

# Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490

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Dear Friend,

April 2024

Spring has arrived in the Sonoran Desert and with it are temperatures in the 80s and even the 90s already. Those three-digit temps are coming quickly; much sooner than we want. Despite the upcoming heat, we still have blankets on our donation Wish List and will continue to collect them throughout the summer heat wave. The pigs will not be using them during that time, but those fluffy, warm comforters and blankets will be stacking up in the storage buildings to be ready for use when the temperatures go down next winter. The exception is that blankets are



always used for pigs after surgeries because their body temperature drops when under anesthesia.

I had mentioned in a previous newsletter this year that we were scrambling to keep enough blankets in all the shelters this past winter. Lots of heavy rainfall made it even more of a struggle. As the pigs make their nests inside their houses, blankets invariably get shoved out below the carpet doors and



when it rains, everything gets wet and must be hung up to dry. When pulling blankets out to hang, we also find evidence of pigs known as the “shredders.” Comforters ripped and torn also need to be hung to

dry before heading to the trash. (Wet blankets are heavy!) It is just a natural instinct for the pigs to pull and tear things to create a comfy bed. We often find creosote branches tucked inside the houses as part of their nests.



Dragging blankets outside for naps in the warm sun adds extra wear and tear. But boy, is that the life! Lying on a blanket, soaking up the sun, not a care in the world. The piggies love doing that as well as the nesting and those are the reasons we are always needing more and more blankets. So,



even though the summer is ahead of us, don't forget about the piggies wanting comforters and blankets if you hit the thrift stores or yard sales or find an excellent off-season sale at the store. It will feel like forever before it cools off again, but it will come and the pigs will appreciate your efforts! Thanks for keeping those blankets coming!

Sincerely,

Donna Thomason  
Sponsor Coordinator

# Slater

**S**later is an incredibly sweet boy that arrived at Ironwood in March 2007 with his siblings Tori and Screech. He is now 17.5 years old and has been in great health during his time here except for a nasty mast cell tumor that has plagued him off and on for the past five years. It had been surgically removed twice in the past but came back both times. Slater's tumor is in a delicate spot right next to his penis, so it has been difficult for the vet to get



and monitor his progress. After the last procedure, Slater spent some time in one of the individual holding pens to ensure that all was well before returning to the Sunset Field where

he lives with a herd of 26 pigs. He had been gone from his herd since late December so there was "cold shoulder" treatment from his friends before things got back to normal. This usually happens when a pig has been gone for a while. They need to work their way back into the pecking order

smaller, so everything was going according to plan. The last clinic procedure done on February 7th was the removal of all three tumors. With the shrinkage, the vet was able to get wide margins on all of them. The surgery was a success!



Before Treatment



After 1st Injection



After Removal

clear margins. The growth came back with a vengeance in December 2023 with multiple masses.

The plan this time around was for Slater to go to the clinic, be put under anesthesia, then have steroids injected into the masses to shrink them down to make the removal safer and easier. The first injections occurred on December 27th. He was also put on oral steroids and Benadryl. Within days, the tumors were visibly smaller. Two weeks later, Slater returned to the clinic for a repeat procedure. The three masses were softer and much

Slater handled his trips to the clinic and going under anesthesia like a pro! He recovered very well from each procedure and was the perfect patient. It was no problem at all to check his sutures

of the herd. Slater is doing well these days and is happily spending time with his friends. We will continue to monitor the site of the tumors, but hopefully we have seen the last of them.

...Donna



*If you would like to help Slater with his medical bills, please dedicate your donation in his name. The cost of his procedures came to \$2,770.79. Slater appreciates your support!*



# Esmerelda



of the herd was either elderly or also having weight issues. These days there are eight piggies living with me. While I do enjoy spending time by myself, the boys just will not leave me alone.

They have the loveliest mud wallow under a shade tree! There is also a big, open-sided shelter in the middle of the field where the boys and I sleep with a few others from the herd. In the winter I prefer going into one of the smaller shelters because it's cozier.

**H**ello from Esmerelda at the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary! Boy, am I glad you are helping take care of all the piggies here because that includes me! I came here in the fall of 2012 when my humans moved away. I was three years old at the time. On the paperwork they described me as "fat and happy." It was more like "obese and miserable." I was so overweight that I could hardly get to my feet without assistance and I had heavy fat rolls hanging over my eyes obstructing my vision. Ugh! The folks here at the sanctuary immediately got me started on a diet. It took a long, long time, but I eventually got down to a normal weight. I even lost enough that I was able to get spayed six years ago. Now I'm 14.5 years old and still in decent shape for my age.



Dugan



Barton



Rusty

I'm actually lucky my humans had to give me up because at the rate I was "growing" I doubt I'd still be around. I for sure wouldn't be mobile. I like puttering around in the field and being able to go visit various friends. Thanks for helping to make a happy home for me and my herd!

Every time I turn around someone is sidling up beside me wanting to cuddle. Of the three boys pictured here, Dugan is my fave. He is always so sweet to me. Barton is also very gentle and always has a nice smile on his face. Rusty...well, he's rather large and just doesn't realize how much space he takes up. He'll try to lie down beside me and end up squashing my leg or pinching my tummy. He means well though.

Because I was so rotund when I arrived, I was placed in the Assisted Living Field, Phase 2 due to a lack of mobility. It was a safe placement for me. The rest

During the hot season, I often hang out with Molly and Moonpie, two nice, quiet ladies.

Love,  
Esmerelda



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## **IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY**



**Nick, Resident  
Since 2018**