



LANG-OOR NUUS

Esetljiesrus Donkey Sanctuary

Newsletter #73, May 2025 - July 2025

Strengthening Our Future

Dear Esetljiesrus Community,

With great pleasure I share important news about the leadership of Esetljiesrus Donkey Sanctuary(EDS).

Following a period of transition, the Board has appointed Mr Tony Saddington as Executive Manager from 1 April 2025 and Mr Stan Davidoff as Donkey Care, Welfare and Farm Manager from 1 May 2025. These appointments come at a pivotal time in the life of our Sanctuary — a time when we are preparing to implement our new Strategic Plan, which charts an ambitious and inspiring course for the years ahead.

The EDS Strategic Plan 2025–2030, developed through wide consultation and careful reflection, focuses on four key pillars:

- **Organisational Capacity:** Building a motivated, skilled, diverse and cohesive workforce and leadership team.
- **Financial Sustainability:** Strengthening our income streams, deepening donor and adopter engagement, and building reserves.
- **Outreach and Advocacy:** Expanding our influence in donkey welfare through education, advocacy and community-based outreach programmes.
- **Operational Excellence:** Ensuring the highest standards of care for our donkeys and continually improving our facilities and visitor experience. Striving to be a Centre of Excellence for donkey care and welfare.

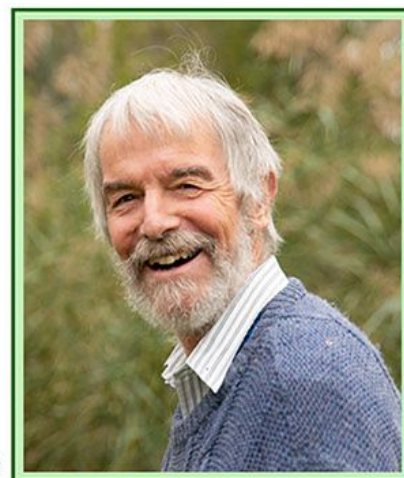
Our vision remains: to promote the welfare and status of donkeys through a culture of care, collaboration and empowerment. To successfully implement this bold plan, the Board recognised the need for strong, stable leadership and the best possible team to drive the next phase of our journey and made two new appointments.

After an open, transparent and rigorous recruitment process, the Board unanimously appointed Tony Saddington as Executive Manager. Tony has served EDS faithfully for over 15 years as Finance Manager and Board Secretary, bringing to this new role unparalleled knowledge of EDS's operations, governance, financial stewardship and commitment to our donkeys.

Tony's appointment directly supports the strategic objectives of stabilising management, strengthening financial sustainability, enhancing governance and donor engagement, and preparing EDS for long-term leadership succession.

Crucially, Tony will also drive the process of building a strong and effective management team that reflects the diversity of the EDS community and the communities we serve.

Promoting inclusivity, capacity-building and leadership development will be key focus areas of his work over the next two years.



Continued overleaf

Promoting the welfare and status of donkeys through a culture of caring



We are equally thrilled to announce the appointment of Stan Davidoff as Donkey Care, Welfare and Farm Manager.

Stan's commitment to the welfare of our donkeys has already been evident in his work as Donkey Care Officer. With over 30 years of experience managing equine, farm and wildlife operations both locally and abroad, Stan is exceptionally well placed to lead our care and welfare work into a new era.

Stan's leadership will be crucial in achieving our strategic goals for operational excellence — ensuring that our Sanctuary remains a recognised centre of excellence in donkey care, welfare and farm management.

These two appointments bring stability, a depth of experience and fresh energy to EDS. They reflect the Board's unwavering commitment to careful planning, good governance and inclusive leadership, always prioritising the welfare of the donkeys and sustainability of the Sanctuary.

We believe Tony and Stan are the right people to lead EDS into its next chapter, implementing the 2025–2030 Strategic Plan with professionalism, compassion and a strong commitment to our founding values. On behalf of the Board, I warmly welcome Tony and Stan into their new roles. I invite our wonderful EDS community — staff, volunteers, adopters, donors and supporters — to join me in supporting them as we embark on this exciting journey together.

Thank you for your continued belief in our work. Together, we are ensuring that EDS remains a place where donkeys are cherished and where a culture of care inspires all that we do.

