

CALIFORNIA POTBELLED PIG ASSOCIATION, Inc.



CPPA eNEWS

MAY 2011

MEET PIG-CASSO!

It is said that anyone can be an artist with the right motivation. We're not sure our own stick figure drawings would qualify, it's clear that the pigs at [Best Friends Animal Sanctuary](#) have an artistic flair. And you can be a part of it!

The process is simple. A canvas is laid down and dotted with paint by a human assistant. Next, it's laid on the ground with a clear plastic covering over it and food is sprinkled on top. Then, a porcine artist like Squeaky (shown here), gets to work expressing him or herself by eating the food, which spreads the paint.

Best of all, the finished paintings are then sold to raise funds for the sanctuary. You even get to specify which piggy artist's work you want to buy and what colors they should use.

To order your own pig-painted work of modern art, contact Yvonne McIntosh at pigs@bestfriends.org. Prices range from \$25 to \$100, depending upon the size canvas you want, and another \$50 will get you a matted frame with a photo of the artist. They don't accept credit cards or PayPal, so you'll need to send a check after you get the total.

We've already ordered ours.



Photos: Gary Kalpakoff

Video: CPPA member piggy photo galleries

It has been a long time since I was able to put a photo gallery on YouTube, but I finally managed to get it done. Here are links to Photo Galleries #3 and #4. #4 is over 7 minutes long and the music (if you are wondering) is performed by "Chris" Christensen. Ok so I had to brag. #4 includes pix of potbellied pigs, feral pigs, farm pigs, "Pigs" with pigs (you'll figure it out), curly coated pigs, and a big dog that thinks he's a cat (sorry, this pic was just too cute not to include).



Most of these pigs have been rescued from one situation or another. They are from California, to Spain, to South Africa to the Netherlands, and all are members of CPPA. Keep sending me those wonderful pix so I can start collecting for Photo Gallery #5. I do want to send a huge shout out to our biggest contributors, Tom in Florida, Marlies in Southern CA and Jane in Northern CA. Each of these three have rescued or helped rescued a "TON" of potbellied pigs, literally. Thank you guys and keep them photos coming.

Hope you enjoy! - Marcie



Story time: Dream Big, Little Pig! by Kristi Yamaguchi

Most of us know Kristi Yamaguchi for her performances on the ice as a professional figure skater. However, she recently became a published children's book author as well.

Titled "Dream Big, Little Pig!", the book tells the story of Poppy, a young pig who wants to be a star.

Obviously, all the pigs we know personally are already stars in our eyes. Although none of them can ice skate and Poppy is pretty adorable.

You can grab your own copy of Dream Big, Little Pig at Amazon by clicking [here](#).

THE STORY OF A RESCUE: THE PINOLE FIVE

Words by Eric Bratcher

We thought we'd give everyone a taste of what it's like to participate in a rescue, moving some of our heart-nosed little friends from an unsuitable home into a new one. Rescues are *hard* work, but the end result is SO rewarding, the feeling is tough to describe.

This is the story of five potbellies who lived together in Pinole, California. Most of you have already heard some of the story, and some of you have already heard most of the story. But the ending is so happy, we thought it was worth sharing again even if it's long and even if we all know it by heart.

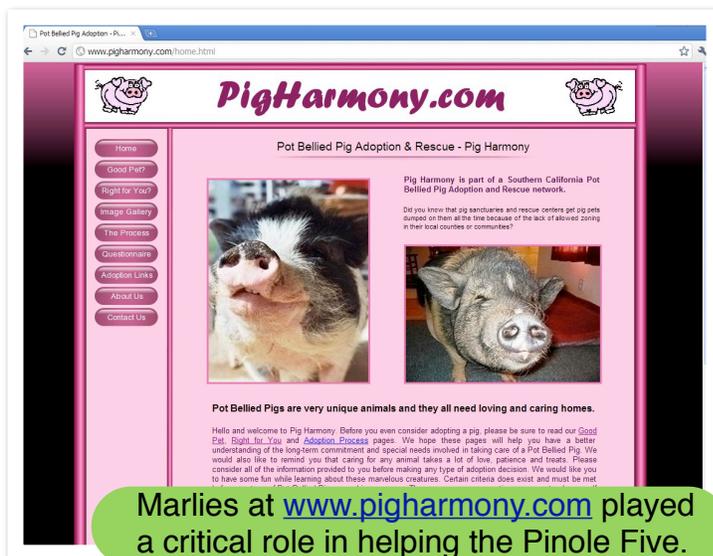
Step One: Discovery

The most important part of any rescue is simply learning that there are pigs in need of help. In this case, the tip came from Marlies Reno of PigHarmony.com, a rescue group in Southern California. It seems the pigs (all rescues from a local shelter) were owned by an elderly woman who had fallen ill, and the caregiver looking after things was concerned that the pigs might need better living conditions and some basic medical care (hoof trims and a pen cleaning, at the very least). The caregiver contacted Marlies, who passed the lead on to CPPA, knowing we had people closer to Pinole.

