

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the Positive Side

Neighbor's dog falls off the Radar

By Win Jacobs For the Sun-News

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Returning from our early morning walk one Monday, my neighbor and I came upon a little beagle puppy not seen before in our park. More accurately, he came upon us, gamboling toward us and away, just full of himself and the glory of the spring morning. One of his forward bounces enabled us to see he had no identifying tags.

Well! With Telshor Boulevard half a block away, his dream of freedom could have had a very sad ending. So while Ellen cooed and kept an eye on the dog, I ran to my house to put the garage door up. Holding out a treat or two, I was able to scoop up the black, brown and white 10 pounds of wriggle and deposit him in the garage for safekeeping while I made a call.

Animal Control and the pound was definitely not an option - this pup was too bright-eyed and bouncy even to contemplate abandonment. Doggie Dude Ranch certainly would make room, and the proprietor would see what he could do about tracking down the dog's owner. Fortunately, when puppy and I arrived, a quick scan with the special tool purchased for just such situations showed that the dog had been microchipped. Wow! Specific identifying information would soon reunite pup and owner. The shelter would make the call to the owner of record, and said owner would be told to reclaim the animal at DDR.

In due course, all went as planned. When the young man came to claim RADAR! he was given helpful suggestions about building the dog a play yard, as well as licensing him. Sweet dog! Well-meaning owner, who had learned the hard way that "I thought he wouldn't go out the open door" didn't quite cut it. But tragedy had been averted, thanks to the microchipping and the story would have a happy ending.

Except that Saturday, Radar was back in our neighborhood park. This time he was adorned with collar and license, but he was back! Called Doggie Dude Ranch again. Owner was called again. Reunion accomplished again.

Over the next couple of weeks, no Radar in the park, but his bark was loud and clear to those who lived right behind his apartment. Then one early morning, Radar returned to the park. By now he had a tag with his phone number on it. Out came the cell phone - and in the same instant, there came a young man racewalking our way and pulling out his cell phone.

When he caught up to us, Radar made a beeline for him. The human apologized profusely. My contribution was to say, in the sternest tone I could muster, "He's a really nice dog but I don't want ever to see him alone in this park again!"

I never did. After a couple of weeks of bark-free silence, my neighbor and I walked behind the apartment building where Radar lived. A forlorn patch of dirt and old poop, surrounded true enough by high chicken wire, was all we could see.

Had the family moved? There was still a barbecue grill on the patio. Should we call? What could we say? After a month of miracles, surviving the traffic on Telshor, had Radar's radar failed?

Win Jacobs is a board member, Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.