

Goodie

June 2013, at dusk, Caroline Schell was driving, leaning forward as close to the windshield of her car as she could, and squinting her eyes in an effort to see the country road. In the deluge, everything was a gray blur. Caroline was forced to drive very slowly and that is lucky, for up ahead she saw an animal sitting in the middle of the road. When she stopped and walked toward it she saw it was a rabbit, white with black spots. It did not move. Caroline picked it up. "That poor little rabbit was sitting in two inches of water. She was soaked to the bones." Caroline said. Caroline drove straight to the Sanctuary.

I had finished up for the day and was surprised when the drenched and bedraggled rabbit and girl appeared at my back door. The rain was still pouring down. The three of us ducked next door to the bunny health care building. After giving Caroline a towel to dry herself, the two of us began toweling off the rabbit until she was dry and fluffy. Caroline expressed her gratitude, but she had been at work all day and was anxious to continue on home. I sat on the floor with the rabbit, pulled out my first aid drawer and began assessing the rabbit's condition.

She was thin and dehydrated; I could feel all of her bird like bones. A look in her ears revealed ear mites. A parting of her fur revealed ticks. There were several small, hard bumps around her shoulder area. I put her down momentarily to fix a pen for her and noticed that she was slightly crippled in her back legs. I removed all the ticks and applied miticide on her ears. It was getting late. I placed her in her straw filled pen with lots of hay, chow, and a dish of water.

"We'll see how you feel in the morning", I said, and I secured the building for the night.

Goodie, as I named the rabbit, and I were at the vet the next morning. The vet treated the aforementioned maladies and gave me all the meds and supplies needed to continue Goodie's treatment at the Sanctuary over the following several weeks. The vet said that those small, hard lumps in Goodie's shoulder were BB shot.

Then the vet had good news and bad news. The good news: Goodie is not pregnant. The bad news: Goodie has lice.

In my fifty years of working with rescued rabbits, I have never had a case of lice. The vet said I have been amazingly lucky. I realized that I had exposed the ten rabbits in the health care building to this very contagious parasite. Jokingly, I asked the vet "Just one louse?" The vet declared, "She's loaded!" That is what I get for breaking with Sanctuary policy: "new arrivals are kept in isolation until their general health and wellness check at the vet before they can join the herd." So, added to Goodie's care, I had to treat, through the summer, all ten rabbits in the bunny health care building for lice. No harm done, just extra work for me, but a lesson learned.

Goodie, who was about two years old, responded well to TLC. By the end of summer she had transformed into a beautiful, happy, healthy, rabbit, albeit, she will always be slightly crippled. She paired up with her male counterpart, Too Busy. The two moved into their very own territory in Rabbitat I.

Hard times gone. Good times ahead. That is what the Sanctuary is all about.