



Safe Haven
for Donkeys

Winter 2024

NEWSLETTER



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The Rt Hon the Earl of Stockton
The Rt Hon Ann Widdecombe DSG
Desmond Lynam OBE
Kay Burley
Peter Egan
Anthony Head
Jan Leeming



Dear Friends,

The last few months have been incredibly busy for our charity. As you will see later in this newsletter, we have had new rescues both in Israel and the West Bank, a new home for our West Bank donkeys and our teams in the West Bank and the El Saf brick kilns of Egypt have continued to improve the lives of hundreds of working animals.

Many of you have been asking about the donkeys in Gaza and if anything is being done to help them. We had been trying to get into Gaza for years but even in peaceful times it was impossible. We have however been made aware of a small charity called Sulala operating in Gaza itself to try and help the animals. They are desperately short of food and medication and so at the time of writing, we are investigating ways that, with the help of Animals Australia and organisations on the ground in Egypt, we might be able to get aid into Gaza. We don't know at this stage if it will be possible – we will keep you updated.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy reading our updates in this newsletter.

These are uncertain times in the Middle East and everyone in the UK would like to pay tribute to our colleagues in Israel, the West Bank and Egypt. We are humbled by the way that they continue their work for the animals. Of course, this is only possible thanks to every single one of you and we would like to thank you all for your support.

Warmest regards,



Melanie



Fiona



Wendy



Visit to Israel

Dr Anna Harrison, our volunteer veterinary advisor writes...

Last September saw Andy and I off to visit the donkeys again and I thought you would like an update on a few of your favourites. We were lucky enough to be staying in the little wooden cabins right by the main paddock and the view is nothing less than heart-stoppingly panoramic – wall to wall donkeys! It never ceases to amaze me how 170 donkeys live so peacefully together and it's a lesson for humanity that living in harmony is very good for the soul.

If all this sounds completely idyllic (it is!) let me tell you our first job is to drag our luggage across the paddock and we always try to do this quietly in the hope we can get them to the safety of the cabins before the donkeys spot us. And it never works! One donkey spots us and tells the whole herd within seconds. And soon we are gently surrounded by lots of soft, whiskery muzzles and glorious ears. Luggage tags seem to be the prizes worth bargaining for and all baggage is inspected more thoroughly than at the airport!

Burnie is loving the outdoor life. He is just the friendliest boy and is one of the first to greet us. His pure black velvet muzzle is eminently snuggable. The team tell me that Burnie really took young Dominic under his furry wing when he was first integrated into the main herd. You may remember Dominic was such a frail, frightened little colt when first rescued and it was touch and go for several days as he found it so hard to eat with his badly ulcerated mouth. With all the loving care he received he is now thriving and one of the boys enjoying life in the main herd.

And **Hope** and **Nader**? What a wonderful mother this young donkey turned out to be – fiercely protective of her son but gradually learning to let go now they are living with the smaller group of donkeys. This pair are unique at the sanctuary in that both were born there and so have had no sad life experiences. I wish I could say that about all the other donkeys many of whom bare the legacy scars of a previous traumatic life.

Nader was a shy baby when I first met him earlier in the year but now he is a really cheeky chappie. He has learnt many vital donkey life skills – he can buck, he can rush around in circles for no apparent reason, he can steal from pockets before you even know it and he can look you straight in the eye to make your heart melt. At the time of writing he is yet to be ready for castration



Burnie



Nader





but, once that is done, he and Hope can join the main herd and he can grow up in the company of many other young donkeys. At the time, I wondered if he would stay bonded to his mum or find a new buddy. In November, we rescued another little foal, **Be'eri**, from a kibbutz in the south of Israel where he was found wandering the streets. Be'eri is a beautiful white foal and he and Nader took to each other like little white donkeys do. They can grow together in safety, surrounded by donkeys and people who love them.

And so to the West Bank where dear **Jan** is doing so well now. She is sweetly pretty and quite shy but absolutely loves her ears being rubbed. And she has two ears to be rubbed – not so for our brave new donkey – **Rakan**. I'm sure you saw the distressing pictures of this brave boy with life-changing cruel damage to his ear resulting in epic, life-saving surgery carried out by our fabulous Dr Rakan. Donkey Rakan is now a happy chap and will soon be integrated into the little herd that Dr Rakan lavishes so much love and care on. Rakan is believed to be over 20 and would have spent a lifetime working hard for somebody and it is difficult

to understand how such cruelty could be inflicted on a loyal and gentle animal. Thank goodness Safe Haven was there to help him. And thank goodness you are there to support Safe Haven in its vital work.

