

Elpida 37

June 2015



Striving to improve the welfare of animals in Greece

Dear Friends,

Would you walk in their shoes?

Working mules in Greece often take thousands of steps a day, walking for miles, carrying or dragging heavy loads up and down mountainsides in both searing summer heat and bitter winter cold. But can you imagine taking every one of those steps in ill-fitting shoes that pinch your feet?

That's the reality for hundreds of working mules in Greece... but GAWF is taking action to change this. Having identified the problem – poor shoes – our farrier, Giannis, has provided his own, innovative solution and developed a new, specially designed mule shoe that fits correctly, comfortably supports and protects the hoof, and enables the animals to walk over rough ground safely... and free from pain.

The shoes in use up to now have been thin, flat metal plates cut to stock sizes rather than tailored to each animal's hoof. They create an almost complete seal, which can lead to infection and disease – potentially causing irreparable damage and constant pain. Giannis' new "Greek Mountain Shoe" – the first mule shoe ever to be developed in Greece – has added grip and, crucially, an open form that can be individually shaped for a perfect fit. *(See more in an interview with Giannis on page 4 inside).*

Will you help us make the Mountain Shoe available to more hard-working mules? We want to see all of the mules we meet during our outreach visits given the chance to work more safely and comfortably. With your support we can make this a reality. Will you please give £25, or whatever you can afford today?

We know many of the muleteers we're helping will resist changes to their traditional practices – ones that have been passed down for generations – and we have our work cut out to convince them of the benefits of adopting the new shoe. But we have already begun to see results and are confident that even the doubters will soon come round as they see animals that are using Giannis' new shoes treading more sure-footedly and working better than their own.

So often in our work we find ourselves just picking up the pieces, so it's wonderful to be partly responsible for making a breakthrough that will be a "game-changer" for so many working animals in Greece. Now we need your help to spread the word and get Giannis' innovation into the remotest corners of the country. Low income groups in Greece have been terribly affected by the country's ongoing economic crisis, and in improving the welfare of the muleteers' teams we know we are also supporting a far from privileged group of people to continue being able to earn a living.

Thank you for supporting us in this pioneering new project and in all of our work for animals in Greece.

With very best wishes,

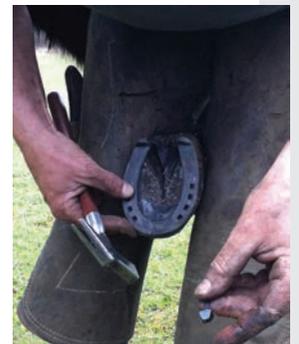
Brian

Brian Cowie, Chair GAWF/Animal Action Greece

NB: all money raised from this appeal will be used to fund our campaigns and projects.



The old 'plaka' shoe



The new Greek Mountain shoe



Greek Animal Welfare Fund—over 55 years of action for animals in Greece

Operating in Greece as:



Welcome to Elpida 37

From the Chief Executive

Dear GAWF Supporters and Friends,

Believe it or not GAWF is now 56 years old! (That's 392 in dog years!)

Back in 1959, who could have imagined that the small organisation Eleanor Close founded would still be active today, and that it would still have such a long way to go before its vision could be achieved?

Whilst preparing Elpida I reflected on everything that was accomplished in 2014: massive neutering schemes in both Athens and rural parts of Greece offering relief for stray colonies. Where we are able to act, new unneutered strays do not appear in large numbers. So there is no population explosion of the kind that can lead to unwanted kittens and puppies having to live with the suffering caused by disease and starvation. We have too often seen individual people (or even whole communities) turn against strays. Our strategy as always is to intervene proactively to prevent possible incidents of cruelty, poisoning and abuse.

Many individual animals such as Mr. Friday, Lucky and Sifis were saved and adopted into loving homes, proving that animals entering our network of care can have a happy ending.

We wore our lobbying caps on many occasions last year, having fruitful meetings with the Ministry of Agriculture. At the same time, we opened a dialogue with the Ministry of Tourism, making the argument about how relevant the welfare of stray animals is to the positive or negative experience of Greece that visitors come away with to both Ministers and staff. We were also very busy lobbying Mayoral candidates. Our campaign, "Building a Greece that cares about Animals" resulted in 100 elected Mayors signing a pledge committing themselves to managing stray populations in their districts responsibly. The result of this effort was more far-reaching than we expected... we now have many Mayors asking for our outreach programmes and advice.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of Elpida which in Greek means 'hope'. Indeed there is so much to be hopeful about and we will not rest until our mission – which is paramount in everything we do – reaches fruition.

