Filbert’s Song of Great Fortune

Filbert was found alongside a Nashville interstate, a tiny farm pig, banged up and in need of care. A good Samaritan carried him to Dr Dixon who took care of his medical needs and kept him safe while a home was sought.

Finding a home for a pig who will grow up to weigh 800 pounds; it’s like climbing Mt Everest in a potato sack. And yet, somehow the impossible

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Dear Friends of the Sanctuary,

As the summer rolls in with high temperatures, floods and winds, we are glad that we found this particular spot for the sanctuary. As the winds howled and trees fell, rain pummeled the roofs like rocks, but all the pig children were bedded down and safe. We did lose a pond and a reservoir, access roads washed out and many trees came down on fences. But the pig kids were hardly bothered by it. Our fruit trees and garden suffered from hail and wind damage but are coming back strong now. The repairs will be costly in a time when funds are at a very low point.

**BUT This is our summer Double your Donation Month !!**

*For Every Dollar you donate, we get a matching dollar from a local businesswoman. Make it really count!* Send $12 instead of 10 and we will get $24! Send $30 instead of $25 and we get $60. Now that’s how to stretch a donation!!

Last summer’s matching donation was a great success. If this year we can do the same it will help pull us back up out of the hole and make some much needed repairs.

Thank you for making our sanctuary a safe haven for our hundreds of pig-children.

For the Pigs

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can actually become reality if we all ignore the “can’t “ part and just act like it’s a perfectly reasonable task. It certainly worked for little Filbert, finding not just any home but one that suited him to a tee.

And so here is how it all came about…..

About 6 weeks before Filbert fell out of that truck, I had a call from a girl who had rescued a farm pig baby. She was looking for a place for her. I explained the difficulty in finding homes for farm pigs and suggested she do 3 things:

1. First, get her pig spayed and we would pay the vet bill from our Helping Hoof fund. No matter where she went she needed to be protected from uterine disease.

2. Then take a look on our pig rescue pages on the web at the options to placing her; there are many ways to solve pig problems and she and her husband had some possible solutions that just needed developing.

3. And last, if nothing else would do, contact some of the farm animal sanctuaries near her .

As always, we left the door open for further communications if these things didn’t work out for her little red piggy, Wee.

In the meantime, Dr Dixon called with Filbert and I had not a single idea where Filbert might go, but Doc would be patient, I knew. Nobody would send little Filbert to the pound. I started making a list of people I could call, beg, threaten or blackmail.

Well, the couple took Wee in for a spay, then drove most of the day to visit the sanctuary to see how our fences and housing are constructed and to begin a pig education course. Stephanie had already read all the pig care info that was on the new website and was ready to make a special home for Wee. And then she added, “and Wee will need a little piggy boy to grow up with if you can find us one”.

IF?? IF?? Filbert was waiting there in Nashville for that very invitation!! It only took a few hours to fetch him home and ready him for his new life. (A little lecture about minding his manners and saying Please and Thoink you. )

The rest, as they say, is history.

A long drive on a spring day and soon he was home where he met Wee and they became instant pals, ready to share the next decade or two of farm life together.
In the dead of winter, when we were iced in and it looked like there was no hope of ever seeing spring again, there was a sudden flurry of abandoned and dumped pigs. When it’s 10 degrees and pigs are found hiding in a pile of baling string in someone’s shed, scared and freezing, there is no time to plan anything except to get them to shelter before they die. And so we worked through January and into February, relying heavily on volunteers in the areas the pigs were found to catch them, load them and get them to the nearest of our vets. Here are their stories:

**Saint**

This handsome, happy (and muddy) boy was abandoned by his caregivers and it may be the best thing ever to happen to him. As he passed through several transports and the obligatory trip to the vet for altering, he may have doubted that. But as soon as he was able to leave quarantine, he took to the life of a herd pig like a duck to water. Here he is perched on the edge of his barn divider waiting expectantly (and patiently) for breakfast as I feed the adjacent herd. Unlike most pigs who require some careful introduction to the new life, he has never for a moment questioned his place here. He is just glad to be home.