Step Two: The Visit

Next, it was time to meet the pigs and survey the situation. This is critical because there are many questions one has to ask when getting involved in a rescue: How well socialized are the pigs? Rescues range from potty-trained house pigs to fully feral, and this makes a huge difference in rescue, transport, and (hopefully) placement in their new homes. Are they healthy enough to be around other pigs? What about the owners? What is their state of mind toward the pigs? Could there even be a legal issue involved (landlord, zoning, abuse or neglect, etc)?

A rescue will always go much more smoothly if these questions are asked and answered early on, to avoid surprises. And while some of these things can and should be worked out before the visit, there



are other things you can only learn through an in-person face-to-snout meeting. So, we dispatched a three-person team from CPPA to do a site visit on a chilly, drizzly day in December.

The great news was that four out of the five pigs were very sweet and social, totally comfortable around people, and the remaining one was very possibly just grouchy because of the current state of things. Plus, while four of the five were a little thick for their size, they all looked between 100-130 lbs, so nobody needed to go on a crash diet or anything. Barring any as-yet-undetected medical concerns, these pigs were completely suitable to be placed in new homes.

The bad news was that none of the pigs had been given a hoof trim in a very, very long time. Some

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of them were skiing around on hooves literally six inches or more in length – this isn't just unattractive, it's very unhealthy for their feet, putting the weight on the wrong part of the foot and stretching their muscles and tendons in all the wrong directions. It's probably very painful as well.

Moreover, the living conditions were very rough. There was a run-down, rotting shed, but it was so beat-up it couldn't protect the animals from the rain, wind or cold – although it did manage to block out daylight almost entirely. Plus, the stall floors were covered in inches of rotting straw, mud and pig waste. It was hard to breathe. And in the few moments a day when the pigs were allowed into the tiny, muddy yard area, there was no fence – literally nothing to keep them from getting out (or predators like coyotes or wildcats from getting IN).

Ultimately, we were looking at good pigs in a bad situation. So, we decided to do our best to make things better.

Step Three: The Plan

Every rescue needs a plan. Granted, you often have to make it in a hurry, and the plan is usually different for every single rescue because every rescue is a unique situation. But you've always got to have one, plain and simple.

You make a plan by determining what your specific goals are, then putting them in order. In Pinole, the ultimate goal was to get the pigs relocated. But first, we needed to get them healthy – shots, hoof and tusk trims. And before we could do that, we needed to secure their pen. In the state it was in, the moment we grabbed one pig, the other four would zoom right out of the pen as fast as their giant-hooved little feet would carry them and we'd spend the next week searching for them all around the canyon behind the house.

So, the order of action was set. First we'd fix the pen temporarily, then we'd work on the pigs themselves, then we'd deliver them to new homes.

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This hoof broke off, but the hooves and tusks still attached were nearly as long.



For more pictures of this rescue, head to <http://bit.ly/jrVeqH>

Step Four: The Work

The plan in place, Marcie Christensen sent out the call for help, and as usual the people of CPPA (as well as many other kind souls) stepped up in that way that always makes us awed and proud.

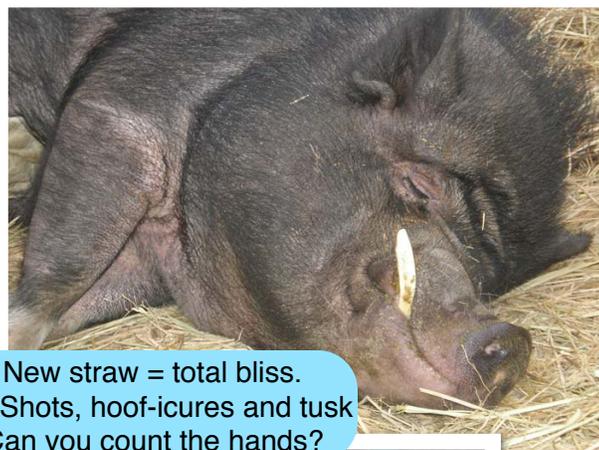


The living area was in shambles.