A heartfelt thank you to our dedicated donors and supporters because you enable us to do great work on behalf of the animals. Thank you for being with us on this journey.

With all good wishes,
Amalia Sotirhou, CEO



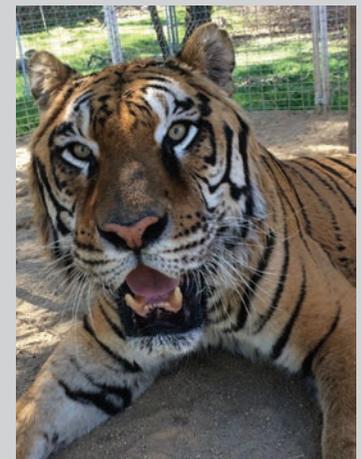
Phevos goes to California!

Remember Phevos the ex-circus tiger? Animal lover and former CEO of GAWF, David Barnes, was on a mission to raise £13,000 to send him from a barren cage in a run-down zoo in Greece to a sanctuary in California.

Just before Christmas, we were absolutely thrilled to hear that Phevos has been successfully moved to his new home and is settling in nicely. We know that many of you, our supporters, generously donated to Phevos's fund or spread the word about his plight so please do all give yourselves a big pat on the back! By working together, so much can be achieved. We received this message from David: *"Thank you for all your help, the appeal on GAWF's website worked and many Greeks donated! Thanks to GAWF members"*.

And this message from Veronica at Lions, Tigers and Bears—Phevos's new home: *"Thank you for your support and for helping get Phevos to his new home here at Lions Tigers & Bears. He is settling in nicely and we are happy to have had the opportunity to provide him a lifetime home here"*.

Congratulations to everyone involved with this rescue! *By Lucy Westmore*



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Neutering Update

Our Neutering Outreach Project went from strength to strength in 2014 and we treated, vaccinated and neutered over 2,000 animals!

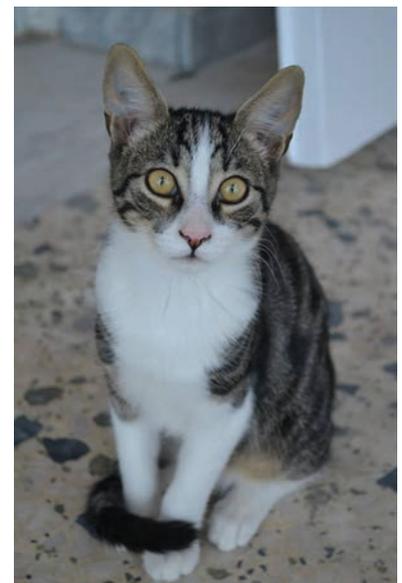


We are so grateful to our funders, and, last year, we received €8,000 from the Brigitte Bardot Foundation and €3,500 from mobile phone company WIND. We also received a very generous donation from one of our supporters of £5,000. This money enabled us to launch the biggest neutering scheme ever in Greece on World Animal Day, 4th October. We worked between October 4th and Christmas and focused on neutering animals in Athens and the closely surrounding areas. The target number of animals we hoped to neuter and vaccinate was 750 (600 cats, 150 dogs) but we actually achieved a total of 875! We would like to extend our grateful thanks to everyone involved in what was an ambitious, but truly groundbreaking initiative. By focusing on one large area and neu-

tering the target population, we will see a real impact on population numbers and we will measure our results with the help of local

volunteers who will help us to collect data that we can analyse. The aim of this particular strand of the Neutering Project is to see a marked drop in the number of stray cats living on the streets of Athens, which we believe will lead to greater tolerance of these animals and care and compassion being extended to them. GAWF is grateful for the continued faith our supporters show in us, especially during the desperate financial situation that Greece is living through, and is here to ensure that their funds go directly to the welfare of the greatest possible number of animals. We are currently in the midst of another big neutering drive in Athens, to build on the work we did at the end of last year. We will keep you posted in the next issue.

By the GAWF team



Thank you

As always, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks to you, our wonderful supporters for enabling us to continue our vital work for the animals in Greece. We are so grateful to our fabulous volunteers who have helped us raise much-needed funds for the animals and we would like to send huge thanks to each and every one of you.

We would like to thank our funders and partners for their valued support: Donkey Sanctuary, RSPCA, Vegan Cakery, Brigitte Bardot Foundation, Wind, Atcom, Animal Friends Insurance, The Castanea Trust, The June Stevens Foundation, The Beryl Evetts and Robert Luff Trust, Goldman Sachs Gives, Michael Testler Charitable Foundation and The AS Butler Charitable Trust.

WANTED!

