

On the Positive Side: Host a microchipping 'party' in your neighborhood

By Frank Bryce

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If you have been following the "On the Positive Side" column recently, you are aware that the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico is eagerly and avidly pushing microchipping of dogs and cats wherever and whenever possible. Just these week, HSSNM folks have used the microchip scanners in their possession to check out a number of dogs that went missing due to fireworks terror and ended up in someone else's loving care. The effort of these backyard neighbors and concerned rescuers to get all of the run-amok furry companions home safely included checking the various and sundry collection of furry critters for microchips at veterinary clinics and organizations with microchip scanners. Those with the microchips were almost certainly returned successfully in a very short time to their homes.

HSSNM has sponsored a number of microchipping events at local businesses, as have other animal welfare organizations.

Almost without exception, the organizations that promote dog and cat adoptions are including and ensuring the newly adopted companions are microchipped. The participating organizations have agreed to furnish microchips at \$7 per chip for cats and dogs through a cooperative effort with the Animal Service Center of Mesilla Valley. These events have been successful, but in some cases, are not convenient to everyone due to time of day and day of the week, the high volume of people wanting their dogs and cats microchipped, and the limited locations where the events are conducted. This is exacerbated to some degree with the county requirement that dogs and cats now be microchipped in the unincorporated areas of Doña Ana County.

That has posed the question of how to better provide for easy and convenient access for people to get their pets microchipped regardless of the heat, the time of day, the day of the week and the location. HSSNM got a call from a very nice lady who was interested in getting her dog chipped. She wanted to know if it could be done at her home since there was some issue as to how she could get the dog to an off-site event. She was delighted to hear that HSSNM could do it at her home, if needed (Read: HSSNM really wants to get chipping done). The exciting thing about this interaction was a proposition she made to HSSNM.

How many of us have heard of the Neighborhood Watch program and how neighbors look out for area children, property or unusual activities in their neighborhoods? Well, this dear lady sponsored a group microchipping event for her neighbors who brought their pets to her house and a multiple microchipping event was held for the neighbors and their pets. What a great idea!

How convenient, how neighborly and how much more economical for HSSNM and other organizations that may wish to join a similar type of get together. HSSNM is inviting anyone who wants to volunteer as a neighborhood sponsor to initiate and arrange a block party, a sort of coffee klatch or mutt microchip meeting with the neighbors. Interested persons should contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020 to find out the details and times available that are convenient to them and HSSNM for the events. Did I mention these events can include cats, too? This is a very positive step for area residents to really participate together with such a great opportunity.

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