Warm regards,

Joe Samuels, Chairperson of the Board Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary

Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra comes to Robertson

After a two-year break, the much-loved Cape Town Philharmonic Orchestra will again perform in Robertson for the benefit of our donkeys, on Sunday 14 September. The concert will be held at Robertson Oos-Kerk, which seats 1,000. It aims to unite the diverse communities in the Breede River Valley for a memorable afternoon of music and togetherness. The last concert filled the venue to capacity. This performance promises to inspire both young and old and aspires to involve the wider community in our region.

The orchestra comprises 55 talented musicians from a variety of backgrounds. To ensure that people from low-income households, residents of old-age homes and youth can attend, we have established a sponsored-ticket scheme. The beneficiaries of this initiative also include choirs and music students.

Ticket prices are R180 for adults and R90 for students. Any contributions toward sponsored tickets would be greatly appreciated. Your support will provide two significant benefits: the enjoyment of wonderful music for those who might not be able to attend; and assistance for donkeys in need.

Venues selling tickets include McGregor, Robertson and Montagu/Ashton Tourism Offices, Dr de Wet's Vet Practice (51 Durban Street, Worcester) and the Sanctuary. You can also order tickets by email from 2 June. Please contact adopt@donkeysanctuary.co.za to purchase your tickets or sponsored tickets. Your tickets or proof of purchase of sponsored tickets will be sent directly to you.

Our motto is 'A Culture of Caring' and the concert will be held under the theme 'Music for Everyone/ Musiek vir Almal.'

Thank you for making it possible for fine music to be shared by all. Baie Dankie!

Het u geweet?

Donkies wat goed versorg word, kan tot 40 jaar of ouer word. Werkende donkies in swak toestand raak gewoonlik nie ouer as 10 tot 12 jaar nie. Donkies moet ontworm word, korrek gevoer word, hoewe en tande moet versorg word, behandeling vir velprobleme word benodig, en werkende donkies se tuie en karretjies moet korrek gebruik word.

Donkey Care, Welfare and Farm

Pepe and two other donkeys came to the Sanctuary from Swellendam in March of 2022. Pepe suffered from laminitis, possibly due to weight gain from high sugars, Lucerne or lush pastures. We tried to manage this, but the damage was irreversible and eventually we had to say goodbye in January 2025. Pepe was 23 years of age.

Elizabeth was brought to L'Agulhas Nature Reserve about 16 to 17 years ago as a foal. One of the residents had horses there so she mingled with them. Two years ago the horses moved and Elizabeth was left alone. Residents debated about getting another donkey for company or sending her to us. We visited there to assess her condition, which was good, as she had lots of grazing in a big open area. She had never really been handled, so is shy of people. She had to be tranquilized to load in a horsebox for transport. She arrived at the Sanctuary on 30 April and after exploring her paddock seems quite content with no signs of stress.

The donkeys at the sanctuary have been doing really well. A few hoof abscesses were treated and cleared quickly. We adjust the feed according to each individual donkey's needs. Care and grooming has improved so much, especially with the shy donkeys receiving more attention.

Mindy had mild colic and recovered with pain medication. **Sonop**'s age is catching up to him. We give him vitamin boosters and pain meds when he needs it, just keeping him comfortable and happy.

March saw a visit from the farrier and the dentist: The farriers from Cart Horse Protection Association (CHPA) did a great job trimming the donkeys' hooves. We are grateful to CHPA for this as part of their outreach work. The dentist inspected 15 donkeys and 11 received dental treatments. We were impressed that all were treated without sedation. This meant no stress or injuries to donkeys or handlers. Currently we have 30 donkeys and one mule at the Sanctuary.

As reported in our last newsletter, we had to do major repairs to two of our bore-holes. Happily, all three bore-holes are currently producing water, stored in our dam for irrigation. We had some good rainfall in March (29mm) and April (32mm) which has helped the grazing. We also receive a fortnightly allocation of *Leiwater* (irrigation water allocated to farms from the Hoeks River). However for two weeks in April we received none due to leaks in the channel near the top weir, which needed repairs.



Ziggy and Eddie getting some attention from Durren

Stan Davidoff (Donkey Care, Welfare and Farm Manager)

Young professionals get to know donkeys

Eseltjiesrus is proud to offer guest lectures at the Onderstepoort Veterinary Faculty at the University of Pretoria. Thank you to the Ethology Department for inviting us!