Have you got any unwanted gold, silver or costume jewellery (even if it's damaged)? Or UK or foreign currency notes? If so please read the enclosed leaflet and find out how you can support the animals in Greece quickly and easily by recycling your items.
Thank you!

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New welfare-friendly mule

As you will have read on page one, we are absolutely delighted that a new, welfare friendly mule shoe has been developed and produced in Greece – we are even more thrilled (and more than a little proud) that the force behind this pioneering innovation is none other than our Equine Project farrier Giannis Brastianos! Giannis, who works as part of our Equine Team and also in private practice, trained in the UK on a GAWF funded scholarship and is the only qualified farrier in Greece. For some time now, Giannis has been frustrated by the regular shoes used by working mule owners and made it his mission to develop and implement an effective alternative. Here, in an interview with our vet Kleo, Giannis tells us more about the first shoe specific to mules to be developed in Greece.

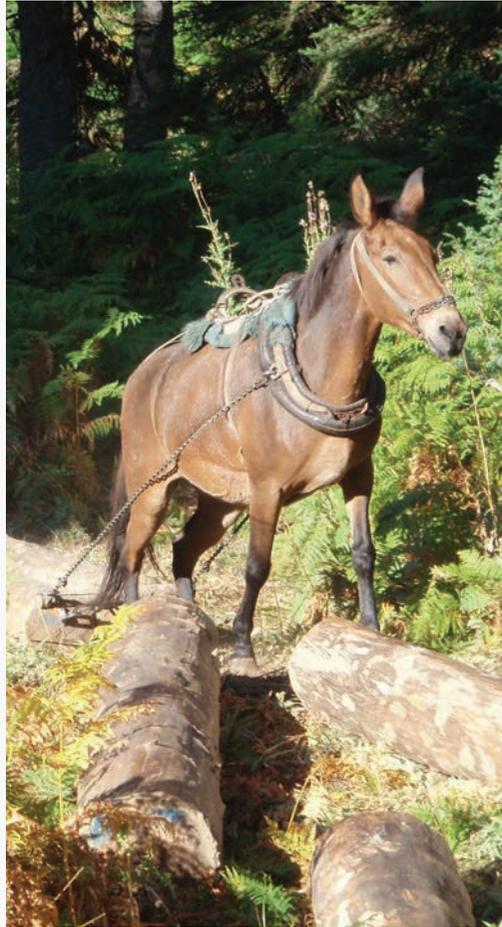
K. When did you start working with GAWF / Animal Action?

G. The first Equine Project visits I took part in were in 2004 and I had the once-in-a-lifetime chance to work alongside some well-known professional farriers from England, namely John Preece and John Fairgrieve. We quickly identified wrong practice in the shoeing of working equines, and saw that so many problems were caused by the lack of other options available to the owners.

K. Where are the large populations of working equines located in Greece, and how are they being used?

G. The largest are of mules and horses to be precise, and they're mainly located in mountainous regions of Halkidiki, Thessaly, Drama and Serres. In all areas they are considered "workers"; assisting lumberjacks with carrying wood from mountains where there are no forest roads. They have to be continuously shod in order to protect their hooves from extreme wear caused by the multiple times they walk their routes each day.

K. Is there a particular way of shoeing working equines in Greece, and how is this different from shoeing in other countries?



A working mule in Greece

G. Until now, working equines in Greece have been shod with shoes called 'plakes'. These are bits of a metal plate, cut into various sizes and fitted as they come, thus completely sealing the underside of the hoof. It isn't possible to shape these 'plakes' in order to adapt them to individual hooves. In other countries, where mules are used for the same purposes, people use normal 'open' shoes that can be shaped according to the mule's hoof.

K. Why do Greek mule owners continue to use 'plakes'?

G. Above all because they think that by sealing the hoof completely, sensitive parts are better protected on rough ground. They think that stepping on a stone without them will cause discomfort and possible lameness to the mule. Furthermore the equine owners are often resistant to change a practice they are accustomed to; one they have learned

from their ancestors.

K. So how was the new mule shoe designed?

G. After many outreaches with GAWF/AA, during which I saw many examples of the problems animals had with the old type of shoes, I concluded that a new shoe, open and corresponding to the dimensions and shape of a mule's hoof was needed. I started taking measurements of different hoof sizes, in order to have a large enough sample from which to design a new shoe. In cooperation with a company called 'Petalos' and the Dutch shoe-making firm Kerckhaert, we decided to produce a specific shoe that is fit for purpose. It has been named the "Greek Mountain" shoe.

K. How did the owners react when you discussed the new shoe with them?

G. As expected, in the beginning, they were very negative and highly critical of the shoe and weren't open to something innovative and so different from the shoes they were used to.

