottontail rabbit. Benji was part of a group of over 20 rabbits seized from a backyard breeder who was not feeding and caring for them. Benji is an active young male. Since he was never kept as a "pet" bunny, he needs some socialization time with a family that will help him to learn to trust humans. He's not afraid of people, he just needs to bond with someone who will take the place of his former hutchmates! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



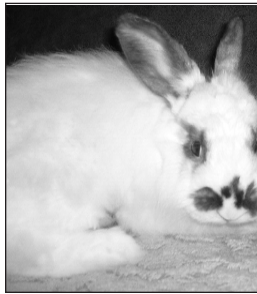
Abbey Rose has blossomed in foster care, but she will bloom beautifully in a forever home. This 5 1/2 pound lop is an eager eater and explorer. She will be a little shy initially, but then will hop next to you on the couch (looking for a raisin treat, maybe?) or jump on you if you happen to recline on the floor. Like most bunnies, she's not fond of being carried, but is very fond of petting. She is not quite a year old, and has all the energy and curiosity of a wonderful pet. **Please contact Jann Kuntavanish (jann@ohare.org) 937-435-6899.**



Bonnie is a curious and friendly 5.5 lb girl who gobbles all of her hay and comes running for pets. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Sigmund is a tiny little boy with long, soft fluffy fur and short ears, and distinctive eye markings. He likes to snuggle and comes right to you for pets, and he even enjoys being picked up occasionally. "Siggy" is roughly 2 lbs and approx 9 months old. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Mena has beautiful, thick white angora fur and really likes human companionship. Mena may require a little extra grooming to keep her fur from matting, but she's worth it! A fantastic housekeeper and a champion hay eater, Mena weighs 5 lbs and is approximately one year old. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Hope came to us with her 3 baby girls (Coalby, Coltrie and Jess) from the Lorain County crisis. She is a very nice girl who just loves to explore. Hope is very gentle and would make a wonderful member of your family. **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Sylvester is quite a unique looking bunny with his stripes and two-toned face! He LOVES his free time and pellets. This handsome guy would make a great addition to your home. He has lots of love to give. Why not make an appointment to meet him? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Introducing **Harry** -- Harry Houdini -- who makes all his timothy hay and fresh salads disappear in an instant. He even greets you at the door when he knows you are serving the goodies. Harry is a playful guy who does wild dances and binkies, twisting and turning high in the air. This three-pound

dutch fellow could make it in a professional ballet company if they took bunnies. Do you have room in your heart and home for Harry? He is patiently waiting ... **Please contact Keni Morris (keni@ohare.org) 513-469-0840.**



Good things come in small packages. Little **Pete** is an adorable mini-rex. His fur is unbelievably soft and he is just as adorable as they come. He has excellent litterbox habits and loves to do binkies to show off. Pete is about 7 months old and weighs under 3 lbs. He will

surely work his way into your heart! **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



This is **Basil**, born in June 2006. A mini rex and soft as velvet, this little guy is as sweet as can be and fun as all get out to watch. He came into foster care along with his brother, Pete. Add some flavor to your life, adopt Basil! **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Verde is a 5.5 lb black Havanna who likes to sleep on top of her box. Verde was born in November 2002. She's very tidy with her litterbox and loves to run through her cardboard tunnel. She's an excellent hay eater, too! **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Alfonso, a little mini-rex, gets so excited for his meals that he runs round and round frantically until he is fed. If you pick him up however, he melts in your arms and nuzzles his face under your chin. He weighs about 3.5 lbs, is perfect with his litterbox, and eats a ton of hay for such a little guy. He also loves cruising through his miniature tunnels and boxes. **Please contact Kristen**

Doherty 440-543-4959.



