

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

Commentary: Older animals need help finding homes, too

By Mike Hainer For the Sun-News

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The new Executive Director of the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley, Dr. Beth Vesco-Mock has been on the job just two weeks and is already demonstrating the courage and compassion required to immediately set actions in motion for a No-Kill Shelter. Last week in this column we talked about "No Kill" meaning that all healthy and treatable animals are saved and adopted rather than killed. Dr. Beth called our organization last weekend about finding a foster home for a senior dog that had some mobility problems but was otherwise healthy. This was a perfect demonstration of her dedication to two goals we share: saving a healthy, treatable pet; and respecting the value and quality of life for an older canine.

There are countless reasons to adopt a senior dog or cat. Older animals are usually calmer, house trained, and have a personality that you don't need to wonder about as they grow. Animals at our local shelter arrive there in different ways. They may have been surrendered by their owner or perhaps they were found on the street, where they lived for a number of days or weeks. These animals are very loving, affectionate and work hard to please you in exchange for the second chance that you give them. Please remember our furry friends at the shelter who are not puppies or kittens. There are older animals just waiting to give you a lifetime of love and devotion while asking nothing of you in return.

Visit our website at www.hssnm.org to learn about how you can help HSSNM match senior animals to senior citizens. The research has proven that companion animals reduce high blood pressure and speed recovery time. Companion animals can reduce loneliness, increase a person's chances of exercising and generally lift a person's spirits with their playful and curious nature.

Please call us at 521-3642 or email at memberhssnm@zianet.com if you are interested in volunteering. You can also contact us at this number for tickets to our fund-raiser "For the HeART of Animals", June 20th from 5-9 p.m. at Farm and Ranch. Enjoy local entertainment, live and silent auctions of beautiful collectible pieces, and the company of fellow art lovers and animal supporters. All proceeds benefit HSSNM projects: offsite adoptions, humane education, and veterinary and spay/neuter support of fostered pets. If you are interested in donating a piece of art to HeART call our art coordinator, Kathy Lawitz at 642-2648.

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