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shoe in Greece

However, after many attempts at persuasion and some demonstrations of the shoe and shoeing procedure, we were able to address some of their more common concerns and they came fully to understand the advantages of the new shoe and its multitude of beneficial implications for the welfare of their animals. Of course there are still many owners that refuse to try it but as with other areas of our work, education is so key and we will continue to highlight the advantages of the new shoe and hope that through gentle persuasion, even the resistant owners will eventually want to give the new shoe a try.

K. Let's talk a little about the advantages of the new shoe and the disadvantages of the old shoe.

G. In the table below I have listed the advantages of the new shoe and the disadvantages of the 'plakes'. In the latter, the complete sealing of the hoof creates anaerobic conditions that are great for microbial growth and diseases. Moreover, the shoe is not shaped for each hoof, so nails often injure living tissue. Finally, the plate can bend and remain distorted after a strong impact. This can produce a pressure point that will cause continual damage to the sole until the shoe is re-

moved.

All these disadvantages are eliminated by having an open shoe that can be shaped to the hoof, allowing the sole not only to breathe but also to harden.

K. Do you think the new shoe will get the interest it deserves, and what are your hopes for the future?

G. One thing is certain – to date, we have made a great deal of progress in changing the views of people using outdated practices. It is not easy, even when suggesting something that seems like common sense, but more and more young people are taking over their parents' work and are thankfully open to trying new things. I speak on behalf of the entire Equine Project team when I say that for us, it is vitally important not only to treat working equines in many areas of Greece but also to change the perception of people using incorrect practices and thus ensuring the highest possible standards of welfare for animals. By continuing to advocate best practice, we not only see happier, healthier equines but we improve their ability to work comfortably and thus we help people in Greece to make a living.

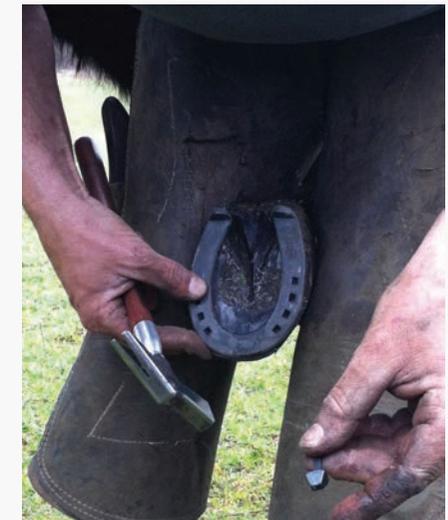
It has been an honour and privilege being a member of GAWF/AA's Equine Project team and I look forward to promoting the new shoe far and wide. I have no doubt that we will see far-reaching positive results in months and years to come as a result of the Greek Mountain Shoe.



The old 'plaka' shoe is ill fitting and creates problems



The plaka is removed to reveal a very unhealthy sole



Giannis fitting the new Greek Mountain Shoe

	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proper shape for the majority of working equines. Requires the least amount of time and effort to fit. 2. Open, can be reshaped according to hoof. 3. 19X6 thickness, covers enough of the hoof and is highly durable. 4. Does not wear easily. 5. No clips, easy to use. 6. 10 mm heel for maximum grip. 7. Sufficient space on the toe, to fit carbide pins for additional grip and less shoe wear. 8. Square nail holes, to prevent nails from being cut off. 9. Nail holes have the right pitch, respecting the conformation of the hoof, so when a nail is placed the risk of injury is minimized and at the same time the shoe is held tight in place. 10. Nail holes shaped for E-Head nails so the shoe is secured. 11. Adequate number of holes (6-8). 12. Space to pull clips, if required. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Impossible to shape, no heel coverage, leads to shrinkage of heels and injuries due to cracks. 2. Very thin metal plate can be easily distorted so excessive pressure will hurt the sole instead of protecting it. 3. Round nail holes while horseshoeing nails are rectangular so they frequently break and shoes are lost. 4. Incorrect position of nail holes leading to placement of nails in sensitive parts, injuring the sole and causing lameness and pain. 5. They seal the hoof completely, creating a perfect environment for the growth of bacteria that lead to many problems, which in some cases, can't be rectified. 6. Sealing the hoof is intended to protect the sole from sharp objects. In reality it leads to gradual accumulation of foreign objects such as stones and gravel and this can result in injuries and even cause irreparable damage to the sole.

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Lives we changed

Sifis the cat from Serifos

You will all remember the story of Sifis, the frightened, be-draggled stray cat from Serifos. As you know, we managed to catch Sifis and take him to Athens where he was gently examined by our vet.