**Sonny**

A call from Nashville’s metro brought this little guy to our vet where he had to stay for 2 weeks while the roads became passable enough for me to drive there to get him. He is a shy boy and was lame when he arrived. He was soon introduced to our “Littles” group and he has slowly adjusted to living in a herd.

**Wee Charlotte**

We had known Charlotte for years so when her caregiver died, Charlotte came to live here. Tinier than the littlest pig here, she was happy to enter the elder herd when her quarantine was over. Charlotte was thin and has a chronic rhinitis causing her to sound like a little train huffing and puffing as he hurries to breakfast. Shown below with Oscar, an average sized pig, she is out sized but not in the least concerned. She is now rounding out and happy to be just a little elder pig.
Summertime at the Green

 Ain't nuthin' better than mudding on a hot summer day
Pools are Cool too
And of course we all love ponds and streams
A nice shady spot in the woods is a great place to spend the hot part of the day. In summer we have an open gate plan so all the herd pigs can wander over about 28 acres.
What do Tigers, Tortoises, Parrots and Pigs have in common?

Abuse… neglect.. People wanting to possess a being who should be wild and free; wanting it so badly they will let the animal live a life of suffering to have what they desire.

The American Sanctuary Association, of which we have been a member since 2002, accredits sanctuaries for many species. The member bulletin board posts animals in need. These 3 tigers are just a few of the dozens of big cats, bears, pigs, turtles, parrots, wolves and all other kinds of animals to be in desperate need of help this year. Abuse and neglect are the same for all of them. Whether it’s a tiger kept locked in a cage or a pig locked in the utility room, life is little more than survival.

Tony and Roy, two 6 year old Bengal tigers, and their mother Sabrina, 12, found an end to their suffering this month and will begin, after many years of abuse, a far better life. They can never be free but they can know a life that gives them space, activity, companionship and real compassion from their guardians.

Their owner was found dead after 11 days. In the scorching Texas heat, the tigers were left alone with no food and little water. They had been neglected as a result of their owners failing health and now they were left to die in a concrete-floored cage. Their mother, Sabrina, was also on the property when they were discovered, but her enclosure door was open. She was almost shot by authorities when they decided that she was in such poor condition that they would allow her to be moved to another location to recover from the severe malnutrition and dehydration; the police showed up twice to shoot and kill the 2 males. They were held off by the daughter and others and for these 3 lucky tigers, help was quickly found.

How do you define “Living”? Below Left: Life for a pet exotic animal, confined 365 days a year to a barren cage.

Right, Zulu, another rescue now healthy and living a free roaming lifestyle living at Peace River Refuge & Ranch.

See the full story of Tony & Roy at the Peace River Refuge & Ranch website. Lisa Stoner and her staff are in the process of moving their sanctuary, but Tony and Roy couldn’t wait.. So they dropped everything and drove to Texas to save them.

www.PeaceRiverRefuge.org

It costs about $5000 a year to feed a tiger. Please, if you can help with a meal or two for Tony and Roy, please donate when you visit the website.

Sabrina is now safe in MN at the Wildcat Sanctuary. Director Tammy Thies, says of Sabrina:

“After 48 grueling hours of loading, driving and unloading, Sabrina is finally safe at The Wildcat Sanctuary. Sabrina has a very long road to recovery both physically and emotionally. Her fear aggression of humans causes her a high amount of stress as well as wounds from hurting herself. But we know she will settle in and begin to trust again. “ See Sabrina’s rescue story and pictures at:

www.WildcatSanctuary.org

You can donate to Sabrina’s care at the website
Like all prey animals, pigs are basically non aggressive. Their protection from predators is usually flight, hiding or screaming depending on the situation.

So why all the calls about pigs acting aggressively?

To understand this apparent contradiction we need to take a look from the pig’s view. To a pig with all the instincts of a wild animal it looks like we have deprived him of freedom, deprived him of a mate, a family and a social life, deprived him of the opportunity to build his own home and determine his own foraging area. Doesn’t matter how good our intentions are, he sees it from an instinctive view and it looks like constraint. The only instinct that he can still act upon is claiming a territory. As guardians we provided him with that one special thing, a bed, a room, a little barn… in essence… a territory. And with a will that is extraordinary in such a mild mannered animal, he will defend it. If the pig is kept in the house the whole house can become his territory, and to his thinking, strangers and family members are there only because he permits it.

