

# IRONWOOD

ISSUE  
NO 111

MARCH  
2023



Lyla

# PIG SANCTUARY

# Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490  
Tucson, AZ 85740

Dear Supporter,

March 2023

Hello and welcome to Ironwood in March of 2023. The first couple of months of 2023 have been kind of like Mr. Toad's Wild Ride. I like being able to say in my update letters that all is going well and do hope by the time you receive this March newsletter, that is the case. Once again, as in the winter of 2017 for those of you who were with us then, we have experienced a diarrhea outbreak. As I write this letter, we appear to be clear of the illness. Just as in 2017, the agent that has caused the illness has never been identified. There was no known cure either, but following the direction of our vets, we gave the pigs a combination of drugs. These were given based on what they knew about the symptoms and would at least be supportive and help them through the worst of the illness.

During these past several weeks, we more or less have had a shuttle service to and from the vet clinic, taking pigs in most every day and bringing home those who were on the road to recovery. We would have 3 to 6 pigs there on any given day. Since dehydration was of course a huge problem, giving them IV fluids, sometimes for days, along with the meds, made it possible for almost all of them, even the worst cases, to recover. Specimens sent to Iowa State University produced no identification. Since it was not bacterial, parasitic, or a fungus, it must have been a virus. All testing, however, did not identify a specific virus.

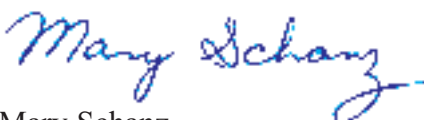
One might say we should isolate the ones with the illness, but most often we would identify a new sick pig in one of our many fields and soon realized the best plan was to quickly get them loaded and off to the vets. Of course, we cleaned and used disinfectants. We never knew where or in what field we would find the next sick pig. Some cases were mild and we were able to treat the pigs at Ironwood.

I guess the question remains, if it is indeed gone for now and that is not a given, what do we do to prevent another siege? That is an unanswered question. Now that we have time to take a breath, we will be discussing options with our veterinarians. There is an Endemic Porcine Diarrhea Virus and a vaccine for that virus. However, it has a known agent. We have not identified that virus at Ironwood.

Of course, the costs have been enormous, especially emotionally, but also physically and financially. The financial burden has not just been our veterinary bills which were huge, but the costs of all the meds to be given and the many hours of staff time caring for and cleaning up after our pigs. We had to cancel tours and turn away boarders as well.

Running a rescue in good times is a daunting task, but in times like we have just experienced, it is overwhelming. We could only just keep putting one foot in front of the other. The staff were on it, the calls would come in over the walkie talkie radio and off we would go to pick up the next sick pig or pigs. Our vets never turned us down and you never let us down either. Little did you know that your financial support was literally saving lives. The question was never can we afford to do this but let's get him or her loaded and off to the clinic. Thanks so much to you, our vets, our staff and everyone who helped us through this difficult time. We are so grateful.

Sincerely,



Mary Schanz

President & CoFounder



# That's Entertainment

**T**o quote Cyndi Lauper (sort of), *“Oh, pigs just wanna have fun.”* And just what does “fun” entail for our porcine pals? Pigs are generally not very active animals and are mainly concerned with filling their tummies. That would place eating at the top of any pig’s list



North Field

of favorite activities. The majority of pigs at Ironwood Pig Sanctuary are fed once a day. This is due to having a population of around 650 pigs and the fact that to properly feed and medicate everyone, it takes 4-5 hours depending on staff numbers.



The youngsters and those with special dietary needs requiring small meals are fed more frequently. The regular daily meal consists of grain pellets that are made specifically for pigs. Most of the pigs are fed in troughs and happily trot from one trough to another to get their fill. Others are fed in individual bowls inside small pens in order to get added medications or specific amounts

of grain dependent on their needs. For “dessert” after the morning meal, everyone gets to munch on alfalfa hay that is spread out in the fields for the pigs to forage on. This is included in their diet for roughage due to the lack of grass or other vegetation in the desert environment. The pigs

occasionally enjoy special treats that are donated at various times of the year such as pumpkins, watermelons or tomatoes. It’s fun to watch how excited they get when a few pumpkins are bashed open so they can grab a piece and run off to a secluded spot to gobble up their treasure.

