

Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490

Tucson, AZ 85740

Dear Friend,

August 2018

I love pot-bellied pigs. They are wonderful animals and loving companions, but they are not the pet for everyone. There is so much to consider before acquiring a pig (or pigs since they are happier with others of their kind). The first thing to find out is if you are even zoned for pigs. Most counties, towns and HOAs have regulations on size and number or do not even allow pigs at all. Pigs are happiest outside where they can root around in the dirt and do what comes naturally. Is your yard properly



Consider Size

bellied pig. Find out before getting a pig! Also, can you transport a full grown pig to the vet if needed? This is not an easy task. Do not listen to breeders who will tell you that your pig will be 25-30 pounds. If you feed a pig properly, it will grow properly into an average size of 120 pounds. Remember- with most breeders it's "inbred

and underfed" meaning you will have a genetically weak, malnourished pig with medical problems and a short life span.



We Need Shade

fenced to not only keep your pig in but to keep dogs and other predators out? Do you love your landscaping? If so, be prepared for the pig to demolish it. Is there adequate shade, shelter and water available at all times? Pigs can't pant or sweat to release body heat and must have access



Keeping Cool

to water to cool off.

Something most people don't think about until an emergency crops up, is do you have a vet that has the knowledge and willingness to treat a pot-

Are there children and other animals in the household? Pigs are territorial, very strong and can be ornery at times.



Pigs Need a Friend

Young children are not always a good mix. Putting dogs and pigs together is a potential disaster due to the predator/prey issue. We have seen a lot of pigs torn up by dogs.

Research thoroughly before taking on a pig or pigs! Visit a place like Ironwood if possible to get a real grasp of what you'll be dealing with. Pigs make fabulous pets but have unique needs and issues to consider.

Sincerely,

Donna Thomason
Sponsor Coordinator

Meet Wilbert, Wilbert and Wilbert

In the past we have had a lot of pigs come to us with the name Wilbur, so when yet another Wilbur arrived in May of 2015, we changed his name to Wilbert not realizing he would be the first of three pigs with that name. This first Wilbert was a two year old boar that the family claimed they “couldn’t care for properly”. What that really means is they just couldn’t handle his behavior. Two year old pigs are at that age when they will challenge everyone to become the alpha of the family group (whether human, dog, pig, etc.) Also not being neutered contributes to bad behavior. So this poor guy didn’t have a chance. After he came to Ironwood we got him neutered

and a mischievous twinkle in his eye.



Sunset Field

A year later we got a call about a young boar named Wilbert whose owners had been on vacation. When they returned home they found out that the house sitter had left the gate open and the neighbor’s dogs had gotten in and attacked Wilbert. He had not received any vet care or help with the wounds. The family contacted Ironwood and said they just didn’t want to deal with it. Poor piggy! He had badly infected bite and scratch wounds on his sides and one ear. We took him to the vet clinic where he was anesthetized and had his wounds debrided and treated.

Wilbert is now a healthy 3 year old neutered male living in the Sunset Field with a herd of 33 pigs. He has several close friends and is very happy here.

In May of 2017 here came the next Wilbert. His family had gotten him neutered when he was

young (way to go!!), but they had overfed him to the point of obesity. When they moved into a new neighborhood, they failed to check the HOA regulations about pigs and were soon in trouble and forced to rehome Wilbert. He now lives in our Assisted Living Phase 4 Field with a herd of 10 pigs. We chose a smaller field and herd for him due to his weight and inability to defend himself properly. Wilbert has been on a diet and lost a lot of weight in the past year but still has more to take off. He is a handsome 5 year old who likes a good back rub. He is in love with Little Pig but also enjoys the company of others in his herd.



Northeast Field

and once he recovered and got through his quarantine, he was placed in the Northeast Field where he lives with a herd of 17 pigs. Wilbert does have a strong personality and likes being in charge but has learned over time how to behave properly with people. He has a cute under bite



Phase 4 Field

We love all three of our Wilberts. They each have unique personalities but have fit into their respective herds nicely. Thanks to your generosity they have the opportunity for safe, happy lives here!

---Donna

Charlie

Charlie is a sweet 9 year old who came here in May of 2017 from a very loving home where he was well cared for. Unfortunately, his owners had to go out of state to be with their daughter who was undergoing major transplant surgeries and would need long term recovery care. Charlie was a bit shy with other pigs when he arrived, so he went to live in Assisted Living Phase 4 whose small herd is a mixed



Charlie returned to Ironwood and continued to get fluids but two days later he was dripping and straining once more, so off to the vet again. This stay was shorter, only 2 days. The same tests were done with similar results. Charlie was put on two medications to help him relax and be able to urinate normally. After he returned to Ironwood, we added two supplements to help acidify his urine. He remains on all those medications on a daily basis and is doing great now. Charlie has

male pigs as it can be a sign of a blocked urethra which is very painful and can be fatal if not treated quickly. Charlie was taken to the vet clinic where he was anesthetized for x-rays and an ultrasound in order to perform a cystocentesis (taking a urine sample directly from the bladder). There were no crystals present, but he did have some silt build up in his bladder. The urinalysis was clear of infection. Charlie stayed at the clinic for 4 days to get IV fluids to flush out his system.



group of obese pigs and elderly pigs that could be considered "active seniors". Charlie is a bit of a hermit still and likes to be alone. He chose a house away from the general hubbub of the herd. His favorite napping spot where he waits for breakfast each day is in the shade of two creosote bushes. Charlie has a quiet life but he is content and peaceful.

All was well until this spring when Charlie began exhibiting problems urinating. This is a major concern, particularly for



been back in his field since March with no further problems.

---Donna

If you would like to help with Charlie's medical bills, please designate your donation in his name. The total cost for his vet care, medications and overnight stays at the clinic was \$2,473.39. Thank you for caring! Charlie appreciates your help!

IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY

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