Sadly, the prognosis wasn't good – Sifis had cancer that couldn't be cured, and we were told that he wouldn't live a long life. After everything this brave little cat had been through, we wanted to make sure that his remaining time, no matter how short, was as good as it could possibly be.



Sifis before

We found a foster home for Sifis and his carer reported that he was understandably shy and untrusting – this didn't surprise us, after all, he'd never been shown any kindness by humans before.

But something changed.

Thanks to the love and respect he was shown, Sifis came round. Although it was a slow process, Sifis began to enjoy being stroked and has even been known to settle on his carer's lap. Much to the delight of all of us, Sifis is still with us and is enjoying a lifestyle fit for a king – we are supplying him with specialist food and we believe it is nothing less than he deserves! It just goes to show how a life can be completely turned around – for the better.



Sifis now

A happy end for Mr. Friday

Readers may remember poor Mr. Friday the dog. He was found by a tourist in a sorry state and was rescued by the local animal welfare group.

He was desperately thirsty and starving, and he wolfed down the food given to him before being rushed to the vet's.



Mr Friday when he was found

He was dehydrated, emaciated, weak and had open wounds on his neck - had we not intervened there and then, we have no doubt his days would have been numbered.

Despite his terrible ordeal, Mr Friday made a full recovery. He now lives very happily with his original rescuers – having seen him gradually drag himself back to full health they simply had to open their hearts and their home to this lovable mutt! *By Lucy Westmore*



Mr Friday now, with his new playmate

UPDATE

Success!!! No more marine mammal performances at Attiko Parko Zoo under Greek Law

In January 2014, the Ministry of Rural Development & Food attempted to start proceedings that would create an exemption for the one and only legally operating zoo in Greece, Attiko Parko, from the ban passed by law in 2012 prohibiting performances with animals.

The zoo's dolphinarium held daily performances featuring marine mammals but GAWF/Animal Action strongly felt that these performances should also be banned under the 2012 law. We decided to take action and met with the Ministry, sent a letter to the responsible Minister himself, and also urged our supporters to email the Minister to show that the public were against the dolphinarium shows and wouldn't tolerate any exemptions. We made the case that all animal performances that lead to animal suffering for 'entertainment' purposes are unacceptable, and we are pleased to say that we succeeded! We hope there will be no more animal performances at the zoo's dolphinarium and we want to thank all of you for lending your support to this important campaign.
By our team in Athens

Vegfest Brighton

GAWF had a stand at this huge vegan event in March and spoke to hundreds of people interested in the plight of animals in Greece. We also auctioned two of the beautiful sculptures designed and produced by local artist, Damian Harrison and raised £400 from these. We still have one of these amazing sculptures left and are currently considering ways of raising money from it for the animals.

Many thanks to Damian for creating the sculptures and to our volunteers for helping out at the event. To see more of Damian's work visit <http://www.damianharrison.com>



Kat, Vern and Lola (rescued from Greece!) —proud owners of one of the sculptures

Lobbying to benefit strays

Last year we lobbied for revision of the article of Law 4039 that refers to neutering programmes carried out by volunteers. The law currently allows such programmes to take place only in certified veterinary clinics (private or public). Most Municipalities in Greece don't have a public veterinary clinic and local private vets often refuse to join our vet team and provide their premises. This means it can be very difficult for us to carry out neutering programmes for stray animals and we are restricted in terms of the locations we can visit.

The law was due for revision last year and we successfully lobbied to broaden the locations where neutering programmes for strays can take place. This would have allowed us to neuter in premises that belong to Municipalities or individuals, giving us much more flexibility.

Just before this revision was finalised, there was a cabinet reshuffle and a new Minister was appointed, which unfortunately meant we had to start from scratch.

Recent communications with the new Minister's secretary revealed that the law revision was still awaiting the Minister's signature. As we write, in early 2015, there is a whole new government in place, making the task of building new contacts and understandings truly reflect the Greek myth of Sisyphus... we push the boulder to the top of the hill and just as we reach the crest it rolls back down... and we have to start again. Nevertheless, we intend to keep the pressure up and hope eventually to open up new possibilities in terms of locations we can visit in the future. Without the current restrictions, we will be able to reach many more stray animals in need. *By our team in Athens*