Probably for most pigs, the number two spot on the list of



Geena

favorites would be sleeping. Pigs LOVE their naptime! Napping habits vary with the seasons of the year. During the winter months, lying in the sun to soak up the warmth is preferable. Many pigs



Daisy

will pull a blanket out of their house to lie on. It’s very cute but does make extra work for their human servants who have to come along later in the day to tuck those back inside for the night. There are favorite areas in each of the various fields where groups of friends gather to nap in sunny spots. Most piggies like to be backed up against bushes, fences or shelters instinctively protecting themselves while others just plop down out in the open without a care in the world. Some even stretch out inside the feed troughs for some shuteye. During the hot season, everyone is tucked up in the shade somewhere or inside the shelters hidden from view. Lying in the sun is the last thing they’re thinking of when it’s 100+ degrees!



Logan & Chatty Cathy



Francesca &amp; Gorda

Speaking of shelters, the use of those also varies with the temperature. When it gets cold, the pigs will buddy up more to share body heat and cram themselves into the smaller shelters, creating a toasty warm place to snuggle and sleep. Carpet doors are hung on the houses to keep the heat inside during the winter months but are left open for breezes in the summertime weather. When it is hot throughout the nights, a lot of the pigs prefer sleeping out under the trees and bushes and don't even use the shelters. Blankets make the houses even more



Moe &amp; Izzy

comfy. Pigs love to nest, often spending quite a long time pushing, shoving and even ripping their blankets into the perfect pile before lying down. Some will "borrow" blankets

from other houses to stuff their own home full so they can burrow under the pile. As far as pigs are concerned with blankets, they would say the more, the merrier!

Pigs are herd animals and enjoy each other's company. Puppy has several friends he spends time with, but he especially loves Phil and shares a shelter with him.



Silverbells Herd

Gorda is fairly new to her herd but has bonded closely with Francesca. Mac and Cheese live with a small herd where everyone gets along great, but they are almost always side by side within the group. Families usually stick together when placed in a field with a large herd. Nurse Judy and her children love to cuddle together during rest time. Some pigs that were raised as an "only child" at their previous home may not have learned the social skills to easily make friends but most eventually form a relationship with one or more pigs. Just being



Taryn's Yard

around other pigs, even in small groups, can help them feel more comfortable and secure.

Some pigs that grew up with little to no human interaction, remain wary of people. To this day Karter and her family never allow anyone to pet them even though they have lived at Ironwood for almost ten years. Others absolutely love to be petted or get belly rubs and never seem to get enough. Just try walking through Taryn's Yard where three families live. The ten youngsters, all around a year old, throw themselves at your feet, begging for belly rubs. It's impossible to



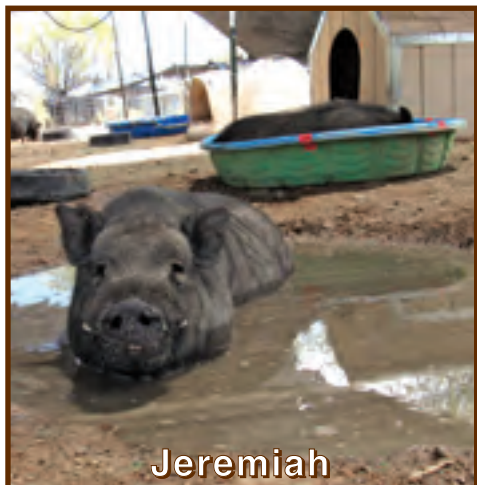
Valentino



get out of there without wearing yourself out attempting to give multiple belly rubs simultaneously. Up in the North Field, Faline will lie down to get in position when she hears me coming from across the field then “talk” to me until I come to her to ensure I don’t get distracted and forget to stop and spend time rubbing her belly. Sometimes pigs get their back scratches from birds. It’s true! Many times I’ve seen a pig freeze when a bird lands on them. The mane starts to

developed by individual pigs, but both choices are always available when it is hot. Some even resort to cooling off in their drinking bowls.

