

# Alley Animals

## Editor's Note

Because we've been extremely busy, I'm very late getting out our summer newsletter, so this issue will be brief. The story of Nibbly, the bunny, is one I hope will inspire you by his courageous spirit after having been "thrown away". Most of us identify with cats or dogs: they're familiar to us, and we communicate easily with them. We know when a cat or dog expresses love, contentment, mischief or play, and they understand what we're feeling, too. Rabbits may seem inscrutable, but they reveal themselves to those who investigate their delightful personalities with so much to offer. Abandoned to the streets in a disgraceful act of cruelty, Nibbly faced every-increasing fear, further injury, and pain for whatever would have been left of his life in a treacherous environment, had Alice not happened upon him.

If this newsletter is brief it does *not* mean we're doing less work in the streets and alleys. Sadly, the homeless population never subsides, nor does their hardship and suffering. They live nobly and many die bravely, alone in an alley, never having experienced the love of a family or the safety of a home.

An intensely hot summer is unpleasant for people, but Hell-on-Earth for homeless animals: we've seen the effects of it in the streets. I will say without fear of contradiction that summer is a most unwelcome and relentless beast, a bringer of horrid suffering. If you awaken in the middle of a hot sticky night, you can rest assured that at least in the dangerous neighborhoods of one inner city, beleaguered and homeless animals are being offered a measure of kindness by a team of determined alley-goers.

## Nibbly Part 1 by Alice Arnold

I was heading to an alley where I'd seen a male cat I thought might have been "put out", so I wanted to check if he was still there. Unlike dogs, cats tend to stay near the place they're abandoned, so I was on my way back to look for him. The alley is hard to get through, I have to go in partway and then back out. When I got there I could see the cat was not around; after doing this work for so many years I've learned how to scan an area for animals who try to stay hidden, especially adult animals. I was confident the cat wasn't there. As I started backing out, my headlights caught something I was pretty

sure was a tiny animal next to some trash. I stopped the car and pulled forward very slowly and as I did, my headlight beam caught the glint of a small animal's eye.

I didn't think it was a kitten, the dark shape of its body was different from a kitten. I thought to myself, maybe a puppy? I got out with a pot of food and a flashlight and I walked as quietly and slowly as I could. As I approached the little animal, I bent down in between some trash cans. Just then he *hopped* away, a little black rabbit left out in the alley. He hopped faster as I got closer, and when he turned to check on me. I saw one of his eyes was bloody. While trying to escape from me he bumped into things, but was still doing a good job of getting away. I followed him for a long time but finally realized this wasn't working. I was just scaring him more.



We see rabbits in the city *almost never*, so I didn't have any enticing food for him. But I knew he had to be really hungry because there's nothing for rabbits to eat in the alleys. I dropped a handful of dry cat food in the pot and put it on the ground just to see if he might come to it, then I backed away. That little bunny was so hungry he hopped over to the pot. This made me very happy because it gave me the chance to work with him.

He was watching me with his good eye, so to distract him I edged as close as I could on his blind side and put the flashlight at an angle to shine in his good eye. I knew I had to do this right. I wouldn't get a second change to get him if I made a mistake and frightened him away for good. I hoped he couldn't see my hand through the glare of the flashlight. The little bunny was still trying to eat bits of dry cat food when I knelt down, carefully reached over his body and came down on him. I had him in my grip though he struggled with

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## Nibbly *(continued from Page 1)*

all his might; unfortunately that's not saying much because he was skin and bones and weak from hunger and thirst. On the way to the car he tried to kick but I held on. In the car I put him on a soft towel in a carrier with more dry cat food, the only thing I could offer him at the moment. I got out to pick up my pot and flashlight, then I took the skinny hungry bunny out of that alley where he would have died for sure.

## Part 2 *by Demetria Patras*

Upon entering my house after working the night in the alleys, the telephone rang. It was Alice asking if I would be interested in a companion for my rabbit, Mocha. Of course, I said, no problem. Where did this rabbit come from, I wanted to know, was it a male or female, and all the other questions one would ask if taking in another family member.

