

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the Positive Side: Local heroes give two cats a second chance

By Frank Bryce/For the Sun-News

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Much of the work of animal advocacy and intervention is done on an individual basis without adequate recognition - recently for two local felines as a famous literary line says, "It was the worst of times and the best of times." These incidents are worthy of mention as examples of individual efforts bringing focus on individual animal emergencies and being on the positive side.

Some weeks ago, the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico (HSSNM) received a call from Linda Wright about an injured kitten seen near the Las Cruces Country Club. This little critter was dragging a badly broken front leg and trying to survive on its own under very difficult circumstances.

With the help of Linda and as a result of her concern, a HSSNM volunteer managed to trap the little girl and take it to Las Cruces Animal Hospital for testing and subsequent treatment. The little kitten was thin and without any diseases, but the leg had to be removed - what an ordeal of surviving with such an injury, being trapped, examined, tested, vaccinated, spayed and having its leg amputated.

Linda fostered the cat with a great deal of compassion and care while it recuperated and through its final vaccination for rabies.

Initially named Twinkie, this girl has made an amazing recovery from her misfortunes and all the while demonstrated a very loving, gentle disposition toward all those who have helped her. Twinkie, also called Checkers, is ready for adoption and can be visited at the HSSNM and PetSmart cat facility on East Lohman Avenue.

Without Linda's concern and involvement, Twinkie would probably have become a fatality statistic among our pet overpopulation.

About the same time, another call to HSSNM told of a cat who would not come down from a tree it had taken refuge in near Triviz and Spruce. The Orta family reported the cat had been in the tree from Monday to Saturday and only retreated higher when they attempted to help it.

While most cats can be depended on to get down from trees on their own, this one decided it would not or could not do that. The family did provide food the best they could and sprayed water onto the tree leaves for the cat to drink during the unmerciful August heat.

Once involved, a HSSNM volunteer secured a catch pole and a trap, and with the Orta family's help, the cat was safely caught and ended up in HSSNM's foster facility. HSSNM provided appropriate veterinary examination and vaccination, and Carmel, as she is now known, is scheduled for spaying in the next few days.

Despite being "treed" for almost a week and subsequently found to be deaf and with some injuries to her paws, Carmel survived her unusual ordeal as well as Twinkie did and has shown a remarkably sweet nature with her new friends. Carmel is now in the foster care of HSSNM and also up for adoption.

HSSNM recognizes the extra effort demonstrated in the two incidents of the care and compassion of local community folks. Without Linda and the Ortas and the many other unrecognized caring residents of our community, these two and many other companion animals would not have had much, if any, chance for survival and the opportunity for a loving family home. Thanks again to all of you who create these contributions to the positive side of our communities.

Frank Bryce is an animal advocate, committee member of the New Mexico Sheltering Act Board and president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.

To see photos and descriptions of animals available for adoption through HSSNM programs, go to <http://www.hssnm.org>