thrust forward into his favorite staghorn cholla or lie down so that the spines poke into his neck and shoulders. Isabelly and Pinky are sisters who also enjoy cactus acupuncture. Rather than having their heads in the clouds, these girls will have their heads in the cactus. Strange, but true! Yet another oddity occurs when a barrel cactus has the misfortune of leaning or falling on its side. The pigs begin just above the roots and eat their way through the inside until nothing is left but the long, hooked spines. This is a tasty, juicy treat that they’ll stand in line for.



Jeremiah

rise up, a sign of pleasure, as the bird pecks or scrapes their feet back and forth. Valentino simply melted to his knees when a cactus wren dropped down to forage through his hair. Hey, if it feels good, go with it!

Living in the desert during the summers can be tough for pigs when the temperature stays at 100 degrees or more. Playing in the water looks like a lot of fun for the piggies, but it’s actually a necessity for survival. Pigs cannot sweat or pant to release body heat so taking a plunge into the mud wallows or wading pools is a must. Preferences are

A few pigs have peculiar ways of entertaining themselves. Using cactus spines for something that



Inky’s Acupuncture

must feel like an acupuncture session is something that Inky treats himself to every morning. He’ll either stand with his head



Willow

The pigs at the sanctuary are happy and content whether napping in a quiet spot by themselves or snuggled with a group, eating grain, veggies or cactus, rolling in a pool, or wrapping up in a warm comforter. All of these things are possible because of your continued support to provide a safe haven where the pigs can live a relaxed, full life.



Lincoln

—Donna

# A Budding Friendship

## Frodo and Ralphie

### Frodo's Story:

**B**ack in my younger years, I lived with three piggy friends; Augusta, Agnes and Poppin. We lived at a rescue/petting zoo that wasn't a very nice place. In fact, the owner got in trouble with the law for being a hoarder. The four of us then went to a nearby horse rescue



Frodo & Ralphie

the new place and things were going along just great. Then to everyone's shock, she died suddenly in December after a quick series of seizures. I was so upset and sad about losing her. She was the last of my buddies and I felt so alone. Twelve years old and all alone for the first time ever.



while a search was done to find a permanent home for us. That turned out to be Ironwood Pig Sanctuary. When we came here in March 2016, we were given our very own space; a small field with a big shade tree, three houses and a large shade ramada covering a pool and two mud wallows. We got to live by ourselves because Augusta was elderly and Agnes had arthritis. Sadly, Augusta, the oldest in our group, died of renal failure later that spring. Agnes, Poppin and I shared the place for years until Agnes had to "retire" to one of the special care areas

because of severe arthritis which later was the cause of her passing in June of last year.

Last March, Poppin and I moved next door into the Assisted Living Phase 5 Field to join the small herd there. We chose the back portion of the field as our home territory and it was there that we



met Ralphie who also lived in the same area. To be honest, I didn't pay much attention to him because I had my best friend Poppin at my side. We adjusted to



After grieving on my own for a while, I decided to make an effort to get to know Ralphie better. He's kind of in his own world all the time, maybe because he's blind and just goes around happily doing his own thing, but he's a nice guy. I've been lying near where he likes to take his morning nap after breakfast. It's a sunny corner in the back of the field close to my house. Ralphie was fine with that so I started getting closer to him and chatting with him. Then one day he let me snuggle right up next to him! That made me so happy!! I'm hoping that we can develop a closer relationship, but I think it's going to take some time and more



effort on my part. You know, because he can't see me so he won't really be trying to come over to me. I have to make that move myself and be persistent about it. Wish me luck! I really, really want a close friend again.



