



The Adaptable, Adoptable Rabbit

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Differently-abled rabbits have as much right to full, happy lives as do able-bodied rabbits. With minor adaptations on our part, they thrive and respond to loving care. We've had several experiences with these bunnies that we'd like to share with our membership.

An animal rescuer found Hobbes huddled along a busy Madison roadside. Completely blind in both eyes, a human deliberately abandoned him beside the road, hoping he would hop into traffic and be killed.

Apart from a minor facial injury, Hobbes was perfectly healthy. We suspected he was quite elderly given his behavior, appearance, and faded ear tattoo. Once upon a time, someone had valued him.

We first housed Hobbes in a cage, because we feared he couldn't find his litter pan. We forgot that its odor would guide him. We soon realized that Hobbes was startled whenever we opened his cage or touched him. A little testing revealed that poor Hobbes also was stone deaf! To warn him we were coming, we gave Hobbes the run of a foster room. On the floor, he could feel the vibrations of our feet, so he could sense our approach.

During the next several days, we watched Hobbes as he explored the room and created a mental map of his new habitat. A few raps on the floor next to the food bowl told him it was suppertime.

We paired him with Neener, a non-judgmental "nurse rabbit" in our home. In addition to providing valuable companionship, Neener became a "seeing-eye" rabbit for Hobbes. By following Neener about the house, Hobbes expanded his exploration range.

Hobbes only lived a few months with us. One lovely Saturday he dozed off in a patch of sunlight and didn't wake up. But his time with us was golden. It was a joy to watch his transformation as this new life restored his curiosity and happiness.

Equal opportunity isn't restricted to humans. Could you offer a home to a calm, cuddle-loving, special rabbit?

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