

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

Pet advocates come together in Chaparral

By Joanne Ferrary

For the Sun-News

Aug. 21, 2015

A few weeks ago, the Coalition for Pets and People was made aware of a serious situation by the Doña Ana County Animal Control Department in Chaparral where a pet owner needed help with a number of unfixed and undernourished dogs who could escape from the yard. It wasn't long before two very dedicated animal advocates stepped into action to help remedy the problem by setting up a special spay and neuter clinic that would be affordable and convenient.

Soon it became apparent that others in the area had been waiting for such an opportunity and more pets were signed up, enough to hold three more clinics to meet the demand.

One of these two quick responders is Emile Bourdet, a longtime resident of Las Cruces, who hails from the Bay Area of California where his French heritage and extensive family continue to live and beckon him home a few times a year. Bourdet is well-known in the community of animal protection advocates and to city and county officials who have been approached, or confronted in some cases, to improve the policies or procedures that affect the conditions of pets in our community. The mild-mannered, tall, slender senior citizen doesn't match the energetic, hardworking and persistent personality when it comes to his intolerance of animal cruelty or irresponsibility.

He expects everyone will do what is right when it comes to saving the lives of dogs and cats in our county by preventing unnecessary euthanasia of adoptable pets and also preventing unwanted litters of puppies and kittens.

The retired executive has successfully managed hundreds of employees and has extensive experience working with people.

Now, Bourdet uses those same skills to focus on the big picture, detail the necessary steps and then collaborate with others to get things done. He organizes the spay and neuter events, a collaborated effort between the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico and CFPP's PetSmart Charities grant as well as new funds from the New Mexico Special Spay and Neuter License Plate. Bourdet even makes what he calls the "milk run" where flyers are distributed and posted in the areas of San Miguel, La Mesa, Mesilla, Mesilla Park, Mesquite and Vado.

If you live in one of these areas and need your dog spayed or neutered, call 575-386-9212 for information and appointment.

Another partner in this latest endeavor is Frank Bryce. A retired administrator with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, reptile expert and current president of Humane Society of Southern New Mexico, Bryce is also a master microchip technician. He holds "pupper wear" parties for anyone who gathers neighbors and friends to their home to have their cats and dogs microchipped to ensure a safe return should they get lost. Like Bourdet, who is also with HSSNM, he is very dedicated to reducing the dog and cat overpopulation by implementing strong spay and neuter programs, as well as Trap, Neuter and Return for feral cats. Bryce also is very involved in the foster and adoption program of HSSNM as he can be spotted regularly at PetSmart helping match pets with people for their forever homes.

Even though both gentlemen have been involved in animal protection activities for many years, I don't think the community recognizes the great dedication and altruistic efforts of these men.

It seems their every waking moment and thought is focused on Doña Ana County becoming a “no kill” community, to be Zero in 7, which means no adoptable pets euthanized by the year 2019.

Bourdet, Bryce and the Coalition For Pets and People support these efforts and those of the many organizations collaborating together to reach this ambitious goal. This latest project in Chaparral was possible because of the improved communications and cooperation between CFPP, the county animal control, and the Spay Neuter Action Program to better answer the needs of that community. Special thanks are due to the Chaparral community facilitators Trish Anderson and Yvonne Dominguez.

If you would like to support coalition projects, you are encouraged to make a donation through at www.zeroin7.org, send a check to CFPP, P.O. Box 1237, Las Cruces, NM 88004, or call 575-649-1231 to volunteer.

There are many opportunities to fit your abilities, schedule and talents.

Guest author Joanne Ferrary is co-chair of the Coalition for Pets and People. Guest authors for On The Positive Side are invited to contact the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico at 575-523-8020.