## Ralphie's Story:

**Y**ou might have seen me on the cover of the January 2023 newsletter. (My fifteen minutes of fame and proud of it!) I've been living at the sanctuary since September of 2019. My humans moved away and just left me in the yard with nothing and nobody



to care for me. Thank goodness the neighbors cared enough to call the Sheriff to report me and the dog that was left inside the house. The deputy called the county

animal shelter who gave Ironwood permission to come get me and bring me here. I was so chubby that the fat rolls over my eyes had caused me to lose almost all of my sight. I'm used to the blindness now and can get around in the field like nobody's business. You should see me at feeding time! I know exactly where that person is carrying my bowl of food and stay right on their heels until they set it on my placemat. No problem for me! Anyway, I've lost a lot of weight since coming here and at 6.5 years old, I'm in pretty good shape.



I'm used to being on my own having never lived with other pigs before coming here. I chose to live in the back part of the field because it's quiet and hardly any of the other pigs come back there. Sometimes Neil and Gracie graze on hay close by and may nap there in the sun afterward. They're both nice and quiet. Then there's Sarge. He comes back in my area occasionally and stomps around clacking his teeth, just putting on a tough guy show. I don't get why he does that. I just ignore him and he'll eventually wander back to his post up front.

About a year ago, Frodo and Poppin moved in and would you believe they started sleeping in my house! I couldn't believe it either but being the sort of guy I am, I just went and picked out a different shelter and all was well. I don't like trouble. Not too long ago Poppin died kind of suddenly. Frodo got really down for a bit then he started hanging around with me. I don't mind though. It's sort of nice having someone to lean on for a change. I wasn't really looking to start up a friendship or anything, being an independent sort, but who knows. Frodo is very nice and has a quiet, calm personality. If he keeps coming around, I'll think more about the possibility of a relationship. I still need my own space though. I'm not so sure about sharing a house or anything, at least not yet. Maybe later we could try the bigger shelter; you know, him on one end and me on the other. That might work. In the meantime, I'll just keep on doing my thing and see what Frodo does.



Peace and Love,  
Frodo & Ralphie

# Sponsor a S



Gorda



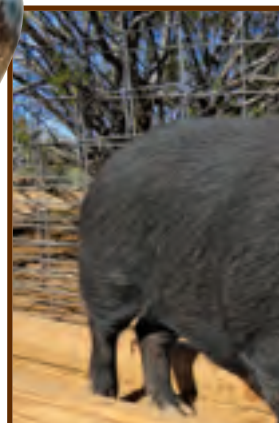
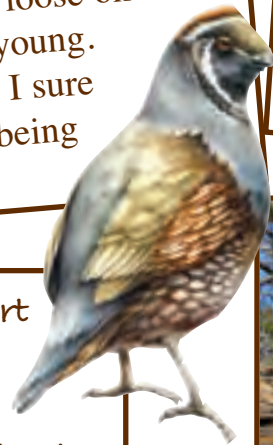
Nacho



I had my first b  
Now I'm a big b  
sponsor family.  
says I need to be  
behavior for you

I was grossly overfed by my humans. I've been dieting since coming here and feel better these days. I love living with other pigs and have a best friend named Francesca.

I'm part of the "Snack Pack", a trio of siblings found running loose on the streets when we were young. Twizzler, Popcorn and I sure enjoy living here and being well fed!



Mimosa

My mom and thr  
have sponsors. I  
best for last! I'm  
gentle, and love t  
belly rubs. I'll b

These cuties are just a few of the ones in need of support at the sanctuary. A monthly donation of \$30 will go toward providing a safe home for your pig. You will



Phil & Donna

receive a letter and photos to learn more about the pig of your choice then an update later in the year to keep you connected. Join our family of sponsors today!

*\* Go Green! When signing up as a Sponsor, you may request to receive your letters and photos by email.*

Better for the environment!



# Special Pig!



Hawthorn

irthday in January!  
boy ready for a  
My mom, Daffodil,  
e on my best  
. You got it!



Sioux

I'm a California girl that has  
been here a long time, but I no  
longer have a sponsor. If you  
pick me to support, I'll be  
your best friend forever!  
You and me, BFFs!



