



# Turning Pointe Donkey Rescue

Quarterly Newsletter  
Fall 2005

## Laminitis

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Laminitis is the last article in the series on "How does your donkey score?". Laminitis, often called founder, is an inflammation in the lamina in the foot. First, a review of anatomy of the equine foot will facilitate a better understanding of laminitis. All equids walk on a single digit. For comparison, our fingernail is equivalent to their hoof capsule and the connection of our fingernail to the deeper tissue is the lamina. During laminitis, the attachment (lamina) of the hoof wall (fingernail) is disrupted from a critical element of the underlying tissue, the coffin bone (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Normal

Imagine the pain that occurs when your fingernail is torn back into the sensitive tissue or bent back, now imagine having to bear all your weight and walk on that fingernail. This gives you an idea of the pain involved with the acute form of the disease. Typically, only the front feet are involved, but in severe cases all four feet may be involved. During the acute (active) stage of laminitis, the individual feet are extremely painful. Depending upon the severity of the inflammation, the pain may be short-lived without obvious changes in the foot; or so severe that the coffin bone alters its position within the hoof capsule. Two types of movement are possible. The one type that most people are aware of is "rotation of the coffin" within the hoof capsule (Figure 2). With rotation only, the lamina at the toe is disrupted. The other type is the breakdown of entire laminar connection between the coffin bone and the hoof wall that leads to the coffin bone sinking within the hoof capsule (Figure 3). If this form is severe enough, the hoof capsule may be left behind, ie the coffin bone comes out of the hoof capsule- just like stepping out of a shoe.

Figure 2. Rotation

Figure 3. Sinking

The severity of the disease and the commitment of the owner will determine the outcome, with euthanasia one of the scenarios. Studies reviewing long-term outcomes of laminitis in horses, report that 75% of those affected were euthanized. Since donkeys seem to be much more pain tolerant than horses, are not usually "athletes" and are more inclined to keep off their feet during the acute aspect of the inflammation, they seem to have a better outcome for long-term survival.

The form of laminitis most commonly seen by the Rescue is the chronic form. When the lamina of the foot is damaged by inflammation, hoof growth often changes. The heels grow faster than the toe, leading to the characteristic "elf slippered" appearance of the foot. In the absence of routine, regularly scheduled farriery, the hoof walls of affected donkeys may actually curl. As can be imagined, the donkeys become very painful on their feet and are very reluctant to walk. Also, due to inflammation, the white line area of the hoof is damaged, and becomes quite wide and spongy in consistency. This is most prevalent at the toe for those suffering rotation. White line damage can lead to an increased incidence of "gravel" or hoof abscesses involving the white line.

Treatment of laminitis involves removing/correcting the inciting cause, pain control and regular hoof care. If your donkey has foundered due to being overweight, then dietary changes are necessary. Other causes of laminitis include sudden feed changes, especially eating too much concentrate/grain; severe illness, especially if the intestinal tract is involved; and injuries to the opposite leg that require more weight to be

placed on the supporting leg. Adequate pain control may be very difficult to achieve in severe cases. The simultaneous use of several methods is often necessary. Medications, such as phenylbutazone (Bute) and Banamine, are the most commonly used for pain control. These medications are non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAID's) and are in the same group of drugs as aspirin and ibuprofen. It is important to remember that these drugs can have severe and even life-threatening side effects if not used correctly. Other pain medications, such as detomidine, may also be used. In addition during the acute phase of the disease, it is important to keep the donkey confined to a stall or very small paddock, whether it is a new occurrence or a flare-up of chronic disease. This, along with a soft, well-bedded surface, will help relieve pain by providing both support to the foot and encouraging the donkey to lie down and take weight off its feet. Stall confinement may be necessary for only a few days or may be required for months. It takes about a year for a hoof to re-grow fully. Finally, it is essential to have a close working relationship with a farrier who is experienced both in trimming donkey feet and dealing with laminitis. In contrast to the goal of routine trimming of horses' hooves, donkeys are meant to have a normal more upright hoof wall. More heel should be left on a properly trimmed donkey hoof. This correct, more upright stance and trim becomes even more critical for donkeys affected by laminitis. A donkey-knowledgeable farrier or veterinarian may also elect to place pads on the hooves to provide extra sole support. Therefore, if faced with a severe case of laminitis in your donkey, a successful outcome will be greatly enhanced by a strong working relationship between you, your veterinarian and your farrier, coupled with your willingness and dedication to follow their directions for care.

