

On The Positive Side: Community Chipping Away at Cat Concerns
Frank Bryce, President, Humane Society of Southern New Mexico
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As many of us are aware, the issues with too many cats ending up at our Animal Services Center of Mesilla Valley (ASCMV) shelter are overwhelming and unacceptable. For as many as seven or eight out of every ten cats, arrival at the shelter is literally the end of their life. Fortunately, positive steps are being taken by the shelter and supporting community organizations to continue to provide existing adoption programs and develop additional opportunities to change this outcome.

Current adoption opportunities and venues for finding the perfect feline companion including the ASCMV facility, are Humane Society of Southern New Mexico's on-line, foster, and re-homing programs, Safe Haven Animal Sanctuary, PetSmart adoption facility, and Pet's Barn adoption facility. These efforts are bolstered by supporting organizations such as the Spay Neuter Action Program to continue to provide spay and neuter assistance throughout the county, the Action program for Animals which provides a pet food bank and medical assistance for pet retention, along with the Dona Ana County Humane Society also providing medical assistance. The Animal Welfare and Responsibility Education organization is providing billboards and other media assistance containing public information about pet welfare. These existing community programs and resources help prevent cats being taken to the shelter and reduce the number of cats overwhelming the shelter facility.

These cats range from kittens to seniors, from tiny to huge (for a cat that is) and to almost all colors or combinations of colors imaginable. They share three things in common. One, they need loving homes where they can reciprocate that love, two, they are ready for adoption, and three, without that home their fate is sealed.

Recently there have been additional efforts to expand the venues for opportunities for cat adoptions. We understand that soon our local PetCo, through a cooperative program with the ASCMV, will be providing an in-store facility for cat adoptions. Jean Gilbert, Board of Director member with the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico, and Jake Sims, Director of Animal Welfare and Responsibility Education, arranged a meeting with interested parties that has resulted in another appropriate venue to be provided for cat adoptions during the Farmer's Market hours on Saturdays. Kevin Bixby, Director of Southwest Environmental Center, has generously agreed to allow the ASCMV in cooperation with interested organizations access to the Southwest Environmental Center office for cat adoptions. The ASCMV Director has stated the shelter had the resources and staff to offer this additional venue. Both these new venues should be operational sometime in October and provide greater exposure to find homes for these furry companions.

The new and existing venues will not solve all our companion animal welfare problems by any means but the efforts are cumulative, commendable and much needed. Please support the organizations of your choice to help them achieve their goals.

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.