Doyle

I was a young stray that got very  
lucky to be helped by a  
woman who got Ironwood to  
take me in about a year ago.  
Now I have a safe place to  
live with good friends. Yay!



ee sisters now  
say you saved the  
a good girl, very  
o get pets and  
e your perfect pig!



Tiger

I'm a tough, older gal looking for  
someone who can put up with an  
attitude. I have moments of  
tenderness but don't turn your back  
on me. Maybe that explains why  
I'm here...



Logan

My sponsor ghosted me, so I'm  
reaching out to you for help.  
Feeling a bit lonely these days  
and hoping you would like to be  
friends with a nice, polite guy  
like me. Please!



# My Favorite Pig

**L**arry began working at Ironwood Pig Sanctuary 4.5 years ago, starting out on the watering team. Over time, his responsibilities shifted over to maintenance and general labor. The thing the pigs depend on Larry for the most is bringing in the water. He makes multiple trips per week trucking in water to put in the holding tanks to supplement what is drawn from our water well. That particular job is super important for the pigs' survival!

*When I first started here at the sanctuary, I loved the pigs. When I met Luna, she was little. Since then, Luna has been my favorite. We have been inseparable ever since. Yep, she's my Baby Girl!*



Larry & Luna



Luna



## Amazon and Chewy:

*Both are easy! On Ironwood's website, [www.ironwoodpigs.org](http://www.ironwoodpigs.org), go to the "Support Page" and click on the links in the drop-down menu to go directly to our wish lists on both sites.*

Miss Piggy Spots





# Donation Drop-Offs

Currently needed items can be found on our Wish List then dropped off at any of the following locations. (No monetary donations can be accepted here.) Don't forget the blankets!!

East Phoenix: Carolyn's in East Mesa near Superstition Springs Mall. Call 480-981-8069.

Fountain Hills: Geri's in Fountain Hills. Call 480-229-8318.

Tempe: Anne's near McClintock and US-60. Call 480-720-5168.

Northwest Tucson: Ben and Mary's near N Oracle Rd and W Hardy Rd. Call 520-631-6015.

East Tucson: Sandra's in the Civano neighborhood. Call 804-840-5296. **\*Please notify Sandra before dropping off.**



Jameson

## Our Wish List

### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

- \*\*Used Blankets are needed year round.\*\***
- \*First Class Forever Stamps**
- \*Canned Pumpkin \*High Priority\*
- \*Ensure, **Vanilla Only** \*High Priority\*
- \*Animal Crackers \*High Priority\*
- Sheets
- Prunes
- Stool Softener
- Fiber Powder (Non-flavored)
- Antibiotic Ointment **with Pain Reliever**



Snooky

### GIFT CARDS

- Master Card
- Discover Card
- Fry's
- Home Depot
- Lowe's
- Office Max
- Staples
- Walmart
- Amazon
- Walgreen's
- Tractor Supply

**When shipping donations through USPS, please ONLY ship to POB 35490, Tucson, AZ 85740-5490. Do NOT use the physical address.**

# Male or Female?

**B**ack in Ironwood's early years, we took in a pig named Reggie that had been with its family for years. They filled out the release form, marking the pig as male. We chuckled about their mistake then renamed their sweet "boy" Regina. She lived a long, happy life...as the girl she'd always been. Last year, the local county animal shelter posted a picture on their website of a stray female pig they had named Petunia. The pig was soon released to Ironwood in order to receive immediate medical care for wounds from a

altered? With younger pigs, the signs may not be as obvious, but there are things to look for. The



Bo Peep

The lower canines can grow very long and are used as defense weapons during confrontations with other animals. Some males, like Rubble, have very obvious tusks even when the mouth is closed. If the tusks grow up inside the lips rather than out, they still form a full, rounded upper lip that can be an indication that you're looking at a male.