Eva and Ercell Ingram from Belly Draggers Ranch donated hay and feed, loaned us hog paneling, posts, and gates to construct a temporary pen, and drove it all 80+ miles to the site in Pinole. Several people donated carpeting for us (including Diane, who even rented a car to deliver it) to lay down to try to combat the muddy conditions. Then, 16 volunteers showed up (driving as much as 2 hrs each way) on a gloomy Sunday with all sorts of supplies and energy, ready to work. And work they did.

Within a few hours, we'd cleared a larger space for the pigs (there was dense brush all around their hut), driven post holes and erected the hog paneling to create a secure temporary pen, cleaned out their filthy stalls (Aloha and Forrest – how did you not need a gas mask?), and patched the shed with tarps and wood to make it more rain- and escape-proof. Everyone went home sore to the bone and filthy with mud, but happy with what had been accomplished. The pigs seemed to appreciate it as well – before we left, all five had frolicked in their new outdoor area, and all but one had gone down for a belly rub. They had to be bribed with treats to get back to their stalls.

The next weekend (the Sunday before Christmas), it was time to address the pigs themselves. Another battalion of 14 volunteers piled into the new pen with dremels, clippers, OB wire, gauze, medical equipment and a large bag of cookies and gave our little friends the works. Inches-long shards of hoof went flying, tusks couldn't escape a trimming, and our amazing vet Dr. Dana Conly gave so many immunizations we think Marcie's cold was cured



Above: New straw = total bliss.
Below: Shots, hoof-icures and tusk trims. Can you count the hands?



just from being nearby. Amazingly, the rain stopped shortly before we all arrived, and started again ten minutes after we finished. Best of all, all five of our little heart-nosed friends made it through with no trouble. So did the CPPA folks, most of whom went home sore – but happy.

Now it was time to find the pigs new homes.

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Step Five: Placement

On one final visit to the Pinole location, 10 CPPA members loaded up all five pigs, took apart the temporary pen so we could return all its parts to the respective owners, carted both parts and pigs up a muddy hillside, and delivered the piggies to their foster home at Belly Draggers Ranch, soon to move on to their forever homes.

Okay, we'll admit we're skimming over a bit of the "Does anyone want to adopt some little angels?" part of the job here (which, amazingly, took only a week). But that's just so we can get to the good stuff.

Step Six: The Reward

So, after more than 250 volunteer hours (not counting all the laundry of muddy clothes), from more than 40 volunteers, was it really all worth it? We'll let the letters from each pig's new parents answer that question for us...

First we'll check in on the larger, white pig, who was renamed Punky Brewster because of his rascally nature. Ercell again stepped up, driving more than 300 miles round trip from Belly Draggers in San

Martin to deliver Punky to his new home in Geyserville, where he's got a large yard to hang around in and some piggy yardmates as well. New mom Barbara writes...

March 16, 2011

"Our little PB is doing fine. He is a very vocal pig in terms of grunts and snoring-so nice because I don't have to see him I just listen for him. He loves to lie in the sun against our gate and gets indignant when we have to open the gate-how dare we interrupt his sleep!"

Then there was Gina, the smallest of the five and the only female of the group. She was a quiet little sweetheart who quickly charmed everyone at her foster home at Belly Draggers Ranch – no surprise then, that Eva's next two emails read as follows:

March 21, 2011

"I think Gina is gaining a little. Cathy makes scrambled eggs for her on the mornings she's home and she's getting about twice as much food as the others. She's everybody's favorite. Ramona (volunteer) loves her and gives her extra treats.

Russell (volunteer) loves her and brings her treats. He said next time he's down he's bringing her cake and ice cream. She's such a special pig..."

March 22, 2011

Yes, Gina is adopted. We are keeping her. This is her forever home. Today when Ramona came Gina was laying in the sun, but she was laying in one of our large black plastic summer water troughs. It's full of gravel and probably really warm in the sun. She was hanging over on both ends but was perfectly happy there. She's one smart girl!



Punky Brewster checks out his foster digs.

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Finally, there were the three brothers, whom we hoped to keep together. Marlene in Squaw Valley was kind enough to adopt all three (special thanks again go to Marlies at www.pigharmony.com, who not only sent us the original lead on the pigs, but also connected us with Marlene). Here are just a few of the things she's had to say since taking on the trio, now named Wilbur, Mr Piggy, and Spot...

