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# 2018 SUMMMER NEWSLETTER

## SOMETIMES DONKEY OWNERS SHOW THEIR LOVE BY LETTING GO...

Our mission is to provide a safe and permanent home for abused, neglected and unwanted donkeys.

That being said, not all donkeys are here at the Turtle Valley Donkey Refuge because of abuse or neglect or abandonment. However ALL the donkeys that find their forever home at the Refuge need to be here.

Even the most loving donkey owners may eventually find themselves in situations that make it difficult or impossible to continue to properly care for their donkeys. Owners may get too old to provide the special care that a donkey needs. Their financial situation may change or they may lose their health. Unlike other seniors who are no longer able to care for their pets, donkey owners usually cannot ask their friends or family to step in to care for their beloved companions. Even folks who like and understand donkeys are reluctant to take on the responsibility for a senior donkey.

Surrendering a donkey is a difficult, heart wrenching decision. We are grateful when they contact us. It shows how much they love their pet. We try to assist

them if they are able to continue to care for their donkey but when they cannot we try to make the transition as smooth as possible for both the owner and the donkey.

Our role has gone beyond providing relief for only the donkeys. We now look for ways to help senior owners ensure that their long-ears continue to receive love and care when they no longer can provide it.

Such was the story for our newest arrivals, mom Sophie and her sweet daughter Izzy. Their senior owners surrendered them when they could no longer meet the special needs of their donkeys. An injury as a baby caused Izzy to have a curvature of the spine. This means that if she lies a certain way at night she cannot get back up. When our vets examined her, they determined that Izzy also has a swollen right shoulder which could be affecting her ability to get up from a prone position. She is now on pain relief medication which seems to be helping in the short term.

Further analysis of X-rays past and current will hopefully give us a clearer picture as to what is causing her to struggle when she tries to stand up from a sleeping position. Once these have been compared and analyzed we will develop a plan to help this very sweet young donkey with the hope that we can create a life for Izzy that is free from pain.

Yet another interesting aspect of the wonderful world of donkeys!

Without The Generous Support of Our Donors and Visitors  
Donkeys Like Sophie and Izzy Could Not Have Found  
Their Forever Home At The Donkey Refuge  
Thank You For All You Do To Help These Loving Donkeys!

**Thank You For Making A Difference to the Lives Of These Amazing Gentle Creatures!**

# FOR THE DONKEYS.....CAPITAL PROJECTS

Here at the Refuge we are always looking for the best ways to care for the donkeys. Our short- and long-term goals and projects will enable us to increase our efficiency, save on operating costs and provide an enjoyable, educational experience for our visitors.

## ✓ VISITOR EXPERIENCE TRAILS AND SIGNAGE

Experience the beauty that is the Turtle Valley by taking a walk-about on the mobility friendly trails around the barn complexes. Learn about the donkeys and the local flora and fauna through a series of colourful, informative signs along the trails. From the saskatoon berry bushes to the white-tailed ptarmigan to bears and even the skunks that we see on the manure pile, we are all part of a natural system that works in harmony. Special thanks to Lush Cosmetics for a generous grant that funded these trails and signs and to the Sierra Club BC who shared information about the area and its natural inhabitants. Of course, the highlight on this walk-about is the time spent with the donkeys. Your kindness to them is critical to their mental health.



## ✓ STANDBY GENERATOR

In our area we lose power at least once per month and usually for an extended amount of time. While this is inconvenient for the humans, it is a health hazard for the donkeys. We depend on a well for water and when the power goes out we cannot provide fresh water for the donkeys. The security camera systems also go down so we are literally “in the dark” as far as being able to see that they are safe and secure. We have applied for a grant through a community foundation to purchase and install a high quality wired-in standby generator that will kick in as soon as the power goes off. If we are approved the grant will cover the major portion of the cost of the generator and we will need to raise an addition \$4000 to \$6000 to complete the project.