Rubble



Bugs

upper and lower canine teeth on a pig are called tusks. Both males and females have them, but the males retain an open root so that the tusks grow continuously throughout their life. The upper tusks normally grow so that they curve up into the upper lip or they may curl up over the outside of the lip. Their job is to sharpen the lower tusks into sharp points.

dog attack. We called him Mr. Petunia for a few days but decided that wasn't really very nice. He has been neutered and is now happy with the name Bugs. So how do you identify a pig as male or female?

It's usually pretty easy to recognize a pig as a male if he has not been neutered unless he is cryptorchid, meaning the testicles haven't dropped down. But what about when all the pigs have been



Buddha



Jitterbug

Checking beneath a pig's tail will tell another tale about boys and girls. (Awkward use of homophones, but I couldn't resist!)



Neutered boys don't have much to show back there except a small opening of the anus while the girls are displaying their vulva below their anus. Easy enough to distinguish between the two, but most pigs don't like having their tails touched and won't let you peek.



Meadow

A pig's belly can be another place to check but does throw people off sometimes because there are nipples present on all pigs. Several times I have had people say they thought a pig was a girl because it has nipples. Most male



Pearl

mammals, including humans, have nipples with a few exceptions like horses, mice and marsupials. Overweight males or those that have lost a great deal of weight will have larger, saggy nipples, giving the appearance of being female so don't be fooled by that. What to pay attention to on the bellies is the presence or lack thereof of the penis. It is located on the back half of the male's belly and is enclosed in a sheath of skin with a grouping of hairs at the opening. A female's belly will be relatively smooth. Girls will squat and urinate out the back while boys take a wide stance and urinate from under the belly.

So, there is your pig anatomy lesson for today. If you are introduced to a pig, do a little checking around for clues before you start commenting on what a good boy or girl it is. Here's a pop quiz for you. Male or Female?

—Donna



Pig #1



Lincoln



Pig #2

PS: #1, Hazel is a girl and #2, Neil is a boy.



# Front & Back Cover



**L**yla was released to us in 2019 because her elderly caregiver had recently had back surgery and could no longer care for her. What a beautiful four-year-old she was indeed! After a period of time in a holding

pen, she was released to one of the smaller fields since she seemed to have some difficulty socializing with other pigs and with us as well. It took Lyla quite a long time to adjust to her new home. Over the years, she has gotten into quite a few fights with her field companions. It has been a difficult adjustment for her, but for the most part she has settled down with us and her companion pigs. She has come a long way from the days when I was out there watching and breaking up fights when she first arrived in her field. It is not uncommon for pigs coming from a single pig home to be aggressive with us. They often have a difficult time adjusting to life with other pigs as well and sometimes, but not always, never form strong bonds with other pigs. Pigs are very social animals and for this reason we have a policy to only adopt two pigs or one if they will be a companion for another pig in the family.



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IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY

Issue 111

**C**harlotte was a new arrival in 2018. She ranks among one of the most obese pigs we have taken in and we have taken in many very overweight pigs. Her caregivers were an elderly couple who said they could no longer take care of her. They said they had rescued her from someone because she was quite young and starving. When we picked her up, she was nearly 3 years old and at the opposite end of starving for sure. Because of her obese condition, we moved her to what we call the Lifer Pens where she lives with other pigs with disabilities of some sort. Over the years, Charlotte has lost a lot of weight. In January of 2021, we were finally able to have her spayed from which she recovered well. She is now quite an active 7-year-old and while she also has not made any really strong bonds with her companion pigs, she and Lucinda are often seen sleeping together and enjoying their companionship.





### WORD SCRAMBLE

Unscramble these letters to find things that make pigs happy.

