

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the Positive Side

Safe Haven sanctuary helps homeless animals

By Lorna Harris For the Sun-News

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LAS CRUCES - She was brought in bedraggled, malnourished, unwanted and looking for someone to love her. She had recently had pups and had been someone's pet.

The owners relinquished her to Safe Haven with the message that they were no longer able to care for her as they had young children and another on the way and the husband had recently lost his job. We willingly accepted her into our Safe Haven family, knowing that there was a better home out there for her where she would be loved and cared for.

Unfortunately, there are many stories similar to this one, and Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary is not large enough to take all the unwanted pets. Our purpose is to save those that we can from an uncertain future and this is reward indeed for our organization, its volunteers and supporters.

Located on almost three acres of land on the East Mesa, Safe Haven was formed in the mid-1990s as a nonprofit 501 C-3 corporation and practices a "no kill" policy. We do not receive funding from government entities and rely solely on the donations from private individuals, grants, fundraising and the proceeds from our thrift store. We have a few employees but the majority of help comes from our volunteer base.

The thrift store is at 144 Wyatt Drive and is quite a contrast to the usual thrift store. You will find a wonderful selection of clothing - some brand name and never-worn items - men's, women's and children's clothing. Household items are also available along with a nice selection of books and tapes. You will find glassware, bedding, decorative items, and an assortment of electronics and odds and ends.

We are seeking donations of larger household furniture items at this time. Items such as desks, bookcases and couches can be picked up by prior arrangement. Money from the sale of these items goes toward the operation and maintenance of the sanctuary. Donations are tax-deductible, and you can give knowing that you will have made a difference in the life of a pet.

Are you someone who cares about animals and who has a few hours each week or each month to spare? Do you have a special skill, such as being handy at maintenance work, landscaping, office skills or perhaps you have a pickup and can help pick up items occasionally. Perhaps you would prefer to walk our dogs and play with them at our dog park (they will surely appreciate this).

Our feline population at the cattery always greets visitors for some attention and grooming. The thrift store also welcomes those who can donate a few hours to help sort and price items received, put them on the racks, and assist with cashiering.

Not only is this rewarding work but also our volunteers are people who like to have fun and turn their time at Safe Haven into a social time.

Sanctuary hours are 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. Tuesday through Sunday. Call (575) 805-5338 for directions. Thrift store hours are 9 a.m.- 3 p.m. Tuesday-Friday and 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday. The phone number is (575) 541-4942. For the office, call (575) 527-4544. For more information about Safe Haven, please visit www.safehavenanimalsanctuary.net.

Lorna Harris is the executive director of Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary.