

On the Positive Side: Groups partner for fundraiser

by Frank Bryce

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What happens when 14 university students, a farm business, serious animal advocacy organizations and dedicated volunteers get together with cats and dogs? The fur flies, soap and water flows and community pets benefit. Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary and the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico combined forces with University of Southern California students to conduct a fundraising dog wash and microchipping event this past Sunday at the Tractor Supply Store at Picacho and Valley. Looking for an interesting and worthwhile way to make the most of spring break, the students decided to visit southern New Mexico to volunteer with Safe Haven in Las Cruces, then visit the northern part of the state.

The students sloshed, splashed and soaked their way through 50 plus dog baths and HSSNM microchipped 51 dogs and cats. The following day, the students conducted a spay and neuter canvassing event just south of Las Cruces in Vado. Walking and knocking, the student goal was to recruit pet participation in the Coalition for Pets and People's Pet Smart Charities Grant, which provides spay and neuter services for dogs in the six ZIP codes involved. Residents contacted received informational packets on county animal control ordinance compliance, contact information for pet assistance and services and tips on providing proper care of pets.

To register for this free program, residents of the following ZIP codes, 88044, 88046, 88047, 88048 and 88072 can contact Tom at 575-386-9212. The students leave Wednesday for their visit to the rest of the state.

Our community and the involved organizations all benefited from this opportunity provided by the students and their generous assistance.

The preceding Saturday, the Coalition for Pets and People presented Nathan Winograd's "Redemption" at the Fountain Theater in Mesilla. This film is the pioneer endeavor in detailing the history of shelter development and operation, and details the path to reach the "no kill" goal for animal welfare.

The attendees shared in open discussion of their concern and program efforts in support of the CfPP mission of achieving ZERO in SEVEN – to ensure that the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley becomes no kill by 2019.

Frank Bryce is president of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.