## ✓ IRRIGATION WELL AND ADDITIONAL PASTURES

We have excellent land here. It is relatively flat and it would be perfect if we could fence in more pastures for the donkeys. There is room for a total of 9 good sized pastures. With a full complement of pastures we could rotate the herds through the pastures to allow each pasture to rest throughout the summer and grow new grass for the donkeys. This would give the donkeys two feeding times on fresh grass each day and reduce the amount of hay that they would need through the summer. Not only is this healthier for the donkeys and a much better usage of the Refuge land but it would reduce our operating costs by reducing the amount of hay we would need through the summer. We are also going to include

power to this new irrigation system so it will operate as a fire retardant in case of a wildfire threat.

However, we would need a second well on the property as the present well does not have the capacity to meet the current needs and provide the water for irrigating the pastures.

We have submitted a grant application to BC Gaming Capital Project Grants with the hope that they will support our Pasture Upgrade and Management Project. If we are successful, the government will fund up to 50% of the cost and we are responsible for the balance. We estimate the balance to be approximately \$18,000 and have received a \$5000 donation to kick off the Capital Campaign that we will launch in the Fall.

## ✓ SMALL STORAGE SHED FOR HAY AND SHAVINGS FOR THE MULE HERD

We are hoping that someone will donate a 5' by 8' (or similar) shed that will be set up near the George barn and will hold bales of hay and a bag of shavings for George and his herd mates.

## ✓ FOUNDATION FOR DONATED COVERALL AND USED CONTAINER

A huge Thank You to Christine and Marty Heinrick who have donated a large brand new coverall building similar to our Hay Barn and the used container that it will arrive in. A second coverall has been on our wish list and will house our equipment, trailers and at least one of the two tractors. We will need to raise the funds to transport the container to the Refuge as well as the cost of the ground prep, the foundation concrete “legos”, the front and back walls for the building and the cost of erecting the building itself. We estimate the cost for this at \$10,000. If anyone has a connection with a concrete form company perhaps we will be able to have the legos donated or discounted. We will be fundraising for the balance our cost to get this building up before the snow flies.

## ✓ INFIRMARY

Always at the top of our long-term wish list is an on-site properly equipped infirmary where our animal health staff can provide treatment for ill or injured donkeys, our veterinarians can perform surgeries and medical procedures, and where we can provide quiet, safe healing areas for donkeys in distress without compromising the space needed by the herds. Even though we haven't launched a formal campaign to raise the funds for this major endeavour, we have received generous support from long-time supporters Jean and Frank Hassard. What better way to leave a lasting legacy than by helping fund a medical center here at the Refuge.

**Thank You For Making A Difference to the Lives Of These Amazing Gentle Creatures!**

# HEALTH CARE COSTS RISE AS DONKEYS MATURE



**Socrates – our grand old gentleman has Kushing’s Disease requiring daily medication (Hoss is doing the photo bomb!)**

**Shirley did the math and the average age of the donkeys in our care is 28.** Given that the life expectancy of a donkey that has had health issues during their lifetime is about 35 years, our average donkey is a senior in human years. We all experience physical challenges as we age and our visits to the doctor increase as do the costs of medication and treatment for illnesses, aches and pains. It is no different here at the Refuge as we deal with the health challenges of our donkeys as they mature to make sure we keep our promise to give them a pain free life.

Donkeys are very stoic and do not show their pain and discomfort until they can no longer hide it. Subsequently, we often cannot see that a donkey is in pain and must depend on other indicators of pain such as an increased heart rate.

Senior donkeys are prone to painful abscesses in their hooves, teeth that have become smooth over time affecting chewing, chronic skin issues, cancers, and chronic pain that can only be managed with daily pain medications and protocols. They also can suffer from neurological disorders where there is a disconnect in the brain that severely affects their motor skills. This is particularly dangerous as they can fall and severely injure themselves.

Many who have not received proper hoof care throughout their lives suffer from deteriorating coffin bones in their hooves. Sadly, this painful, non-reversible condition often leads to our heart-wrenching decision to ease their pain by letting them go.

