

# LAS CRUCES SUN-NEWS

## **On The Positive Side: Determination and Compassion Gets Snooky Home Again**

**Sept. 2, 2011**

**Frank Bryce, President, Humane Society of Southern New Mexico**

It is amazing how often human determination and compassion can positively resolve what appears to be an almost unresolvable situation. It seems Snooky, a seven month old Shih Tzu living in Santa Teresa, New Mexico, managed to get out of the yard of a relative of Alex Rodriguez, Snooky's owner, the very day Mr. Rodriguez left town for a ten day trip. Although some effort was made by the relative to find Snooky, Mr. Rodriguez was not notified of Snooky's disappearance until the family returned home. Snooky had been gone for the entire time.

It seems a Good Samaritan had found Snooky and had taken her to a Santa Teresa fire station for assistance. The fire station helped contact the Dona Ana Animal Control and little Snooky was transported to the Animal Services Center of Mesilla Valley (ASCMV) shelter. She was legally held for three days and then placed in a foster to adopt program with a new loving family. There was not much else to do since although Snooky was properly vaccinated she wore no identifying collar nor was she micro-chipped. That would have been the end of the story in some cases but Mr. Rodriguez and his family upon finding their four-legged family member missing initiated a determined effort to find her. Posters put up around their town found their way to the Good Samaritan who contacted Mr. Rodriguez and explained how Snooky was taken to the ASCMV shelter.

An initial check by Mr. Rodriguez with the shelter indicated they had no record of Snooky being brought to the shelter. That did not deter Mr. Rodriguez knowing animal control had picked up their puppy. A check through the Sunland Park police department with animal control produced the sequence number assigned to Snooky and the animal control truck number so additional review found her records. A request for review of public records revealed by then Snooky had been placed in a foster to adopt situation by the shelter. Mr. Rodriguez was told it was shelter policy he could not get Snooky back. Seeing no other options, Mr. Rodriguez asked the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico (HSSNM) to intervene to see if anything could be done. HSSNM discussions with ASCMV Chair Billy Garrett and an explanation by the ASCMV Director to the compassionate family who had already fallen in love with Snooky resulted in Snooky being returned to her original family and friends. Snooky is now micro-chipped and spayed too.

The foster to adopt family remains anonymous but the following are excerpts from a letter by Mr. Rodriguez to this understanding family. "I write to you this letter to thank you for coming to the decision to return our baby. ... I wanted to thank you for taking such good care of her all this time. God bless you for making this tough decision. I want to assure you that she that she will be going to a home where she will be loved by many. ... Fortunately for us, she was being cared for by you guys. I know this wasn't the easiest decision you have made but you truly made a lot of people happy again. Thank you once again! God bless you!"

Frank Bryce is President of the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico. Interested authors for "On The Positive Side" can contact HSSNM at (575) 523-8020.