

# IRONWOOD

ISSUE  
NO 100

MAY  
2021

Lil' East Field  
Following Deeanna  
For Their Morning  
Feeding

PIG SANCTUARY  
20 Year Anniversary

# Ironwood Pig Sanctuary

Post Office Box 35490  
Tucson, AZ 85740

May 2021

Dear Supporter,

A Journey of Twenty Years and it has been a memorable 20 years indeed. It all started with a conference in Tucson in the fall of 2000 and a search for land. Not an easy task as we soon discovered. We needed to be rural but not near a huge wash where we would be in danger of getting flooded, not too rural where we saw a lot of empty gunshot casings, not where a lot of people would be passing through over the land and where we were actually zoned to have an unlimited number of pigs. After a tip from a friend, we found a beautiful 40-acre property that has now grown to 130 acres in the Sonoran Desert about an hour north of Tucson.

We had volunteered at a local pot-bellied pig rescue since late 1998 and decided to open our own sanctuary when it became apparent the need for homes was greater than the two-acre property that was available to them. So let the building of the infrastructure begin! By June of 2001 we took our first two pigs and began our twenty year journey.

After recognizing that boarding, adoption, and attrition were not going to support the pigs, we began to print a newsletter in August of 2002. By that time, just over one year after we had opened our gates, we had 200 pigs and growing. Donna had begun the sponsor program which has continued over the twenty years to become a very significant part of the income to support the pigs. This newsletter is issue number 100 and we have added our newsletter updates between issues to keep you informed and up to date on what is happening with the pigs and the changes at the sanctuary. The newsletters and updates are the lifeblood of the sanctuary and your support from them is the crucial part that makes it possible for Ironwood to survive.

And survive we have from 2 pigs in June of 2001 to about 625 pigs in 2021. Many hundreds more have come through our gate, lived their lives to the fullest with companions and the security of a good home then ended their journey here in peace or been adopted to a good home. And that has been our mission; to rescue pigs and give them sanctuary, a place of refuge. We have gone from Donna, Ben and I in the beginning to 32 staff at this time in full and part-time positions with several regular volunteers. I cannot overstate how essential our staff is to maintaining the well-being of the hundreds of pigs. This includes not only the hands-on caregivers but all those involved in maintaining a sanctuary as large as we have become. Without you, our supporters, and our staff, there would be no pig sanctuary. Living in this harsh desert environment requires a great deal of care since the pigs are totally dependent on us for all their food and



Claire 2011



water and maintaining their health. Over these many years we have learned so much about the pigs and their needs. Therefore, what we do for their care has increased dramatically as you have read in many of the articles in our newsletters.

The rewards are huge. Every time a new pig entered our gate over these 20 years, whether it be an individual pig or many pigs from a large rescue, I know a life or many lives have been saved. Their stories cover a wide range of reasons for coming to Ironwood, but whatever the reason they had nowhere else to go. Sometimes we could cry seeing



Abigail 2004

their condition but rejoice knowing they would now be cared for the rest of their lives and never know suffering again. Sometimes we have regretted having to remove a pig from a loving home due to an unfortunate family situation, but the families were so relieved knowing their beloved pig would continue to be cared for.

As the rewards are huge, so are the challenges and, of course,

never-ending. Without a doubt the biggest challenge we are facing as climate change rages and the severe drought continues, is water. We have just dug our 5th well but will not be able to determine if it will satisfy the



Charlotte & Olivia 2012

water needs of the sanctuary until we perform a drawdown test. Unfortunately, this test is scheduled for next week after we go to press with this issue. We have faced many challenges over the 20 years we have been here and know from experience there will be many more ahead of us.

More than anything I have learned in these twenty years is that the most important thing one can do to help these pigs is to stop the breeding and sale of pigs. This contributes more to



Chandler & Mary 2005

their suffering than any other single issue. Sanctuaries have filled up with discarded “mini” pigs that, of course, are not “mini” pigs at all.

