

LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

On the Positive Side: Project Save a Kitten hosts silent art auction

by Jackye Meinecke

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Project Save a Kitten expands with each passing day, as we have entered kitten season. For the next few months, kittens will abound in sheds, mobile home parks and backyards. Even as animal-rescue organizations continue to spay and neuter as many cats as possible, the spring flood of kittens begins.

Sadly, many of these kittens will be impounded or left at the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley and subsequently euthanized. The animal shelter will receive more than 500 kittens over the next few months.

Project Save a Kitten will rescue as many as fosters and resources will allow, possibly as many as 300 kittens.

To support the efforts of Project Save a Kitten, three groups have collaborated on a silent auction art fundraiser to collect funds to pay for veterinary bills — the largest expense in rescuing kittens.

Naturally, like human babies, kittens also have limited immunity in the early weeks of their lives.

The Tabby Team of the Coalition of Pets and People, ACTION Programs for Animals and Big Kitty Fix have organized the Project Save a Kitten Spring Fling planned from 5 - 7 p.m. April 25 at MVS Studios, 535 N. Main St. Join these three dedicated organizations to raise money for kitten rescue.

The silent art auction features a range of art items and other donations.

Children from the Boys & Girls Club of Las Cruces created kitten drawings that have been crafted into plates and platters by Kate and Russell Mott.

These charming pieces will be available the night of the Spring Fling.

Dan Lambert provides music during the fundraiser.

Share community, nibble refreshments and take home some treasures during this two-hour event.

This is the third year of Project Save a Kitten, which was initiated to take kittens from the shelter and place them in public spaces to increase adoptions during the spring months. The first year resulted in more than 100 kittens rescued.

The number of kittens rescued more than doubled in the second year.

With these small victories, however, come considerable medical expenses (more than \$30,000 in 2013). We already have started pulling kittens from the animal shelter for our Spring 2014 project, in anticipation of saving even more kittens. As the season progresses, kittens will be available for adoption from the following business locations: Better Life Pet Foods, 365 Avenida de Mesilla; Enchanted Gardens, 270 Avenida de Mesilla; Pet's Barn, 1600 S. Valley Drive; Doña Ana County Government Center, 845 N. Motel Blvd.; Center for Spiritual Living, 575 N. Main, during the farmer's market on Saturdays; and PetCo, 3050 E. Lohman from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday.

This is your opportunity to change the harsh treatment of kittens in our community by supporting Project Save a Kitten. Adopt, donate, foster and support our fundraiser. On behalf of the precious kittens that will be saved this year, thanks so much for your generosity and support!

Jackye Meinecke leads the Tabby Team of the Coalition for Pets and People. She owns Enchanted Gardens and is a freelance writer who writes about gardening and other topics in local publications.