Alice began telling me about her adventure and how she rescued the small bunny rabbit. He had a bloody eye and was running about. He must have been starving because he responded to cat food—rabbits don't eat cat food unless they are desperate. Alice cleaned the dried blood from his head and around his injured eye before bringing him to me. We didn't know the extent of his injuries, but he was a well-behaved bunny from the start, and easy to work with.

I took Nibbly to the veterinary clinic where I found out his eyelid was torn and his eye damaged. He also had a hole in his shoulder. After scheduling surgery on his shoulder as well as neutering, I brought Nibbly home with antibiotics and ointment for his eye. He is a small Rex and looks like a young bunny, but he is full-grown even though you can almost hold him in one hand. He's very good at taking his medicine, and at present Nibbly's shoulder has healed from surgery and his fur has grown back. Unfortunately, his eye is permanently damaged and my little black rabbit will soon go through *another* surgery, this time to remove the eye, but I remain hopeful he will bounce back without difficulty. After the surgery when he's given a clean bill of health, I expect Nibbly to join my lop-eared rabbit, Mocha.

Nibbly is a spunky little guy. He eats and runs continually. He is always good when being handled and loves to be rubbed. You would think he'd be afraid after being put outside to fend for himself (which is impossible for a domesticated rabbit) and then attacked and injured by a person or another animal. Instead, he lets my cats lay in his bed and shows no fear; I think he actually likes their company!

You cannot imagine the difficulty of catching a rabbit by hand in the open especially at night...in the alleys. And Nibbly is black. At times he must have looked like a shadow. It took dedication and determination on Al-

ice's part, and she would probably still be in that alley on her hands and knees if she hadn't been able to grab him. I am just thankful all went well.

*One element not mentioned in the story was that Nibbly's rescue took place shortly after last Christmas. Was he a "Christmas present" for a child perhaps? We strongly object to giving live animals as presents. Bringing an animal into one's family requires a lot of thought and planning as well as the certainty of a lifetime commitment. Christmas presents, birthday presents, Easter presents, and so on, should not include living breathing animals who can then be abandoned.*

## Memorials In Loving Memory Of:

The precious dog who died in the crate. *Sandy Miller*

**Sam, Rushy, & Tuttle.** *Joyce Jefferson*

My beloved son, **Steven Needle**, 11-20-1960 – 1-25-2012.  
*Helen Needle*

My beloved husband, on the anniversary of his birthday.  
*Anne Cramblitt*

**Denise Hamer**, my beloved wife; she loved animals dearly!  
*George Hamer, III*

**Callie** – you gave us so much love and affection through the years. You will be missed and will be forever in our hearts.  
*Dick & Lou Nethkin*

**Bag Lady** – you came to us as "Bag Lady" but you were always "Lady" to us. You were the best dog who started out with a tough beginning in life but ended up a member of our family loved by all.  
*Don & Darlene Goff*

**William "Willy" Thornton**, our marvelous yellow lab who passed away on May 1, 2012. Willy gave so much to our family and we will miss him forever. *Kathy Novak & Family*

**Willy**, beloved dog of Roger & Kathy Novak. Willy was a special dog and the Novaks' best friend. *Barbara Wallick*

**Dusty Cat**. She found us 14 years ago (with a string embedded in her neck and not much fur). She turned into a beautiful, loving cat. We miss her everyday. *Judith Copeland*

Farewell, precious little **Judy**...Your sweet presence of 18 years was truly a gift. Now you have arrived to your final home along with the rest of the family. Watch over them until I get there. *Florence Brenner*

**Tinkerbelle**: a shelter adoptee and a wonderful cat companion for 20 years. *Carol Liss*

**Doyle & Lena Abbot**, my parents. *Carolyn Orandle*

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My **Dad**, whose 92nd birthday would have been June 8th. He was such an animal lover! He once trapped a rat and drove it out to the "country" to let it go. He bottle fed baby rabbits, punched a hole in a crawl space to save a cat he then adopted and named Lucky. He let us keep all the strays we brought home. He once was upset with the vet when she had to take his little Fox Terrier, Fawn, home with her to monitor. He wanted to know why the vet didn't let Fawn sleep in her bed! He was a real character and we miss him. He used to feed the geese and swans at his waterfront home. You know, those mean swans DNR received permission to kill. Well, those *mean* swans used to come up from the beach and honk for Dad to come outside, so they could show him their babies. Now, whenever we attend a family funeral, we know that there will be geese flying over the cemetery. My sisters and I just smile at each other because we know Daddy's there.

