

Winter 2017

FREE!

Dog & Cruces

Information for the Las Cruces Dog Lover!

County-Wide Ride

Phyllis Wright gained a broader perspective on Animal Control when she rode along with Doña Ana County ACOs.

Page 18

In a Flood of Compassion

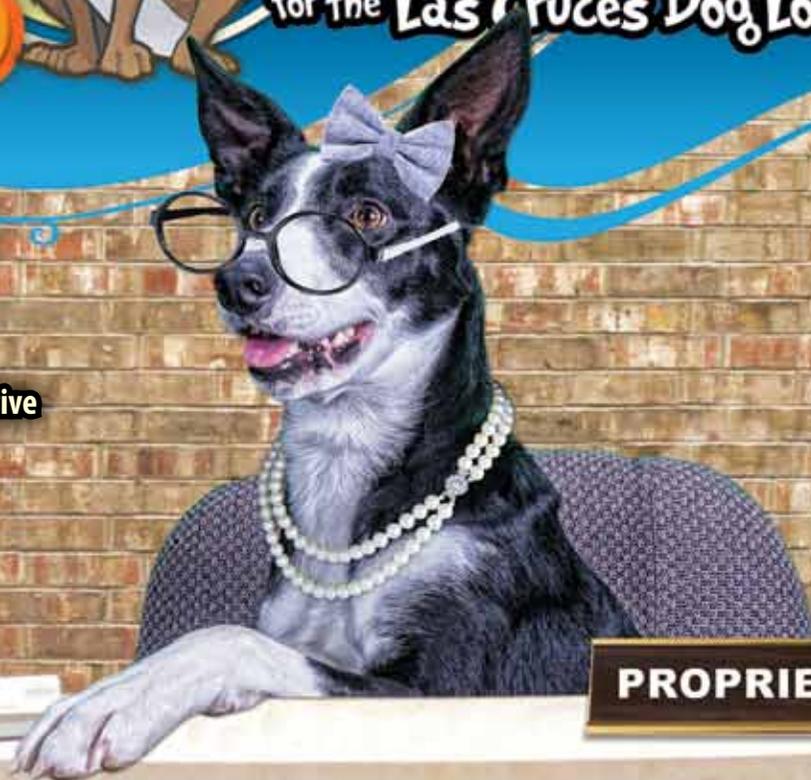
Cara Lewis hitched up her horse trailer and headed into unknown territory to help furry flood victims in Louisiana.

Page 21

And Your Little Dog, Too!

Las Cruces Community Theatre's *Wizard of Oz* brought down the house — and deserves a standing ovation for saving two shelter dogs in the process.

Page 25



Good things come in
**Small
Businesses!**

Page 14

Meet four local entrepreneurs turning their love for animals into their life's work.

PLUS... What's Gnawing at Jess? ... UPDATED list of Dog-Friendly Businesses... Feral is as Feral Does ... A Very Manly Road Trip ... and More!

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¡Prospero Año, Dog'Crucens!

I love this time of the year! Twelve shiny new months just waiting to be unwrapped—and the proverbial glass not half full, but completely full of the promise and potential of a brand new year.

But I know not everybody overflows with optimism like I do at the dawn of each new year. I ran into Jess Williams over the holidays, and I think he's still sore about the election. No, not *that* election! For some unknowable reason, he accused me of engaging the Russians to help me defeat Toby in the Dog'Crucens Mayoral Election-for-Life. Talk about ancient history! All I had to say to him was, "нет, они не сделали." Hey! Maybe my New Year's resolution should be to learn Russian—I hear it might come in handy going forward.... I sure hope Jess and Toby don't decide to move to Canada in protest, but—coming in 2017—we'll be making Dog'Crucens subscriptions available for our out-of-the-area readers, so Jess won't have to sever all ties. You can read his first column of the new year, as always, on page 12.

Our cover story features four dog-focused small businesses operating right here in Las Cruces. They all fill different needs in our local animal community, but each is committed to helping us enhance and celebrate the lives of our favorite four-legged companions. We hope their stories inspire some of you to pursue your dreams, as well!

Of course, there are many dog-friendly businesses here, too, and it's been five years since we did a story about where to take Fido out on the town. We've updated the

list of area businesses that welcome dogs, so please include your best friend the next time you're out and about—and reward Fido-friendly businesses with your patronage! Take it from me, dining with your dog is a great experience! Usually. Just in case, we've also included *Nacho's* Petiquette Guide to make sure *everyone's* dining experience is a positive one.

On a related note... *Scout* and I took a boys-only road trip for some advanced Search and Rescue training up north. We were ready for a what-happens-at-SAR-training-stays-at-SAR-training-type weekend, but it didn't turn out quite as planned.