In closing, if your donkey founders, it is going to be a potentially long, involved, expensive, and most importantly, an emotionally draining experience. It is extremely difficult to watch your donkey in pain during the healing process. Prevention of laminitis is preferable, but treatment should be considered and may be rewarded.

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Future newsletter articles: What would you like to hear about? Include your ideas when you renew your memberships for 2006.

### What's New?

- Thanks to everyone who has new donkeys in their barn. As we approach our first anniversary, we are deeply appreciative of all the new, and forever homes our donkeys now call home!
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Adopter	Donkey's Name
Tim and Sue Snyder	Willy and Rod Stewart
Melinda Lemmon	Baxter
Sharon Windsor	Raven
Sue Hodson	Lynn
Tia Bonkowski	Cloudy
Carol and Thomas Rapson	Toby
Nina Mattarella, M.D.	Frisbee
Tobias Lehman	Dude
Barry Yano, DVM, PhD	Dexter
Mari Nicol, DVM	Pal and Polly
Tammy and Bryan Marks	Oliver Ward
Brenda Moyer	Ben
Christy Bedford, DVM and Will Bedford	Kevin
Connie Sjoblom	Levi

- Come visit our website!

Thanks to Chris Wilson, up-to-date information on donkeys available for adoption, educational information and links, paperwork related to adoptions, previous newsletters and just fun letters on how our donkeys are doing in their new homes are available on the web at:  
[www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com](http://www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com)

➤ Donkeys available for adoption:

To see if your favorite donkey is still available for adoption, visit us at our website [www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com](http://www.turningpointedonkeyrescue.com) or at [www.petfinders.org](http://www.petfinders.org) .

Donkey name's	Pertinent comments
<p>Joni</p> 	<p>Joni is a young (4-5 years old), brown, standard jennet that is very sweet and appreciates any attention paid to her, but is still a little apprehensive when approaching someone that she doesn't know. She loves treats and readily demands her grain in the morning. Joni leads, loads and ties. She is very comfortable having her front legs and feet handled, but is still somewhat apprehensive about her hind feet. Joni gets along well with everyone, including sheep, and goats. For more information, contact Tia at 810-797-2229</p>
<p>Jill</p> 	<p>Jill is a shy, mature, grey, standard jennet that is about 6-7 years old. She needs someone with plenty of time, patience and an understanding of equine behavior. She leads, ties and loads, but is difficult to catch without a lot of patience and treats. She is apprehensive about her feet and legs being handled. Therefore, for everyone's safety, Jill was tranquilized for her first trimming with us - which she desperately needed. Jill gets along well with other donkeys and would make a good companion for another donkey or horse. For more information, contact Tia at 810-797-2229</p>
<p>Sara and Samantha</p> 	<p>Sara and Samantha are perhaps the oldest donkeys that most of us have seen, they are guessed to be over 40yrs old. They are also two of the kindest, gentlest and sweetest long ears. Sara and Samantha need a retirement home together where they will never be separated. It is believed that these two are most likely mother and daughter, so have probably been together all of their lives. They should never have to compete for their food or shelter. They both ADORE any and all attention and go into a trance while being brushed. For more information, contact Sharon at 517-623-0000.</p>
<p>Murray</p> 	<p>Murray is a 9 year old standard gray dun gelding who has it all! He is handsome, in great condition AND he's well trained. We were told that Murray has ponied behind horses like a pro, so he's a very good candidate for being a pack donkey. He is good for the farrier and leads like an absolute dream. The sky is the limit with this amazing guy! Murray came to TPDR from a horse rescue who thankfully saved him at a sale and now he is ready to come to your home. For more information please contact Sue at 269-209-3578 or <a href="mailto:ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com">ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com</a></p>