*Sharon Nardone*

**John Raber**, who sold Christmas trees in Dundalk for many years with his dog, Andy.

*Ruth Thompson*

**Cane Akhavan**, a beautiful, gentle, American bulldog, who passed away March 2nd. Cane was a special boy!! I love and miss you, Cane.

*Theresa Chonoski*

**Max**, my son's family's dear dog, who was with them for 12 years. He was a wonderful dog, and I'll miss him very much.

*Judith Eble*

**Belle, Jette, and Clyde**, three special adopted kitties. They were loved, are missed and will always be remembered by the Bittings, Leyboldt, and Jones families.

*Sue E. Jones*

**Perl & Chester**, who were so devoted to each other. Some people could learn from the animals if they only took the time.

*Dorothy Cooney*

My beloved cat, **Smudges**, who had to be put to sleep on May 10th. He had a hideous cancer that caused huge welts on his body then went to his throat so that he couldn't swallow his food. He was the most wonderful animal I ever had.

*Mary Buff*

**Oreo**, beloved Border Collie companion of my friend, Louise Lee. Oreo had to be put down because of seizures, and Louise hasn't been able to stop crying.

*Mary Buff*

**Sparky**, our beloved monkey, who passed suddenly while at the hospital. My heart is forever crushed, he is my heart and soul. Daddy told him every night that he was the best monkey in the universe: how right he was. I miss you so very much it hurts, not a day goes by that I don't cry. I love you, Sparky.

*Tammy Dickson*

My beloved **Midnight, Katie, and Little Fox**. I will forever have you in my heart.

*Carolyn Hoffman*

**Sassy** - Our beloved sweetheart cat. We miss your beautiful kitten-like face. Thank you for 19 wonderful years. March 21, 1993 - May 3, 2012.

*Julie (Momma) and Elaine (Grand ma ma)*

**Mario, Natasha, & Layla.**

*Surah Kaplan*

For Terry Fisher Berkovsky, in fond memory.

*Mary Louise Broadbeck*

Our precious cat, **Mouse**, who crossed over the rainbow bridge on April 14th, 2012. We rescued her when she was a kitten, and spent 12 wonderful years together. We miss her dearly, and will never forget her beautiful *Heart* so filled with Love. May her spirit soar to the heavens.

*Irene & Paul Sallustio*

On November 11, 2000, we adopted **Curley** from Alley Animals. We changed his name to **Charlie**. Yesterday, May 30th, 2012, it was our sad responsibility to take him to our veterinarian for the last time.

Charlie brought us 11½ years of joy and laughter. Today the house is quiet and lonely. We were truly blessed to have him in our lives.

*Barbara & Diane Ziegler*

On May 31st we had to put to sleep our 14 year old cat, **Amber**, after she started going down hill very quickly on Memorial Day. She tried so hard to get well and stay with us, but her liver was giving out. Several times we thought she was going to make it, but I guess God had bigger plans for her. Everyone at the hospital felt bad, and they sent us a beautiful gardenia we keep on our porch in the sunny spot Amber would take her sunbaths. That spot doesn't look quite as empty now.

*Denise Gatti*

**Cooder**, (18 years, 4 months) beloved calico of Ray & Rachel Riley.

*John & Maggie Miner*

Our beloved dog, **Maxine**, a loyal friend and companion, and mother to Sunshine. She was a warrior and fought the fiercest of battles against her heart disease for 18 months with grace, strength and fortitude. We miss her so much.

*Joyce Callahan*

My precious "first cat" **Minerva**, and her next door half-siblings: **Gremlin, Pumpkin, Rascal, and Phantom**.

