



CALIFORNIA POTBELLIED PIG ASSOCIATION

a non-profit rescue organization

P.O.Box 23955

Pleasant Hill, California 94523

925.937.9045

www.cppa4pigs.org info@cppa4pigs.org

We're back!

Welcome to the new CPPA newsletter! We decided to try something faster and more e-friendly this time around, instead of our usual downloadable newsletter. So please root around and see what you can find!

And if you have a minute, please consider taking our [one-question survey](#) to let us know how you like it.



Yay! A new newsletter! Finally!

Save the date: For the CPPA Hog-i-day party!



CPPA's annual Hog-i-day party will be Saturday, November 21st at Marcie and Chris Christensen's house (sharp-eyed readers may noticed Marcie originally emailed a different date. This is the correct one.)

It's a great time to hang out and enjoy great food and great people. For more info or to RSVP:

Please contact Marcie at info@CPPA4Pigs.org. See you there!

Movie time!



Here at CPPA, we have no official stance on whether one should eat pork, beef, chicken, or any other animal. As long as you love pigs, you're in the club. However, pig lovers of any dietary lifestyle will want to watch out for [The Last Pig](#), an upcoming documentary about Bob Comis, a pig farmer who, having realized what special creatures they are, has decided to switch to raising crops instead of pork.

Thanks to donors including Farm Sanctuary, the film is now finished, but its makers have launched a Kickstarter campaign to fund its distribution (because a movie that nobody can see isn't really moving at all). So head over to [the film's website](#) and take a gander at the trailer. If you like what you see--and you will, because Bob Comis is thoughtful and well-spoken pigs are pigs--consider donating through the "support" link on the site, on the film's [facebook page](#), or on its [Kickstarter](#) page, which launches this week.



"After ten years of looking into thousands of pig eyes,
I've come to understand that they're never vacant.
There's always someone looking back at me."
- Bob Comis, *THE LAST PIG*

Heartwarming Story #1: Tab the Wonder Pig takes his first steps outside in years



photo credit: Lasa Sanctuary via Care2.com

Get ready to fall in love, folks. This is Tab, a pig who was born without ears and who showed up at Ohio's [Lasa Sanctuary](#) last year so overweight (around 350lbs) he was deaf, lame, and mostly blind. He also had "urine scald" on his tummy and cried out when people touched him.

But Tab had a good heart--and some *very* good caregivers. He quickly realized belly rubs weren't half bad, and after almost a year of intense TLC, Tab has lost the weight, gained back much of his sight and hearing, and has his own piggy door so he can come and go as he pleases.

You can get the full story about Tab and his remarkable recovery at Care2.com. We'd suggest starting with the [update here](#) and then backtracking to the [original post](#).

Why I Rescue: A Volunteer's Tale

As if the links above weren't explanation enough, our good friend Marilyn Hirvela was kind enough to share this story with us. Thank you, Marilyn!

I am often asked why I spend so much time working to rescue and re-home potbellied pigs. The answer is really quite simple...it's my way of giving back. I've always loved pigs and like most people, I always saw the pictures of those cute little piglets. You know the ones. The media depicts them standing in rain boots and licking ice cream cones. Their little faces so cute that you just want to curl up on the couch with one in your lap. Far from reality, but that's the picture that comes to mind if you've never been around one.

When I got my first PBP Betty, she was just 2 months old. I bought her off Craig's list for \$50. She was so small and afraid when her breeder came and basically dumped her at my house. He left without any instruction or information. That was my first big mistake. I did not do my due diligence and had not a clue as to what I was doing. I did not know how much she should eat, or required for housing, or that her

hoofs needed to be trimmed or how young they can start breeding. All I knew was my Betty was adorable. My second baby was little Archie. I had no intention of getting a second pig, but walking through our local swap meet just a few weeks later; there he was, sitting in a small bird cage, in his water bowl. It was about 100 degrees out and I felt so bad for him that I bought him (for \$25) and brought him home. So now I had a male and a female, both around 3 months old at the time. They bonded so quickly and I was glad they had each other.

As you may have guessed by now, a mere 3 months later (at 6 months old) Betty was pregnant! This was the point my adventure truly began.

At 9 months old Betty gave birth to 5 healthy piglets, I finally got myself on line and I was lucky enough to connect with Marlies Reno who runs Pig Harmony. She did not judge, although I'm sure she had plenty of opinions with every email I sent. She got me pointed in the right (information) direction, helped me spay/neuter all the babies and even place them in forever homes. Two went on to become "Therapy Pigs" at the Orange County Rescue Mission. And of course, right after the birth of the babies, Archie went in for his neuter as well.

