

compassion

a newsletter of american fondouk



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From the desk of *Dr. Gigi Kay...*

As someone who loves animals as much as I do, you should know you're making a world of difference for suffering animals a world away. Best of all? You're doing it *your way*! When you choose to support American Fondouk, you're empowering a worldwide community of animal lovers who share your deep commitment to improving the lives of all animals. For that, I can never thank you enough.

Together we share a unique interest in helping equids – horses, donkeys, and mules – live better lives in Fez, Morocco. You understand the power that one gift can have as it travels around the world to provide free veterinary care – and save lives.

It's been a labor of love since our founding more than 90 years ago.

Today, I'm happy to report to you we're stronger than ever! Inside your new issue of *Compassion*, you'll find important updates and great news about how we're helping more animals daily. As a good friend of the Fondouk, you understand we're helping families and people too. Perhaps nowhere in the world do you find a people's well-being as intertwined with their working animals as Fez.

You'll read about Dr. Jay Merriam's exceptional visit to American Fondouk this year. It's a firsthand look into the incredible demands of performing everything from routine medical procedures to advanced surgeries on these powerful and beautiful animals.

More, you'll see how the life-saving tool of education is shaping this ancient land in new ways. From free workshops designed to make a practical difference today, to training the veterinarians of tomorrow, American Fondouk will continue to save and improve real lives. *Thank you for all the progress we have made – and all that we will make!*

– Dr. Gigi Kay, Director



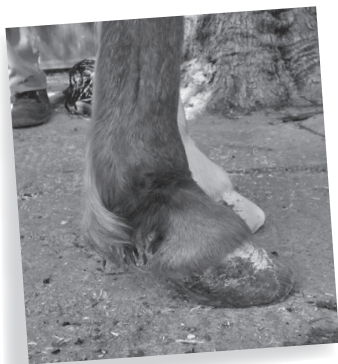
A Taste of Daily Life at **American Fondouk ...**

By Jay Merriam DVM, MS, Fondouk Board Member

The American Fondouk Hospital for working equids in Fez, Morocco, is one of the largest working equids (horses, donkeys, and mules) hospitals in the world. Certainly, it's one of the busiest. As a Director and surgeon, I travel to Fez from Colorado at least once a year to work, listen, and teach. After a warm and sunny Monday afternoon pickup in Fez, it was time to get to work. This year's trip would prove exceptional!

Day 1

Tuesday morning, 7:30 a.m. We began hospital rounds. As usual, our 24 stalls held about 36 animals, with another 6 tied in the courtyard. When the doors



opened, we also saw a steady stream of outpatients.

At the end of rounds, Dr. Ahmed had put my name beside 10 of the cases for consults, and the Director, Dr. Gigi Kay, assigned me to another 3 or 4 outpatients.

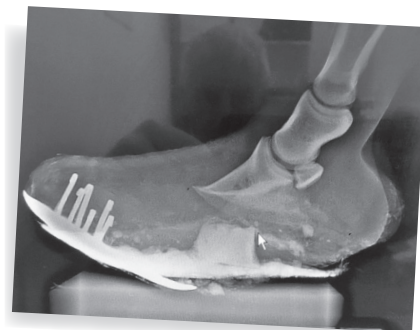
Cases here are almost never what they seem at first glance. Some go so far astray that the animals sometimes, like today, end up "going to heaven." Maladies range from gangrenous avascular necrosis of the hoof – with no possibility of treatment – to massive P3 fractures

that actually can heal nicely soon after receiving a proper shoe. Tomorrow we'll do some eye operations.

Day 2

Wednesday. Another bright, clear morning, starting with strong coffee. On daily rounds, 42 cases needed review. Dr. Gigi Kay, the students, and I began discussing nuances of their progress (or not) in detail. Gigi knows everything about running a place like this, down to feeding and medication schedules. Our students are from Scotland, Italy, and France – and for the first time – we have 5 Moroccan vets as interns/staff, with more applying each year.

We assigned the various surgeries and special procedures needed today, including enucleation (eye removal), lameness exams, and an ultrasound session for me. As always, there'd be lots of bandage changes, skin grafting, and hoof care. We have a shortage this month of Ketamine anesthesia, so we are saving what little we have for emergencies.





One highlight was seeing how well the staff is progressing. I'm standing back more, answering fewer questions, and growing more and more proud of what is going on!