If you didn't see Las Cruces Community Theatre's mostly-sold-out run of *The Wizard of Oz* in December, you missed out on a wonderful production of everyone's childhood favorite. If you *did* attend, then you probably noticed *Toto* stealing a scene or two on stage. What you may not know is that *Toto's* yellow brick road to stardom began on death row at a New Mexico shelter and ended up in a loving forever home after the final show. Read about *Toto's* journey in Jen's column on page 25.

I'm very proud of the work we did in 2016, and I think a standout moment for me was the time I spent with Las Cruces Animal Control this past fall. We have made real, tangible progress as a result of City and County Animal Control Officers posting the pets they find to our Dog'Crucens Facebook page so our social media community can share them. Every day we see more and

more pets reunited with their owners instead of forcing other animals onto death row at the ASCMV—and ultimately ending up there themselves. I have high hopes that our Facebook network will continue to expand so that, together, we can help decrease the number of animals being euthanized at the shelter. Thanks to all involved in making this program a success!

Speaking of Animal Control, Phyllis and I finally got approval to ride along with Doña Ana County Animal Control Officers. I'm gonna let her tell you about it in this issue... she said I hogged the whole story for myself last time!

And finally, because I always like to look ahead, I was excited to find out that 2018 is going to be the Chinese Zodiac's Year of the Dog. мы будем иметь столько удовольствия!

I wish everyone—and your pets!—a healthy, exciting, surprising and fulfilling 2017.

Not Toby

Mayor of Dog'Crucens

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Dogs in Las Cruces and Doña Ana County can only be tethered to a stationary object for no more than two hours in a 12-hour period, and can only be tethered to a running line, pulley, or trolley system for no more than 4 hours in a 12-hour period. These time limitations are in the City's & County's Animal Control Ordinance.

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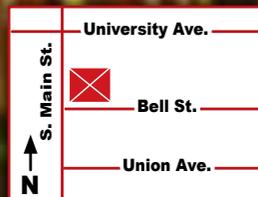
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Doggie

RECURRING & ONGOING EVENTS

WINTER 2017

Red Brick Pizza Monthly Fundraiser for HSSNM

Thursday, January 26th

Thursday, February 23rd

Thursday, March 30th

Red Brick Pizza, 2808 N. Telshor from 11am-9pm. Social hour at 6pm. Mention "HSSNM" when placing your take-out or dine-in order, and 15% of proceeds will be donated to the Humane Society of Southern New Mexico.

Happy Tails Pet Adoption Events at PetSmart

Saturday, February 11th

Saturday, March 10th

Saturday, April 8th

PetSmart, 2200 E. Lohman, from 10am to 4pm. These events feature many wonderful rescue dogs and cats seeking loving homes from the HSSNM's foster program and authorized individuals and organization/groups. For more information contact HSSNM at 575-523-8020 or mail@hssnm.org.

APA Adoption Events at PetSmart (2200 E. Lohman)

Sunday, January 22nd

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, February 5th

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, February 19th

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, March 5th

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, March 19th

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, April 2nd

From 11am-4pm.

Sunday, April 16th

From 11am-4pm.

Safe Haven Adoption Events at PetSmart (2200 E. Lohman)

Saturday, January 28th

From 10:30am-2:30pm.

Saturday, February 25th

From 10:30am-2:30pm.

Saturday, March 25th

From 10:30am-2:30pm.

For information or to sign up to volunteer, contact triciaquillen@gmail.com or call 408-529-1065.

For a complete calendar of events, visit

DogCruces.com

List is updated as events are announced

JANUARY

Saturday, January 21st

Rabies Vaccination Clinics

Mesquite Animal Vaccination Clinic will be at Old La Mesa Fire Dept. from 10am-4pm.

Animal Hospital of Las Cruces will be at Doña Ana Feed Store from 12pm-2pm.

Jornada Veterinary Clinic will be at Moongate Water Co., from 12pm-3pm.

El Abrigado Animal Clinic will be at La Union Community Center from 1pm-2pm, and Sunland Park City Hall from 2:30-4:30pm.

Wolfgang Veterinary Services will be at Talavera Fire Department from 10am-3pm.

Anthony Animal Clinic, always at 901 Franklin St., Anthony TX from 1pm-4pm.

Sunday, January 22nd

Rabies Vaccination Clinic

Wolfgang Veterinary Services will be at Radium Springs Fire Dept. from 10am-3pm.

Tuesday, January 24th

Change a Pet's Life Day

Saturday, January 28th

Rabies Vaccination Clinics

Schumacher Veterinary Clinic will be at several locations around the area:

Rincon Water Co. from 8am-10am,

The **Original Yappy Hour**, the third Wednesday of each month starting in March. 6 - 8 p.m. at St. Clair Winery & Bistro.

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DogCruces ❧ Winter 2017

Dates



East Picacho Elementary from 8am-3pm,
Garfield Elementary from 1:30pm-2:45pm,
Hatch City Hall from 10am-3pm,
and Arrey School from 3:15-4pm.

