

Nubbins

Nubbins' story started back in July, 2006, when ARF was contacted to come to the rescue of Marlin and Lilly who were purchased at a pet store and were supposed to be the same sex. On August 10, September 10 and October 10 Lilly gave birth to a litter of kits. With the situation out of control, ARF came to the rescue and removed 18 bunnies from one house along with a nursing Mommy, Lilly. As our fears were later confirmed, Lilly was pregnant again, and her little body was tired and bare as she kept trying to care for her little litters. On November 2 Lilly gave birth to a litter of seven, about eight days premature, and one by one, each little baby died. When we were down to two, Kris Kringle and Crystal, renamed Nubbins, they were transported to a foster home with Lilly so she could rest, care for her living babies and rebuild her strength in the quiet and comfort of a loving foster home. Both little furballs were slow to gain weight but particularly Nubbins. Lilly would lie on her back in her foster mom's arms, while the baby was placed on her belly to nurse a few extra times a day trying to get the babies the nourishment they need. From this point on, Diane and Tom became the nursemaids for a handicapped little girl named Nubbins.

"The day this little six-ounce, two-handed scoop of fur came into our home and our lives, we couldn't tell which end was front or back until she moved! Originally named Crystal, I felt she most resembled a pill, or "nub", on your sweater, and so she became Nubbins. She and her sister, Kris Kringle, were the only survivors of Lilly and Marlin's fourth (and final!) litter which had started with seven babies. Recognizing their will to live, Tom and I knew we had to join their fight to survive. Little did we know how much of fight was ahead for sweet-natured Nubbie.

Ever the true snuggle bunny whether she was nestled in the wooden castle with Kris or cuddling in the corner with Lilly, we did notice that Nubbins wasn't joining the group hug in the potty box to either use it or snooze in it. She did have a pop in her hop, but going from Point A to Point B usually consisted of multiple spiraling circles to get there with rest stops in between. Often she would 'crash' into and then lean against the castle or the side of the cage until she got her bearings. It was then that we realized her right hind leg pointed out to her right causing the dizzy circles. And because she wasn't using the litter box, her poor fuzzy butt was beginning to cake with feces and urine.

And so began Tub Time! Twice a day Nubbie would go for a shampoo dip in the sink followed by a tumble in the towel with trims to the tendrils. With bunny kisses abound, Nubbins and I formed a bond like no other. Now that she was old enough to be separated from mom, Nubbie found new digs in a cage with a grated bottom to allow her bunny tail to stay dry and clean with fewer visits to the "spa". Before we knew it we discovered...Nubbins has a tail!! Curled up like a kitten in her Cuddle Cup with food and hay very close by, Nubbins proved herself to be quite the little piggie. With four servings of timothy hay and two scoops of pellets per day in easy-access cups, she is now up to two whole pounds! Besides her expanding waistband, that fluffy fuzz now most resembles an 80's hair band. Nothing compares to having this spikey-haired fuzz butt greet me home from a hard day at the shop with seemingly endless hours of petting, snuggling, hugs and kisses."

Diane and Tom had taken Nubbins to two vets and had many x-rays and blood work to find out how she could be given the best chance at a normal life. She was such a love bug, and truly enjoyed being in the hands of humans. I'm sure all that nursing care created a special bond and a deep trust from Nubbins that Diane was always looking out for her best interest. Nubbie always knew she would be cleaner and more comfortable when Diane was done and could then enjoy a fresh salad and a warm lap for hours to come.

With a desire to give Nubbins the chance at freely bouncing across the room, we consulted Dr. Len Donato of the Radnor Veterinary Hospital in Media. It was determined that although Nubbins is currently somewhat mobile without obvious signs of discomfort, a future of dragging her hind foot could prove painful and would definitely lead to a future of sores, infection and maybe even amputation. With surgery, we were told, her congenital disorder could be corrected. We looked forward to some day when Nubbins' path to the food bowl, potty box or into our arms would be a straight one. Although we knew the surgery would be expensive and not without risk, Nubbins deserved the full 10 years as a healthy house rabbit. ARF SEPA put together our first ever, Spring Event with the proceeds to benefit Nubbins and other bunnies that may later cross our doorsteps in need of care. The event was successful and we were anxious and nervous about the surgery scheduled for three days later.

I'll never forget the Wednesday morning, tension was high, but it never crossed my mind that Nubbins would not survive. She was such a fighter and had overcome so much, we just knew she would come to us at the end of the day with the worst behind her and just recovery to hopping ahead. The surgery was a success,

her leg had been straightened in both places and pins in place and her outer cast was being attached, when suddenly, little Nubbins' heart just stopped. The Doctors worked diligently to revive her, but little Nubbins' heart just wouldn't start beating. She was such a brave little girl, and we were all so very sad at her passing over Rainbow Bridge. There has been so much sadness and tears as we all questioned whether we made the right decision to have this surgery. After five months of daily care, the bond with an animal becomes so deep and intense, beyond the normal love and joy. Because Nubbins showed us how brave and strong she could be and showed us how many people came forward with donations, prayers and support, we have decided that Nubbins will be remembered with ARF always. We will continue our tradition in her name to have the Nubbins Spring Event each Easter so others may come and know the beauty, gentleness, and love one little fuzz butt can give—if only we give them a chance to kick up their heels and share our lives and our homes. For all who donated to her cause, we cannot thank you enough and all the money was put in the Nubbins Medical Fund for other bunnies that need our help. It is with great sadness and many, many tears that we say goodbye to Nubbins. One little bunny with such a big heart. She will be dearly missed and remembered forever.