

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

2015 promises opportunities for pets, people

By Frank Bryce

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The last On the Positive Side column ended 2014 year on a positive note about the efforts of the county's Animal Control Department to reach out to county residents with information and education on animal care.

The new year has started with a series of upbeat events that hold promises of even greater opportunities for pets, and people.

The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico (HSSNM) conducted more Pupper-Wear Parties, hosted by residents for their neighbors to get their pets microchipped.

In a friendly home atmosphere, more than a dozen cats and dogs got low-cost identifying microchips while neighbors talked about the holidays and enjoying each other's company.

Early New Year's Day, HSSNM received a call about a beautiful, big, very friendly bull mastiff occupying most of the front porch of a concerned homeowner. The visitor showed up a little after midnight, apparently frightened by the holiday fireworks.

By the time HSSNM arrived to check this sweetheart for a microchip, he was already making himself at home and showing tremendous affection for his rescuers.

His microchip insured his almost immediate return to his family with the help of the microchip company and the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley's database. HSSNM will continue offering the microchips at \$6.35 at various commercial sites around Las Cruces and the county, which will be announced as they are established, and through more resident-hosted Pupper-Wear Parties for the coming year. The Spay and Neuter Action Program (SNAP) and the Coalition for Pets and People (CFPP) — two slightly different programs — are getting into full gear to continue offering low-cost pet spay and neutering services for county residents.

The SNAP program will conduct events at the Coquill Community Park, 625 Paseo Real in Chaparral, NM on Tuesday, February 3, March 3, April 7, May 5 and June 2 with assistance from CFPP.

Participants must register prior to the clinics. For full details and appointments, participants can call Trish at 915-626-8258.

Free microchipping at the time of the surgery will be provided.

This program is funded by Doña Ana County.

SNAP has been helping low-income households in Doña Ana County fix their pets since 1999.

Over the next year, the CFPP will also be conducting a spay and neuter program for dogs of residents living in the 88044, 88046, 88047, 88048, 88072 and 88058 zip code areas.

Again, participants must register prior to the clinics.

The CFPP events schedule and locations will be provided when participants call 575-386-9212 or 575-382-0018 to register their dogs. This program is funded by the PetSmart Charities through the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico.

Spaying and neutering your pets has many health benefits and eliminates the need for the intact animal and litter permits required for pet owners with intact pets. All participants of both programs will be entered into a random drawing for a 42-inch flat-screen television.

Adoption events have increased with the new Cat's Meow adoption center, located at Mesquite and Madrid, and the ACTion Program for Animals Adoption Center at 800 W. Picacho, along with the off-site events of ASCMV and the Happy Tails HSSNM adoptions at PetSmart.

Residents interested in hosting a Pupper-Wear Party can contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020.

By working together and taking advantage of these opportunities, 2015 will be a banner year for animal-welfare improvements.

Frank Bryce is president of HSSNM. Interested guest authors can call HSSNM at 575-523-8020.

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