



VOLUNTEERS

NEWSLETTER No 8

APRIL 2015

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Thank you.

Thank you once again for your continued support. It never fails to amaze us how very generous you are with your time as well as your talents. We are indeed lucky to have the support of such an excellent group of volunteers. The winter has been as busy as ever, with the regular sales, and additional work in the yard with the donkeys being in the warm for the winter. The workload increases dramatically when you add in the host of events ranging from the donkeys playing leading roles in the nativity plays in schools and churches to the 'donkey appearances' in town centre Christmas evenings and long days at shopping centres.

Carol Service

The highlight of our Christmas events at home must be the carol service which was supported by over 100 people. The band, who were invited by one of our volunteers, were amazing and enjoyed it so much that they have agreed to come again next year. (17th December 2015) The Rev. Janice Chilton conducted the service and made it interesting for both young and old, Tracey was the star of the event as she stood at the nativity scene which the staff had created and the goats and sheep added to the atmosphere of the occasion by bleating and baa-ing to the music. The trustees would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for your help and support at all of these events, which not only raise a lot of money for the sanctuary but also raise people's awareness of the work that we all do. Thanks also, to Charlotte who built a nativity stable in the Barn. This was a lovely idea and admired by many people.

Trustee News

From time to time changes are made to trustee responsibilities and in February 2015, Annie Ebsworth was appointed Vice Chair. Catherine Keogh and Dave Ebsworth will remain as trustees and Catherine be working with Linda and John in the Yard. Dave will be working with John on the site. We are hoping to develop contacts in outside funding opportunities. Judy Gibbons will remain as Chair.

Annual Party

As there are so many events during the summer we will be arranging our annual get together in the New Year as usual. We had hoped that we could find spare dates in the calendar which has proved impossible. We will talking with you all about the entertainment later in the year.

Equine Hospital Appeal

The hospital appeal has now reached £16,000+ and we will be starting on the work over the Summer with the first phase of this build. This is really encouraging and due to our many volunteers who have made such a special effort to help us achieve this facility for our dear donkeys. We all want our donkeys to have the best care we can give them and this will mean we can.

Events

Country Show this year is on 23rd and 24th May [see details on next page] please volunteer if you can all help will be appreciated.

We will hardly have time to draw breath before we host the **Pony Show on the 7th June** and programmes are available from the office. Our own **Donkey Show will be on the 5th July** as usual, and there is a **Donkey Agility show planned for August**. Easter is always a big event in our donkey calendar This year we had 14 donkeys going out to churches in the area.

To prepare for this we had a grooming and tack cleaning day on Saturday the 28th March. Thanks to all who came and groomed and shone our donkeys even those who are not going out queued up to be groomed and were not disappointed! All the tack looked amazing and our donkeys went out to face their public in their best bib and tucker. The volunteers were rewarded with a cup of tea and a hot cross bun!



Country Weekend 23rd and 24^h May

We are now in full organising mode for the spring and summer events and we hope that we will have something to please everybody. The Rally Committee is working hard getting ready for the **Country Show**, which once again will feature the Irish Dancers, The exotic belly dancers, Mr. Muddle the children's entertainer and the Oxford Drum Troupe among other events. There is a Frank Sinatra tribute in the evening.

The exhibits will include our own range of saleable items and others with a wide range of goods and new this year will be a pets' corner with pot bellied pigs (don't tell Percy), rabbits, goats and both pony and dog agility competitions. There is lots to do and it will be a weekend of good family entertainment. Hot and cold food on offer.

Food

This year there will be a separate point for hot and cold drinks to stop the need for those not wanting hot food having to join the queue in the Barn. This will be a great help.

Shop

There is lots of new donkey stock in the shop as well as children's books, microfleece tea towels and note books, to book markers with three dimensional views and a different range of soft donkey toys too. Please try and support the shop.

Email addresses and website

We are setting up a group email so that we can keep everyone in touch where possible - including sending this newsletter. For special events and regular events Wendy will continue to ring as usual. **Please ensure that you ask for your Newsletter which is for the information of all volunteers.** If you miss a copy or want to check please go to our website www.donkeyrescue.org.uk and you will find all back copies and the current copy on the website. Thanks to our website designers we have a very good and easy to use website, please have a look there is lots of information and videos too.

Health and Safety.

All volunteers and visitors need to wash their hands with hot water and soap and to sanitise hands with the alcohol gel when they have been mucking out or grooming or petting the donkeys or any of the animals. This is to avoid the spread of disease. Speak to Wendy in the office if the soap or alcohol gel are running low.

Volunteer news - Well done to Frances Wacey who was awarded a Volunteer Award through a scheme run by OCVA [Oxfordshire Community and Voluntary Action], who received her award, with John, representing the Sanctuary and two members of her family present at Oxford Town Hall in February 2015.

WE NEED more Volunteers. We are looking to expand the job of volunteers to Meet and Greet our visitors in the car park and give them information and general assistance. We will be making a special appeal for these volunteers, so if you know anyone that can spare a few hours between 11am and 2pm during school holidays and at weekends please get in touch. We also need an 'odd job' person to do some painting around the site.

More volunteers will make it easier for everyone. We need people to help at events in the barn and the local area. We also need volunteers to work in the yard. The yard is very rewarding - but hard work as we all know. But we all love the donkeys and realise that their essential care is the core of the work that we do. Obviously, the more help we have the better - the Sanctuary will be looking at ways to encourage more volunteers to join us. Everyone at the Sanctuary knows how hard you all work and John, the staff and the Trustees would like to say again, a BIG thank you to you all.

Recycling - a reminder Always remember we are now signed up to recycle old inkjet cartridges, laser & toner cartridges & mobile phones. There is a box in the office where people can deposit cartridges etc. We get money credited to our account every time we send them cartridges.

Online Fundraising and Social Media

Please remember to use **EASYFUNDRAISING** when ordering online. We need more people to register and the Sanctuary benefits a percentage on the items which you order. Visit our **WEBSITE** www.donkeyrescue.org.uk there is lots of information, photos, videos and notices of events. The Wantage Palm Sunday photos are there plus many more. **FACEBOOK** is also up and running, look there for photos, messages. Annie has posted lots of photos on facebook which has generated a good response. Visit our facebook and see what people are saying. We are also the top visitor attraction in the Wallingford area with **TRIPADVISOR**

Judy Gibbons, Chair, Anne Ebsworth, Vice Chair, Catherine Keogh, Trustee, Dave Ebsworth, Trustee