



The Donkey Walk was a success

The tenth edition of the Walkathon, the traditional 'caminata', of the Aruban Donkey Sanctuary, was once again a success. Some two hundred participants enjoyed walking through the Aruban cunucu, the countryside. Several donkeys accompanied the group, which was made up of walking participants and runners. Three of those ran the route for the tenth consecutive year. Mito Werneman, one of the three die-hards, came in first after 29 minutes. He was followed by Michael Rasmijn and Randy Brown, who respectively came in second and third.



The majority of the participants walked the 6.5 kilometer-long route, however. Halfway there was a pittance with water, which was much in demand, and at the end there was a small gift for everyone and large containers of fresh fruit, sponsored by Super Food. Because of it being an anniversary caminata, the Dutch foundation Stichting Dierenlot doubled the proceeds of the walk, so it was not only a healthy and fun walk, but a wonderful addition to the finances of the Aruban Donkey Foundation as well.



Against boredom and vitamins



Beside eating and crapping, donkeys also like to play. They have a favorite toy: coconuts. Sometimes it seems like the sanctuary is a veritable soccer field, the way they run and hit the 'balls' – if you close your eyes you could count the goals even. So if you have some coconuts lying about, please bring them to the Sanctuary, where they will gladly be received. And one other thing: kwihi beans are full of vitamins and very nutritious for donkeys – can you bring them too, please?

Sabbatical at the donkeys

Mirte van Wijk, a Dutch volunteer, decided to take a sabbatical to decide what to do with her life. She spent it on Aruba and she volunteered at the Donkey Sanctuary during a few afternoons per week. She hereby allowed Desiree to spend her time on other things that needed her attention. Now, after her year off, Mirte knows exactly what she wants to do: in September she's going to start studying. From all of us at the Sanctuary: lots of good luck and many thanks!

But: Mirte's departure is showing us that we urgently need more volunteers. A few enthusiastic people would be more than welcome. Our chief Desiree is trying to fill the gaps, but she needs to spend more time on fund raising events and sponsoring.

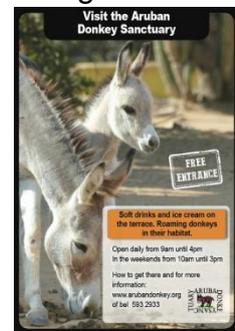
Our new secretary Dirk Ormel has taken over a few administrative tasks, but we are still a few volunteers short. So would you like to help us out for a few hours a week, surrounded by other volunteers and donkeys, please let us know. Call Desiree at 593-2933 and before you know it, you are showing visitors around, selling souvenirs or cleaning out stables.



Free advertising



Our marketing department (how does that sound..) has done a great job, getting ads in the local papers. When there is still a bit of space left on a page, they publish ads for non-profit organizations, completing their pages this way. At the Donkey Sanctuary we need publicity like this and the nicer the ad, the easier it is published. We therefore have various ads in color or black and white available. And we are successful: Dutch newspaper Amigoe publishes an ad a day, asking for sponsors, visitors or volunteers.





Escape from Bringatraz

At Bringamosa we have cacti fences, the local way of keeping out unwanted animals. But some time ago, a few cacti died, so that holes occurred without us knowing about them. And so a large group of donkeys made an escape: curious as they are, a group of some 20 animals disappeared through the gaps; almost a third of the entire herd at Bringamosa. So we were inundated with phone calls – we could not



understand how, why and where, until we saw three donkeys standing at the gate at Sta. Lucia: Sassy, Browney and Ramon, whom we instantly recognized. We drove at full speed to Bringamosa to discover how the donkeys could have escaped. That took a while, but finally we found it and put up a sturdy fence. By now all the donkeys except

one, are back home. Only Azzy is still out and about, but that is also because she has a boyfriend outside. She has been spotted a few times, but until now she has not reported herself.

Aruba Donkey Program



In March we introduced the Support The Aruban Donkey program. For just AWG. 10,- (\$ 6,-) per month you become a member and you support the Donkey Sanctuary with your monthly donation. In this way we are trying to get structure in our finances. We have spent four Saturdays at local businesses and there was a (free) commercial on television during that time. You can still watch it on www.youtube.com/watch?v=nal72ajOCNM&feature=youtu.be

This is a hopeful start (there were around 35 memberships sold), but we are not there yet. We still need a lot of money, so we will continue promoting the program.

The sick bay

There are always a few sick or injured animals in a large group. Sometimes it is easy to heal them, but sometimes we need to take drastic measures. Thus Miracle is okay again after a dramatic delivery with all kinds of complications endangering her life, she made it through. Veterinarian Ricardo had to come by twice a day to change the drips and to dispense medication. With the aid of lots of anti-inflammatory and painkilling medication and lots of sugars, Miracle has survived – but it took her six weeks to be back on track. Now she is 100 percent healthy again and she is enjoying hanging out with her girlfriends.

With Roulette things are not so rosy: she has a problem with her thyroid and we are currently deciding what can be done. There is little known about thyroid problems in donkeys; it became clear that Roulette's thyroid was the culprit of his illness on an echo that the vet made. We are all hoping that he will be right as rain soon again.



Things were not going well with the baby donkey that was found in Rooi Koochi. She had a large wound on her hip and she did not walk right. Most of the time she was lying down, however. We have tried everything to save her,, but we could not. In the end, on the vet's advice, we had to put her to sleep. To learn why she died, an autopsy has been performed and it appeared that there was no cartilage in her joints – something that is caused by inbreeding.

Salt Pillars



It has taken some time, but the result was worth the wait. The poles and bricks of salt were not the problem, but the `hats' needed a professional eye. The first contractor left us in the lurch and it took us almost a year before somebody else came along. Donkeys need extra salt and minerals; they lick this from the salt bricks that are hanging beneath the `hats'. Well, now they are there and much in use: the new salt pillars at Bringamosa look beautiful.



Roaming donkeys

There are still roaming donkeys on the island; when that is dangerous, we try to catch them and take them to the Sanctuary. Sometimes we can't catch them, or the roaming donkeys are not a danger to themselves or to their surroundings. At Seroe Colorado there is still a herd of some 16 donkeys, two males and fourteen females.



The two males are father and son, and the females are clearly daughters. Inbreeding is looming, so the two males need to be castrated shortly. As we do not wish to let the Aruban donkey breed die out, we shall need new donkeys, fresh blood, from Venezuela and Colombia. Donkeys belong to Aruba's culture.

On Television



To get as much attention as possible from visitors and sponsors, the Donkey Sanctuary is trying to attract media attention. Interested? If you want to listen to an interview of Curtis Robinson, please go to:

<http://onehappypodcast.com/ep10/>

and for a movie of Lucy's Vet Ventures, meant for National Geographic, you surf to:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdeEpJBqV0I&app=desktop

State of affairs at Bringamosa

At this time we have begun building the visitor center at our new location Bringamosa. As soon as this is ready, we are going to move. Not only our volunteers and materials, but also all the donkeys that are living at various locations will be going to Bringamosa. Then we festively open Bringamosa and close Sta. Lucia.



When this will be is still not clear, but we shall surely make waves in the media world. Until that time we are still located at Sta. Lucia.



But the moment that we have dreamed about, is coming closer: all the donkeys at one spacious location with sufficient facilities. The foundation of our new visitor center is made up of two new containers, which have been donated by three sponsors: our ever-faithful Super Food (Jack is a darling man), GLE Caribbean Line and GP Cargo. Thank you so much!