Wolfgang Veterinary Services will be at
Mayfield High School from 10am-3pm.

Mesquite Animal Vaccination Clinic will be at
Mesquite Fire Dept. from 8am-4pm.

Sunday, January 29th Rabies Vaccination Clinics

Wolfgang Veterinary Services will be at
Ben Archer Clinic on Thorpe Rd.
from 10am-3pm.

Mesquite Animal Vaccination Clinic, always at
109 Lisa Dr. in Chaparral from 10am-3pm.

FEBRUARY

Spay/Neuter Awareness Month

Help reduce overcrowding in our local shelter while also enriching the life and health of your own furry family members! Check out local spay/neuter clinics in the Mesilla Valley. Call ASCMV 575-382-0018, or SNAP 575-524-9265.

Pet Dental Health Month

Unchain a Dog Month

Now every month is Unchain a Dog Month in Las Cruces! As of November 12th, there are new time limitations on tethering dogs.

They may be tethered to a stationary object for no more than two hours in a 12-hour period, or to a running line, pulley or trolley system for no more than 4 hours in a 12-hour period. These new tethering limitations are part of the City's Animal Control Ordinance.

Saturday, February 4th Valentine-Themed Photo Booth

Safe Haven Thrift Store, 940 El Paseo, from 10am-2pm. For more information or to sign up to volunteer, contact triciaquillen@gmail.com, or call 408-529-1065

Thursday, February 23rd International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day

Yes, this is a real thing! Stop by the Dog'Cruces office, 151 S. Solano, Suite E, for a free Dog Biscuit for your best friend!

MARCH

Monday, March 13th K-9 Veteran's Day

Honoring all armed service dogs, but also law enforcement, police, customs and search and rescue dogs for their service and sacrifice for our nation. Thank you for your service!

Wednesday, March 15th Yappy Hour is Back!

St. Clair Winery & Bistro, 1720 Avenida de Mesilla, outside on the patio and lawn, from 6-8pm. Music, games & door prizes. Free goodie bags for the dogs. Food & drink, including wine and beer, available from the

menu. Well behaved, leashed dogs welcome. \$5 donation at the door benefits DACHS and SNAP. Call 575-642-2648 for information.

APRIL Every Day is Tag Day!

Dogs sometimes get out and wander from home. ID tags are a tried-and-true method for making it easier to get your pet back if he or she strays. (Microchipping is added insurance, providing your information is up-to-date). Please get new tags for your pet if the information is outdated or if the tag has faded.

April 9th - 15th Animal Control Officer Appreciation Week

Say thanks to the hard-working men and women of Animal Care and Control who work tirelessly to return lost animals to their owners and make the community safer for humans and animals, alike.

Wednesday, April 19th Yappy Hour

St. Clair Winery & Bistro, 1720 Avenida de Mesilla, outside on the patio and lawn, from 6-8pm. Music, games & door prizes. Free goodie bags for the dogs. Food & drink, including wine and beer, available from the menu. Well behaved, leashed dogs welcome. \$5 donation at the door benefits DACHS and SNAP. Call 575-642-2648 for information.



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The Four-Foot Wall:

I'm writing from the heart in this issue of *DogCruces*, and at the risk of sounding negative, I'm going to start 2017 by offering some words of warning to all the dog owners of Las Cruces. I guess after seeing the same situation over and over in my practice, I feel the need to share what I've learned with all of you—and unfortunately, some of you have probably learned this first-hand. Simply stated, Las Cruces is not a very safe place to walk your dog! Sometimes our own yards are not safe places for our pets, either.

**Las Cruces is not a very safe place to walk your dog!
Sometimes our own yards are not safe places for our pets, either.**

The rock walls that define and separate our properties from each other are more uniform and consistent here than in any other place I've ever seen. I've heard visitors to Las Cruces remark how much they love the rock wall architecture that we seem to take for granted here. I love the look of the rock walls as much as anyone, but I have to admit they can cause problems for our pets. There isn't a week that goes by when I don't see at least one case—if not several—of dogs being injured by other dogs that jumped rock walls.

Big dog/little dog syndrome, as we sometimes refer to it, is a much too common situation in this city. Let me explain. Many of the neighborhoods in Las Cruces have rock walls of

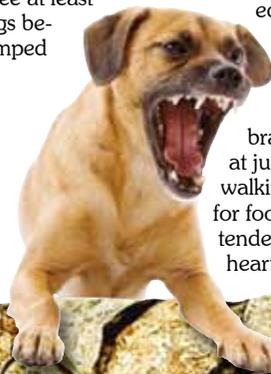
roughly four feet in height surrounding the yards. This simply isn't tall enough to keep large (or even some medium) dogs in or out of the yard if they're determined to get to the other side. I can't tell you how often I hear the same two scenarios—either, "I was walk-

ing my pet when a dog (or dogs) jumped over a wall from their own yard and attacked my dog," or, "A stray dog jumped the fence into my yard and attacked my dog." And I only see the poor little ones that survive

and make it to the clinic with a chance to be treated. Unfortunately, too many of them *don't* survive to make it to the veterinarian for emergency care.

