

He Makes Her Heart Go Hippety-Hop

By Linda Lynwander

For Suburban News

For many people—well kids primarily—it wouldn't be Easter without a visit from the Easter bunny.

Nancy Laracy has her own Easter bunny. He's 8-1/2 pounds of red fluff. An indoor pet, FLuffett—also known as Bunny Boy—has his own Easter basket filled with toys and yummys." Says Laracy, pointing out yogurt drops, corn pellets, cookies made of hay and, of course, a stuffed bunny rabbit. "I keep reminding him that his big day is coming up and that he's my baby."

As she scoops up 8-year old Bunny Boy, the bond between them is obvious. Although Bunny Boy likes Laracy's husband, Ward, and their children, Julie and Chris, the rabbit seems to have the deepest feelings for his mistress.

She is the one he seeks out every night for cuddling in front of the TV, when she administers medication for jaw abscesses that have plagued him all of his life. Laracy is ill as well—she suffers from an autoimmune disease—and they have even undergone the same treatment.

A couple of years ago when Laracy had surgery for a bone abscess in her jaw, she said her dentist explained they'd be using a new procedure—antibiotic beads—that were on the market for animals. It was the very same treatment Bunny Boy had received.

When it comes to other pets, Laracy says, Bunny Boy leaves them in the dust. "A bunny is a much better pet than a dog or a cat," Laracy said of the rabbit the family bought from a local pet store. "He's not as expensive to take care of—just give him some Timothy hay and a few green vegetables. You don't have to walk him. He doesn't misbehave. He's litter box trained. I take him all over in the car; he sits in the front on my lap.

"Our vet at the Franklin Lakes Animal Hospital and her techs are crazy about him, and my mother calls him her grandson.

Although Laracy loved Bunny Boy at first sight, their bond strengthened as a result of the rabbit's illness. At 6 months of age, he got a huge abscess, which necessitated the removal of part of his jaw, which then led to a misaligned jaw and teeth.

Laracy pulled out her old burp cloths and carried him around all day like an infant, applying hot compresses and administering penicillin shots.

Her own illness sometimes confines Laracy to the house, and Bunny Boy seems to understand. They convalesce together.

When he was younger and feeling better, they'd chase each other and play hide and seek; in the evening he'd tuck his head under her chin and purr as his mistress told him she loved him "more than life itself."

Laracy says she's halfway through writing a book about her beloved pet which will explain how their bond was formed in sickness and health. She plans to call it "Bunny Boy."