The grass is green, the flowers are blooming and the seeds are ready to plant ... It must be spring!

Charlotte Marie enjoys the early spring, basking in the warm sun. Of all the natural pleasures the sunbath is tops on their lists. As I work on the computer in the early hours I watch daylight come and if sunshine comes with it, a parade of pigs venture out even on very chilly mornings to climb to the top of the hill where the sun strikes first and sprawl out like it was high summer. They sigh and smile, knowing Spring is on the way.

Survivors! This winter I am just blown away by the many treacherous paths that have led pigs to our door. Roscoe, 18, so badly mauled by dogs that he spent a month at the vet hospital having multiple surgeries to put him back together and then, unwanted by his owners, came here at the request of his vet. Pumba, evicted from his home of 16 years because the city suddenly realized he was a pig. Ivan, an adorable baby pig, thrown over a 7 foot wooden privacy fence onto a rock patio of a rescuer. Four babies and a dad, the only survivors from a group of 13 that a county humane society failed to protect after seizing them from a dog fighting ring. Poe, Andrew, Adam, and Walker, unwanted because the owners hadn’t the common sense to know a baby boy pig needs neutering to make him a “pet”. Silver Wilbur, a pig kept in a small, hot wired muddy pen, abused by the owner who hated him, grew up to be very big and very angry. Resources from 2 sanctuaries barely saved this boy from being shot on a snowy day in East Tennessee. And Fernando, left to fend for himself for years after a house fire. And that is just the short list.

Pictures on page 3 of these new rescues and residents at the Green.

One swallow does not make a summer, but one skein of geese, cleaving the murk of March thaw, is the Spring.

Aldo Leopold
Dear friends,

The enthusiasm the pigs show for spring is no less than what I feel as I order garden seed, get the mower serviced and start the clean-up projects that winter has created. After every storm we walk fences and repair damage but it’s not until spring that we get the chainsaws singing and clear the downed trees, pick rocks and branches from the pastures and clear the culverts and waterways. Time to get ready for the pleasures of sunny days with birds nesting and warm nights of peepers, crickets and bullfrogs in song. Ahhhh, spring!

We wish you a busy, productive and healthy one wherever you are. With your continued help we will forge on, saving pigs as we find them in such desperate need. *Peggy & the pigs*
Did you know? A pig’s snout is his most sensitive spot? And it’s the tool he uses every day for digging and touching objects to identify them. When he “noodges” your leg he is tasting you and smelling you and notifying you that he wants attention. When cruel, ignorant people put rings in a pig’s nose it’s the same as blinding them. It takes away their most important sense.
Pumba, displaced from his home of 16 years, has spent several difficult months getting accustomed to a new home, a new caregiver and other pigs in his world. It’s not easy on pigs, especially older ones, to adjust to a whole new world. His “family”, was devastated by the city’s indifference to Pumba’s health, forcing them to uproot him in the dead of winter. They traveled a great distance every weekend to give him a sense of continuity in his changing world.

People who call wanting me to take their pig have no idea how difficult it will be for the pig to make such a big change.

Pumba was lucky. He had family to help him make the transition and he had a sanctuary deeply concerned with his happiness.

Once he moved into the yard house, free of fences and those bothersome piggy roommates, he became quite the smiling lad. His house is heated, a special spot on these cold windy nights and the windows let in the sunshine when it’s nice.

His final few years will be comfortable and his family will continue to visit him. For him, a happy ever after story.

We love them.
Drip, Dribble, Stream

The urinary blockage

Urinary blockages account for many deaths each year.

- Almost all cases are with boys.
- Dissolved minerals can collect, forming “sand” like substances which can adhere to one another, forming stones in the bladder. Stones then try to work their way down through the urethra which is very narrow and has twists and turns like no other being. This causes great pain and straining to move the stone. It can end up blocking the passage of urine entirely.
- The condition may be critical (as it was with Deano, shown straining) or chronic, where “sludge” that doesn’t form stones slows but doesn’t completely prevent urination.
- The chronic form can often be treated with a medication called Ammonil, given orally.
- The acute condition requires quick veterinary attention before the bladder ruptures.
- If you see the warning signs, contact your vet immediately.

When Surgery is Needed

If medications cannot dissolve the blockage quickly, the vet may draw off urine & continue to treat with drugs before doing surgery. When necessary he will install a Foley catheter tube which is a drain tube inserted into the bladder and sewn to the abdominal wall that allows urine to drain without passing through the urethra. Sometimes these tubes are temporary and with medication the problem resolves and the tube can be removed. Sometimes, it’s permanent.

The Warning Signs

How critical is his problem?

◊ If he stands in the “pee position” for long periods or repeatedly over the course of a few hours.
◊ If he shows repeated activity in the prepuce area by “pumping” or quivering.
◊ If he strains, obvious by the pulling in and releasing of his abdominal muscles and the extension of his rectum (see picture). Excess straining can cause the rectum to prolapse (be forced out of the body). Immediate surgery is required in that case.

If he does any of these things and:

◊ He gets nothing
◊ He gets drips
◊ He gets a bit of dribbling but continues to try to go..

Contact your vet. This is one of those situations that cannot wait and it can be corrected.

Did you know? You can use your smart phone’s camera and camcorder features to greatly facilitate the information you want to convey to the vet. While I know exactly what I mean by “dribble”, he may not visualize the same thing at all; a picture or video is worth 1000 words!!
Did you know? Pigs have poor eyesight in the best of conditions. Age, wrinkled faces and overweight all contribute to reduced vision and ultimate blindness. They compensate so well that it is often a surprise to find out they are blind at all. Their sense of smell, hearing and that awareness all wild animals have of “presence” keep them very active despite lost vision.
Here’s where your donations will make it all happen in 2013:

- **Outreach** costs for pigs in need over these cold months has already run into the thousands. Each pig we take on to vet, foster or place is an average of $500. The funds you provide to save them couldn’t be better spent, saving them years of suffering.
- **Vet care** for the elders and preventative care for the mature pigs. Our promise is for life long care, not just a place to live.
- **High quality diets**, adding more fresh foods as they age and find grazing beyond their ability.
- **Maintaining our big barns** to serve the populations that use them. A few repairs and upgrades this year will keep everyone comfortable as the seasons pass. This year we will install a solar ventilation fan in one barn that gets extreme summer sun and is currently only passively vented.

* Become a monthly subscriber for a particular program, Outreach and Fruits for the elders are two favorites. If you don’t use a credit card, On-line banking now lets you be in charge of how much and how often a check should be sent.
* If you use a credit card, USE OURS!! Visit our website and connect to Capital One and sign up. We get $50 plus a percentage of everything you spend. Last year it provided us $5000.
* Visit our Fundraising page and see the many ways you can help, many that cost not a penny but help us do so much!

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**Did You Know?**  
According to Ollie, *Salad Doesn’t Count.*  
Lisa, who does all our editing, wrote: Ollie is going through a very hungry stage the last couple of weeks; must be spring fever. He has to have exactly five foods in the morning (his regular pig food plus four treats unless one of them is salad, then he must have one more). He just roots the door for each “course” and when it gets to five (or six with salad) he stops. Must be a guy thing! A bowl of cereal or a scrambled egg is fine, but we don’t count salads!
Spring Cleaning at The Green

Cartoon reprinted by permission of Isabelle Bannerman