Scarlet is one of Maya's daughters with sleek black fur and a pleasant demeanor. She is now full-grown. She likes to be petted and to lay stretched out in her litterbox. Scarlet weighs about 5 lbs. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Coalby is one of Hope's 3 babies. She loves to play with her cardboard box and her other toys. Coalby has adorable fuzzy cheeks and extra long ears. She is very neat and has great litter box habits. Why don't you make an appointment to meet her? **Please contact Sue Zimmerman (sue@ohare.org) 419-355-8433.**



Sebastian is an adorable male Dutch rabbit who is a year and a half old. He likes to sit on top of a cardboard box and check out his surroundings when he's not busy standing on his tiptoes at the edge of his pen looking for affection. He is healthy with excellent litterbox habits and enjoys his daily veggies. Wouldn't you like this cutie as part of your family? **Please contact Kristi Cole (kristi@ohare.org) 330-484-8416.**



Somebunny Needs YOU! Cont'd.



Meet **Robby**, one of the Lorain County rescues. Robby is looking for his forever loving family. If you have room in your heart and home for a little three-pound dutch bunny who loves his salads, does wild dances and binkies when he is out to play, then he may be the bunny for you. He adores nose pets; he runs to the front of his cage to get

them and tooth purrs to show how much he enjoys them. He doesn't even mind being picked up and held. What a great little bun! **Please contact Keni Morris (keni@ohare.org) 513-469-0840**



Tamale looks just like Molly; he is a small 3 lb. part-dwarf mix with a dark brown and black coat. He and Molly were both abandoned, along with three other rabbits, in a house where the family was evicted. Tamale is curious and playful and enjoys being petted for a long time. Tamale will not get any larger than he is at 9 months old (as of Jan 07) and would make a perfect bonding

partner for Molly. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**

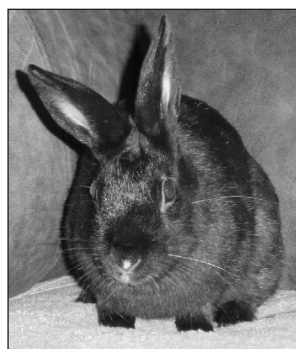


Introducing **Bixby!** Watch this charmer race through his cardboard tunnel or toss his favorite bell toy. You wouldn't know he spent the first five months of his life bitten and scratched by an aggressive hutch mate and neglected by his human family. Bixby is a lionhead mix born in June 2006. He weighs about two pounds, has a strong appetite for veggies and hay, and is now in excellent health. Great litterbox habits, too. Guaranteed to chase the winter blues, this lovable guy is

a smile wrapped in a rabbit. **Please contact Herta Rodina (herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**



Nacho is easily a snuggle-bun who likes to hunker down on the floor with you for pets. He likes to sit in your lap too, and would do well with kids. Weighing about 5 lbs., this bunny is very calm and gentle. Nacho came into foster care from the crisis in Elyria, where 50+ rabbits are still waiting to be placed. **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**



Molly is a friendly little 3 lb. ball of energy with a beautiful dark brown and black coat. She always wants to know what you're up to so she can join in the fun. Molly is very friendly, loves to be petted, great with her litterbox, and would also be perfect for bonding with her brother, Tamale. She is part dwarf and will not get any larger

than she is at about 9 months old (as of Jan 07). **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**

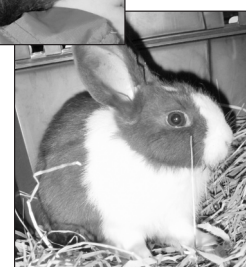


One glance at this comical character will have you smiling! **Chaplin** (you'll see his 'mustache') is as loving as he is entertaining. This soft-as-velvet mini rex will cuddle forever in your lap and loves zoning out on his back, as long as a gentle hand is petting him. Chaplin is about two years old and has a

strong appetite. He hasn't completely mastered the litterbox yet, but his habits are improving. **Please contact Herta Rodina (herta@ohare.org) 740-797-7616.**

Lorain County Bunnies

Won't you consider letting one of these adorable and very friendly little bunnies into your home? How about a matching pair? **Please contact Kristen Doherty 440-543-4959.**





Adopted!

