

On The Positive Side: Seamless transition for spay and neuter programs celebrated

By Frank Bryce

Oct. 4, 2013

The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico has completed its PetSmart Charities spay and neuter grant in Chaparral and embarked on a new Doña Ana County-funded program.

To mark the transition, HSSNM will host a special recognition ceremony from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday at the Betty McKnight Community Building Annex in Chaparral. Participants of the Chaparral spay and neuter program and the public are invited to attend.

Hot dogs and drinks will be served at 1 p.m. and continue as long as supplies last. Enchanted Pass Rescue of Chaparral is providing snacks and drinks. The participant winner of the 42-inch flat screen television will be announced at 2 p.m.

Enchanted Pass Rescue will also provide 100 free parvo/distemper combination vaccinations. Dr. Elizabeth Carver, DVM, will be available for low-cost dog and cat rabies and combo vaccinations. The Coalition for Pets and People is providing 50 free microchips with a suggested \$7 donation to support the program.

Curtis Childress, Doña Ana County Animal Cruelty Coordinator, and candidate for Doña Ana County Sheriff, will be the guest speaker. An animal blessing will be conducted by the Reverend Richard Plock, pastor of Broken Chains Christian Fellowship in Chaparral.

The successful completion of more than 750 canine spays and neuters marks the close of the PetSmart Charities grant and the beginning of a similar program that is funded through the Doña Ana County contract with HSSNM as a partner.

This new program targets cats as well as dogs oversubscribed for the PetSmart grant. The public event links the two programs. Both designed to address over-population and issues with stray and unwanted cats and dogs.

In Chaparral, which straddles the boundary between Doña Ana and Otero counties, upwards of 1,000 stray dogs and cats are picked up annually. The animals are then transported to their respective county animal shelters: 35 miles to Las Cruces or 72 miles to Alamogordo.

Chaparral residents' response to the spay and neuter program has been overwhelming. Now with the Doña Ana county spay and neuter program, this important work can continue.

The Doña Ana County program with HSSNM differs from the PetSmart grant in that both cats and dogs are included. And there is a \$25 co-pay for procedures unless the pet owner's income qualifies him or her for free services.

Maximum annual income allowed to qualify for free services is \$50,755.50 for a single person. The allowable income increases by \$1,500 annually for each additional household member.

HSSNM is excited to enter this new program and, based on the success of the previous grant, we will continue to make significant strides. This program is designed to ultimately envelop the entire county with the involvement of all CPP partners.

To learn more about HSSNM and CPP and its partners, or to donate to these efforts, go to hssnm.org and zeroin7.org.

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