



Veteran journalist Eric Margolis and Princess Alia's foundation raises awareness on rescuing animals from war zones

By Zach Harper

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War tears communities apart and prompts suffering among adults and children worldwide, but it also severely affects animals, making them vulnerable and placing them at risk of great harm in times of conflict. Longtime journalist **Eric Margolis** and **Princess Alia** of Jordan's foundation joined with **Four Paws International** to raise awareness about work that's being done to help animals in war-torn countries at a special event at Toronto's Royal York Hotel on Oct. 30.

Eric, who has reported on conflicts worldwide, including in the Middle East, also has a strong love for animals, which is why he founded the **Eric S. Margolis Family Foundation**. It supports organizations working to provide sanctuary for animals and those that are also working toward more stringent animal cruelty laws worldwide. Last week's event was held in cooperation with Four Paws International, and featured a panel focusing on the difficulties of planning and executing high-risk animals rescues in war zones.

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Eric and Dana Margolis are passionate animal welfare advocates. Photo: © The Eric S. Margolis Family Foundation

"I have never been able to witness the suffering of helpless animals who have no voice to express their pain, fears, loneliness and being wrenched away from family – without taking action," Eric said in

a press release before the event. "We share all these emotions with animals – and they with us.

"Four Paws and the **Princess Alia Foundation** continue to impress me greatly with their dedication of providing a sanctuary for abused, neglected and abandoned animals, both wild and domesticated, and we are honoured to have them join us in Toronto for this meaningful evening of awareness and support."



The aforementioned panel featured discussion from Eric, Dr. **Amir Khalil** of Four Paws and *National Geographic* senior writer **Sharon Guynup**. Princess Alia was also due to take part in the panel, but unfortunately could not make it to the event due to an emergency.

Amir spoke about his work negotiating animal rescues in conflict zones. The panel also highlighted work Alia's **Al Ma'wa for Nature and Wildlife** does in helping animals experience freedom from war. The organization was established through a partnership between the Princess Alia Foundation and Four Paws in 2011. It runs two centres: the New Hope Centre in Amman, Jordan and the Al Ma'wa Wildlife Reserve, in the ancient northern Jordanian city of Jerash. At New Hope, animals receive urgent medical care and are rehabilitated by its staff. Those that cannot be released back into the wild in their countries of origin are sent to the Al Ma'wa reserve.



The room was packed at for the panel, which included an awesome highlight reel of Four Paws' work rescuing animals! Photo: © The Eric S. Margolis Family Foundation

Four Paws works in 10 countries around the world and also runs three bear sanctuaries and

Lionsrock, a planned sanctuary for big cats. You can watch the clip below for more information on Lionsrock and the work of Four Paws:



Alia is well-known for her animal welfare work. The Princess Alia Foundation's motto is "Respect and Compassion towards Creation," and in 2011, she gave the keynote address at the World Arabian Horse Organization conference. Her speech highlighted the relationship between horses and humans and the connection between human rights and animal welfare.

We're thrilled to see Princess Alia and Eric working on such an important cause together!

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