Coltrie has a new home with Nikki Wells and family of Port Clinton. ♥ **Ellie Mae** is one lucky critter since she now has a new home with Michelle Latham. Congratulations on striking it rich! ♥ The Lowrie family will never be short on **Cash**! Their life is now much richer with **Cash** in it. Congratulations! ♥ **Jess** is falling in love with former Buckeye HRS adoptee, Big Joe, at the wonderful home of the Beck family ♥ Michelle Robb is dancing with joy since she has adopted **Tango**. Congratulations on your dance card always being filled! ♥ **Sonny** made his way into the heart and home of Scott Edwards and bunny pal, Rita. ♥ Congratulations to the Gibbs family on the adoption of **Hershey**. Her life is much sweeter now and the Gibbs are thrilled to have her as a part of their family. ♥ **Jack** finally gets a loving forever home with Beth and Rob Szule. ♥ Playful and affectionate **Biffin** is having a ball exploring his new home with Christa -- and, of course, getting into lots of mischief! ♥ **Puff Daddy** keeps his girlfriend Phoebe company since he was adopted by Jill in Mentor. ♥ **Squirrel** (now **Sassy**) and **H.J.** (now **Hammie**) are giving it the old bonding try, thanks to Abigail and Jose of Wooster. ♥ **Cleo** and **Oreo** are two very lucky rabbits who got the love they deserved with Denice of Mayfield Heights. ♥ **Jazzy** was recently welcomed into Peggy's home in Brunswick Hills. ♥ Congratulations to the Savistanos of Independence, who recently welcomed **Richard the Lionhearted** into their family. ♥ **Fiddle** is the latest addition to the bunny family of Rich and Donna Brady in Youngstown. ♥ **Coconut** and **Scooter** hit it off immediately, then were adopted by the Barbera family of Uniontown, where they will get lots of attention. ♥ **Umlaut** and former Buckeye HRS foster **Trevor** are getting along splendidly, courtesy of Bonnie and Miles of Cleveland. ♥ Congratulations to Amanda Breneman on the adoption of **Magpie**. She now chatters with delight in her new home, where she is loved very much and constantly entertaining with her wonderful escapades.



Holiday Raffle Results

And the winner is ... **Beth Smith** of Akron, OH. Congratulations to Beth and many thanks to all who supported the Buckeye HRS through the purchase of raffle tickets. Proceeds will allow us to make the future brighter for more needy bunnies in Ohio.



Bathing a Rabbit's Messy Bottom, Cont'd.

If your bunny's bum is very messy, wet, and smelly, it may be necessary to give him a wet bath. Here's how to do it:

Wet Bath Procedure

1. Purchase hypoallergenic, non-medicated pet shampoo from your veterinarian or pet supply store. Hy-Lyte is a good choice, but any similar product will work as well. **DO NOT USE ANY TYPE OF HUMAN SHAMPOO ON YOUR RABBIT.** Rabbit skin is far more delicate and sensitive than human skin -- especially the scalp. Even baby shampoo is far too harsh, and can make the problem worse, not better.

2. Fill a bathroom sink with about 2.5" lukewarm water.

3. Mix in about a tablespoon of shampoo, and mix well.

4. Being firm and gentle so that the bunny cannot jump and injure himself, lower his rear end into the lukewarm shampoo/water, and gently lather the solution onto the soiled areas until they are clean. If the bunny is very messy, you may have to change the water and do this twice.

5. Rinse with lukewarm, clear running water very thoroughly, leaving NO shampoo residue.

6. Towel dry carefully, being sure not to rub too hard against irritated skin.

7. Blow dry on low, keeping your hand close to bunny's skin so that you can tell if the air flow is too hot. The last thing you want to do is burn already inflamed skin!

8. When bunny is fluffy-dry, carefully clip away the fur on the areas where the skin is irritated. If you can't see the skin, or are doubtful where skin ends and fur begins, then do not clip!



Rabbit skin is very thin and stretchy, and even a small wound can expand to alarming proportions!

9. Apply a soothing balm, such as Calendula (from the health food store) or triple antibiotic ointment (e.g., Neosporin, but NOT Neosporin Plus, which contains lidocaine and is not recommended).