I know after many years of caring for and living with pigs, they have a very wide range of emotions and sensitivities. They feel joy and pain and fear and stress. And like we humans, they deserve to live with dignity and respect. They have their own culture and deserve to have a companion of their own kind with whom they can bond. They deserve to be given the things that pigs need; space to run and play in and all the basics they need for their well-being; water and wallows to roll and root in, warm cozy shelters to sleep in, shade to protect them from the sun, security from dogs who may attack them, good, clean food and access to health care.

With your support, it has been possible for so many hundreds of pigs to be rescued and given a home they would otherwise not have had over these past twenty years.

With our heartfelt appreciation,

Sincerely,

Mary Schanz  
President & CoFounder

### Some Historical Pictures

# Highlights, Past & Present

## First 5 Years

**Six-Acre Field:** In the fall of 2001 we completed our first large enclosure and began to move pigs in, creating our first herd. Over the years this six acres has been subdivided to create different fields for herds with varying needs and abilities.



**Sponsor Program:** To raise funds for the sanctuary, Donna developed a sponsor program. Joel from New York signed up as our first sponsor for a handsome pig named Taylor. This has grown to be a major source of financial assistance for the pigs.



**Assisted Living Field:** A new field was built in 2003 dedicated solely to the elderly pigs needing special care and attention. As that field's population reached its maximum, Assisted Living Phases 2 and 3 were developed during 2004 for the increasing number of special needs pigs.



**Annex:** The sanctuary originally known as Pigs\*A\*Lot in Picture Rocks, AZ was incorporated into Ironwood after the property went up for sale in a foreclosure auction in May of 2003. The Annex continued to house pigs until late 2016 when the last of the elderly herd transferred to Ironwood's main site.



**Open House:** Ironwood had its first Open House in November of 2003. This annual event is a great opportunity for supporters and visitors to tour the sanctuary and meet the resident pigs.



**Large Rescues:** In July of 2004 Ironwood took in 46 pigs from St. Matilda's Sanctuary when the owners decided to close their doors for personal reasons. There were other group rescues from an abuse case in Florida as well as the overcrowded Pigs\*A\*Lot before its closure.



## Second 5 Years

**Four Little Hoglets:** Ironwood took in a litter of four adorable hogs from the Humane Society in June of 2006. Buttercup, Bubbles, Blossom and Mojo Jojo will always hold a special place in our hearts.



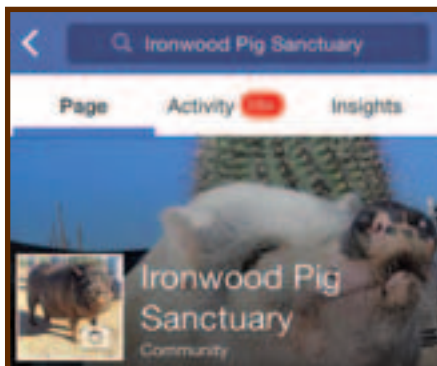
**Field Expansion:** The pig population continued to grow beyond our expectations, so another six acres was enclosed on the west side of the property during 2006-07. Today that addition is subdivided into 14 different living areas providing a home for a total of 216 pigs.

**More Large Rescues:** In 2008 an abuse case in Peoria, AZ led to the rescue of 33 pigs including three pregnant females who soon gave birth to another 13 bringing the total to 46 pigs. An Apache Junction, AZ sanctuary in poor condition finally closing its doors after years of attempts to shut them down, brought in nearly 40 more pigs during 2010.



**Electricity:** After years of depending on a diesel generator for power, Ironwood finally gets “real” electricity in the fall of 2008. It was a happy event since we no longer had to listen to the roar of the generator running several times each day.

**Cryogenic Medical Equipment:** With a training workshop and donated cryogenic equipment from Mike Brymill and family in January of 2010, Ironwood staff is now able to conduct cryosurgery to freeze spots of skin cancer on our white pigs. Being able to do this procedure on site is less stressful for the pigs as well as more economical.



**Facebook:** In June of 2010 Taryn got Ironwood’s Facebook page up and running. She posts pictures, videos and information about the daily happenings at the sanctuary. Currently there are over 10,700 followers on Facebook being entertained by our pigs.

