

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

'For the HeART of animals' fundraising event scheduled

By Mike Hainer For the Sun-News

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The Second Annual "For the HeART of Animals" will be held on June 19, at the New Mexico Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum. Mark your calendars for year two of this relaxing evening and fun time together. There will be no lectures and no difficult requirements. Just an evening to share visiting with old friends, making new ones and being part of a rapidly growing movement working for responsible change for homeless companion animals.

Last year more than 250 citizens interested in animal welfare came together at The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico's "For the HeART of Animals." As a result, homeless pets have received veterinarian treatment and care, were spayed or neutered and adopted to new homes. Positive community education about pet overpopulation and responsible pet ownership was funded for children and adults alike. With 100 percent volunteer work, HSSNM pursues solutions to our community challenged with severe pet overpopulation. Hundreds of lives have been saved.

HSSNM values the great work being done by allied organizations and our many citizen advocates. A celebration of these many people and their successes in the past year is what "For the HeART of Animals" is all about in year two. This fun evening is our special way to say thanks to all the many people who contribute their time, energy and their heart to building a better quality of life for our community through animal welfare.

This year the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is bringing the community together and hosts this great event with proceeds being equally shared between HSSNM, Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary and Spay Neuter Action Program. Recognizing the great work being done by SHAS and SNAP makes this the premier event for everyone to join together in building friendships and strengthen the respect that grows our work together in Doña Ana County.

Last year, more than 100 area artists donated 150 pieces of art to support "For the HeART of Animals." Today, our economic times are different, and "For the HeART of Animals" will feature an art sale featuring select area artists available to discuss their work. The event will offer a sampling of highly unique auction items and some new twists which promise to add a whole new level of entertainment.

Together, our area citizens can prevail over the rampant catching and killing system being used today as an unacceptable public policy for treating pet overpopulation in our community. Reform must come through active involvement of our area citizens, taxpayers and animal advocacy organizations. Through our work in animal welfare education, public policy efforts, and community awareness, we can replace the outdated attitudes and failed systems in our community. We can prevail over wasteful practices that have nearly tripled the cost of our public animal shelter operations in one year without reducing the number of homeless pets killed and disposed of in our landfill. If you are interested in making a difference, put June 19 on your calendar for a fun evening where you are building a better place for us and our companion animals to live. Look in the next week or two for advance ticket information on the Web site for the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico at www.hssnm.org or call our offices at (575) 523-8020 to learn more. This event is for everyone interested in celebrating our collective success and continued work together.

Mike Hainer is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico