

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the positive side

Commentary: New Pet Help Line to aid distressed pet owners

By Mike Hainer For the Sun-News

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To view Michel's No Kill Revolution blog, click [here](#).

Pets often lose their homes when owners are overwhelmed by events in their life. Unemployment, moving to a new town, financial hardship and inability to care for or manage the family pet's behavior are just a few of the many reasons that lead to a decision to get rid of the cat or drop off the dog.

Pets wind up abandoned on the street, in the desert or dropped off at our shelter with the hope that a home will be found before they are killed for lack of space to house them. It is a sad, sad situation that occurs each day.

One of the factors in the no-kill equation is pet retention. This means help to solve problems before a pet is abandoned. Pet owners can be at their wit's end trying to solve a pet housebreaking problem, excessive barking, aggressive behavior, jumping out of the yard, damage to clothing or furniture or when a real mismatch between owner and pet occurs. Where do we turn for help?

On the positive side, the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is launching a Pet Help Line in November.

The Pet Help Line will help owners solve a multitude of problems and reduce pet abandonment. Anyone can call with pet care questions or for help solving problems with their pets.

Michel Meunier is the captain of this remarkable effort. She is developing a comprehensive resource booklet and caseworker handbook in order to get his line up and running. Call Michel at (575) 644-0505 if you would like to join her Pet Help Line team.

Michel is also looking for business partnerships in the HSSNM Pet Help Line community resource booklet. We would like to acknowledge Bonney Brown, director of the Nevada Humane Society, for the great caseworker handbook and proven material from their hugely successful pet help line.

The No-Kill Revolution Study Group kicked off last Wednesday. You can be a part of the community team by coming to the next meeting at 7 p.m. on Oct. 1 at the Unitarian Universalist Church, 2000 S. Solano Drive.

Feral cat programs, spay and neuter, rescue groups, foster care, adoption programs, pet retention, rehabilitation and public relations are all part of the equation.

Previews of coming attractions: Visit the unveiling of HSSNM's "On Golden Paws" on Oct. 4 at the Village at Northrise's 10th anniversary celebration.

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