This relationship of pig and human sharing a territory often exists only until he begins to mature into a young adult (about 2 yrs old). At this age he would be establishing a territory of his own in the wild, raising his children and defending them from predators. His agreeable nature seems to change, for some almost overnight, as he feels the drive to take action on his way to becoming a mature adult.

Our advice to callers is: if you are living with a territorial pig, solve the problem before it becomes of such magnitude you cannot solve it. Put him outside, give him a large fenced area and a house that is his and respect his privacy and his right to be in charge there. No kids, no dogs, no visitors without calling first!! It will fill his territorial need and keep your home, your castle. Once this is working then his visiting your home is a pleasant event for both you and him. Enjoy a movie and some popcorn as friends.

For more info about the behavior of pigs see the website at www.9sites.org

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**2011 Calendars**

Our holiday gift to you, our friends and supporters.

We love producing them and you love getting them. Some of you like to order extras and ship them as holiday gifts. We are happy to ship them at no charge to you, including a little gift card. We ask that you order these calendars early so we will have enough to ship. Calendars can cost as much as 10 times more if printed in small quantity so we have to print all of them at once.

Order your extra calendars for gift shipping by using the enclosed form.

Orders need to be received by Sept 30. **Thanks!**
Finding the pig

Spring 2008: Freddy Mac, 5 years old, had been eating corn and kept confined in a small pen. He was totally blind and deaf because of the layers of fat.

May 2010: Now 60+ pounds slimmer. (He has legs!!)

After a couple of years of living an active life with a good diet (no reduced portions) a pig is emerging from all that fat, a pig who can hear. Sight has not (yet) returned, if it ever will, but when I call “come here Freddy Mac” he finds me quickly. Freddy lives in a handicapped herd with other blind and/or deaf pigs. He is now learning the wonderful comfort of other pigs; the soft sounds of their sleeping and the warmth of their bodies against his on a chilly night. He sleeps in a group of 7 boys in a small Victorian cottage.

The Mother Ship

Here in the office we now have a full length counter and shelves custom built by my brother. The newsletter mailing is much easier now that everything is at our fingertips. Thanks, Bro!!

Tinker’s Grove

We lost our old boy Tinker to cancer last winter. A finer gentleman I may never meet. In his memory I planted a grove of wild pears, protected by old logs at the edge of the woods, just the sort of place he loved to lie.

On our Rainbow Bridge roster, pigs 17 and older are remembered here in Tinker’s Grove.

The Orchard

Last year there was just one pear from our hundred young trees. This year almost every tree has fruit ripening. The older apple trees are ready to start picking and soon there will be pears as well. Figs have begun to ripen and grapes will be ready soon too.

The pigs will feast on fresh fruit and garden produce from now until September.

This fall we will be planting a second 100 trees. By 2013 we hope 30% of our pigs food will be grown right here at the Green. That will be 42,000 pounds of fresh food!

The Orchard
April 10, 2010.

Peggy,

Just wanted to send you a quick email before I went to bed. I have attached some pictures I thought might make you smile! They were taken Friday.

Filbert is a very sweet little boy and we love having him. I thank you so much for bringing him to us and for all the help that you have provided since I first contacted you about Wee. I want you to know how happy I am to be keeping Wee and her new little friend. When I first contacted you I had sent out at least 20 emails for help and had not received any response (and still you are the only one, I never heard from the rest). I just want you to know how grateful I am for you and people like you in this world who truly try make a difference. Your website is a guiding light in caring for these wonderful animals and the time and effort that you put into it giving all that you already do is amazing!

Well, it’s been a long day and I’m headed to bed. Thanks again for everything!

Stephanie

See our Summer Feature Story of Filbert’s rescue

August is Matching Donations month

Last year was our first time to have a matching donation sponsor.

Your response was so wonderful that we hope August will be a Matching Donation month every year.

Send $10, we get $20, send $100 and we can support a herd pig all year!

Make this August rock to the sound of free money so we can continue to help people like Stephanie with her little pigs Wee and Filbert.