

Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490

Tucson, AZ 85740

Dear Supporter,

June 2016

On Saturdays during the months of October through May, we give tours of the sanctuary to visitors, not only locals but people from all over the country. Special accommodations are made during the “off season” for those traveling to Arizona that would like to visit. After May the heat gets unbearable for most folks, especially those from out of state plus the pigs don't want to be out in 100+ degrees either and are usually hiding in the shade or inside shelters. Coming all the way out here then only seeing a handful of the hardiest of pigs willing to come out in the heat can make for a rather boring tour!

I enjoy introducing the pigs to visitors as we wander through the different fields then seeing how they interact with one another. People are amazed at the texture of the pigs' hair and get tickled at how their mane will stand straight up to show their pleasure while being petted. Giving a pig a belly rub for the first time always brings a smile to one's face. Seeing someone's excitement and awe when a pig walks right up to give a little nudge on the leg in exchange for some pets is always fun. And then there are the observant people who notice all the other animals taking advantage of the food and water available at



the sanctuary. We get to observe rabbits, ground squirrels, ravens, hawks and even an occasional snake. Particularly for those out of state visitors, seeing the variety of desert wildlife up close is an added bonus along with interacting with the pigs.

The tours are not only a chance for some hands on interactions with the pigs but also a learning opportunity for everyone. I have my usual spiel about pigs, their behaviors, adoptions and pig ownership, adjusting to herd life, the feeding process, etc., but visitors come up with great questions of their own that enhance the presentation.

It's interesting to find out what details people want to know. I am glad that we at Ironwood are able to provide this opportunity to so many visitors. If you have not been able to make it out here, I hope that



someday you can visit the sanctuary and see in person how important your support is for these wonderful animals.

Sincerely,

Donna Thomason
Sponsorship Coordinator



Slater



Pamela

Cha Cha

Cha Cha's family moved away and left her behind at their home with no plans for her future and no attempt to place her elsewhere. A neighbor kindly took care of her before reaching out to Ironwood for help. Cha Cha arrived at the sanctuary on January 26, 2016. No one was sure about her age, but our vet thinks she is 10-12 years old. Cha Cha is a little smaller than average with extensive scarring along her right jaw line and neck. It looks as if a dog attacked her at some point in her past.

We suspected that Cha Cha might have a uterine tumor because her belly was rather large in comparison to her bony hips and spine. She was spayed in mid February and to our delight there was no tumor or anything else out of the ordinary. Cha Cha did great during the surgery and returned home that same night.



Unfortunately, two days later her stomach was badly swollen and she had very smelly flatulence. While we were discussing what may be wrong and how to handle it, Cha Cha began vomiting. That was it! Off to the vet clinic we rushed.

Cha Cha stayed overnight at the clinic receiving IV fluids as well as medication to settle her stomach and alleviate the gas. The next morning she was doing well. X-rays showed that food was passing normally through her intestines, but there was no indication of what had occurred to cause her problems. After a full day of normal behavior and no obvious discomfort, Cha Cha was able to return to the sanctuary. Over the next few days we gave her bland meals with plenty of fluids.

Cha Cha made a full recovery after her second visit to the vet clinic. In late April she was able to move out into Spike's Field to become a member of their herd of

23 pigs. Joining an existing herd with a hierarchy already in place is always a challenge for a new pig. It soon became apparent that this was too overwhelming for Cha Cha. She was intimidated and harassed by many of the other pigs. We moved her back to a holding pen for a period of rest and relaxation. When she gains her confidence back, we will try Cha Cha in a smaller field with a calmer group. There are several choices where Cha Cha can find her niche.

Cha Cha also wanted me to mention that she is looking for a sponsor!

---Donna

If you would like to help cover Cha Cha's medical bills, please designate your donation in her name. The total cost for her surgery, medications and second visit to the vet clinic was \$1,484.85. Cha Cha and everyone here appreciate all your support! Thank you!



Revisiting New Mexico

The spring of 2007 was a tough time for a group of feral mix pigs in New Mexico. They were breeding uncontrollably and constantly escaping from their enclosures which were filled with trash and debris. By the time word got out to the pig rescue network (people across the country that help with abuse cases and large rescues), over 30 pigs had been shot and killed by neighbors and sheriff's deputies. A handful of rescue volunteers worked with the local animal shelter to capture and



Apache

contain the remaining 20 pigs. The males were separated from the females then neutered by a local vet. All the pigs were given blood tests and ear tags to enable them to travel across the state lines in order to get to Ironwood.

Ten adult pigs, 5 males and 5 females along with ten youngsters of various ages made the trip from New Mexico and arrived at Ironwood in May of 2007. The females were spayed soon after. The babies were adopted out into homes in pairs. The adults, being



feral mixes, were not socialized and were extremely wild. We built a huge field just for them with plenty of space to roam, run and hide from people which is exactly what they did for a long time. Whenever the group heard us coming, they would all snort and gallop off to disappear into the bushes and trees at the back of the field. It took a long time to win their trust and to this day, only two of them will allow anyone to touch them. Sedona and Apache are now very friendly and love to be petted and get belly rubs. The others remain wary but will let us get close to them without bolting in the opposite direction.



Four of the babies that were adopted out in 2007 to two different homes came back to us later. Only Carmela is still with us out of those four after all these years. She is living in the Sunset Field with her many pot bellied pals. The ten adults from the rescue have dwindled down to a herd of seven living in a field called New Mexico. After the herd got smaller, older and much less wild, we commandeered part



Kwili

of their field to create other fields for our ever increasing population of pigs. The New Mexico pigs got the area in the back since they prefer being more solitary as well as getting the "wildest" spot with more trees and other vegetation. Apache, Richard, Rami, Kohanna, Kwinna, Kwili and Sedona remain a very close family unit. They have lived happily here in a safe carefree environment for the past nine years. The remainder of their years will be just as great because of wonderful people like you giving your support to provide a home for them.

---Donna

IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY

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UPDATE

IRONWOOD PIG SANCTUARY UPDATE



Kohanna From the New Mexico Field