

## Newsletter January 2013

### A sad day at the Donkey Sanctuary

Indeed, it is not always party time at the home of the donkeys. During the past few weeks the volunteers and donkeys have said their goodbyes to the oldest donkey at the Sanctuary, Watty, who went to eternal sleep after 51 years. Until recently, this proud donkey was in prime condition, until that final morning



when this old fellow could not get up at feeding time. He tried but failed and it was clear that Watty was suffering, so the vet was called. He came and examined Watty. His verdict was that nothing could be done for him, so to save him any further distress it was decided to put him to sleep, a very difficult decision, as Watty had always been a very valued inhabitant from the first day of opening of the Sanctuary.

Watty had been admitted to the Sanctuary after having been abused and maltreated by homeless people; he had electrical wires around his neck that left scars that would never fade. But the final fifteen years of his life have been wonderful and peaceful. Last year he `retired', which means that he was put inside a special enclosure so that his mealtimes were a lot more quiet and less stressful: younger donkeys could not eat his feed anymore. Watty has had a great time with us.

### Annual vaccinations

This past year all the donkeys have had their shots against tetanus and de-worming. This has to be done every year, so we were very pleased when our vet (Contreras Veterinary Services) sponsored the expensive vaccinations. We were pleased, but the donkeys reacted in their own way when they felt the needle go in... It is all for their own good, but try and explain that to them! The donkeys as well as the friendly vet have survived, we are happy to tell you.



### Intensive Care

At Seroe Alejandro, yes, at Desiree's, we have an intensive care unit. Because someone is present, also during the night, sick donkeys receive the maximum care and attention there.



This past year we have renovated the unit: stables have been replaced, remodeled and renovated and now they are well-lit as well. Formerly the volunteers had to walk around with a lantern after sundown when a donkey needed care. There is an automatic watering trough and the wood has been replaced by steel pipes. Now

we are succeeding in keeping the donkeys inside.

### A sad end

Around July Desiree's neighbor came in to tell her that she had found a newborn donkey. Just a week old, he was in a very bad way, so we went straight to the vet. Dehydrated, the vet gave her a drip, vitamins and a long list of instructions. The neighbor went home with her little charge, but after two days she realized that she had underestimated all the work it entailed. We took over and held a 'Name the Baby' contest, which had a winner in Peter Somers from the Netherlands with the name Well Done. The contest generated \$ 450.- and Peter received a painting, which he came to claim in person in the company of his wife and children. He was so touched that he adopted Well Done. Unfortunately this adoption did not last long, as, due to missing his mother, the tiny donkey died.



### Garage Centraal Aruba donates a car to the Donkey Sanctuary Aruba

Recently the Aruban Donkey Foundation received a gorgeous, fire red pick-up truck from Garage Centraal Aruba to be used for the foundation's daily chores. With this car, a delivery van of Isuzu, we now have a new aid to transport materials and other things. The bad condition of the road to the Sanctuary makes this strong pick-up an ideal means of transportation.



The car is easily recognizable, because the name Donkey Sanctuary is prominently displayed. The festive donation was held at Garage Centraal. The board members of the Donkey Sanctuary doled out slices of delicious cake, so everyone was more than a little happy.

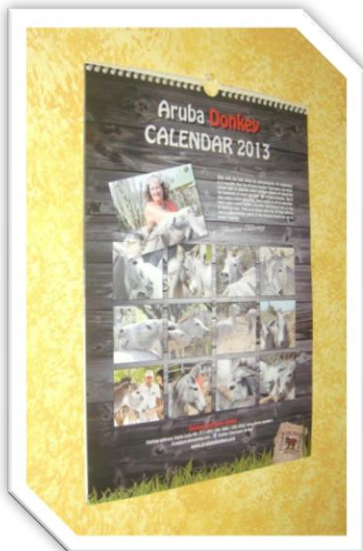
### Snickers..?

Yes, we have a beautiful brown donkey added to the pack. His name is Snickers, as the other three brown donkeys also carry names that refer to their color (Chocolat, Browney and Krocket). Snickers was walking in the middle of the road in San Nicolas; fortunately our ex-president Ramon could catch him and lock him into a stable. Ramon even tried to catch Snicker's mom, but she was definitely more savvy and experienced than Snickers. The herd of Snickers can be found roaming the streets, and that is why we are asking people to lure donkeys into their gardens, so that we can pick them up and protect them. For the greatest danger for donkeys is our traffic.



### First Donkey Calendar 2013 handed over

With lots of photographers and camera crews present, the first Donkey Calendar 2013 was handed over at Fusion, the new Piano and Wine Bar in the beautifully renovated Alhambra Mall. Desiree handed over the first copy to Mr. Alex Nieuwmeyer, managing director of the Divi Resorts on Aruba and Bonaire and also board member of AHATA (Aruba Hotel And Tourism Association). It all took place under the watchful eyes of donkey Ban Ban and four-month old Well done. Alex Nieuwmeyer was immediately charmed and said in his speech that the work of the Donkey Foundation and its volunteers is so very important, as it keeps Aruba's culture and natural habitat of the donkeys alive, actively realizing a green environment. Divi's employees form part of a special foundation, which aims to help; the Donkey Foundation was fortunate to be its recipient in the past.



