

CAN PIGS SWIM? ~ by Barbara Baker



(photos courtesy of SCAMPP)



The story below is from Barbara Baker. Barbara Baker was the first Secretary of the “North American Potbellied Pig Association” that was founded in Columbia, Missouri in 1989. As President of her local pig club, “Pillar Pigs of the Community,” she was involved in the rescue and placement of pigs in need and is a true potbellied pig advocate.

LORD (my potbellied pig) had a bad experience the other day. He and Lady (his elder pig sister) were licking up what was left in their bowls and Lady butted Lord on the side with her head, knocking him clean into our big swimming pool! Luckily, I was in the kitchen and saw it all. I ran out of the house screaming for my husband all the way (no telling what the neighbors thought). Lord tried to get up the steps but fell back and then sank to the bottom of the pool and lay there motionless. I jumped in the pool (clothes, shoes, watch and all), pulled him up from the pool bottom and dragged him over to the steps, where I pushed his big bottom up the steps. A close call indeed. Had I not been around to see Lord land in the pool, my beloved pet would have drowned!

I now have placed the patio furniture around that end of the pool as a barricade. I've only seen Lady butt him once before and it was in the same general area... where they eat their meals. Now I watch the dining swine until they finish eating and take the bowls away between meals.

Being rather concerned that Lady had it in for Lord, I decided to call an animal physic who assured me that Lady's action was not malicious... thank goodness!

Editorial Note from Nancy Shepherd: I have personal experience with swimming pigs, both potbellied and commercial. In this case Lord, a potbellied pig, sank like a brick to the bottom of the family swimming pool and for whatever reason was unable to get himself back to the surface. I have read accounts of pigs actually saving the lives of those about to drown. The lesson to learn here is to be watchful of your pig (or any other pet) around water until you assess how s/he will react to it. As with any other new experience, a period of desensitization is necessary, so the animal isn't taken by surprise, becomes comfortable with, and understands what water is all about. Start lessons in the bathtub or a wading pool. The best fool proof measure to eliminate a pig drowning is to PUT A FENCE AROUND IN-GROUND SWIMMING POOLS.

Quote from: <https://animalhype.com/mammals/can-pigs-swim> - “Potbelly Pigs known for their compact size and high intelligence can be excellent swimmers. They have a very high body fat percentage, which aids in buoyancy, making it easier for them to float and paddle around. However, due to their smaller stature, they might struggle in deeper or fast-flowing water bodies.”