

**On the Positive Side**

**National cat adoption trends are improving**

**FRANK BRYCE**

A recent article in the June 14 ASPCApro Newsletter had some positive and encouraging news about cat adoptions being up and shelter intake of cats down across much of the nation.

While positive numbers can be ferreted out locally involving cat adoptions, we have not seen the trend of shelter intake and community cat colony compliance being reported by a majority of ASPCA community partners. This is especially apparent as noted from many of the West Coast destination ASPCA partners, which are taking as many cats as they can get and have trouble keeping up with the demand.

The ASPCA Research & Development Team was able to review year to year comparisons of data and experiences from shelters all around the nation. The ASPCA looked at possible reasons for these trends to determine why there is a lack of cats available for adoption such as colder weather in the Northeast reducing opportunities to produce litters and lowering survivability of outside litters and an increase in more effective spay-and-neuter programs in a great many areas.

The ASPCA identifies the trends as likely due to the great amount of work accomplished by governmental and nonprofit organizations involved with adoption events, awareness education, greater training of professionals, expanded spay-and-neuter services and safety programs such as microchipping.

Doña Ana County and the city of Las Cruces are fortunate to have a number of enthusiastic and dedicated nonprofit organizations engaged in these types of programs seeking to work cooperatively and collaboratively with Doña Ana and Las Cruces Animal Control departments and the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley to address pet responsibility and community cat colony management.

The ASPCA author states in conclusion, "Certainly, there are still cats at risk out there — both friendly cats and especially cats who are unsocialized. The wave of change generated by The Million Cat Challenge is likely chewing into that next level of risk, as are the relocation programs and more ...

But from a 10,000-foot view, and clearly communicating my own perspective, I think a sea change has occurred. Can you help fill in that view by sharing what you are seeing in your community?"

Better yet, please get involved with the organization of your choice to aid and support the continuing work they are doing. A little or a lot, your help is needed.

Frank Bryce is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. To share an "On the Positive Side" subject, interested guest authors may call HSSNM at 575-523-8020.