

## **On the Positive Side: Starting the new year on a bright note**

**By Frank Bryce**

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It's fitting that the first "On The Positive Side" article of 2014 acknowledge the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico's collective appreciation of the dedication and hard work of so many individuals and organizations that contribute to animal welfare throughout Doña Ana County. These efforts not only benefit cats, dogs, other household animal companions and livestock, but — just as importantly— work to address family violence, keep family units and their pets together, reduce the economic impact of stray and unwanted animals on the community, and provide greater public safety. All of these things make Doña Ana County and all of its communities a better place for each of us to live.

The following year-end note was just received from Dee Dougil and was sent out to the animal welfare network. It highlights some of the tremendous work being done and now being shared with you. Dee writes: "First and foremost, a huge thanks to Norma Provencio for taking the time to keep track of all the animals coming through our 'pet network' this past year (2013).

Please note that my first totals I sent out around the holidays were incorrect because after a computer crash I had to use an older computer for a few months, and a significant amount of the totals were on the older computer which I forgot to use in my end-of-the-year calculations. Here is the correct total of animals coming through our "pet network" for 2013: Total: 1,213 Animals.

Breakdown: 977 Dogs, 185 Cats and 41 Other. Resolved: 490 Thank you to all of you who receive and forward our 'pet network' messages, you are helping to make a difference for the animals of this community. This is really a historical momentum because never before in the history of this valley have so many taken an interest in saving the thousands of animals that die at our shelter each year, or those that are just abandoned or dumped. Please join us in telling others how important it is to spay/neuter your animals, and to get them microchipped as well.

And please continue to help us by forwarding our pet-related emails and posting to your personal facebook pages when you can. Have a great year!—Dee"

Dee's words of appreciation only begin to describe the broad efforts taking place. There is not room in this article for greater description of the work or listing all those involved, unfortunately. From pet food bank, medical assistance, adoption and microchipping events to re-homing, fostering and, importantly, spay and neuter efforts, it seems the number of folks involved continues to grow.

The increasing collaborative and cooperative spirit between city, county and animal organizations with greater awareness and support from the general public bodes well for the coming year.

Whether you can spare only a few minutes of time to encourage friends and neighbors to help or immerse yourself in the work of the animal welfare organization of your choice, please get involved however you may.

By doing so you can help the animals and make Doña Ana County an even more wonderful place to live for yourself and family, your neighbors and our companion animals that mean so much to so many.

*Frank Bryce is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. Interested guest author should contact HSSNM at 523-8020.*