

ON THE POSITIVE SIDE

Spay and neuter clinics are scheduled in the area

June 12, 2015

by Frank Bryce

With summer starting to heat up, so is the positive effort to increase participation in a program to prevent unwanted litters of puppies, reduce intake of dogs to the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley, and continue to lower the euthanasia rate of healthy and treatable dogs at the shelter. Initially funded by a grant from PetSmart Charities through the Community Foundation of Southern New Mexico, the dog-only spay and neuter program is targeted to residents in six ZIP codes: 88044, 88046, 88047, 88048, 88052 and 88072.

Starting in October 2014, spay and neuter events have been jointly conducted using a contracted mobile veterinary surgical van at Doña Ana County fire departments in the south valley and the implementation of an animal transport system provided by the ASCMV. Dogs not scheduled to be sterilized at the mobile van events are transported to the ASCMV for surgical procedures and are returned the same day to a designated return site.

To date, close to 200 low-cost dog spays and neuters have been completed since the grant began.

Now, with some generous private donations, the Coalition for Pets and People is able to support and provide these same services for free to residents in the targeted ZIP codes until the donated funds are depleted. To take advantage of the free dog spay and neuter program, residents of the targeted areas are required to call 575-386-9212 between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Monday through Friday for appointment scheduling and program information. Bilingual volunteers are available to assist Spanish speakers.

A low-cost pet microchip event has been scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday at the Cat's Meow adoption center on Mesquite Street, just south of Madrid Avenue intersection. This event is hosted by the Cat's Meow, the Coalition of Pets and People and the ASCMV and will be providing microchipping for \$7 per chip.

The Humane Society of Southern New Mexico will be conducting a microchip event on Wednesday at the Zia Natural Gas office, 3700 W. Picacho Ave., from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. This event is hosted by Zia Natural Gas Co. and HSSNM and will be providing microchipping at \$6.35 per chip. A limited supply of free pet accessories and toys to promote pet socialization activities will be available to participants.

Microchips provided at both events meet Doña Ana County and City of Las Cruces animal control ordinance requirements.

Families throughout the county and city whose pets need microchipping, but cannot attend the two scheduled events, can consider hosting a Pupper-Wear Party at their residence for neighbors and friends and their pets.

These get-togethers are gaining in popularity and awareness while offering the convenience of a local residence microchipping site and a cool drink with friends and pets. Remember that the microchip is the best way to ensure your lost pet gets home to its loving family. Interested party hosts can contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020 for information.

Frank Bryce is president of HSSNM. Interested guest authors can contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020.