## Third 5 Years

**New Water Tank:** In the summer of 2011 we added a 65,000 gallon holding tank to increase our available water supply. The four storage tanks totaling 112,000 gallons are filled by a combination of our well water and water brought in from town in large water trucks.



**Desert Rescue:** The latest of several desert rescues over the years brought in a family of six scruffy pigs in June of 2013. Karter was pregnant and later gave birth to six babies.



**Blood Transfusion:** During a difficult recovery from spay surgery in March of 2015, Lulu required a blood transfusion to save her life. Theo donated his blood to help her. It was the first transfusion for any of our pigs as well as a new experience for the vets.



**California Pigs:** A group of six pigs from two Animal Control Centers in California made the long trip to Ironwood in May 2015. The group included yet another pregnant female. Jezebel gave birth to nine babies a few weeks later.

**Amputation:** In the summer of 2015 Penelope developed a severe bone infection in her toe and had her outer dew claw amputated. The successful surgery was another first in our history...the only amputation for an Ironwood pig.



**Adoption Increase:** We adopted out more pigs during 2015 than any other year in our history. That was due to a vast number of young pigs and babies arriving at the sanctuary.



## Fourth 5 Years

**Hog Mix Pigs:** Eleven sweet pigs are living in a field of their own called Gotham City after being rescued in the spring of 2018. The owner was a hoarder whose water well had failed and there was hardly any food for the pigs.



**Kunekune Pigs:** This beautiful multi-colored breed of pig had not made its way to the sanctuary until 2018 when we rescued a group of 9 after their owner was arrested. They are larger than pot-bellied pigs and are extremely friendly pigs that love hugs, kisses and belly rubs.

**Puerto Rico Pigs:** Hurricane Maria left Puerto Rico overrun with pigs on the loose, reproducing and in need of rescue. In early 2019 we got Petey, adopted from a PR rescue but soon given up when he became ill. Weeks later a litter of 5 girls born in PR flew to Tucson to join us.



**Outreach Expansion:** Due to an abundance of calls for rescues of large numbers with many pregnant or nursing females, Ironwood became involved with covering the spay/neuter costs and placements in foster homes of over 220 pigs during 2020 alone. Those efforts stopped the birth of hundreds more piggies that would have been living in horrid conditions or placed unaltered in unsuitable homes.

**COVID 19:** The 2020 pandemic brought about many changes and hardships for the sanctuary including canceling all tours and Open House, a constant shortage of staff, scrambling for high demand supplies, moving to outdoor meetings in high heat, etc.



**Water Well:** A fifth attempt for a productive water well was made in 2021. The previous wells supply most of the sanctuary's water during the short winters, but the hot season brings a high demand for the water trucks to bring water in from town. It's a bit early to tell, but the hope with the new well is to decrease those water runs.



### THE FUTURE

Who knows what the future holds, but we're willing to bet it will include more pigs! One thing is for certain though...the future of the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary is in your hands. YOUR support ensures the continuation of our efforts to provide the best care and the best home possible for pigs in need. ---Donna

# Sponsor a S



Elma

When I was a baby, my sister and I were abandoned on a vacant lot. Thank goodness the neighbor saw us and knew to call Ironwood! We're so lucky to be in a safe place.



Zelma

I came here with my sister Elma (also on this page) after a nice person found us. We were so little and scared! Now we live with an amazing group of friends and are so loved.



Dollie

My human mom p though her ex-hus me, he was kind e placed at Ironwood several piggy friend



Marshall

I was found in a sn dumped on the side was starving and d Luckily, someone s was curious about i safety.

Mother's and Father's Day will both be here soon. The pigs featured here are looking for moms and/or dads to support them. A monthly pledge of \$30 will help cover the basic needs of one of the pigs shown here. You will receive an introductory letter and pictures of your pig with an update and new photos later in the year. Become a sponsor parent today! Or sponsor as a gift for a special Mom or Dad you love!

—Donna



Billie Jean & Donna



# Special Pig!



m passed away. Even  
husband didn't want  
d enough to get me  
ood. I have made  
riends here.



