

Newsletter – september 2024

Dear donkey friends and sponsors,

It has been a while, but this is our bi-annual newsletter once again. A lot has happened at the sanctuary and we are happy to share the good and the bad news with you, our friends

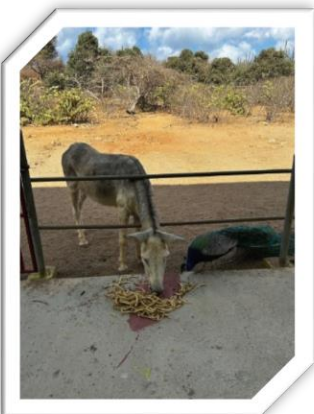
Houdini



Mid December last year we received a phone call around 10 pm that a donkey was lying in the middle of the road in Rooi Koochi. He had been hit by a car and could not get up anymore. Fortunately, he was standing on the side of the road when we arrived, but he was badly shaken and he let us catch him. And guess what: it was our Houdini, our escape artist! Besides the fact that he was injured, he was also in a bad physical condition. It took us until April before he was feeling more or less alright and ready to be introduced into the big group. He is doing well there, but sometimes he wants to be on his own again. We hope he will soon find a special, good friend to keep him company during lonely times.

Alto Vista

In March it was Pamela, a former volunteer, who informed us that she had managed to catch a donkey in her garden. This donkey was one of three, who can often be found walking from Sabana Basora/Bringamosa to Alto Vista and back. This group accidentally escaped from the sanctuary some twenty years ago. We think the donkey in Pamela's garden is Alto Vista, but we are not sure. We cannot find the microchip and donkeys change color when they get



older. When we finally put him in the trailer with a rope around his neck, he flipped: he was so scared! He bit Desiree in her arm, so we baptized him Chewy. The poor animal was not in good shape and it took months before his health improved. And then the gate was accidentally left open and he left the corral. We kept feeding him nearby up the hill, where he was hiding in the bushes. After a while he did not run away anymore, so we could file his teeth down in order for him to chew better. It appeared, however, that he cannot eat hay anymore, only soaked food. Nowadays he is content to be living with his fellow senior donkeys - he must be thirty-plus years old by now!



Muffin

In April there was sad news: we received a call that a young donkey was lying near the hiking path behind the cemetery of Sabana Basora. She could not get up anymore. Tim succeeded in putting her on her legs again and managed to walk her to the car. At the sanctuary she ate and drank and we saw that she improved a bit, but something was clearly wrong with her.

We tried everything, but after a few hours we knew that nothing could be done for her and had her put to sleep to save her from more suffering. The autopsy made clear that she had suffered brain damage. Because she was such a lovely brown color, we named her Muffin. She was still very young, only one year old maybe...

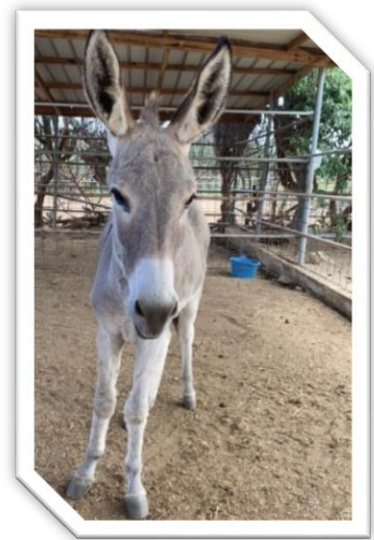
Breeding program

Happier news now: we started a breeding program with young stallions from Bonaire last year and we are ecstatic to announce that four of the nine mares are pregnant! Coco, 7-UP, Xena and Woods are up the duff. The gestation period for a donkey is 11 to 13 months, so hopefully some more mares will be pregnant by now. All the mares are in a special corral awaiting the births.



Maybe some of you will wonder why we cannot use Aruban stallions for our breeding program. That is because of the risk of inbreeding. We often see the terrible and heartbreaking results of inbreeding, so that is why we need to castrate all the

males who are at our sanctuary. We have been trying to get new blood to Aruba for years and years, and we are so glad that it appears that our efforts have not been in vain. We are keeping our fingers crossed that everything will go well and that we may welcome several lovely, cute donkey babies in the near future.





Our sanctuary is literally the area where donkeys will find their safe haven, escaping the ever-growing traffic with all its dangers as well as other hazards. We started the sanctuary 27 years ago to protect the Aruban donkeys - by castrating the males on the island, preventing the inbreeding, we would end up with no donkeys at all in the end. That is why the males from Bonaire came to Aruba.

Boolchands

Last May Boolchands celebrated its 50th anniversary with a donation of 50 trees and shrubs via the Foundation Ban Lanta y Planta. Please find a link to their newsletter, in which we are mentioned:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1bjhdCttru9SO6LQO8XkgbjZ9KmjEuKyR/view?usp=drive_web



Ban Lanta y Planta has installed a drip system as well, so every other day the plants and trees are watered during 30 minutes. They are looking great!
So thank you very much, Boolchands!



York College

Aruba has welcomed eight students and two teachers from York College, York, England. They arrived early in June and they created a life-sized donkey made of driftwood beneath the spirited guidance of Phil. This is the first in a series. We are very happy with our donkey and we are curious what the others will look like



Swa

Swa, one of our four cats, got short of breath on June 18. He was taken to the vet right away and he died on the operating table an hour and a half later. It was very sudden; he had had no symptoms of being ill before. We were stunned that it happened so fast.

We miss our 8 year-old Swa a lot, as do his sisters Shrimp, Sunchi and his best friend Socks. They kept looking for him during the first few days after his death. Where was Swa?



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Hopi Danki!!