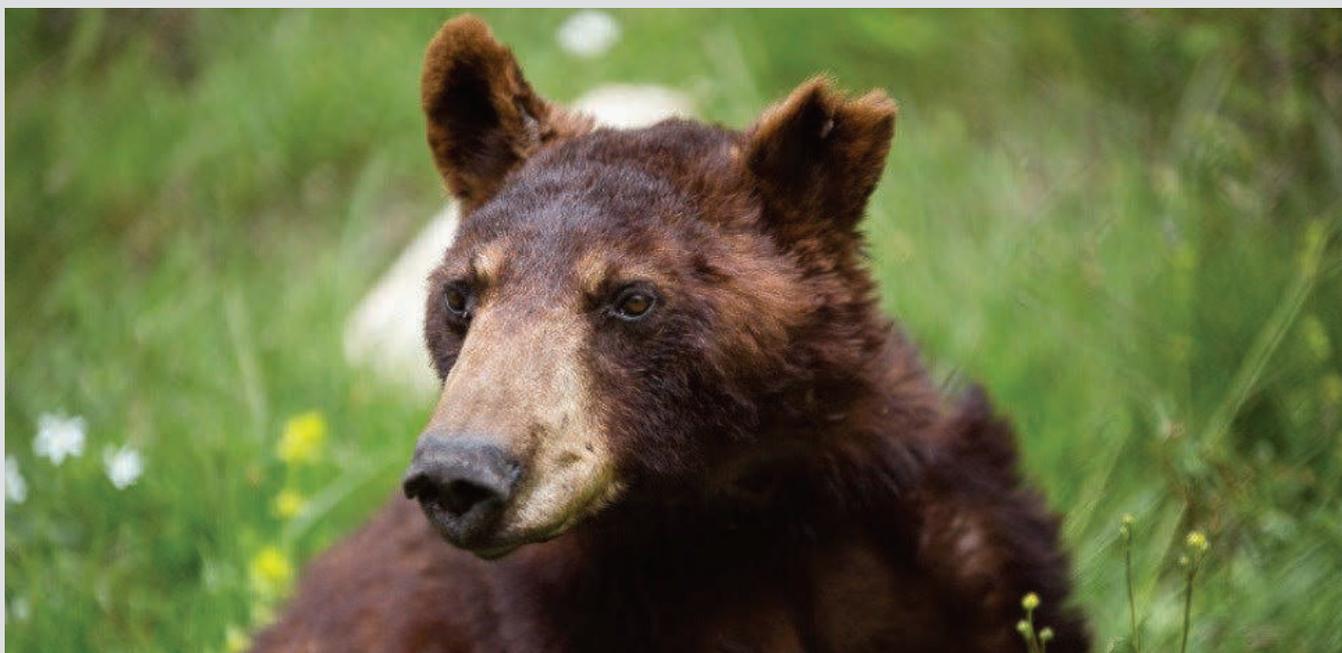


In memory of Giorgos

In December, quietly, on a wooded hillside in northern Greece, an American black bear died. Giorgos was found lying lifeless in his enclosure at the wildlife rescue and rehabilitation centre run by the NGO, Arcturos. He was the only resident of his species at the centre, which specialises in wolves and bears, having been confiscated in 1991 from his previous owner who had been using him as a dancing bear. Before that he had been a circus animal. Because of his history of long contact with humans it was never going to be possible to release him into the wild – and there is no naturally occurring population of black bears in northern Greece. However, he lived happily at the centre, where over 20 years his health improved and he was able to form a close bond with Tasoula, a brown bear. Giorgos took to digging out a den large enough for both of them each winter, and they would hibernate together.

This one bear's story is emblematic of the success of the organisations that campaigned long and hard to end the suffering of performing bears and outlaw their use in travelling circuses and shows in Greece. Arcturos was originally set up to achieve this objective and GAWF/Animal Action also played a very active role, extending the ban to all animals. Giorgos could be confiscated because attitudes to dancing bears and holding wild animals in captivity have changed so much in Greece – and elsewhere – and laws have gradually been revised to reflect this. In 2012 Greece became the first country in the EU to ban all animal performances.

Giorgos found dignity and companionship at the rescue centre, where his uniqueness, his glossy coat and quiet demeanour made him popular with visitors. Staff reported that he was gentle but also stubborn. After his pretty rocky start in life I guess no one much begrudged his occasionally behaving like... a bit of a bear! *Anna Stamatiou*



New celebrity support

We've been fortunate to have attracted the support of some new celebrities. We have welcomed Greek chef Vassilis Kallidis and comedian Katerina Vrana on board as Ambassadors and were very pleased to have social media support and general backing from animal lovers classical violinist Vanessa Mae and TV presenter Jasmine Harman.



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ANIMAL ACTION
ΔΡΑΣΗ ΓΙΑ ΤΑ ΖΩΑ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΜΜΑΣΑ



Recognition for Lily!

