

On the Positive Side: Annual fundraiser benefits animals in Doña Ana County

By Kathy Lawitz and Marcia Weist/For the Sun-News

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The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is expanding animal welfare action in Doña Ana County for a second year, and, as the work continues, it is planning the Second Annual "For the HeART of Animals" from 5:30 to 11 p.m. on Friday at the Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum.

A generous community stepped out at last year's first "For the HeART of Animals" Gala Art Auction held in June at Farm and Ranch. This year, the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is hosting the event with proceeds to additionally benefit two deserving collaborative organizations, which also provide positive action for animals in our county: Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary and Spay Neuter Action Program. HSSNM knows that more than ever before, fundraising must be responsive to the greatest need with fewer dollars. Individuals who are making decisions on how to best spend dollars for maximum benefit can be assured that multiple needs are addressed by attending this single fundraising event.

This year's event will feature artists who will sell their work and return a portion of their sales to HSSNM for distribution to all three organizations. To help attract art patrons and animal advocates alike, there will be a silent and celebrity auction with eight local personalities offering everything from a round of nine holes of golf complete with coaching, to a ride in the third 1967 Shelby off the line in Detroit. There will be hors d'oeuvres all night long, including a tri-tip carving station, shrimp and more, plus two drinks per ticket. Dance Universe will kick off dancing and dessert under the stars at 9 p.m. with an exhibition featuring District Attorney Susana Martinez, winner of the "Look Who's Dancing" event at the Pan Am earlier this year.

HSSNM has been empowered by local artists, patrons, volunteers and members to carry out programs and services that result in helping to reduce high euthanasia rates, provide community education, awareness and information involving pet overpopulation, care for companion animals, the benefits of animals in our lives and humane education. HSSNM is committed to "bringing the community together" each year in June to celebrate the efforts and support of our four-legged friends and to benefit a different animal organization or effort.

Your partnership in this year's event will help HSSNM make pets' lives safer and create new levels of respect for animals and people in our growing community.

To view artists and other information from last year's "For the HeART of Animals" event, visit the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico's Web site <http://www.hssnm.org>. There is a link on the home page to purchase tickets to this year's event. Tickets can also be purchased by calling (575) 636-2274 or by visiting The Safe Haven Thrift Store at 144 Wyatt Drive; Better Life Pet Foods at 365 Avenida de Mesilla; the Doggie Dude Ranch and Cat Farm at 142 Burke Road; or The Emerald Isle at 1750 Calle de Mercado No. 2, Mesilla.

Kathy Lawitz and Marcia Weist are the co-chairs for the "HeART of Animals" annual fundraiser.