Now let's add one more huge issue to the problem: coyotes! I love and respect these amazing, wild creatures. We invaded their space to begin with, but unlike most wildlife, they haven't moved away from our encroachment—they've adapted to and embraced it. Every night they invade the edges of town in search of food; whether it's trash, pet food that is left outside, or—worst of all—our small dogs and cats.

The coyotes have become very brazen about this. They're good at jumping the low rock fences or walking on the tops of walls to search for food or small animals that are unattended in our yards. It creates a very heartbreaking situation, to be sure.



The Vet's View

by
Dr. Scott Pirtle, DVM

a Cautionary Tale

So what should you do to protect your dog? First, if you live in areas on the edge of town where there are coyotes, never leave your small dog unattended in the yard, particu-

larly at night or early in the mornings since this is when the coyotes are most active. Improving or increasing the size of your fence might be prudent if you can do so. If you do walk your dog, always keep it on a leash and close to you. Be aware of your surroundings and your routes.

Avoid areas of the neighborhood where you know there are dogs that demonstrate aggressive or territorial behaviors. Sooner or later one of these dogs is likely to jump the fence instead of only barking and growling. If you can, take your dog to quiet areas, or trails where the likelihood of encountering other dogs is low. And even if you do all these things, simply being aware and alert can sometimes help to minimize the risk of a negative encounter. I'm hoping for fewer of these tragic situations in 2017!

And in closing, I'd like to offer my heartfelt condolences to all of you who lost a furry family member this past year. As many of you know, my house is somewhat of a geriatric home for dogs. We almost lost two of our babies this year, but somehow they are still

here and getting by pretty well. 2017 looms as a difficult year for us, though.

Today, I lost a patient that needed to say goodbye. She was not a victim of an attack, but rather was 18 years old and had lived a good life, thanks to her wonderful owner—one of my favorite clients. My client is 91 years old and spunky as can be. Her pet was all she had in the world, and she is devastated. I've always heard that a parent losing a child goes through the greatest of all grief. My dear friend made me understand more than ever that our dogs can be like children to us.

Rest well Mollie.

I love and respect [coyotes]. We invaded their space to begin with, but unlike most wildlife, they haven't moved away from our encroachment—they've adapted to and embraced it.



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COLD BLOODED

by Jessssss WilliamsSSSS

I was on a radio show recently when the host asked me how I felt about snakes. I told her I like snakes just fine, and I used to have a lot of them when I was in junior high and high school. By the time I had a career, I was down to just three, but at one point there must have been 30 or more.

This comment elicited a lot of questioning that week as I meandered through the community doing the various things I meander about doing in any given week. Since my deadline to submit this column is coming up on me like a freight train, I shall regale you with some stories from my snake days.

My Mom was—at first—not at all receptive to the idea of having snakes in her home, but she capitulated after some pouting on my part. Soon, she was bragging to her bridge club that she had accidentally stumbled across some great truths: Snakes make no noise! Snake food (goldfish and mice) costs less than most other pet foods, and snakes only eat once a week! A son who spends a large amount of time in his Jeep in the desert looking for snakes to bring home isn't messing up the kitchen! (Bonus: The son frequently returns home empty-handed, but he was still gone all day!)

And most importantly, an array of snake terraria on the glass-walled front porch is a great deterrent to would-be burglars; in fact, many innocent-looking pedestrians and dog walkers who used to amble leisurely along the front sidewalk were now actively sprinting to the other end of the block!

Mom decided snakes were cool.

One day, the mother of my friend Hans was over, and she and my Mom were chatting in the kitchen. The topic turned to the snakes, and Hans' mother said she was horrified of them. This spurred the diplomat lurking inside me to go get a snake from the front porch, so that she could see up close how gorgeous they are, as well as witness first-hand the docile nature of most of these creatures. I had many snakes—bull snakes, coachwhips, desert kings, garter snakes, etc.—but the one I chose to show her was a five-foot bull snake who had recently shed his skin, so his beauty was magnificent.

I walked in the kitchen with him, and she simultaneously shrieked and levitated. I must have reacted, because in that moment my docile and beautiful bull snake decided in his tiny reptilian brain that a threat had manifested itself. He reacted to the threat by deciding to bite something. The thing he decided to bite was my upper lip. And then he decided to hang on there for a while. You can just imagine how that played out!

Actually, you can't. It was surreal. Hans' Mom—who moments before was defying gravity and breaking the sound barrier with her shrieks—became suddenly quiet and wide-eyed. The bull snake was not at all mollified. He continued to hang on. Blood from my lip was beginning to drip down on his back and my hands while we stood there and assessed the situation.