Zantina

I was born in Puerto Rico after  
the devastation by Hurricane  
Maria. A group of ladies worked  
hard to save as many piggies  
as they could. I got super  
lucky to end up here!



EV

My human family lost their home  
to foreclosure. My sister and I  
came to live here then. I have lots  
of breathing issues, but  
the people here are  
helping me with that.



a small cage  
side of the road. I  
d dehydrated.  
ne saw the cage,  
ut it and got me to



Leon

Someone came to buy the house  
where I used to live and found me  
trapped in a wooden crate with no  
food or water. I was so sick! Boy,  
am I glad to be well taken care of  
here!



Littlefoot

When I was just a few months  
old, I was running loose in the  
streets. After my capture, I was  
brought to the sanctuary. Now I  
get to live safely with a herd of  
friends.

# Through The Years

**I**ronwood has many different fields of various sizes to accommodate the population of over 600 pigs. The ages, physical abilities and sizes of the pigs vary a great deal. Those things have to be taken into consideration when we are deciding where a new arrival can be placed. We want them to join a herd with which they'll be compatible and safe. But what happens when a pig that has been living with a herd for many years has reached the stage of life when arthritis makes moving about a challenge? Things were great when they first joined at a young age, but their needs change once they reach their late teens and sometimes even earlier.

The staff at the sanctuary keeps watch on the older pigs out in the large fields to take note of when things change. It may be obvious signs such as Squeal taking forever to get to his feeding pen or Mr. Piggles dropping to his knees to eat his hay or Polly having difficulty getting up to a standing position. It might be nothing noticeable to us, but the rest of the herd starts frequently picking on one pig. Sometimes an adjustment in pain management medication can solve the problem, at least for a while longer. Other times those signs are an indication that it is time to "retire" to a smaller, safer environment.

We have built several smaller fields or living areas for pigs dealing with the effects of aging. They need to be around pigs in the same physical condition so that there is little competition for food or shelter. Over the years many of the pigs have moved from big herds to live in the Assisted Living Fields, Cat Shelter or Hospice. These areas were



Hospice

the hot season or tucked in with blankets for cold nights. Assisted Living has always been a mix of pigs from different places. Currently there are Bam Bam, Tyler and Pepper from the Princess Field, Hamlet from Comanche's Field, another Hamlet from North Field, Polly from Northeast Field, Rupert from Spike's Field as well as six others that went directly into that herd after their arrival at the sanctuary due to their physical condition and/or age. The Peoria Field is one of the largest living areas that was built in April of 2008 for a family group of 58 pigs that came from one rescue. Many of those pigs are now 16-18 years old and dealing with arthritis, the most common issue for aging pigs. Over the past year or so, several of that group have transferred over to the Cat Shelter. Currently 7 of the 13 pigs living there are Peoria retirees with Joel and Eloise being the latest to make that transition. We attempt to keep friends and family together whenever possible.



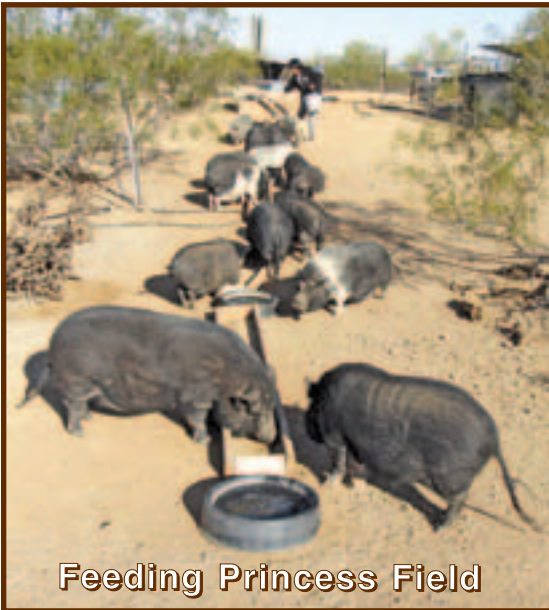
Assisted Living

specifically designed with the elderly in mind. Staff members visit these pigs frequently throughout the day, checking up on them, making sure they are comfortable particularly during