And then we had a very exciting visit with not a donkey in sight (at the time!). Dr Rakan's tiny shelter offers safety and comfort but it is simply not big enough to let the donkeys run and play and, of course, many of his donkeys are young and really need to be able to exercise. We visited a possible site for a new rescue centre and it looked nothing short of amazing. By the time you read this, our precious donkeys will be settled there, running free which will greatly enhance their lives and that's what Safe Haven is all about.

As I write this Safe Haven are working in a war zone. Yet still they work, with their amazing skill and dedication. Our small team comprises wonderful individuals of both Jewish and Muslim heritage. They don't let religious or cultural differences get in the way of giving as many donkeys the best life possible and that is a lesson for humanity and that is the magic of donkeys.

Thank you so much to everyone for supporting us.

Dr Rakan's Palestinian donkey stories



Firstly, I would like to thank each and every person who made a donation towards our new rescue centre in the West Bank village of Arrana.

Several of the donkeys that were living at our Nablus clinic were transported to Arrana in December and they are loving their new home. They have so much more space to run around and play and of course food and love from their very own carer, our new team member Mahmoud. I do miss having them at Nablus with me but I will be visiting regularly to check on them. It is only thanks to your generosity that our West Bank donkeys have this wonderful new home and we are all so grateful.

A few weeks ago, I was made aware of 13 donkeys that needed our help. Their owner, an American Palestinian, had previously rescued them but had to return to the USA and was no longer able to care for them. I immediately made arrangements to bring them to our clinic in Nablus for quarantine and vaccinations. By the time you read this, they should all have joined their new friends in Arrana and we will have more photos for you in the next newsletter.



Two donkeys who are still at Nablus as I write are Jan and Rakan. As you will have seen in the last newsletter, Jan the donkey, named after our Patron Jan Leeming had come to us from the Balata refugee camp. Unwanted by her owner, she had many terrible wounds and it took me some time to restore her health. She and Rakan, the one-eared donkey, will stay at the Nablus clinic for a while until they no longer need daily treatment. It is likely the hearing on that side of Rakan's head is muffled but otherwise, he is healthy and already becoming much more friendly and loving.

Of course, it is not just the donkeys at Nablus and Arrana that we care for in the West Bank. Every day, Wael, Nour and I and our two teams in the centre and south of the country are visiting different towns and villages to bring improvements to the lives of so



many suffering donkeys, mules and horses. As you can imagine, at the moment travel is not always easy but we are doing all we can to help those that need us.

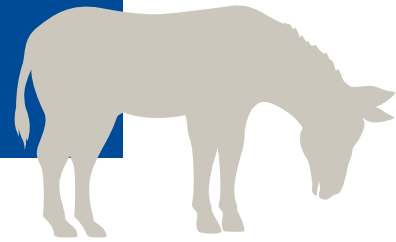
Recently, we held a special education session for children in one of the towns. I gave a talk about animal welfare and gave out booklets. Some of those children understood my speech. They heard me very well, they listened to every single word I said. And I really hope I could reach their hearts in my talk. I wish I have the power to be able to influence them by touching their hearts. And to build a community with good behaviour toward animals and a good generation of new owners who are caring about their animals. One day, it is my hope that our charity will no longer be needed because all owners love and care for their donkeys.

I would just like to end by saying, a huge “thank you” to everyone who voted for me in the Worldwide Vets “Golden Star Awards”. There were dozens of nominations of veterinary professionals all around the world going the extra mile to help animals in desperate need and I was honoured to come runner up. In these difficult times, it means so much to know there are people who care about our work.

Thank you for your generous support which allows all this work in the West Bank to happen.



News from Egypt



Dr Shabaan, our veterinary surgeon in Egypt writes...

It is now almost a year since the Safe Haven for Donkeys team of Moharram, Hamed and myself began working in the brick kilns of El Saf and thanks to you, we have already been able to transform the lives of so many donkeys through the provision of treatment of the donkeys and advice and support to the handlers and brick kiln owners. This is however just the beginning – we are visiting more and more kilns and in 2024 and beyond, we plan to increase our education work and train additional farriers, alongside treating as many animals as we possibly can.

In the last quarter of 2023, we were delighted to welcome one of Safe Haven's Patrons, actor and animal activist Peter Egan, along with Safe Haven CEO Andy Foxcroft, to see our work.

It was a very dramatic visit as no sooner had Peter arrived in one of the brick kilns, he was confronted with a distressing sight. A donkey had collapsed due to

colic and for a moment, everyone thought he was dead. As soon as I realised the donkey was still alive, I got the other team members to help me to get the animal standing up and inserted a saline drip, to which he added anti-inflammatory drugs, vitamins and minerals. While about 4 to 5 litres of fluid were being fed into the donkey through his veins, we checked the donkey's teeth, as food that is not properly digested can often be the cause of colic. Sure enough, the teeth needed urgent dental work and by the time treatment had finished, the donkey was clearly much more comfortable and standing calmly munching on some fresh fodder.

At the end of his visit, Peter told us that although he felt very sad for the animals and people toiling in such a harsh environment, he was also optimistic that with our team's help and your support, the future will be much brighter for the donkeys of the El Saf brick kilns and beyond. Thank you to Peter and to you all.



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Adopt a donkey

Adopt a donkey today and we will send you an adoption certificate, record card and photo of your chosen friend, complete with a small cuddly donkey to remind you of your new friend.

Adoption is just £36 a year (or £3 a month) and you can adopt for yourself or a friend – donkey adoptions make the ideal gift for birthdays, anniversaries or any other special occasion.

Your gift will help pay for the food and medical care of your chosen donkey, as well as support all the donkeys we help at the sanctuary, Nablus clinic and our mobile clinic. Below are just three of our

donkeys – but you can choose from our wider donkey family by visiting our website at www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt.

We care for around 200 donkeys at our Sanctuary in Israel and rescue centre in Nablus. We will update you with news about a selection of our donkeys in every newsletter but sadly we're not currently able to send individual updates.

** Cuddly donkey UK only due to Customs restrictions – many apologies*

Thank you for your support.

Adopt me!



Name: **Be'eri**
Age: **7 months**
Rescued: **November 2023**

Little Be'eri was found wandering the streets of a kibbutz in the south of Israel. Luckily someone knew about our work and called us to take him in. He has made firm friends with Nader, who is only a few weeks older than him, and Nader's mother Hope.

Adopt me!



Name: **Jan**
Age: **3 years**
Rescued: **August 2023**

Jan, named after our wonderful Patron Jan Leeming, was brought to our clinic in the Palestinian city of Nablus, underweight and wounded. Dr Rakan gave her extensive medical treatment and eventually, her owner decided he didn't want her and she could stay at Safe Haven.

Adopt me!



Name: **Rakan**
Age: **4 years**
Rescued: **August 2023**

Rakan, named after his rescuer our star vet Dr Rakan, came to our clinic in Nablus as someone had set fire to his ear. Sadly, the ear was so badly burned that Dr Rakan had no option but to amputate. Although it is likely that Rakan's hearing is impaired on that side, he seems totally used to life with one ear already and has settled down well with his new donkey friends.

Adopt a donkey today by visiting www.safehaven4donkeys.org/adopt or give us a call on 01444 470136 or 01444 470132 and give a donkey the love and care they deserve.

Ways you can help...

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Gift Aid

The Gift Aid scheme allows charities to reclaim tax on donations received from supporters who have paid sufficient income or capital gains tax during the year to cover the amount we would be reclaiming from HMRC. If you are a taxpayer and have not already completed a Gift Aid declaration, please complete the form with this newsletter so we can reclaim even more to help the donkeys!

If you would like more information on the Gift Aid scheme before signing up, just call Wendy on 01444 470136.

Remember, if you are no longer a tax payer, please let Wendy know.



Standing orders/direct debits

We already have over 1,000 supporters who give to us regularly and these payments are vital in helping us to plan for the future of the charity. If you can spare a regular amount each month, quarter or even year, please visit www.safehaven4donkeys.org/fundraising/how-you-can-help/ or call 01444 470136. You can now also set up a regular gift via your credit/debit card or Paypal by visiting the donate page on our website.



Recycle

Donate your used postage stamps, stamp collections, postcards, first day covers, old or foreign coins/bank notes, pre 1940s maps, watches, medals or badges. Simply send direct to Stamps N All, 32 Eastbury Avenue, Plymouth, PL5 2NB (please do not send donations or items for the donkeys to this address and please note that the company is unable to acknowledge receipt of packages due to volume of work).



Easy Fundraising

Did you know that whenever you buy anything online – from your weekly shop to your annual holiday – you could be raising free donations with Easy Fundraising? Simply go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk to sign up, choose us as your favourite cause and get shopping!



Ebay

Sell an item via popular online bidding site Ebay and you can donate the profit (or a percentage) towards our work.