"This has never happened before," my Mom said. "Why don't you go clean up in the bathroom, honey?"

Still lip-locked with the snake, I skulked out of the room. It took a few minutes of muttering at the bathroom mirror to convince the bull snake that the threat had passed and it would be a good idea to let me go. When he did, I put him around my shoulders and rinsed my mouth with Listerine. From a hygienic point of view, that was undoubtedly a good move. However, the resulting sensation was immediate and

gravely impactful. I was Lava Lip Boy—but I knew better than to shriek or leap (some lessons don't take long to learn).

I don't think Hans' Mom ever came back to visit, but I still run into her occasionally around town. She's unfailingly pleasant, so I'm grateful that the trauma has passed.

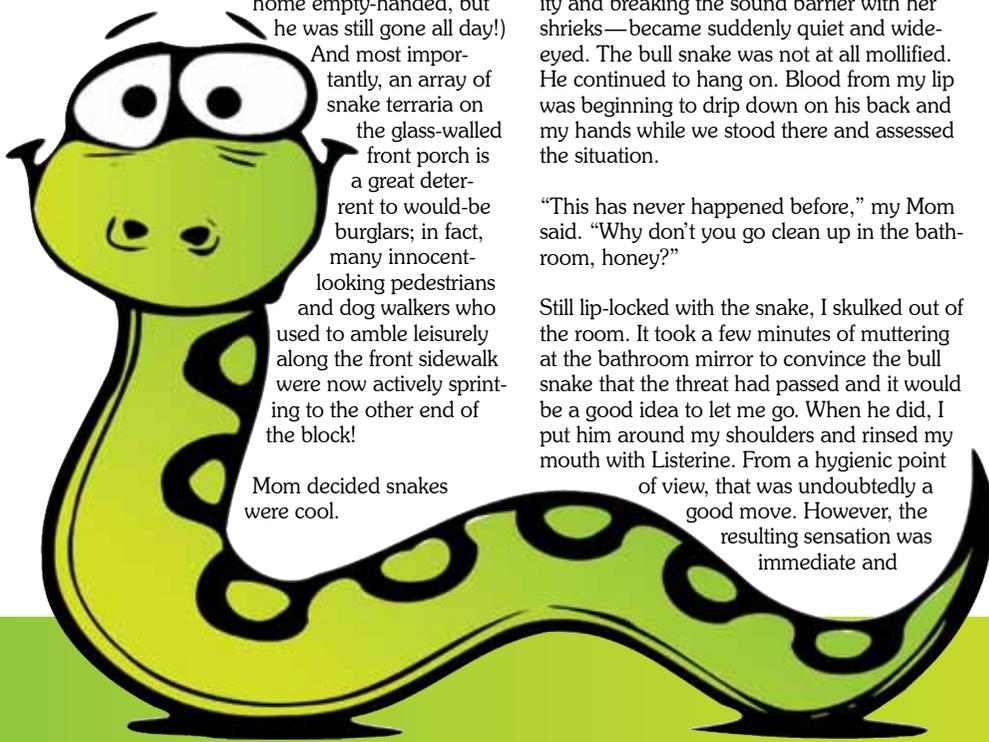
One of the things about having snakes as pets is that, inevitably, one will get loose. Sometimes more than one. After one of my quicker bull snakes got loose, Mom was in a bit of a panic. Over the course of the next two weeks, however, she noticed that she had no further need for mouse traps in the hall closet with the door to the house's crawl space. The mouse problem was simply over.

After that, if a snake got loose, she was nonchalant about it, although she made a point of not sharing the information with her bridge club. If any of those lovely ladies are reading this information all these years later, I apologize; you were in no danger, and Mom's lie of omission was innocent and rooted in the greater good of sparing you a mouse encounter.

At one point during my snake days, I proclaimed at our family's Sunday lunch that I was going to be a herpetologist. My Dad picked up the Sunday paper and tossed the classifieds at me and dared me to find an opening for a herpetologist.

"Be a journalist or a teacher or a mechanic or a banker or something," he said. "Be of use."

Jess Williams is a native of Las Cruces who took his Dad's advice. He still has a Jeep, and he still forays out into the desert looking for snakes, but he no longer endeavors to catch them. He's into parrots and dogs as pets these days. To date, he has not been bitten on the lip by a parrot. If the day comes, there will be deep reflection before Listerine will become involved in the equation. If you walk outside and listen closely, you can almost certainly hear Vic yelling in his office that the name of the magazine is NOT Snake'Cruces.