Day 3

Thursday. The students arrive! Every year I am more impressed with the students I meet. My trip is never on the same dates, so I get a pretty good sample of the student population. Their motivations are clear: see as many cases and learn as much about equine medicine as they can in the 2-4 weeks they are here. They come from Glasgow and Edinburgh and Morocco mostly, but more and more are coming from the states and the UK. Essentially, they come because of the high caseload and complicated problems here. This is easily the largest (by caseload) equine urgent care hospital in the world. We couldn't hire enough techs to cover the daily treatments, even if they were available.

The experience of working on these animals will easily translate into the needed clinical skills for routine practice anywhere. Our Moroccan students can return for longer stays, and some can apply for the 3 internships we have, which can then lead to more success.

Day 4

Friday. We received our first shipment of Ketamine (anesthesia) today and have several surgeries scheduled. A tumor resection and perhaps a castration. Just feels

better knowing we can anesthetize again as needed. The supply chain here is at best "flexible" and at worst non-existent. Some years I bring halters, medications, and other things with me.

Sent another emergency rope injury to heaven yesterday. I suspected a broken hip, but the autopsy revealed massive tendon rupture and loss of function high up the leg. No hope for survival. The case of the day was a 6-year-old stallion with "Sinbad" feet – toes curled up and shoes not hitting the ground. Azami the farrier went to work, and amazingly, the lucky equine walked out almost normally!

On Saturday, we'll be hosting a workshop for 30 vets and farriers exploring ways they can better work together.

Day 5

Saturday. Today is the workshop for vets and farriers. I have given national level talks on vet/farrier relationships in the U.S. and Canada, but this is a first here. We welcomed about 30 vets and 8 farriers from all over Morocco. Mustad, one of the major international hoof care companies was a sponsor. We provided refreshments, lunch, and a great program.



Sunday I'll begin my trip back to Denver. My greatest impression is — the American Fondouk is booming! Training Moroccan vets here is lifting the level of equine care in all parts of the country. For veterinary care, it's always free. No families ever see a bill.

Overall, there's no end to medical and surgical expenses here. But there's also a great need for repairing, remodeling, and upgrading our aging facilities. We very much need and appreciate your support. Thank you!

AMFON Workshops

Free Facts from Farriers and Much More!

Back in November, we hosted a Farrier Workshop sponsored by the British Equine Veterinary Association. There were about 30 participants, mostly local farriers and horse owners. The speakers were two farriers from the UK who covered new ways for owners and farriers to work together to improve the lives of equines and the families they serve. All too often, owners are reluctant to accept new techniques from their farriers. But that's changing due to education. To encourage participation, our workshops are always free all year long.



*Providing Charitable Veterinary Care
in Morocco Since 1927™*

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www.fondouk.org 617.522.7400

The working animals in Fez, Medina will always need our help. We've been helping them, with the support of friends like you, since 1927.

If you would like more information about including the American Fondouk in your estate plan, please contact Raffaella Torchia at 617-541-5011.

R&A with Ron and Julie Druker

We recently had the pleasure of a visit from Ron and Julie Druker. Julie is member of the MSPCA Board of Overseers, and she and her husband Ron have a keen eye for detail when it comes to caring for the animals they love so deeply. Here's some of what they saw.



What caught your eye upon arriving at American Fondouk?

It was pristinely clean, with white wash walls, and a beautiful sign welcoming you.

Was there a line of owners and their animals waiting for treatment?

There were horses and mules being evaluated in the courtyard.

Did you see family members accompanying their animals?

There was a man and his son visiting their injured mule. The man was very distressed that his animal, required for his livelihood, needed treatment. He also had compassion for the animal – and was saddened by its predicament.

Dr. Kay, brilliantly, has a program that subsidizes the owner's loss of income for the days their animals are unable to work. If the animal needs to be euthanized, the Fondouk will help the family find a healthy animal, negotiate a reasonable price, and subsidize the purchase.

What would you tell others about your experiences at American Fondouk?

There is no one like Gigi Kay. She is a charismatic and a caring leader. The Fondouk is clean, well maintained, and an oasis in a very busy city. She has a unique ability to address the needs of the Fondouk, the interns, and the community. You couldn't find anyone better.

What has left a lasting impression on you?

Meeting with Gigi. Visiting the Fondouk leaves a lasting impression of how much Gigi has been able to achieve in moving the mission of the Fondouk forward.

Why do you believe a gift from a donor or potential donor is so important?

The Fondouk helps people who couldn't otherwise afford to treat their animals. This alleviates suffering and helps support the community. The intern program is exceptional. One visit with Gigi Kay at the Fondouk would convince anyone to be generous.