

Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490

Tucson, AZ 85740

June 2015

Dear Supporter,

To keep you more informed about the happenings at the sanctuary, various medical procedures for particular pigs or updates on individuals or groups that were rescued, we will send occasional updates like this one between the issues of our regular Newsletter. For those who are fairly new to our support team at Ironwood, this can be a chance for you to meet some of our pigs from the past. We hope that you will enjoy these updates.

It's only June and we have already been dealing with temperatures of 100 degrees and above for well over a month. The seasonal changes at the sanctuary which occur in the early spring and late fall, are time consuming and often hard, dusty work. Each spring the first task is to start rolling out the shade cloth to provide adequate shade in all of the 26 different fields as well as the backyards and pen areas. We began that in March this year as the temperatures climbed into the 90s. Some shades can simply be rolled back out and reattached to poles and fences. Others need to be repaired or replaced. Some areas of the fields that have been expanded or rearranged during the winter will need to start from scratch to build new shade ramadas.

The second step is putting out the wading pools. Pigs cannot pant or sweat to release body heat and must have water or mud to keep their bodies cool. We place pools in all the pigs' areas scattered about so there is plenty of cool water to play in or even nap in, in some cases. The elderly pigs have difficulty stepping in and out of the pools, so we make "cut outs" for them. One section of the pool has its side cut down then covered with duct tape to prevent a rough edge. This enables an arthritic pig to easily use a pool. During late April and May we began taking down the carpet "doorways" from all the shelters. These have to be labeled to match up with the same shelter for next winter. We also sort those to be saved and those to be replaced then begin cutting those replacements to have them ready to roll next fall. This is a huge job since there are a lot of shelters scattered across the sanctuary's property.

Then comes the dirty job.....bringing in the blankets! Our pigs love their blankets and we use tons of them every year. So when it gets hot we go through every single house and shelter and sort out blankets that are still good enough to be used again next winter, those that need to be trashed and some that are "so so" and will stay out to continue to be used. The good used blankets have to be shaken out and believe me, they can get full of dirt. This is one of the dirtiest jobs out here! After shaking as much sand out as possible, the blankets are folded, stacked and tied in bundles to be stored till next fall.

Sincerely,

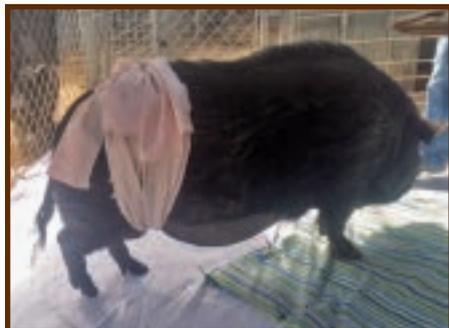
Donna Thomason
Sponsorship Coordinator

PS Seeing a group of pigs resting under a shade ramada or rolling in the mud or sleeping in a pool always brings a smile to my face. Thank you for making it possible for us to perform these seasonal chores to provide for the changing needs of the pigs' comfort.



Theo To The Rescue

Lulu is a 5½ year old pig who went in to be spayed in March. She had not been exhibiting any problems but was simply one of those gals who had some really annoying behaviors during her monthly heats and our goal is to spay all our females for health reasons. The surgery went well, but Lulu began bleeding from her incision later that day after she had returned to the sanctuary. This is not uncommon since there are blood vessels in the fat layer that may bleed for a period of time until they clot. We wrapped her belly several times to put pressure on the



incision, but because of Lulu's "spare tire" the bandages kept rolling up and off of the target area. Despite efforts during the night with ice packs and pressure, the next morning Lulu was almost unresponsive and still bleeding. We rushed her to our vet early that morning where she had to undergo a second surgery to go in and try to stop the bleeding. Lulu was given IV fluids and kept overnight.