You have no idea how angry I was with myself for allowing this to happen! Why would I be so irresponsible when it came to potbellied pigs when I was an advocate of spay/neuter/research for all other animals? All I can think is that I was sucked into the cute little piglet propaganda. And honestly, how many TV spots depict the 7, 10 or 14 year olds? The general public doesn't have a clue. On the upside, I have learned so much these last 6 years and am now a strict advocate for education, spay/neuter and responsible pig ownership. For the right people what beautiful pets they can be!!

So now I do what I can from my little corner of the world. I've constructed a foster pen in the backyard where I take in pigs that are dumped at the local shelters. I have a great network (CPPA, Pig Harmony, SCAMPP, LOH and many others) that help me to spay/neuter and place PBP's in their forever homes. And the big key here: EDUCATION!! I will continue until I help at least 10 times for each of those 5 piglets that were born into the world when there are so

many displaced. Had I done my research that would have never happened, and it should have never happened.

Thanks again for sharing your story, Marilyn! And we have a feeling that many, many pigs would also like to thank you for all your hard work.

Heartwarming Story #2: Pola, the Freedom Fighting Pig



Click this pic to watch Pola's story. Image credit: Juliana's Animal Sanctuary

Sometimes, rescues go wrong. Such was the case for Pola, who spent years of her life in an animal "sanctuary" where she was tied to a shed, fed dog food that contained pork, and constantly harassed by 180 free-running dogs who tortured her, nipped at her, and even ate off her tail.

Luckily, Pola's nightmare ended when she was rescued by the kind folks at [Juliana's Animal Sanctuary](#) in Colombia. Today, she enjoys fruit for breakfast, lots of love, and the occasional dip in the pool. You can [watch her video here](#). The first several seconds are pretty somber, but it sure does get fun from there on.

Sadly, Pola's future is uncertain. Like many sanctuaries, Juliana's is suffering through lean financial times, and is facing a looming shortfall on this year's lease. If you'd like to help, just check out the sanctuary's [website](#), its [facebook page](#), or possibly its [YouCaring.com](#) page.

Video Break: Ziggy the Traveling Piggy

Some pigs love to lounge in their own backyard. Others are up for a little adventure. Ziggy definitely fits into the latter category. Just watch [this video](#), in which Ziggy explores the world, make



friends, and frolics in the surf like a piggy version of Deborah Kerr in *From Here to Eternity*.

Required Reading: What Happens When Your "Teacup Pig" is 160 Pounds



Image: Mrs L, via The Dodo

Animal-loving website The Dodo has run two great articles this year about so-called "teacup pigs". The first was the self-explanatory "[Do Teacup Pigs Really Exist?](#)". And they recently ran [this follow-up article](#) which profiles two first-time pig owners who--you guessed it--did business with shady breeders who promised the "teacup pigs" they sold would stay tiny. Luckily, the pigs' charm won out in these cases, but that doesn't always happen, as articles like this one make all too clear.

[Do a Good Thing: Help Pigs by Taking a Medical Survey](#)



Our friends across the water at the University of Edinburgh's veterinary school are asking potbellied pig owners all across the country to take a quick online survey to help generate a clearer picture of how factors like age, breed, and gender affect the odds of a pig developing certain medical conditions. And CPPA members are all invited to participate!

You can access the survey [here](#). But before you do, please read the following tips:

1. The survey was originally written for veterinarians, so the questions sometimes require a little interpretation for a pig owner. For example, the first question asks how many pigs you've seen over the last 10 years. It doesn't want to know how many you've looked at with your eyes, but how many pigs you've taken to the vet for any reason. Including spays/neuters.
2. After that, just list your pig's medical history, using one "question" for each visit.
3. When listing weights, please always use pounds (not kilograms, as the questions indicate) and label your answer with "lbs" to indicate pounds.
4. If you don't know the weight and age, it's okay to estimate it to the best of your recollection.

Thank you! Your answers will help vets on at least two continents take better care of pigs.

Donate your old pig harness for a good cause!

CPPA frequently donates old pig harnesses to owners in need. But our supplies are running low. If you have any old harnesses you could donate, please contact Marcie at info@CPPA4Pigs.org. Or just bring them to the Hog-i-day party. Thank you!

That's it for this edition of the CPPA newsletter. Thanks for reading, don't forget to take our [one-question survey](#) to let us know what you thought, and we'll see you next time.

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