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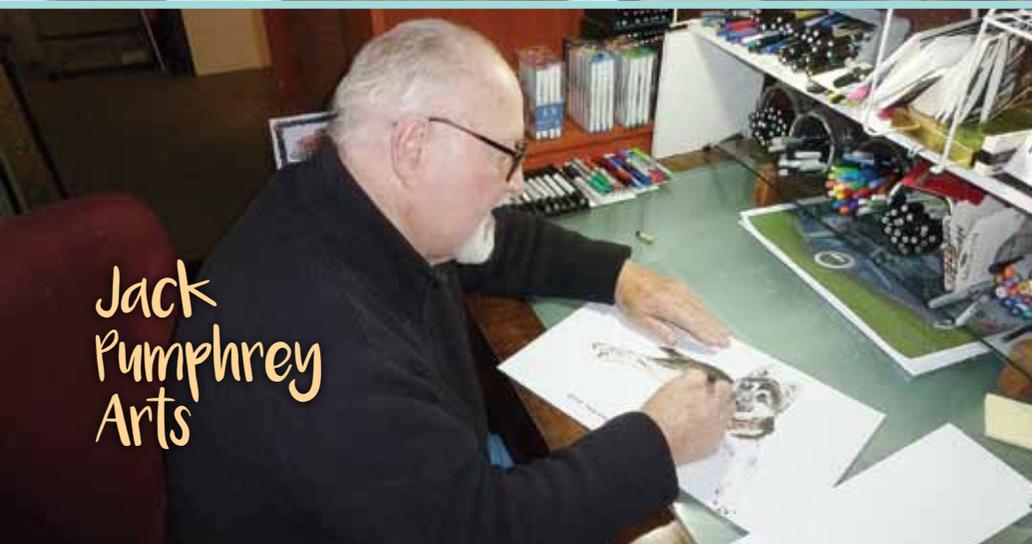
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Las Cruces Dog Sports



Walters Lunchbox



Jack Pumphrey Arts

Admit it—

at one time or another, you've daydreamed about a perfect world in which your love of dogs could translate into a fulfilling (and profitable) career—without having to go to veterinary school!

Well, you CAN make it happen—just ask any of the animal-focused local businesses already up and running here in Las Cruces! We're highlighting four intrepid entrepreneurs in this issue of *DogCruces*, all of whom agreed to let us in on what inspired them to take the leap and work for themselves, as well as some of the challenges they've faced along the way. Every business is as unique as its proprietor, and we at *DogCruces* support their efforts and those of *all* small businesses in our community.

We hope these profiles will inspire some of you to tap into your ambition and follow your passion—whatever it may be.

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or like us on Facebook—it's an easy way to message us at [facebook.com/bowwowblends/](https://www.facebook.com/bowwowblends/)

Bow WOW Blends Power Fruit Smoothie for Dogs was conceived and created three years ago by Shannon Murray. Shannon has a full time job, is a search and rescue volunteer, frequent community volunteer, and is mom to four Golden Retrievers and one cat, each of whom craves her undivided attention. Bow WOW Blends was born in her spare time, during her vacation days, and over countless evenings, in the hopes of providing her own and other dogs with an all-natural, and delicious nutritional supplement. Secretly, some people (like Phyllis) love it on oatmeal and ice cream, but Shannon can tell the whole story.

I was inspired by *Ruby*. *Ruby*, our Golden Retriever of eight years, (now 10) had been really ill with tummy troubles and was on lots of meds, one for nausea, one for diarrhea and the antibiotic, Metronidazole. One morning after returning to bed with *Ruby* to snuggle (she's the best snuggler!) we were startled awake by kicking. When we opened our eyes, we thought we would see *Ruby* running in her dog dreams, but instead we found *Ruby* having a bad seizure. She was flopping like a fish out of water, kicking all her legs, and her claws were gnarled. We believe it was a neurotoxicity to

with Phyllis Wright & Jenifer Woods

There's no business like Small Business!!

Open

Metronidazole. She had been taking it long-term, and although she didn't vomit or have diarrhea while she was on it, when our vet told us it could have caused the seizure, I had to take action.

Ruby had previously seen a specialist in Albuquerque, and during that visit, he told us Ruby might need to stay on Metronidazole for the rest of her life. When we asked about the side effects of long-term use, he said neurotoxicity. We didn't research it then, or think anything of it at the time because it seemed to be helping her—until that day she had that seizure. Of course, we freaked! We immediately took her off the drugs and started researching what we could give her sensitive belly so she could eat and keep her food down long enough to get the nutrients she needed.

During this process, we switched her food to one with ingredients we thought wouldn't irritate her. It was trial and error until we found the right one. Simultaneously, we researched specific foods to learn what helped and didn't help dogs with tummy issues. With research in hand, we started making a fruit smoothie for her, and, of course, she shared it with her sisters. They loved being our taste-test subjects.

When we realized how well it was working for Ruby and her sisters, we wanted to share our research and success with other dogs who might have similar health issues, or need more nutrients, or just love a healthy treat. And Bow WOW Blends was born!

