

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

Commentary: No-kill community pursues top strategies

By Mike Hainer For the Sun-News

Article Launched: 05/25/2008 12:00:00 AM MDT

Our no-kill community work includes two key strategies. First, reduce the number of animals being taken to our animal shelter each day through attempts to return lost or stray animals to owners when possible. The spaying or neutering of dogs and cats throughout Doña Ana County is also critical to reduce the number of animals taken to our shelter. Second, the healthy and treatable dogs and cats arriving at the shelter must find a home, temporary or permanent. Foster homes are needed because they provide shelter animals the opportunity to return to good physical health and become readily adoptable.

Today the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley needs for our entire community to step forward and offer the dogs and cats at the shelter a temporary foster home, or a permanent adoptive home. A wide variety of dogs and cats can be rescued at the center on Highway 70 at 3551 Bataan Memorial Highway, from noon to 6 p.m., Monday- Friday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Telephone is (575) 382-0018. Go by the center to look at the available dogs and cats or ask the staff to help you find the size or type of dog or cat that suits your needs. Mature cats or dogs are often available for seniors or adopters who appreciate a companion animal that is already housebroken and well past the challenges presented by puppies.

The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico helps the center with this lifesaving work. Dogs are available from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. every Saturday at the north end of the downtown mall at the Farmers Market. Cats are available seven days a week at the Lohman Avenue PetSmart store. This provides an opportunity to acquire animals outside of regular center hours.

The community is invited to come together for the animals at the first annual "For the HeART of Animals" Benefit Art Auction Event at the Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum on Friday, June 20, 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. All funds raised will be used by the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico to support adoptions, foster care, spay/neuter, vaccinations, community education and other lifesaving work. Collectible pieces from well known area artists and many other emerging artists will be available at the event, along with live music at this "must attend" event. Tickets are now available. Call (575) 521-3642, or go to our Web site at www.hssnm.org, or come by our Saturday morning Adoption Event at the Downtown Mall Farmers Market.

Community volunteers that want to make a difference with a few hours a week can call (575) 521-3642.

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