

## Donkey and Sanctuary news

All our donkeys are well at the moment and enjoying the crisp winter weather. They have grown thick furry winter coats, and always have access to shelter. We feed extra hay in the cold weather and the frailest donkeys each get a bowl of nutritious feed to supplement the hay and grazing.

The farrier has made great progress with the donkeys who were initially difficult, and most now have well-kept hooves which require only routine smoothing. We find that when there have been a particularly large number of visitors, the donkeys withdraw to rest. We ask that visitors respect this and show patience if they are not allowed into the fields to meet the donkeys at certain times.

The Sanctuary is a haven for humans too: in one day we had a Church group, the manager of a top-class local horse stud farm, journalists from an upmarket magazine, and children from disadvantaged homes. All were welcomed by the donkeys who do not judge or label the humans who come to share in their tranquility and peaceful surroundings.

Many of our visitors also have their own special needs and the donkeys sense this and provide gentle, undemanding love and support.

We are not a petting farm, an entertainment centre or a curiosity.



Visit by the Schools for the Blind & Deaf

Some visitors seem to see only an opportunity to photograph the grandchild next to a donkey, and we feel frustrated that they do not grasp the depth of the project!

Stop, switch off the cellphone, quieten down and look deep into an elderly donkey's eyes!

## Education project



Visit by Schools for the Blind & Deaf

The education project has become so successful that our school visits are fully booked until the end of the year. The focus is our motto "A culture of caring" and hundreds of youngsters are being exposed to gentle interactions as a life skill. We trust that they will apply what they learn at the Sanctuary to other avenues in their daily lives. Many schools that visit us draw learners from extremely poverty-stricken and violent backgrounds. The donkeys provide a medium for therapeutic learning situations.

The Schools for the Blind and Deaf brought learners to the Sanctuary and the visits were truly moving. Anyone who challenges us by saying: "Why donkeys? Why not focus on needy children?" should see the pleasure on the faces of the children when they touch, hug and embrace our gentle donkeys. Our work is about much, much more than just caring for old donkeys.

Ons moet spesiale melding maak van die Overberg Pony Club, wat saam met hulle groep maats ons kom besoek het - met 'n wonderlike skenking van voer! Hulle projek is besonders want dit word deur die kinders self bestuur - hulle gee vir minder bevoorregte kinders die kans om die plesier van perdry en versorging te ervaar. Wel gedaan, almal! Ons sien uit na julle volgende besoek!

To remove your name from our mailing list, please [click here](#)

Questions or comments  
Please E-mail us [here](#)

Or call 023 625 1593

**Please remember** that we are a registered charity and we do all our own fundraising. We derive no benefit from any items sold by the padstal/nursery, which is run independently as a business. Debbie and Jimmy stock a small range of our Sanctuary souvenirs in their restaurant, and those proceeds go entirely to the donkeys.

**We are open** to visitors on Saturdays and Sundays, from 11am till 4pm, and on Thursdays and Fridays by appointment, with pleasure. If we are not on site when you visit, Debbie will cheerfully phone us to meet you. During weekends our friendly guide, Patricia, is on duty. If you wish to bring a group, please contact us in advance so that we can make special arrangements.

**You are warmly invited...**

### **St Francis Day Ceremony**

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009 at 11.30 a.m.**

A short blessing ceremony at Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary, followed by an optional meditative walk in silence.

Pets on leads are most welcome!

You may wish to place a special stone on our Memorial Cairn, in remembrance of a loved friend - human or animal



**We are growing...**



in status, which means that donkeys in general are also growing in status in the eyes of the public! We regularly communicate with the world leaders in England, The Donkey Sanctuary, and appreciate their readiness in advising us so that we can talk confidently about donkeys and their needs. A company in the UK that we dealt with recently referred to us as “an internationally recognized institution”. We are part of an informal network of donkey-orientated people in South Africa, and we refer queries to experts in the appropriate geographical area where possible.

**Future plans...**

We are first and foremost a Donkey Sanctuary, where the donkeys share their good fortune with those humans who are perceptive enough to understand our “Culture of caring”. It is obvious that the Sanctuary is a long-term project. We have to expand, and all systems must function independently of the founders. Our Management Committee regularly examines future scenarios. We are training assistants and are looking at future possibilities regarding land.



**Bequests and donations...**



Please consider us when you draw up your will. We have a registered Trust in place, and will gladly provide details. The Sanctuary is a registered Public Benefit Organisation, so donations and bequests are exempt from tax, and may save you Estate Duty. You may want to consider bequeathing a fixed amount, or a specified percentage of your Estate. The donkeys' future can be secured by your future generosity!