It was a big project! When we started, we made an appointment and met in person with some very helpful people at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA). They explained the process, and we were on our way. They ok'd our ingredients for K9 consumption, and they checked the label and wording to make sure we adhered to the AAFCO guidelines. For example, we wanted to market this as a power fruit smoothie for pets, but we had to be cat or dog specific, and it fell under the supplement category, instead of food or treats.

Then... the manufacturing process! Here are some excerpts from the The Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) website to capture the level of specificity: "The manufacture and sale of pet food is highly regulated by both the federal government and the 50 states. Most state laws require registration of feed or pet food,

other states may require that your company be licensed to sell in that state....

The United States Food and Drug Administration's Center for Veterinary Medicine also has regulations for animal feed and pet food. At this time, these regulations cover basic labeling requirements (ingredient list, net content, name and address, statement of identity) in detail but do not address all aspects covered by the AAFCO Model Regulations (e.g., guarantees, nutritional adequacy, calorie content).

Except for products manufactured in a private residence, all manufacturing facilities must be registered with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) under the Bioterrorism Act....

Laws in most states require that you register your products and/or license your company BEFORE you offer your products for sale in that state."

In other words, it's complicated, and there are numerous regulations and fees, but it's been worth it!! Bow WOW Blends has been tested at the New Mexico State Food Sciences lab to assess its shelf-stability, too, and it can sit on the shelf unopened for 18 months. It must be refrigerated once opened, as noted on the label.

We really believe in this product—it helped our Ruby and other dogs, too, so we hope to grow the business throughout the state and then hopefully to more states. We are actually seeking a reliable distributor that wants to work with a small company—hint, hint—if anyone can send one our way! We delivered product ourselves to one of our first clients, Yellowstone Dog Sports in Montana. Yes, we had to register with Montana's Ag Department and pay their fees, but Yellowstone is the Disneyland for Dogs, with all their dog-friendly sporting events and digs. People come from all over the country and even Canada to partake in the trainings and various competitions.

We donate to many organizations via gift baskets for fundraising events. We like to include paw print or bone shaped ice cube trays with some bottles of Bow WOW Blends to pour in them (they make great frozen treats) and a couple of toys or a fun bone. We've also passed out samples at the Annual Doggie Dash and Dawdle in Albuquerque because the event benefits Animal Humane, and for the price of a booth fee, we can support the organization and introduce the community to Bow WOW Blends!

It's exciting and rewarding to know that it's a product that supports the digestion and urinary tract, made with healthy ingredients that are grown in the USA (except the bananas, our country doesn't grow them). The bottles and easy-pour lid are BPA-FREE, as well as made in the USA. Plus, Bow WOW Blends is produced right here in Las Cruces in an FDA-inspected facility.



by Shannon Murray, Kim Fuqua, Margaret Dubbin & Jack Pumphrey



One day we were making a batch, and the workers at the facility saw and handled all the ingredients that go into our product—like the bananas, blueberries, carrots, pumpkin, and cranberries—and when it was finished and being bottled, we taste-tested it and offered them a taste, and they said “There is no way this is dog food!”

See what your dogs think!

You can find Bow WOW Blends at

- Better Life Pet Foods (both locations)
- Horse N’ Hound Feed N’ Supply
- Mesilla Valley Pet Resort
- Mountain View Market
- Toucan Market
- The Mesilla Valley Store on the Mesilla Plaza.

Las Cruces Dog Sports



Kim Fuqua, owner
LCDS@LasCrucesDogSports.com
www.LasCrucesDogSports.com
575-202-6037

Kim Fuqua has always had a passion for competitive sports with animals. As a teenager and young adult, she trained and competed in horse events in the southwest. She has always owned and loved dogs and can't remember a time she didn't have one. One day, while watching TV, she saw an agility competition and knew she needed to try it! That's when *Dolly*, her first Border Collie, came into her life, and she learned soon after that any kind of dog can do agility! The rest is history, as Kim explains . . .

I was soon addicted to the sport and four dogs later when my husband landed an assignment at Fort Bliss, I decided to open Las Cruces Dog Sports (LCDS) in 2011 to promote Agility and owner/canine partnerships. As a certified Animal Behavioral College dog trainer and a former elementary school teacher, I wanted to convey a love of learning as well as the latest Agility and pet fitness knowledge to the Las Cruces, El Paso and surrounding communities. In 2015, I expanded the scope of the business by gaining certification with Equissage as a Certified Canine Massage Professional. Currently, I'm working with the University of Tennessee and Bobbi Lyons to bring

a certified Canine Fitness (FitPaws) to our region. I have extensive experience in animal performance (AA in Horse Training Management, Lamar College) as well as experience in education (BA in Education, New Mexico State). I work to blend these experiences into a better training environment for both dogs and their owners. I also spend numerous hours working with instructors online for education in agility training, trick training, behavior modification and anything else I feel would benefit my students or me. LCDS also works hard to bring in top professionals in the dog training industry several times a year for seminars.