Over the past two semesters, dedicated Vet Nurse students and enthusiastic BVSc students have delved into the fascinating world of donkey behaviour, husbandry and welfare in South Africa.

Our presentations centre on the importance of holistic animal welfare, a vital commitment within the veterinary profession. This encompasses both the physical and mental well-being of animals.

Equally important, our discussions embrace the 'One Health, One Welfare' concept, illustrating the interconnectedness between human health, animal welfare and environmental sustainability.

We are confident that the emerging veterinary professionals will recognise and cherish the invaluable contributions that donkeys have to offer. Together, let's build a future that honours and protects these long-suffering and deserving creatures.

For more information contact Annemarie@donkeysanctuary.co.za



Each student receives these two manuals compiled by Eseltjiesrus.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

We warmly invite you to join in our 18th AGM which will be held by Zoom (and email) on Wednesday 13 August 2025 at 6pm. Enjoy hearing and seeing what you have helped Eseltjiesrus to achieve this past year.

AGM Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Minutes of the 2024 AGM
3. The work of the Sanctuary
4. Business matters:
 - a. Annual Financial Statements
 - b. Appointment of auditors
 - c. Election of the Board of EDS
5. Any other business and closure

Election of the Board

Board members serve for three years and each year the term of office for some of them ends. We have a few vacant positions on the Board for this coming year. We therefore invite anyone interested in standing for the Board to send us their name and the names of both a proposer and seconder, on or before 1 August 2025.

To take part in our AGM please send your full name and email address to admin@donkeysanctuary.co.za by 1 August 2025, indicating whether you will participate by Zoom or email. We will send you the necessary information and documents. Please also send any apologies and tell us if you would like the Chairperson (Joe Samuels) to act as a proxy vote on your behalf.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions. Thank you for caring and taking an interest in donkey welfare.

Donkeys for Africa



Donkeys for Africa, an international online portal supported by Eseltjiesrus, is dedicated to promoting donkey welfare across the continent. People from around the world come together with a shared passion for ensuring that donkeys are treated with respect and care.

We invite you to visit www.donkeysforafrica.org to read our newsletters and reference library.

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or have any items of interest for publication, please contact editor@donkeysforafrica.org to be added to the mailing list.

You will hear from us again.

The next edition of Lang-Oor Nuus will reach you in August 2025. Donkey Reports were sent to our adopters during March. Please let us know if you didn't receive yours.

Inform us of any changes in your contact details and tell us of friends who would like to receive our newsletters. Where possible we request that postal communications change to email. We will post information if that is what you prefer.

Other news

We have decided not to hold our Annual Book Fair in 2025 and will instead hold regular Book Sales at the Sanctuary. Please watch our Face Book and Instagram pages for details of these events. We are always looking for volunteers to help us with tasks at the Sanctuary. Please contact us for more information.

We accept PayFast (via our website) Zapper & Snapscan along with traditional EFT, card and cash payments.



zapper™



Scan here to pay



Snap here to pay



You can help us to help donkeys by:
DONATING • ADOPTING • VISITING & BUYING OUR BOOKS, OUR GIFTS & OUR WINE • VOLUNTEERING
• PUTTING A DONKEY IN YOUR WILL

Ons skakel graag met u in Afrikaans.

Visit our website to securely donate, adopt a donkey or purchase our wine. Find out more about donkeys and use it to contact us:

www.donkeysanctuary.co.za

Email: info@donkeysanctuary.co.za

Call: +27 (0)23 625 1801

Facebook: www.facebook.com/eseltjiesrus-donkey-sanctuary

Instagram: www.instagram.com/eseltjiesrusdonkeysanctuary

View our YouTube channel:

www.youtube.com/channel/UCRseHdhyziM6nOLSThl-hw



Find us on Google Maps

BANK DETAILS: Eseltjiesrus Donkey Sanctuary • Standard Bank • Branch Code 050413 • Savings Account: 288244419

You can also pay by SnapScan or Zapper (see the codes above). Donations, adoptions, renewal of adoptions and wine orders can be made via our website at www.donkeysanctuary.co.za through PayFast which accepts credit/debit cards and instant EFTs.

Please identify your deposits so that we can thank you, record your details and issue Section 18A tax certificates.