Dec 23, 2010

"They are SO sweet ... So far my favorite is Wrinkles (just a descriptive name as I don't really know who is who yet). He came for loves & rubs, over & over & told me how much he enjoyed it:). We are happy."

Dec 25, 2010

Merry Christmas to you, also. Haley, age eleven, is the granddaughter that has been asking for a pig for a very long time. Her parents brought her over yesterday with the ruse of Grandma needing a ride to their Xmas Eve party so when they arrived here she just thought were going to give horses, dogs & chickens snacks then leave. We all walked down to the barn and you should have seen her face when the piggies came out from their shelter to meet us. It was sheer joy and awe. She said, "Oh, Grandma it's my pigs!" I got a big hug and she went right in to visit with them. She & the pigs were in love. After treats, brushing & belly rubs she raked down their pen, got them fresh water and as we sat side by side on a bench in the pen she told me, "Grandma, I had prayed for the best Christmas EVER,, and my prayers have been answered!"

Dec 26, 2010

We are prime time in love with these piggies. Steve said that when he feeds in the morning he usually



Gina pours on the quiet charm. Who wouldn't fall in love with this face?

has a couple of nickers from the horses. This morning there was a robust conversation all in pig talk. He said they come running to the gate and just tell him all kinds of "gossip".

Jan 04, 2011

Steve and I have made the decision to move the piggies out of the barn, bring them up the hill and let them reside in our yard proper. We are so captured by their personality and realize they (and we) will be happier with them up here.

Jan 05, 2011

I wanted to give the small one an extra feeding per day as he seems thin to me. So, little pig is in the pen and bigger pigs are exploring the rest of the barn. I poured a cup of feed for Wilbur and the other boys came running to the pen gate. When they realized the gate was shut and they were locked out you

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should have heard the noise. It was a roof raising ruckus. I was piggy yelled at, they stomped, they got mad and started to push my trash barrel over, they couldn't believe I wouldn't open the gate. FINALLY, Spot (middle piggy) gave up and went to eat hay. Mr Piggy was not giving up. He started this mournful wail; half crying, half howling. I had our German Shepard, Sadie, with me and she sat beside Mr Piggy just licking his face and shaking. The dog was sure Mr Piggy was dying. I was laughing so hard ... Thank goodness we don't have any neighbors close by as they surely would have called 911 had they heard the noises coming from the barn today.

Jan 22, 2011

They ARE happy and so are we. I had no idea they were so endearing.

Feb 17, 2011

This last weekend Mr Piggy and his buddies, Spot and Wilbur, were helping keep us company as my husband and I worked in the yard. It was a beautiful day, warm and sunny. I went to the house to get treats for the pigs and when I came out Mr. Piggy came prancing up to me and, without stopping, when he reached me he all of a sudden took off like he was shot out of a cannon. He



"We thought we heard a treat jar lid open."

peeled around the corner of the house, gravel flying in the side yard walkway and out of sight. A minute later here he comes from his trip all the way 'round the house still running full out. He nearly slides to a stop at my feet and sits (no kidding) with his mouth open for his treat. We laughed so hard my husband and I had tears in our eyes. I can't believe that Mr Piggy would leave for a joyful run when he knew treats were coming but that's exactly what he did. I LOVE these pigs!!!!

We know what you mean, Marlene.

If anyone needs help with hooves, tusks, shots or other vet care in the Contra Costa County area, the fabulous Dr Dana Conly can be reached at (925) 765-9917. Finally, we'd like to offer one last **THANK YOU** to everyone involved with this and any rescue. There are too many of you to thank individually, but you all make us so proud to be part of this wonderful group of amazing people!

Must-watch Video: The [Righteously] Angry Pig Rescuer

A short time ago, CPPA received a call from a pig owner who lived in an apartment. She had purchased a piglet five years ago from a breeder in TX who told her that it would be less than 30lbs and to only feed a very small amount of food. This pig spent her entire life, five full years, in an apartment. Due to a zoning issue the owner was told the pig had to go.

Long story short, the owner wasn't willing to fight for her pig, which ended up at [Lil Orphan Hammies](#), a wonderful sanctuary in Solvang, CA, where she is now getting proper food (she'd been stunted from her years of barely-above-starvation diet) and exercise. She is learning what it is like to be a pig, something she never

knew before due to a breeder who lied to her human and her human not doing her due diligence. The breeder said the pig was a teacup pig, it's okay to feed such a tiny amount of food and it was okay to live in an apartment and never see the outside. NONE OF THIS IS TRUE! And it was the pig that suffered. How sad is that?