I first came to know Lily when she and I were both Trustees of GAWF – a position she held for many years, influencing policy and projects to the benefit of the animals of Greece. But at the same time she was also busy on another project; one that was wholly her own creation, inspiration... and burden.

Over 30 years ago Lily had become aware of the poor state of the sea turtle nesting beaches on the island of Zakynthos and, being entirely undeterred by the enormity of the task, determined that she would do something about it. Intrusive building development and disturbance from visiting tourists – both on land and at sea – meant that the endangered loggerhead turtles, whose most vital nesting beaches in the whole of the Mediterranean were in Laganas bay, were unable to come ashore and nest in peace. Nest numbers were falling – fast.

Lily set up a UK charity – MEDASSET – and another parallel not-for-profit association in Greece. Through these two bodies she lobbied, researched, educated, raised both funds and awareness, and generally fought to protect the Mediterranean’s turtles. Yes, the Mediterranean! Lily has never been one to limit the scope of her ambition, so the discrete area of Laganas in Zakynthos was gradually expanded to include the whole sea! Marine turtles don’t recognise national boundaries, so neither did Lily. She soon learned how the



European institutions worked and has since been fearless in taking her case to the international meeting of the Bern Convention in Strasbourg each year to challenge each and any nation of the Mediterranean rim when it was failing in its obligations to protect its vulnerable populations of sea turtles. Currently she is still pursuing Turkish and Greek governments to do better, while tackling the re-appearance of turtle meat for sale in the markets of Alexandria, Egypt.

Not only the survival but also the welfare of sea creatures is at the heart of MEDASSET’s work. Entanglement in fishing gear frequently causes the agonising death by drowning of seals, dolphins and turtles. So the charity is currently partner in a project to take abandoned fishing nets, “ghost nets”, (see below and left) out of the sea and recycle the nylon they are made from into reusable yarn. This, in turn, is now being successfully used in the manufacture of socks, in an example of the kind of creative thinking that typifies Lily’s approach to everything she does.

A couple of weeks ago Lily and a team from MEDASSET were at the recent International Sea Turtle Symposium in Dalaman, Turkey, where her years of dedicated work were acknowledged in a Lifetime Achievement Award. 600-odd people from around the globe rose to their feet in a standing ovation. Rarely can such a reception have been better deserved. *Anna Stamatiou, Trustee*



We need you!

We are in desperate need of more volunteers to help us collect funds at London train stations this year. If you would like to help please call us on 02073578500 or email gawf@gawf.org.uk. Our collectors tell us that they find the experience enjoyable and very rewarding, particularly when we add up their takings and let them know how much money they have raised for animals in need – London commuters can be a generous bunch! If you aren’t able to get to London perhaps you might like to hold a collection in your local area. We would be more than happy to help you arrange this so please do get in touch.

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Spotlight on a Greek animal welfare group

Friends of Animals Nea Filadelfia began 11 years ago and since that time, the group (see photo below) has changed the lives of many animals that have come into its care. In this interview, its founding member Kiki gives us an insight into the highs and lows of working at the sharp end of animal welfare in Greece.

in themselves. To make this transition as smooth as possible, we offer them some provisions such as the first vaccination, worming, and the obligatory microchip free of charge. We also work with people who contact us when they want to give their animal up and we try to explore the reasons they can't keep the animal anymore and find solutions that would help them to keep it.



How do you raise funds?

First, we have a 'virtual adoption' system. We urge people or groups to virtually adopt one of our animals for 25 euro per month. We organise fundraising bazaars as often as we can including at Christmas, Easter, May Day, summer and in October, to coincide with the WAG-A-THON walk. We cut our cake on New Year's Eve and have a Halloween dance and have also had volunteers running the marathon to raise money for us for the past 3 years.

What are the biggest animal welfare problems in your area?

The problems we usually face are those typically found in urban areas such as abandonment of animals. Perhaps because people are aware of our animal welfare work, many abandon animals outside or around the shelter and this can be extremely difficult to manage, due to lack of space in the shelter and our foster homes.

Why, when and how did you start your group?

Friends of Animals of Nea Filadelfia was founded in 2004 in order to address the problems associated with stray dogs and cats in our town. We also wanted to work towards changing the attitudes of the local people with regards to the animals, so that they can live in harmony with them. Therefore, one of the things that we systematically do is talk to schools, especially primary schools, hoping that the new generation will be kinder to animals.

How does GAWF/Animal Action assist you with your work?

GAWF/AA supports our work by offering us free neutering for dogs and cats. Neutering cats is particularly important because there are no other programs currently running.

What are the biggest challenges you have faced in your work with animals?