*Margaret M. Detwiler*

**Polo**, my small boy-cat, euthanized due to serious illness on April 24, 2012, age 15+ years. He had been adopted and returned to the shelter several times before I took him as a foster in May 2000, adopting him myself later that year. Shy and apprehensive around other cats (and with people), he would burrow his little face into my shoulder and turn on his purr machine. His determination to go on despite long-term clinical problems, as well as emotional upheaval in his earlier years, has been a life lesson for me. Thank you, Polo.

*DonnaRae Castillo*

**Bandit**, a quiet senior hamster; **Captain**, a sweet brown mouse who never quite grew into his over-sized ears; and **Marvin**, a gentle white mouse who loved to snuggle down into my winter hat to "hide" from me during playtime. All very dear.

*DonnaRae Castillo*

**Bethesda, America, and Tempino**, three shelter cats who did not get a second chance for a home. Rest in peace over the Rainbow Bridge.

*DonnaRae Castillo*

My pet monkey, **Sparky**. I still cry everyday, and my heart has not begun to heal after the sudden death of "my baby."

*Tammy Dickson*

**Jasper**, beloved companion of Mrs. Robert Warden.

*Howard & Sharon Miller*

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## In Memory Of: *(continued from Page 3)*

My Uncle **Hank Perle**. For years, he looked after feral cat colonies at Miami International Airport (and maybe elsewhere), something that he had picked up from my grandfather.  
*David W. Perle*

## In Honor Of:

Dear Alice, may God bless her and protect her.  
*Ruth Guenot McElvany*

Mr. Pat Harnett, in celebration of her 70th birthday.  
*Margaret Patterson*

The special dog, **Forever**. My prayers are with you.  
*Catherine Kates*

My wonderful husband, **Daniel**, who loves all animals; my sweet Norwegian Elkhound, **Foxy**, and my wonderful cats.  
*Carolyn Hoffman*

My **Dad**, who always makes me smile. I'm proud to be his daughter.  
*Lilly*

Mary, caregiver par excellence. Flowers, kitties, and my wonderful Dad all flourish in Mary's loving care.  
*Lilly*

## Spring Raffle Winners—2012

|           |                       |                         |
|-----------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1st Prize | <i>Gail Messier</i>   | <i>Washington, DC</i>   |
| 2nd Prize | <i>Susan Waldman</i>  | <i>Owings Mills, MD</i> |
| 3rd Prize | <i>Paul Corraine</i>  | <i>Baltimore, MD</i>    |
| 4th Prize | <i>Ann Priftis</i>    | <i>Moodus, CT</i>       |
| 5th Prize | <i>Audrey Hopwood</i> | <i>Parkville, MD</i>    |

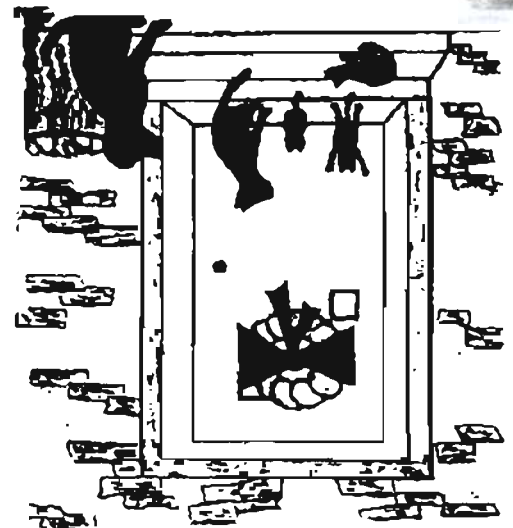
*Special thanks to those winners who donated part or all of their raffle prize to our work in the streets and alleys.*

## Did You Know You can Donate Through Our Website

Just go to [alleyanimals.org](http://alleyanimals.org) and click on our "Make A Donation" button to donate via Paypal. It's safe, secure and easy, and you don't need a Paypal account to donate.

**Alley Animals 410-823-0899**

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