

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

Golfers take swing at raising spay-and-neuter funds

By Daniella De Luca For the Sun-News

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To visit the Spay Neuter Action Program's Web site, click [here](#).

LAS CRUCES -- When it comes to golfing, Doña Ana County Sheriff Todd Garrison has been told not to quit his day job. But when it's for a cause like Saturday's first-ever SNAP Classic Golf Tournament, he's game.

SNAP -- Spay Neuter Action Program -- is a nonprofit group partnering with the sheriff's department and others to reduce pet overpopulation in animal shelters. SNAP facilitates low-cost spay or neuter services to those in low-income households that qualify.

This was the first year of the golf tournament held at Sonoma Ranch Golf Course, and volunteers and players say they hope it becomes an annual outing. Tournament prizes included a fully restored 1969 Plymouth Barracuda and a set of Callaway Big Bertha irons awarded to hole-in-one contest winners.

Just as the sun began to peek over the Organ Mountains on Saturday, volunteers prepared the registration table as 18 foursomes checked in. "I think it's fantastic SNAP has organized this to support the spay-and-neuter program since the city stopped funding it," said Judy Morris, a volunteer with the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico and the ACTION Program for Animals pet food bank.

"I love animals, and this is the place to be if you love animals," said Darlene Berg, volunteer administrative staff member with the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. great organizations to be involved with. SNAP does a lot to keep animals off the streets," Berg said.

On average, 2,000 dogs per year are picked up in Chaparral alone and local shelters are taking in about 1,400 animals per month, said Curtis Childress, director of animal control for the Do-a Ana County Sherriff's Department.

"If we can take our RV out and take SNAP's services to the public, I think we could reduce the number of unwanted animals in the county," Childress said. The sherriff's department provides a mobile hospital that is a disaster relief and rescue vehicle. SNAP provides the veterinarians who offer low-cost and sometimes free animal services to those who qualify, he said.

Daniella De Luca is a freelance writer and can be reached at daniella.deluca@gmail.com.