

# LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the positive side

Changing the sad truth of animal euthanasia

By Mike Hainer For the Sun-News

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Spaying and neutering of companion animals is the very best way to control our serious pet overpopulation problem in Doña Ana County.

Many of the animals euthanized were sold as pets or were born because a pet was not spayed or neutered. Too many pets become unwanted, lost and abandoned today and are gathered up as community waste and euthanized. We intend to change this sad truth.

In the fall of 2007, the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico held a community meeting and Webcast with animal welfare groups from throughout southern New Mexico to develop support for the Mobile Spay and Neuter Van from the Santa Fe Animal Shelter and Humane Society.

As a result, 671 low-cost surgeries were provided for pets in southern New Mexico. Deming Animal Guardians, Doña Ana County Humane Society, Noah's Arc of Carlsbad, Spay Neuter Action Program and Free Spay Neuter along with their many dedicated volunteers participated to make this project a huge success. These dedicated groups across southern New Mexico proved that low cost spay-and-neuter services are well received and effective.

The euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals is a community-wide problem requiring community-based solutions. Our work together with our  
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government leaders is the best method to save the lives of healthy and treatable animals and end the needless social and economic costs of unnecessary euthanasia.

Our Spay & Neuter Van project together was a clear and positive demonstration of this passion in action. Kudos to all the organizations and individuals involved.

The euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals is now the sad responsibility of the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley. This task is certainly not desired or relished by the people working at the center. With the help of volunteers from the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico many cats from the center are now available for adoption at the local PetSmart store on East Lohman Avenue in Las Cruces.

Adopt a cat this weekend and get all your supplies in one easy trip. You can be a lifesaver and have that special feline companion in your life. We are currently seeking volunteers to expand this and other lifesaving work at [www.hssnm.org](http://www.hssnm.org).

Mike Hainer is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.