Ruth



Ruth is a gorgeous black standard 6 year old jennet. Ruth has a kind heart, but it is so overshadowed by her fear and distrust of humans that she **MUST** go to a very patient, kind, loving, knowledgeable home. One must be able to give her unconditional love without any expectations. For more information, contact Sharon Windsor at 517-623-0000

Marty



Marvelous Marty is a 3 year old gray dun standard donkey gelding who is a very attractive guy! He is young, ready and willing to start learning more. Marty already leads well and is good with front feet trimmings! He's kind of a shy guy, but once that petting and brushing starts, he's all about it! With time and patience, he will be a wonderful donkey. Marty came to TPDR from a horse rescue who thankfully saved him at a sale. For more information please contact Sue 269-209-3578 or [ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com](mailto:ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com)

Little Richard


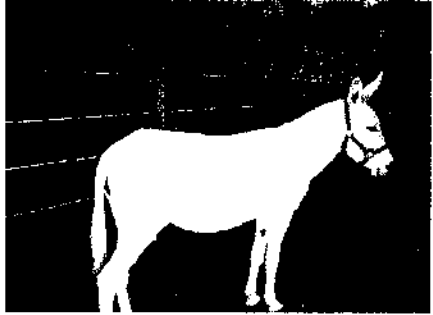


Little Richard is a very adorable, dark bay gelded mini mule who is 3.5 years old. He has super conformation with a disposition to match! He is great for the farrier, leads and ties too. He also will just jump right into the trailer and is ready to go where you're taking him. Little Richard is getting some special attention with a trainer right now and might even be a driving mule once he's done! He's one of his foster mom's favorites because he's so cute and sweet. He's very social with people, adores brushing and treats. Little Richard would make a fabulous companion for donkeys, mules or horses of any size. For further information, contact Sharon at. 517-623-0000.

Kirby



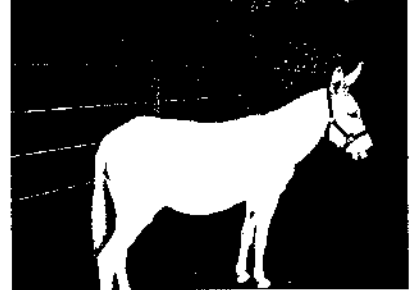
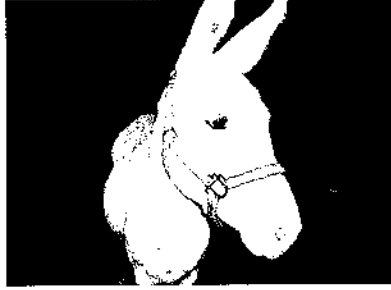
Kirby is a handsome 6 year old standard donkey gelding with a beautiful reddish tone to his coat. He is a BLM donkey who was bought at an auction. Kirby is a shy guy who hasn't had much handling, but he is a very calm and willing learner which makes training so much easier! With a little sweet talk, he comes right up for his attention. His foster mom is working on leading him right now, he ties fine and likes brushing. He was pretty nervous with the farrier at first, but then settled down for it. Kirby has "tons of potential" that is peeking through and we know that the time and patience put into him will definitely be worth it! He is already an amazing boy! For more information, please contact Sue 269-209-3578 or [ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com](mailto:ssnyder@waltersdimmick.com)