The biggest challenge is trying to persuade people to adopt or even foster animals in Greece. Often, when people call us to let us know they have found an animal in need we will first ask whether they could take the animal



Pups at the shelter

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Friends of Animals, Nea Filadelfia

Can you tell us about a success story?

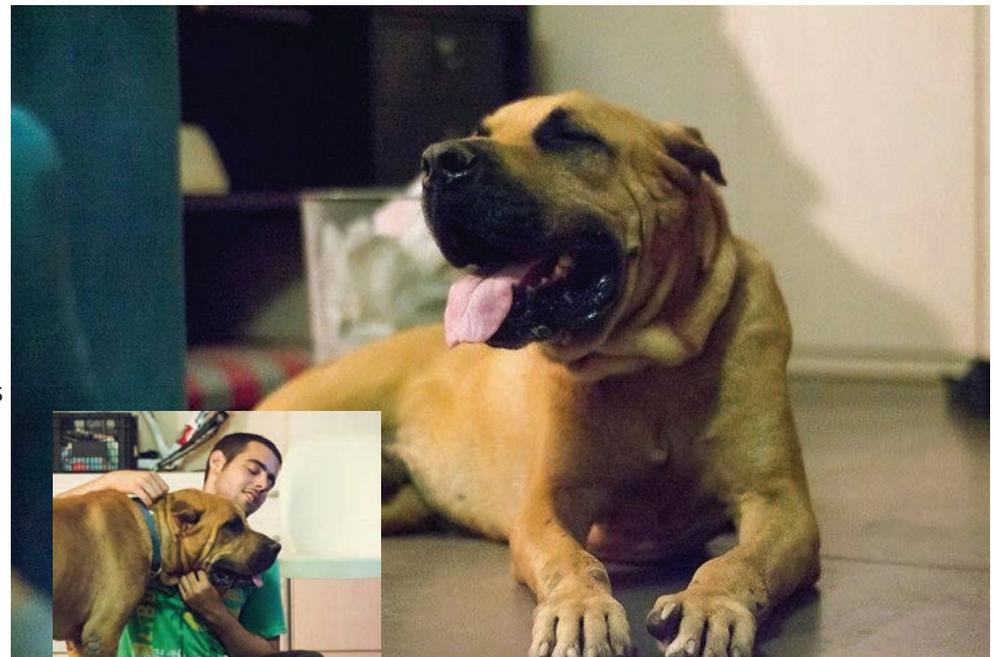
It was May 5, 2014, when we found a giant dog, a mastiff type, tied up outside our shelter, abandoned. He was in very poor condition and could barely stand up. Both of his hind legs had deep wounds in two places and we could see the bone protruding. Veterinary tests showed the poor dog had Leishmania, which hadn't – thankfully - damaged his vital organs, but the sickness had taken its toll and Talos, as we named him, was in a bad way. The wounds we saw on his body were sores that had caused osteomyelitis so we treated these quickly and started Intensive treatment for Leishmania and antibiotics for the pressure sores. At the same time, volunteers tried to give him as much love as possible and heal the wounds of his soul. And a miracle happened! Gradually he rose to his feet and began to walk tentatively and slowly. The wounds started healing and just three months later, Talos wagged his tail, and barked like any other dog. With the help of GAWF/ Animal Action we neutered him as well.

Then a second miracle happened. Alexander, a kind young man had previously adopted Oliver from us who was a Cane Corso with damaged kidneys - also caused by Leishmania. Alexander offered Oliver a happy and loving life until he passed away at which time he visited the shelter again and this time met and adopted Talos! This giant of a dog who had been reduced to a weak and cowering wreck by disease and neglect now stands tall and proud and lives a very happy life with Alexander and his family – nothing less than he deserves! It is outcomes like this that keep us all going through the exceptionally hard times and people like Alexander who give us hope for a better future of animals in Greece.

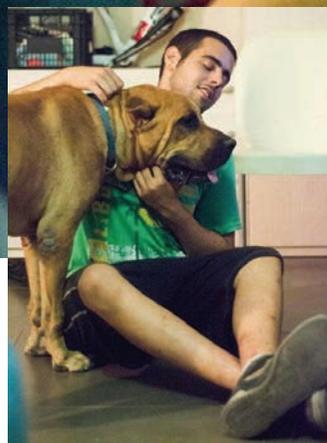
By Evgenia Mataragka



Talos was found tied up outside the shelter in a terrible way...



...but with love and care he survived and has found a forever home with Alexander



For more information:
<http://www.friendsofanimals-nf.com>

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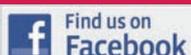
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