This year's donkey calendar is already the fourth edition and it has gained fame for its photos and execution. The photos have been taken by Luc Peek, while Saskia Aanhane of advertizing company Direct Result is responsible for the lay-out. A wonderful, full color calendar in A3 format is the result. This edition highlights twelve volunteers of the Donkey Sanctuary. Every month a volunteer is pictured with a donkey of course, and a short story; in this way the board members wish to extend its gratitude to its volunteers. The calendars are for sale of course (AWG. 25,--) at the Donkey Sanctuary Aruba, but also via the volunteers, Contreras, Bestial, En Vogue Coiffures and Pia di Oro.

### **Naughty Tica has been moved to her new home**

At this time we are busy transporting quite a lot of donkeys to the new sanctuary at Bringamosa. There we have lots of space; the sanctuary at Sta.



Lucia was actually becoming way too cramped for so many donkeys. It is a time consuming chore, as we do not always have enough time and available volunteers. Only two donkeys fit into the trailer, so it might take a while before we are done. But our donkeys Tica and Bringamosa (nicknamed Smiley) received the honor to be the first to be moved. It was high time for naughty Tica: she slipped inside and could be found on the porch

some five times a day, gorging on the plastic bags filled with feed. She ate five meals a day!

When unnecessary, we do not separate donkeys that are buddies, so that is why Bringamosa and Tica came to be the first to be moved. In the meantime the two have settled in, but Tica has not lost her wild ways. She sneaked into the container and removed three boxes with mugs, destroying six. And she was also spotted on the parking lot – there was some left-over hay there..

### **Dry spell**

When we have a dry spell, the donkeys start roaming the districts in search of food and water. We asked people to catch roaming donkeys in their gardens and call us, and that has been successful, for after a few weeks we received a few calls, that have led to the capture of six roaming donkeys. In the meantime they have been named: we have Orchid, a pregnant donkey, who delivered Gismo two days after having been caught. And the males Ninja and Aramis. Later we caught Cymbi (short for Cymbidium, also an orchid), Orchid's daughter and Soldier, who was caught together with his mom Faith. Soldier was sick and died, hereby greatly distressing his mother Faith. She stopped eating from grief and we tried and tried to get her to start eating again. Mimi even made her famed Donkey Soup, a recipe with carrots, apples, pellets, molasses and beets, so that we could recognize her poop. The vet came by to feed her and to inject her with antibiotics and pain killers because Faith also suffered from an infection. Alas, we did our very best, but could not save Faith.

Fortunately we are now in the rainy season and the roaming donkeys have retreated to the wind mills at Vader Piet. There the traffic is almost non-existent and thus it is much safer for them. But should you be living in an area where there are roaming donkeys and if you have a fenced-in garden: please call us when you have lured a donkey inside. Together we may succeed in making Aruba a safer island, for the donkeys as well as for the inhabitants.



**But it can be worse..**

On Aruba there might be some 50 roaming donkeys, but in Botswana there are countless more. Should you be on a safari in Botswana in the evening and you see some four-legged animal with



reflectors, do not doubt your eyes. Some 500 donkeys will get luminous `earrings' in an effort to diminish the number of traffic accidents. One in ten car accidents happens because of roaming donkeys. In the night the animals saunter along the streets, making it for drivers often impossible to avoid them. The English organization Society for the Protection of Animals Abroad (SPANNA) has therefore

sponsored an animal protection foundation in Botswana with the earrings. ``The people in Botswana who own a donkey are often the poorest. They do not have any other choice than to let them roam for food in the desert,`` says SPANNA's Laura Higham. ``The animals are an easy target for accidents and we hope that through this simple solution the number of accidents will go down.`` The charity hopes that other parts of Botswana will introduce the reflecting earrings and that this initiative will be the first step towards a legal obligation to illuminate donkeys.

### Successful baby name competition

About one year ago Coco came in, a disheveled donkey, the worse for wear and with a discolored leg. The vet prescribed an x-ray and rather strong anaesthesia plus lots of medication. Ten months later we discovered that Coco was pregnant. Even though the first months of her pregnancy were not ideal, a healthy little donkey was born and we organized a name giving competition. With any donation you could put a name forward. The winner of the competition was David Arbaiza and from now on the little donkey has the gorgeous name Chula, which means beautiful in Spanish.

But come to think of it, the real winner is the Donkey Sanctuary, as we collected the whopping sum of AWG. 2.269,-- with this competition. The Dutch foundation Dierenlot, which helps animals in need, has doubled this amount so that we received AWG. 4.538,-- (1973 euro / 2594 dollar). For our Sanctuary the money is very welcome for our goal to provide a good life for all the donkeys on the island. Should you be interested, please look up the Dierenlot foundation at [www.dierenlot.nl](http://www.dierenlot.nl).



### And finally..



Once again we are counting down to the New Year. Around Christmas we shall have a get-together with the volunteers, raising our glasses. And then we start the New Year with good cheer. As is customary, we have a few good intentions for 2013: a few more volunteers and sufficient funds to finish building the new sanctuary. But our fondest wish is that everyone, our volunteers, visitors, friends, family members and of course our donkeys will be happy and healthy.