To stay on top of health issues we have hired an Animal Health Care worker who works with Rob to care for the sick and injured donkeys. An important part of the job is to monitor the donkeys closely and check heart rates and other indicators of pain or discomfort several times each day. They also do frequent walkabouts in the herds to watch for signs of distress, provide medical treatments, give oral medications, wrap and rewrap abscesses, do minor hoof repair, apply skin salves and treatments, prepare and distribute special feed for the donkeys with digestive concerns or chewing problems,...and whatever else is necessary to meet our promise to give our donkeys a safe, loving, comfortable life. Even volunteer groomers play an important role by checking for lumps and bumps and skin issues as they are brushing the donkeys.

In addition to our dedicated, knowledgeable Animal Care Worker and our own donkey whisperer Rob we are fortunate to have veterinarians from Salmon Arm and Kamloops that have the donkey knowledge and medical equipment to be able to examine and diagnose illness and injury. Fortunately, they make “barn calls” as taking a donkey to the vets is a bit more complicated than taking our pup to the clinic.

Drs. Jay, Jamie and Matt from the Shuswap Veterinary Clinic make scheduled visits to the donkeys here at the Refuge and we also can count on them to make emergency calls when necessary. We take our donkeys to Dr. Heather at the Kamloops Large Animal Clinic when they need surgeries that cannot safely be conducted at the Refuge. Dr Heather also makes barn calls and even has mobile x-ray equipment that not only enables her to do x-rays on site but to also analyze them right away and start a treatment plan.

We certainly keep our Animal Care Workers, Rob, and the Veterinarians busy!



**Sweet Bijou is a grandma, mama and auntie to many members of the mini herd**

## I WANT TO HELP BY DONATING TO THE REFUGE

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email (for tax receipt): \_\_\_\_\_

I Would Like To Donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the general care and safety of the donkeys

I Would Like To Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ for \$50 (see donkey profiles on our website)

Please add \$\_\_\_\_\_ for hay and special feed for my sponsor donkey! (\$10 per bale)

Cheque enclosed  Visa/MC # \_\_\_\_\_ Expiry \_\_\_/\_\_\_

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# IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RAISE A DONKEY



Shane

- 🐾 Turtle Valley Neighbours Mr. and Mrs. Leo Lenglet Donated 17 Round Bales Of Good Quality Grass Hay For the Mule Herd
- 🐾 Visitors from the Donkey Sanctuary of Canada shared important information on how they provide donkey care at their facility
- 🐾 For the 5<sup>th</sup> year in a row, Shane has used her birthday money to buy necessary items for the donkey leg wraps, special feed, halters and other medical supplies

- 🐾 Local businesses and employee groups donated proceeds from their fundraisers to help with donkey care. Local seniors groups visited and sponsored their favourite donkeys



Rick and Deb Cones of Ringstead Ranch



Chances Casino Salmon Arm

- 🐾 Excited Shoppers are participating in the Secret Bid Auction and our Summer Raffle with the hope that their winning bid or ticket will get them a one-of-a-kind donkey item on September 9<sup>th</sup>

- 🐾 An increase in \$10 to \$20 monthly donations to the BrayVe Hearts Program has helped us to meet ongoing monthly operating costs



- 🐾 Knitters, crocheters, sewists, quilters, jewelry makers, wood workers and other creative folks make and donate items for us to sell in our Donkey Shoppe



Did You Know That  
A Sponsorship Is  
Only \$50?

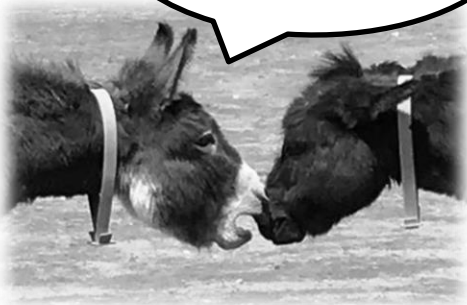
## UPCOMING EVENTS



October 7<sup>th</sup>  
Thanksgiving Celebration  
and Pumpkin Pickup



Christmas Evening  
Gathering  
Date TBA



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