10. Repeat as necessary, but do not continue if rabbit seems unduly stressed by the experience. Whenever you handle a bunny, it's important to be firm, gentle and ready to release the bunny at ground level if she starts to struggle violently. As you probably know, one good kick can dislocate or even fracture the spine. Always keep the bunny's safety *first* in mind if you attempt a project like this.

And remember, the "butt bath" is nothing more than treating a symptom of a greater disorder. The most important thing to do is to discover why your bunny has urinary incontinence or runny stool problems, and get to the root of the ultimate cause for a complete cure.

Lyle's butt is gently dried with a soft towel after his wet bath.



Introducing Keni, Cont'd.

He dropped his other projects and built a pen in the basement using a dog pen as the main component. Needless to say, I was relieved.

What other things did I not know? I went back to surfing the web and soon discovered the House Rabbit Society's web site. After reading through a ton of information, I realized I had a lot to do. We added another "family doctor". Bonnie's new vet was recognized for his rabbit care. He checked her from teeth to tail and later spayed her. Her diet was adjusted and she quickly became litter trained. We bunny proofed the house so she could be with us while we watched television. Bonnie grew to twelve pounds making it easy for her to jump up on the couch and sit with me. To put it simply, I felt like I was doing a good job and my bunny loved me back. We even got another bunny to bond with her. Then one day Bonnie stopped eating. Her droppings changed. Something was wrong. I took her to our vet. Bonnie had kidney problems. The vet believed it was congenital.

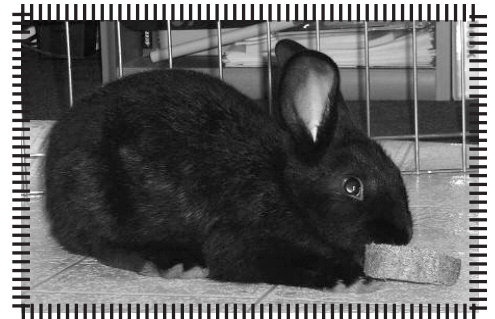
We fought to keep her alive, but within a month she was gone. Bonnie Bunny died while I was at work and could not be there. She was barely 1½ years old. I was crushed.

We also had two cats, so we were in pet supply stores pretty often. I found myself talking to people whenever we went in, sharing what I have learned about rabbits. Explaining that they made great pets and how their personalities emerged. To my surprise, many folks were truly interested and thanked me for the information. If they owned a bunny, I would help even more and suggest the right kind of litter to buy and tell them about the great web site I had found. What surprised me the most was that people did not have the slightest idea how to care for their rabbits and often did not know how easy it was to be better educated about house rabbits. I wanted to make a bigger difference, so I joined Buckeye House Rabbit Society and started going to Petsmart adoption days with another member. I did not feel like I was doing enough, so I applied to become a fosterer in order to contribute even more.

I currently have two foster bunnies and four of my own. Is it hard work taking care of six bunnies? Maybe to some, but to me it is worth every minute of my time. Preparing these lovable darlings for their new homes and providing correct information to their owners lets me feel like I am making a difference. Even if it is only one bunny at a time. Yes, it is hard to see them leave but I know there may be another one just around the corner who needs my help.

Fostering is self-rewarding. Rescuing a bunny from a bad situation usually requires providing a safer and more secure environment. You add a balanced diet, social interaction, a soft touch and kind words. Some time later you will start to see the rewards – bunny waiting for you at the door for fresh salads, followed by a contented flop on the floor. That formerly scared bunny seeks you out to get his nose petted. For me, the biggest compliment is the first time the bunny kicks up his heels in a joyful binky. The best part of fostering is watching the reaction of a new family to this sweet creature. Knowing that this one rabbit has found his forever home makes me want to do it again and again. It may not be saving the world, but to me it sometimes feels like it.

I foster because I find joy in it. My first joy was knowing a bunny called Bonnie. Thanks Bonnie; you were a great ambassador for all the bunnies who have come after you. Someday I will see you at the Rainbow Bridge.



Bonnie, nibbling on a chew toy.