Cat Shelter





Feeding Princess Field

The Princess Field is another of Ironwood’s larger fields with a herd of 37 pigs. Karter, who arrived in June 2013 after being rescued from the desert with several family members, has happily lived with this big herd for almost 8 years. Over the past few months, she has slowed down a great deal and now moves stiffly due to the changes in her joints. In order to keep her family



Large Herd in Peoria Field

together, a new small field was created just for them. It’s tucked in the back of the adjoining New Mexico Field where a portion was fenced in, shelters were added

and shade ramadas built. Karter, Christine, Karloff, Mario and James Dixon recently moved into this new space. This family has a very close relationship and have always remained a bit wild from their days of roaming the desert. Here they can remain together with less human interaction

than they would get in one of the regular retirement homes. This is a much better solution for them because of their personalities and tempera-ment.

Several years ago when the East Field herd that had been here since early 2002 had dwindled down to its last handful of piggies, a portion of their field was fenced off to become Middle East, a home for elderly pigs. Piggy Smalls, Rasputia, Squeal and Lyla all retired from the larger Spike’s Field around the same time and became members of this smaller herd. Again, the decision for their moving together

was to keep a group of friends intact. Momma and her adult daughters, Piggy Pooh and Smokey later joined the small herd. Momma was lame and we did not want to separate her from her girls because of how close the three are. Middle East Field was

a good choice for them and the seven pigs are peacefully sharing the space.

All the pigs living in the smaller retirement type fields receive



Karter’s Kasino

more one-on-one care and individual attention than they could receive if they remained in a big field within a herd of 30-40 pigs. They are pampered throughout their golden years, safe from younger, rambunctious piggies that could do them harm. The ability to provide special living arrangements for the



Piggy Smalls, Rasputia & Squeal in Middle East Field

elderly along with the extra staff time necessary to ensure their safety and comfort is only possible because of YOU. Your continued support makes all the difference for the senior citizens of Ironwood. Thank you!

—Donna

## MISSION STATEMENT

The **Ironwood Pig Sanctuary** is dedicated to eliminating the suffering of pot-bellied pigs by promoting spaying and neutering, assisting owners and other sanctuaries, and providing a permanent home in a safe, nurturing environment for those that are abandoned, abused, neglected, or unwanted.

\* Ironwood Pig Sanctuary is accredited by the American Sanctuary Association.

\* The Ironwood Pig Sanctuary is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and your donations are tax deductible.

At Ironwood we are committed to following our Mission that we wrote when we opened 20 years ago.

In addition to the pigs who come to Ironwood to live, we have financed spaying and neutering and often additional medical care for well over two hundred and twenty pigs during this past year alone, some from large rescues and some from individuals needing assistance.

Over the years we have taken in a large number of pigs from sanctuaries that have closed their doors and rescued many large groups of pigs in hoarding or abuse situations. We make room for those who have been abandoned either in their home or are strays or abused or neglected.

We also continue to open our gates to those pigs who have lost their home for so many, many different reasons. We continue to provide a permanent home in a safe environment to as many pigs as we are able to care for. Our mission has not been interrupted even by COVID because you have always been with us to help us continue our mission. It is even more important now as the pig population continues to explode.



Inky arrived terribly infected and was nearly dead from loss of blood due to an incomplete botched neuter.

Many years ago Lucille was abandoned in the house of a vacant rental property and we were called to come pick her up.





## Sponsors



If you are currently signed up as a sponsor and would like to begin receiving your updates and photos by email rather than print, please let Donna know at [pigsponsors@yahoo.com](mailto:pigsponsors@yahoo.com).

Better for the environment and less expense for the sanctuary! Let's "Go Green!"

If you are a new sponsor, please sign up on our web site or with the enclosed envelope. You may indicate on either that you prefer email updates. Thank you!



Peaches



## Planned Giving

Thank you for considering the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary in your estate plans.

Creating a will is an essential part of securing your legacy and your family's future. Without a will or trust, state laws will determine how your estate is distributed and your wishes may not be fulfilled as you intend. By thoughtfully constructing an estate plan, you can ensure that your family and your legacy are protected as you desire.