Home Collection Boxes

Ask us for one of our home collection boxes. Collect up all your loose change for the donkeys! Just call Melanie on 01444 470132 or e-mail melanie@safehaven4donkeys.org



Thinking of making your Will?

Gifts in Wills are vital in helping to secure the future of the donkeys at our sanctuary. If you are thinking of leaving Safe Haven a legacy after you have taken care of your loved ones, why not ask us for a copy of our will writing worksheet to help you plan what to include before visiting your solicitor.

Just call Wendy on **01444 470136**
or e-mail wendy@safehaven4donkeys.org

Free Will

If you are having difficulty getting out to see a solicitor, we are now partnered with Bequeathed, who offer free Wills and valuable advice. Their simple and convenient service allows you to make the right Will for you in the way that best suits you – online, face to face or over the phone. You will be asked if you would like to leave a legacy to Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land but there is absolutely no obligation to do so.

To find out more:
visit www.bequeathed.org/p/safehaven4donkeys
or call **020 8191 0587**.

DATA PROTECTION & PRIVACY

In carrying out our day to day activities Safe Haven for Donkeys in the Holy Land processes and stores personal information relating to our supporters and we are therefore required to adhere to the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation and other relevant Acts and Regulations. We take our responsibilities very seriously and we ensure the personal information we obtain is held, used, transferred and otherwise processed in accordance with that Regulation and all other applicable data protection laws and regulations including, but not limited to, the Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations.

Personal information we might collect includes your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, date of birth, whether you are a tax payer (for Gift Aid purposes), bank account details if you set up a regular payment, donations you have made or events in which you have participated. On occasion, we may need to look up your telephone number in the phone book to contact you regarding a donation you have made – we would then store this data in our database in case it is needed for the same purpose in the future.

We collect this data for purposes including the processing of any donation made by you, to provide you with any products or information you have requested or for internal record keeping/accounting/administration. Having supported us, under the “legitimate interest” condition for processing data we believe that you would like to receive our quarterly newsletter and occasional additional appeals or updates on our work and so we will also use your details for this purpose.

If you use your credit or debit card to donate to us, buy something or pay online or over the phone, we will ensure that this is done securely and in accordance with the Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. All card details and validation codes are securely destroyed once the payment or donation has been processed. Other information will be held as long as is reasonably necessary to allow us to continue to communicate with you or to comply with relevant legislation. For example, the HMRC require Gift Aid declarations to be retained indefinitely.

We will not sell, share or swap your information with any third parties unless required to do so for legal reasons (for example to the police). We do send the names and addresses of our supporters to the printers who produce our quarterly newsletter. They also comply with the General Data Protection Regulation and use your details solely for the purpose of mailing the newsletter. They do not retain the data or use it for any other purpose.

It is your choice on the type of communications and information you receive about our charity and the ways in which you can get involved. You can change your mind at any time by contacting us by post, e-mail or phone using the contact details on page two of this newsletter. If you have a complaint about how your data is processed, please contact us in the first instance. If we cannot resolve the situation, you have the right to complain to the Information Commissioner’s Office. You also have the right to request copies of any data held about you and to request rectification of any inaccuracies.

Thank you

We are grateful to each and every one of you for your support as without you there would be no Safe Haven. We would especially like to thank:



George and Rosemary Russell –

Not only is George one of our wonderful band of Trustees but he and his wife Rosemary have been braving the elements to hold fundraising stalls at events such as summer and Christmas fayres for more than 20 years. We are deeply grateful to them both for all they do.

Myra and Dave Gunn and Sylvia Osborne

for taking part in a number of car boot sales for the donkeys throughout the year, raising an amazing £4,262.15!



Mick and Jean Izzard for raising £350 from the sale of produce at their garden gate.

Staff, parents and pupils at Children 4 Most Squirrels Wood

for raising £552 from a fundraising day at the nursery.



Pat Clark for raising £200 from a car boot sale.

Janet Parsons and friends for raising more than £1,200 from a garden party.



The anonymous person who sent through this jewellery and more to our recycling service – we are delighted to say that it raised hundreds of pounds for the donkeys. The gentleman who runs Stamps N All has decided that he is not going to retire after all so we hope that all our supporters will keep sending in any unwanted items – please see page 10 for what he can take.

Lois Willett for raising £71 from a stall at a Christmas fair.

Solace the donkey and her owner John Dunstan for raising £50 from St Peter and St Paul Church by attending two nativity plays in Olney.