*Answers at the bottom of the page.*

TAGNEI \_\_\_\_\_

ENSBKTAL \_\_\_\_\_

RHLEETS \_\_\_\_\_

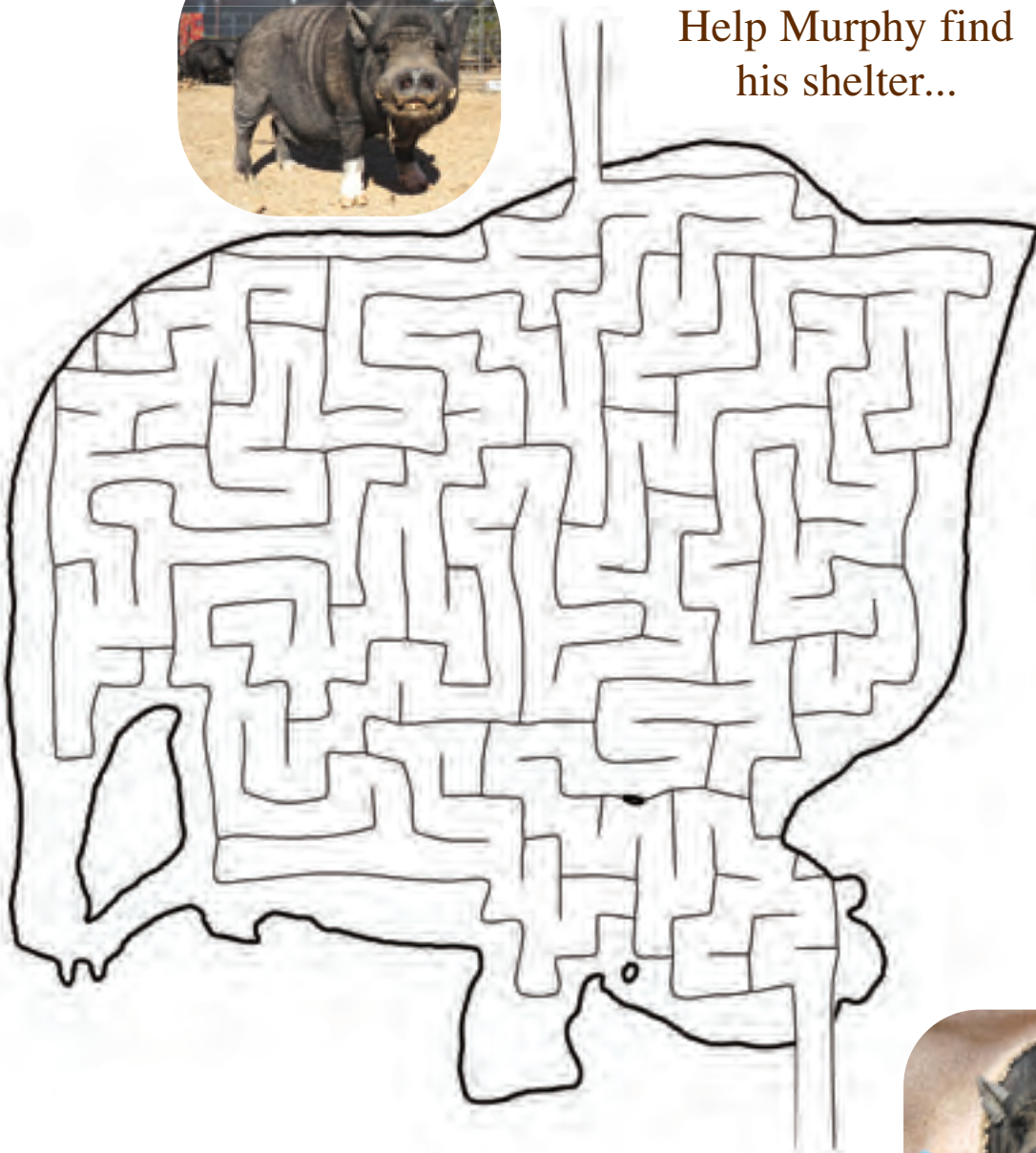
SDIFNER \_\_\_\_\_

MATNEIP \_\_\_\_\_

FLAFLAA \_\_\_\_\_



Help Murphy find his shelter...



...so he can get cozy!



eating    blankets    shelter    friends    naptime    alfalfa

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# IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY NEWS



**Charlotte**