The following day a sonogram showed Lulu was still bleeding into her abdomen. After much research and discussion among other vets as well as back and forth with Mary, everyone came to the conclusion that the only thing that may save Lulu's life was to try to do a blood



Theo

transfusion for red cells and clotting factors. A transfusion was something we had never dealt with before and all of us, vets included, were apprehensive. We needed a strong, healthy pig to donate blood and after some discussion decided on Barnabus. Tim, Julian and I headed to his field to load him into a kennel for transporting to the clinic. Barnabus had other ideas though and ran for the hills! As we did a couple of laps around the field in attempts to catch him, I noticed that Theo was just standing nearby watching us. I took that as his way of volunteering to go. I mean, after all, everyone else had disappeared. Theo willingly got into the carrier and off he went to the vet's.

That afternoon Theo, the picture of perfect and total cooperation at the vet clinic, donated blood for Lulu's transfusion. The procedure went smoothly and was a great success. After a short period Lulu got up and ate a little bit, her first attempt to eat since the surgery three days ago. Both pigs spent two more days and nights at the clinic, Lulu for monitoring and to continue IV fluids and Theo in case he was needed again.

The pigs arrived back at Ironwood on March 16th. Theo the Hero went back to his field where he had his IV removed then was given a veggie burrito as a reward. He was the champion of our first ever blood transfusion! Lulu spent the next two weeks in a holding pen where she gradually improved. We continued giving her fluids until she was drinking on her own. Her appetite got better day by day. Finally toward the end of the month Lulu was able to go home to her field and her friend, Sampson. She is doing fantastic, totally back to normal (minus the annoying heat behaviors!) and glad to be home. A super big thanks to Theo for volunteering to donate his blood and to the vets, Dr. Grimbely and Dr. Staten for taking that leap to perform a procedure they had never done on a pot bellied pig. All's well that ends well!

---Donna



Lulu

If you would like to help cover the expenses of Lulu's two surgeries as well as hers and Theo's blood transfusion, just designate your donation for Lulu and Theo. The combined expenses for all of the procedures was \$2,928. Thank you for all of your support!!

Desert Rescue Update

In June of 2013 we rescued a family of six wild pigs that had been living near an abandoned resort out in the desert south of Tucson. (You can read the full article about this rescue in our September 2013 issue which is available on our web site.) Four females, one of whom was pregnant and two males were the remains of a herd of wild pigs that has supposedly been living in the desert for the past 24 years. A squatter at the dilapidated resort put out water for the pigs and would share scraps of food with them. With plans to demolish the remains of the buildings, the squatter was evicted and the landowner called for our help to capture the pigs.



different section and hung out with a group of other pigs, but they soon drifted back to where the boys lived. They do have other friends they spend time with, but there is a special bond between the six of them. I think it's more than just a family bond. Part of it must be a survivors' bond from the shared hard times during their life in the desert.

This group of pigs looks nothing like the haggard group that arrived two years ago. Their bodies have filled out and with their full winter coats, they all look fantastic. Despite

their background and the rough beginning they had with us, Aibileen, Karter, Barbara, Christine, James Dixon and Karloff are a healthy, happy bunch of pigs!

---Donna



Karloff Then

It was a scruffy group that arrived here. Although there were no fresh wounds, Aibileen was missing an ear while Karloff and Barbara had tattered ears. They were all a little on the thin side and just simply scraggly looking. The boys were soon neutered. Karter delivered her litter then

was spayed once the babies were weaned. Aibileen, whom we thought had delivered babies shortly before the rescue, had an emergency spay and was found to have retained the remains of her babies. Christine and Barbara got severe infections after their spay surgeries that took months to heal completely. Karloff has a tendency to develop abscesses on his face and chin. It seems that James Dixon was the only one to not have any medical issues.

All six of the rescued pigs live in our Princess Field these days. For the past year they have been problem free except for a couple of small abscesses for Karloff. For the most part the family has stayed together out in the field. There was a short period during which the girls moved to a



Karloff Now

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