A gift by will, also known as a bequest, is an easy and flexible way to make a meaningful contribution to the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary. Let your legacy reflect your heart. If your heart is in the animal rescue and care work of the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary, a bequest will ensure that future generations of needy pigs will receive vital support.

## AmazonSmile and Fry's

Here are two ways to support Ironwood at no extra expense for you.

\* Log on to [smile.amazon.com/ch/86-0999483](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/86-0999483) and designate the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary as your charity of choice. Always shop on smile.amazon and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your total purchases to the sanctuary. (If interested in donating items, be sure to look on AmazonSmile Charity Lists for Ironwood's Wish List.)

\* Arizona residents go to [FrysFood.com](https://FrysFood.com), click on "Save" and scroll down to Fry's Community Rewards. Follow the prompts to designate the Ironwood Pig Sanctuary as your charity of choice. Every time you shop at Fry's and use your Fry's VIP card, you are helping the pigs!



Jasper

**Your packages and donations are a great help to the pigs and are much appreciated! Thank you!!**

# Our Wish List

### MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS

**\*\*Used Blankets are needed year round.\*\***

**\*Sheets\* A Priority for the Summer!**

- Miralax
- Stool Softener
- Canned Pumpkin
- Animal Crackers
- Antibiotic Ointment
- Fiber Powder (Non-flavored)
- Peanut Butter (Creamy Only)
- Famotidine Acid Reducer, 20mg
- Fig Newton Cookies (NOT Individually Wrapped)



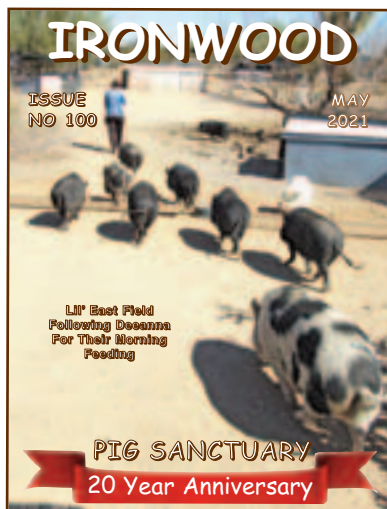
Moe

### GIFT CARDS

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



# Front & Back Cover



**T**his is the Lil' East Field with many of the pigs following Deeanna to their morning feeding troughs. Pictured are 9 of 39 pigs who call Lil' East home. In Sept. of 2017 a new field called Lil' East was created to accommodate 16 pigs who were all young from varied backgrounds. They were ready to move out of the pens and into their new large field where they could run and play and grow up together. They were happily following Jared (Cover of September 2017 Newsletter) at that time not really knowing where they were going but trusting that they would be well cared for as they had been since arriving at Ironwood regardless of their previous history.



They have all grown up in the past 3 ½ years and an additional 23 have come to call Lil' East home and become part of this now big herd. As the young pigs followed Jared to the new field and now follow Deeanna leading them to their feeding troughs, a bond and trust has developed. The bond between the pigs and the people who are their caregivers make Ironwood Pig Sanctuary such a special place. This bond permeates the entire 625 or so pigs that call Ironwood home.



Angel - 19 Years at Ironwood

**I**ronwood's anniversary issues of the newsletters usually feature pigs that have lived here the longest. This year's piggy is Angel, a 19 year old sweetie that arrived at 5 months of age in July of 2002. She came with her mom Princess, dad Bernie and sisters Cinderella and Precious. Angel has outlived her family members as well as all the other pigs that came to the sanctuary during 2001-2006.

Angel lives in the Main Field with a herd of 26 pigs. She has arthritis which is typical for a pig in their teens, but she is doing amazingly well for the age of 19. Earlier this year she had two mast cell tumors removed from her lip and behind her ear. Angel recovered nicely from her surgery and was soon back with her friends in the field. Over the years, she has gone from dark black with tan highlights on her mane to a beautiful silver and gray. Angel is definitely aging with dignity and beauty!



Angel & Precious 2011

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