

On the Positive Side: Thanks to all who make community better place

by Frank Bryce

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There were several themes I could have touched upon for this column, but the overriding one for me at the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is the need to express best holiday wishes and thanks to all those folks who work behind the scenes in a myriad of ways, and with organizations large and small.

Throughout the year we see and hear many heart-warming and almost miraculous acts performed by unknown and unsung people providing the gifts of compassion, concern and caring for animals across our county. Whether supported by a formal organization, or from the simple desire to make our communities better, animal advocates work untold hours, give money, and seek to address animal welfare issues that make this a better place.

These folks provide gifts that keep on giving throughout the year. I am sure most do not think about it in the terms of gift-giving. However, saving an animal's life, providing a path from stray animal to beloved pet, creating a loving and emotionally supportive bond for a family and even creating more effective cost-saving practices and partnerships to stretch limited tax dollars and grant funds are actually community and personal gifts that we all benefit from as residents.

This article is dedicated to thanking all those who have so selflessly given of their time, resources and emotions to achieve this goal.

While it is not possible to list every individual who could be listed, if one only looks at the Doña Ana County and Las Cruces Animal Resources Guide originally developed by Action Program for Animals and now being provided by the Coalition for Pets and People, they would see how many are involved in this effort. You can start with the individual Good Samaritans who rescued a thin, stray mixed heeler at the entrance to an Organ Mountain-Desert Peaks National Monument trail off Baylor Canyon road this past Sunday at dusk. They spent well into the dark of night to see that this stray was safely placed with a rescue before leaving for their home hours later in Alamogordo.

Next in this army of folks who give are the small and large animal organizations listed in the Resource Guide, the government agencies that are charged with regulating care and enforcing ordinances designed to ensure the welfare of all pets and public safety, all the way up to the elected officials in whom we place our trust to continue to act on our behalf in achieving community goals.

Not all these gifts come with perfect bows and smooth edges, and as was recently said at an animal welfare session, "meetings can be contentious," but the gifts are there and most result in a better community for all of us. For that reason, the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico, along with the grateful residents and the wonderful animals of our communities, wish those truly important and appreciated gift-givers a happy and safe holiday. Their daily achievements throughout the year deserve our thanks.

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