

On the Positive Side: Community help for animals involves all of us

By Frank Bryce / For the Sun-News

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The work and resources required to conduct the animal advocacy efforts by the many different organizations and individuals in this small corner of New Mexico are staggering, overwhelming and amazing. From dedicated leaders to individual volunteers, the efforts reaches into every aspect of our homes, businesses and government entities. They span social, ethnic and economic planes in the improved quality of life we strive for everyday.

Recently there has been an encouraging increase in the collective and collaborative efforts by many of the organizations to achieve their mutually beneficial goals. The opportunity has expanded for everyone to get involved and chip in where and how they can. Daily, you can read of free or low-cost spay and neuter events, rabies vaccination clinics, pet food bank programs, off-site adoption programs, animal fostering and rescue transports occurring all across our county.

Volunteering for this hands-on animal advocacy work is rewarding. The breadth of activities of activities allows you to select one that fits your interests, time and abilities and you are physically helping animals and often families in need. Your volunteer help reduces the cost of these events and programs. Vaccination clinics and spay and neuter events require licensed veterinary services and materials. Fostering adoptable animals requires not only your loving foster home but medical treatment as well.

Many of us cannot always devote extra time from busy family and work concerns. So the question arises: How can I help? By simply searching "Las Cruces Animal Organizations" on the Internet you can find the listings for most if not all of the local organizations. Here you can find their missions and goals, and the variety of ways in which to get involved. Supporting their fundraising, shopping their garage and rummage sales, and browsing their thrift stores are all great ways to support their efforts. Of course, adopting that special companion animal at any off-site adoption events is at the top of the list.

Some local businesses support the various organizations by providing space for their events and by donating pet food and toys. Others periodically share a portion of their proceeds from purchases by shoppers. Supporting the businesses that support the animals and animal welfare groups benefits all. Donation boxes for animal welfare groups can be found at many veterinary clinics and other businesses. A bit of loose change dropped in the collection box of your choice adds up when we all do it.

An upcoming event to support the ACTion Program for Animals and Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is a giant rummage sale. It will be held on Saturday, March 2, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3242, 2001 N. Mesquite St. There will be a wide array of useful and interesting items. In addition, adoptable pets, raffle prizes, enchilada plates and baked goods will be offered.

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