



**Walk-a-thon**

The fourth annual Walk-a-thon was a huge success: more than 200 participants enjoyed Aruba's fantastic countryside at the Ayo Rock Formations. Together with donkeys Ban Ban and Igor, who cheerfully 'hoofed' along, the enthusiastic



sportsmen and -women had a great time. All participants had received a bottle of water with the text 'I walk for the Aruban Donkeys' at the start. As the weather was fabulous, none of the bottles made it full to the finish. At the Ayo Rock Formations there were huge bowls with refreshing slices of water melon and oranges for the weary athletes. And surprise: an unknown donkey was waiting for us! He followed Ban Ban inside the shelter as if he belonged there. The 'ambiente' of the walk-a-thon was fantastic and it generated a bit of income as well. Debbie even sold seven calendars!

**Chipping and de-worming**

The first donkeys at the shelter have received chips and they have been de-wormed at the same time. Quite an undertaking; we shall tell you all about it in our next newsletter.

**Fiveninethirtytwoninethirtythree**



No, this is not a riddle, but Desiree's new cell number. Not only her cell number, also our new alarm number. Please put it in your phone right now:

**5 932 933.**

Don't forget!

### Sinterklaas on a visit to the shelter



Although Sinterklaas is always very busy during the first week of December, he did not forget to visit the shelter to thank our dedicated volunteers for their support during the past year. The holy man had thoughtful presents for everyone and the volunteers received thanks and compliments from him.

The kids drank delicious chocolate milk and ate all kinds of December delicacies. Sinterklaas arrived in style: astride on a donkey, as his dappled grey had the day off. The man from Spain enjoyed the ambiance the shelter so much that he took his time: it was almost dark before he and his helpers had left.



### Donkeys instead of jewels

Ready to pop, donkey Surfi was put in a coral of her own as all the signs pointed to her delivery time on January 24. Ronnie had been busy fixing it up. And on Tuesday, January 27 a tiny, cute donkey was born. That morning we received two visitors: Monica and Larry. It was the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their wedding day and the two had decided to celebrate the day by adopting a donkey instead of buying a costly piece of jewelry. A very original idea indeed. And who could have resisted this lovely, cuddly baby donkey: not Monica and Larry. So they named Surfi's little son Roulette and they are his proud adoptive parents.



### A tragic end for Kleintje

In the last month of the year 2008 our donkey Kleintje died. Kleintje lived at Desiree's home; he had been handicapped for almost the entire nine years of his life. Because of a serious back problem, dating back to the time when he was very young, his front legs had been deformed and he was not able to walk normally. Fortunately for Kleintje he had enough fun to make his life enjoyable, but at the end of November he stopped eating. Kleintje still drank a lot of water due to kidney failure. We tried everything to get him better again, but nothing helped. In the end Kleintje died from dehydration. A tragic end for this friendly donkey and also for Desiree, who lost a dear friend and house guest.



### Donkey gets a diaper

Sometimes you read a nonsensical article in a newspaper. One of those we are publishing here.

*Cairo – In the Egyptian province of Al-Wadi-Al-Gadeed it is decreed that donkeys should wear diapers from now on. According to a local official this measure is taken to uphold the esthetic and cultural décor of the province.'*

### Website almost ready



Together with our volunteer Dirk we are very busy getting our website in the air. Things are going well: we hope to be on-line at the end of the month. New on the site is the tele-shop, where visitors can order articles on-line. A volunteer with a background in photography has taken pix of all the articles in our donkey shop. It is going to be great!



### **A Prince was born**

This is actually a mail which Desiree sent to Marja. We think it is such a great story that we did not wish to change one single thing.

February 9 – 4.30 am. I get up to go to the bathroom and, as I had forgotten to set the alarm, I did that on the way back to bed. But after having performed both tasks I am wide awake. There is a lot of noise from the donkeys outside; the dogs are barking along and the pig is also making grunting noises. What is going on?

I go outside to take a look. Normally I cannot touch Queeny, our pregnant mare, but this time she stays put and lets me pet her. But I can't believe my eyes: from her rear a small head and two legs are poking out. My goodness, what do I do? Stay calm, stay relaxed and keep my voice at its normal pitch. 'Nothing to worry about, we're going back to bed, guys,' I say to the dogs. All five of the Golden Retrievers obey and go inside; only the stray stays outside. I look at the clock: 5.10 am. I shall have to wake the kids to catch Olieböl, our stray dog, so he cannot start chasing the mare. As soon as Olieböl is inside as well, the mare lies down. She gets three contractions and the baby is halfway out. After about five minutes Queeny gets up and the rest of the donkey comes out. Wow. The afterbirth soon follows.



Queeny starts licking her baby and she urges it to stand up. She bites off the umbilical cord and just 45 minutes after having been born, little Prince takes his first, wobbly steps. What an incredible experience. For the first time the kids and I have been present at a delivery; before I was always too late. The baby donkey was always already fuzzy and dry when I saw it for the first time; I often saw it first, but I was never there at the exact moment that it was born. Fortunately the moon shone brightly that February night; I am night blind and this way I could follow every precious moment. Our Royal Family is now complete: Queeny with daughter Princessa and son Prince.