

On the Positive Side

End nears for grant that funds spay-and-neuter program

by Frank Bryce

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The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is working with the Coalition for Pets and People and the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley to complete the PetSmart Charities grant involving south valley pets. The project is funded by a grant from PetSmart Charities through the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico. Having begun in April 2015 and ending this April, the grant is designed to spay and neuter 650 dogs in targeted communities from Mesilla and Mesilla Park to Vado in south valley. Currently residents of the ZIP codes 88044, 88046, 88047, 88048, 88058 and 88072 with dogs needing spaying and neutering can take advantage of a program requiring only a \$7 fee. With the end of the grant period rapidly approaching and the need to address limited veterinary resources, some changes are taking place to ensure spaying and neutering of the designated number of dogs is completed. To facilitate this effort the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley, in cooperation with the grant partners, is altering its hours of operation for spaying and neutering to allow dogs to be dropped off at 4 p.m. the day before the dog's scheduled surgery and be picked up the following day after 4 p.m. This new time plan will hopefully better meet south valley residents work schedules and increase accessibility of the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley surgical services.

As time is running out and with difficulty of widespread recruiting for participants from the targeted areas in south valley, the grant administrators are asking for the public's help to make residents in the targeted ZIP codes aware of the grant opportunity. It is unknown when another low-cost spay-and-neuter grant of this nature may become available.

Successful completion of the grant goal may be helpful in securing future additional grants to continue this work and you can be an important part of the program success. If you have friends and relatives living in the targeted areas with dogs that are not spayed or neutered, please share this information with them. If you live in the targeted areas and have un-spayed or unneutered dogs, seriously consider taking advantage of this opportunity.

Spaying and neutering provides health advantages for the dogs, eliminates the county intact animal owner permit fees, prevents unwanted litters of puppies and reduces the number of animals overcrowding our Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley shelter and its need to euthanize healthy and treatable animals. Owners must be sure to contact the Coalition for Pets and People at 575-386-9212 to register their dogs for this low cost program and obtain additional required information.

In another ongoing cooperative effort, the Coalition for Pets and People conducted a successful pet microchipping event at the Spay Neuter Action Program office on Feb. 13. A total of 101 chips were provided to an always amazing range of varying fuzzy, large, small and rainbow colored animals! Watch for announcements to take advantage of these \$6.35 low cost microchipping events, too.

Frank Bryce is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. Interested guest authors can contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020.