<p>Jim</p> 	<p>Jim is a really handsome 11yr old coppery color 10 or 11hh mule gelding. Besides his good looks, this boy also has wonderful ground manners! He leads, ties, loads and is just a delightful guy. Jim also stands like a perfect gentleman for his vaccinations and hoof trims. He is no problem to catch and is very sweet and friendly without being pushy about it. Jim came to the Rescue after his driving partner got out of their pasture and was killed in the road. Since then, he's been very sour about driving. We do not know if he's ever been ridden, but do know that he'd make a wonderful companion for another equine and a lucky family. For further information, contact Sharon at. 517-623-0000</p>
<p>Myrtle</p> 	<p>Myrtle is a white 11 year old standard donkey. Myrtle was rescued from an auction where she had been taken with her foal. She was very thin, had numerous fly bites and was still trying to take care of her foal. Myrtle has settled into her foster home and is now ready for adoption. She's an incredibly friendly donkey who always greets you with a bray and loves a good scratching! For more information, contact <a href="mailto:scharmen@msu.edu">scharmen@msu.edu</a></p>

- TPDR appreciates the support of all our members. Their generosity and selflessness in improving donkey welfare is extraordinary. Benefactors deserving special praise & thanks are:

TPDR Supporter	In appreciation for:
Ray Miller	Rescuing Myrtle from the auction
Tobias Lehman.	Continued help in evaluating, training and offering temporary housing for the TPDR animals
Chuck and Lynn Ward	Locating Cloudy for the rescue and saving our two (Old Lady Donkeys) Sara and Samantha
Dr. Rock, DVM, and Dr. Perry Ragon, DVM	Caring for Sara and Samantha, first at the Ward's, and now at Sharon Windsor's
Ellen Dahlstet	Her continued generous support of TPDR on multiple fronts.
Mike Terpening	Saving 6 standard donkeys from a sale
Kern Road Veterinary Clinic	Referring Carol and Thomas Rapson to TPDR
Beadle Lake Veterinary Clinic	Veterinary care and donkey castrations
Chris Wilson	The development of our website, which is outstanding!!
Bill Lute	His continuing & greatly appreciated support
MSU Large Animal Veterinary Teaching Hospital, especially Kim Johnston, DVM and technicians - Amy and Libby	Surgery and care of Frisbee, a beautiful black and white Tennessee Walking Horse foal.
Eileen McKee	Transportation, farm evaluations, and fostering of Dexter and Toby
Dr. Mari Nicol, DVM	Investigation of a potential donkey neglect situation

- Make sure to visit us at the North American Horse Spectacular in Novi - November 11-13, 2005. We are looking forward to being in the new Expo Center – so, please come visit us!
- Do you have a desire to help and have some extra time?
  - Are you a great organizer with some extra time? We are in need of a volunteer coordinator.
  - If you have several hours to help man the TPDR booth and “talk donkeys” to Expo visitors, please call Sue at 269-209-3578.
  - Enjoy working with equids and have an extra stall or two? Consider becoming a foster home for a donkey that may need a temporary home prior to adoption.
- What a Rescue is all about!



Myrtle is a beautiful, white 11 year old standard donkey. If it wasn't bad enough that Myrtle and her jennet foal were almost starved to death prior to arriving at a sale barn, they were dropped off at the sale barn on Thursday and apparently given little to no food or water until they were purchased at the auction on Saturday.

Ray Miller is a wonderful man who saved both mama and baby. He was very worried that the pair might not even make the trip home in their emaciated condition. However, Myrtle has a zest for life that she definitely passed onto her foal because make it they both did! Ray did a wonderful job with Myrtle, giving her the care, kindness and food she so much needed and deserved. He also treated Myrtle's inflamed, and fly-eaten skin. Ray has been a wonderful caretaker for many animals over the years and we truly thank him for giving Myrtle and her foal a chance.

Ray decided to keep the foal and vowed to find a good home for Myrtle where this would never happen to her again. He spoke to two of TPDR's friends from Indiana and they asked him to call. Myrtle has settled into her foster home where she continues her rehabilitation and is available for adoption. She's an incredibly friendly donkey who always greets you with a bray and loves a good scratching!