After having done rescue for more than 20 years now, I can say [this video](#), created by a Canadian sanctuary called [Hearts on Noses](#), gets it right!!! These are the type of emails and calls we get ALL THE TIME!

And yeah, I guess I'm an "angry pig rescuer". But this is worth getting mad about. -- Marcie



Video: Stampede to the buffet

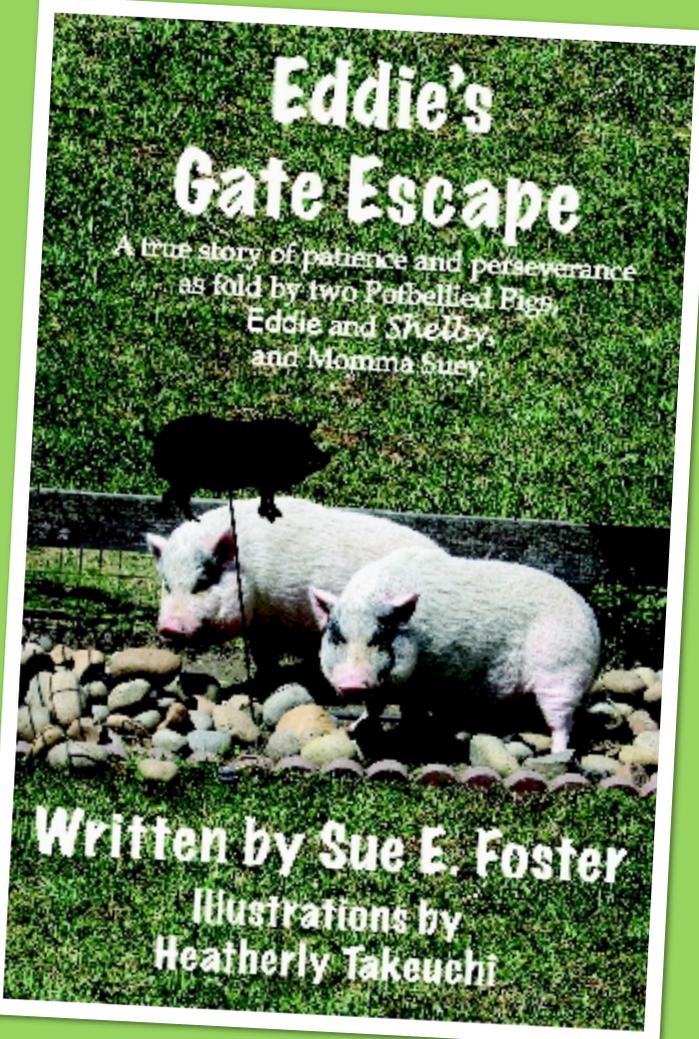
We've been featuring the videos of the amazing Schnoidz for ages now, but even he's upped his game lately.

Taken at the [Rooterville](#) sanctuary in Florida, this video not only gives a pig's eye view of the cutest stampede you'll ever see, it also gives a quick glimpse as to just how many pigs are helped by rescue sanctuaries all over the country.

You've gotta [watch this one!](#) The image can't do it justice.



Story time: Eddie's Gate Escape



Longtime CPPA friend Sue "Suey" Foster has 27 pigs at her sanctuary, [Cuddly Critters](#), and now she has a book. "Eddie's Gate Escape" is a true story written from two pigs' points of view and filled with tons of color pictures.

Grab your copy (and while you're at it a t-shirt or calendar too) by contacting Sue at sueypig@att.net. They're \$15.98 before tax and shipping, and all proceeds go to fund the care of the animals at Cuddly Critters.

Time to party! Belly Draggers Ranch Annual Pig Party

Every year, Eva and Ercell Ingram throw a party at their home, [Belly Draggers Ranch](#) in San Martin, CA. And any and all pig lovers are absolutely invited!

So if you're free Saturday, June 4, 2011, from 1:00 to 4:00 in the afternoon, you should definitely RSVP to Eva at eieipigs@garlic.com. Please RSVP with your number of people attending by May 28 so they can plan accordingly (and shoot you over their complete address).

Good food and wine, good people, good live music and more pig bellies than any one person can rub. If that's not a party, we don't know what is.



Piece of Peace volunteer work day

Karen and Monty down at [Piece of Peace](#) sanctuary in Marysville, CA are having a volunteer work day on May 28th, starting at 10am. If you can make it, please drop them a line at info@pieceofpeaceanimalsanctuary.org for more details.