

Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490

Tucson, AZ 85740

Dear Friend,

April 2019

Why do we rescue pigs? Why pigs? That is a question I have heard from people many, many times over the past 18 years. Well, why not. Somebody has to do it. There are hundreds of unwanted pigs that have nowhere else to go. Yes, there are also hundreds of cats and dogs that have no homes, but there are more choices of

rescues and shelters that will take them in. Pigs don't have many options. This is not just a problem that Ironwood faces here in Arizona but an issue across the entire country. But when I



Freya



Phil

look into the face of poor skinny Freya, how can I not care what happens to her? When Leroy Lee tucks his head into



Leroy Lee

the crook of my elbow and completely relaxes as I kiss his neck and rub his back, how can I not fall in love with him? When Phil quietly sidles over and lies down on my feet to wait for a belly rub, how can I not want to make him happy and comfortable? Every time I walk past the yard and say hi to Pebbles and she

returns a grunt of hello, how can I not get a kick out of that?

Caring for pot-bellied pigs does present challenges. Their size and strength can make even the simplest tasks difficult. Plus they can be stubborn when they feel like it. Although a small percentage of the pigs can be a bit scary and aggressive, the vast majority are sweet, lovable

creatures that only want someone to love them

and spend time with them. If you are unsure about whether pigs are "worth all this trouble" you should come and spend some time with them. Many



Pebbles

visitors to the sanctuary are seeing pigs for the first time and are amazed at how friendly and lovable they are. Petting a pig or giving one a belly rub is a pleasurable experience for both pig and person. Just ask Screech or Big Charlotte. They are the champions of belly rubs and will melt to the ground for anyone who comes along. So, yes, rescuing pigs is totally worth what goes into it...physically, financially, whatever. Having Eli get up to come say hello at the fence every single morning sure makes my day and reminds me of why I'm here. Thank you for making the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary a place of security and safety for so many needy pigs.

Sincerely,

Donna Thomason
Sponsorship Coordinator

Sirocco

Sirocco arrived at Ironwood in November of 2016. At that time he was not even full grown, barely two years old and already so obese that his toes twisted sideways in a permanent distortion from carrying all that extra weight. There were fat rolls above his eyes pushing his eyelids closed causing what is called “fat blindness”. Fortunately for Sirocco that was a temporary condition, relieved as he lost the unnecessary pounds and the size and weight of the rolls decreased. He was so heavy that getting up



Before 12/16

has not been easy or quick for Sirocco but it is happening. He is a work in progress!



After 3/19

We are not sure of Sirocco’s exact weight when he first arrived at the sanctuary but it is visually obvious that the pounds are coming off. When he went to the vet clinic one year ago to have his mouth examined he weighed in at 203 pounds, still above the average weight of 150 for a pot-bellied pig of his height. More pounds have dropped in the past year and Sirocco is closer than ever to his goal of an ideal size.

Although Sirocco is young, only 4.5 years old, he is living in one of

the special care areas that are normally used for the very elderly pigs. That decision was based on his physical abilities which were very limited by his weight. As he has become lighter, his mobility has increased. However, the permanent twisting of his toes affects his gait and slows him down. Sirocco lives a quiet life with Rosie, a sweet

girl with severe elbow dysplasia. The two share their area but sleep in separate houses. Sirocco has shown little interest in developing the relationship any further but that could change as time goes by. For now he is still dieting, getting around much easier and looking a lot trimmer. And he has YOU to thank for providing a place to get the individual care he needs as he works his way to becoming Slim Sirocco!

---Donna



Rosie & Sirocco

and moving out into the exercise yard each day was a slow, agonizing process but lying around in his house waiting for the next meal was not going to help matters any. Slimming down

Please never over feed your pets! Pigs are especially susceptible to becoming overweight. Obesity can cause permanent damage to joints leading to early arthritis issues as well as stress to the lungs and heart.

Veterinary Care

With over 600 pigs to care for, medical issues arise daily. Take January 2019 as an example of the variety of things the Adobe Veterinary Center has done for the pigs of Ironwood. During that month 7 girls and 2 boys were altered. Spaying and neutering pigs like Quincy and Jasmine not only averts unwanted pregnancies but also prevents uterine or testicular tumors that afflict around 85% of unaltered pigs as they age.



Jasmine

when pigs needed immediate vet care. Joey, with a history of urinary tract issues, was rushed in after being seen straining to urinate. An ultrasound revealed an enlarged bladder but no blockage. Draining his bladder was enough to get him back to normal. Petey arrived with an infection in his surgical incision from being neutered. A thorough flushing and antibiotics got him back on track. A stray girl attacked by dogs was taken straight to the clinic after finally being captured with the help of neighbors.



Wilbert

Rupert and Billy went to the clinic for dental exams which included x-rays and surgery. Wilbert had a mass removed from his rear which fortunately turned out to be benign. Sassy and Jack had cryosurgery and biopsies for skin cancer, a common problem for the white pigs. Weda was diagnosed with an eye ulcer. Wilburt went in with severe lameness to get x-rays then stayed a few days for laser treatment.

Sadly, Billy was euthanized at the clinic after a diagnosis of malignant cancer and a bad infection.



Sassy

There were also emergencies

Dr. Reece also made a visit to the sanctuary January 3rd to check on a few things that could be handled on site. Gumby had his goopy eyes checked. Henry had a lump on his belly aspirated. Cookie had an ultrasound for a mass on her belly. Polly had sutures removed from a previous eye surgery. Randy, Andre and Sandy got check-ups for prior issues while Lorelai, Sassy and Dugan got



Wilburt

brief exams for current problems. Thanks to your support all these pigs were able to receive the medical attention they needed to lead happy, healthy lives.

If you would like to help with the costs from January's medical bills, please designate your donation to "January vet bill". The veterinary bill for that month was \$14,645.10.

Thank you for caring!

IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY

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Joey