I am a decorated Agility competitor who has competed at the local, regional and national levels with all five of my dogs. I have obtained AKC (American Kennel Club) Master Agility Champion (MACH) on three different dogs. Additionally, I have competed at the AKC Agility Championships with two dogs. Although I personally train Australian Shepherds and Border Collies, I have experience with all types of dogs and love to bring the best out of each of them. I believe that any dog/owner relationship can be enhanced with training and fun!

Although I and the trainers with whom I work are all national-level Agility or Obedience competitors, we understand and appreciate that a strong owner/dog bond and solid foundation is the key to not only competition but also to having a safe and enjoyable pet. For this reason, I focus on Puppy Training, Basic Obedience, and Agility Foundations in each class cycle. Although competition may or may not be the focus of owners, these classes help ensure that dogs and their owners have basic skills that enhance the joy of having a pet.

Beyond the basics, LCDS offers Agility League, multiple Agility classes, Obedience competition classes, trick training classes, canine conditioning and private lessons that give students and their canines a road into competitive success. LCDS has recently partnered with USDAA (United States Dog Agility Association) to offer additionally competitions in the region. Last Fall, LCDS successfully offered the first USDAA show in the region in Alamogordo and have another show planned this Spring.

My top priority is promoting a strong relationship between

human and canine. LCDS is a great business that offers dogs and their owners a variety of ways to improve relationships, become better pets at home, and move into competition if interested. LCDS offers a safe and enjoyable area for all teams to get better. We look forward to seeing you at our facilities.

Walter's
Lunchbox
K-9 Cuisine



Margaret Dubbin, owner
MLDubbin@gmail.com
www.WaltersLunchbox.com

DogCruces readers know Walter's Lunchbox as our regular Page 27 column, offering delicious, healthy recipes for canine treats and eats. Prominently featured in each column, of course, is a unique perspective on daily doggie life from the wise and devastatingly handsome Great Dane, *Walter*. About two-and-a-half years ago, Walter's Lunchbox K-9 Cuisine began producing wholesome, wheat-free snacks and event cakes for sale to furry friends and followers of *Walter's* column and blog. Available by special order, the mouth-watering treats and canine cakes have attracted a growing fan base all around the Mesilla Valley.

Margaret Dubbin, mostly-proud mom to *Walter* and his equally stunning brother/nemesis *Buliywyf* (*Butthead*), has a history of adopting rescue dogs, some of which, like *Walter*, had specific dietary needs or restrictions that store-bought foods could not adequately meet at the time.

“I have prepared special diets at one time or another for many of my dogs, for an array of allergies, diseases, or disorders. Over the past 20 years I have collected several recipes or concoctions with the intent of one day writing a dog treat cookbook and opening a bakery and bistro that caters to dogs. Six years ago we adopted our *Walter* from the Great Dane Rescue of El Paso. A few weeks after adopting *Walter* we occasionally noticed that he would break out into a rash on his underside. We soon realized that this rash would



We should all eat as well—and as healthfully—as Walter does.

show up almost immediately after feeding him a treat that contained wheat. He was skinny, and we often had trouble keeping weight on him—despite feeding him the highest protein and calorie wheat- and corn-free food we could find. So the challenge became how to get *Walter* the extra calories he needed to keep his weight up without going broke feeding him prime rib every single day!”

“I would pack a variety of homemade snacks for *Walter* in a lunchbox when sending him to day care at Karen’s Animal House. One day one of the wonderful gals working there asked, ‘What’s in *Walter*’s lunchbox today?’ That’s when *Walter*’s Lunchbox became the name of this silly little dog treat venture of mine.”

Margaret’s “silly little venture” currently features three products available for purchase: a Sweet Potato Carob Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting, Dog Treats with Pumpkin, and Liver & Cranberry Stix. All of these doggie delights are made fresh upon ordering via the website or Facebook page. And all had to satisfy the rigorous regulating authority of the “Dog Treat Mafia” (a.k.a. the New Mexico Department of Agriculture). A guaranteed analysis is conducted on all *Walter*’s Lunchbox products, and each is registered with the state. “I research ingredients,” explains Margaret, “and consult with our veterinarian (Dr. Delores Craig at Solano Animal Clinic) who practices both western and eastern veterinary medicine regarding holistic ingredients.” Extensive taste tests are conducted by *Walter*, *Buliwyf*, and Margaret’s husband, Mark—though it’s rumored Mark refuses to try the Liver & Cranberry Stix for some reason.

Walter’s Lunchbox operates as a not-for-profit concern, and all proceeds from the sales of the healthy treats are donated to local animal organizations. “We collect the proceeds until we reach approximately \$150.00, then we either make a cash donation or purchase a gift card (ie. Walmart, Sam’s Club, etc.) to give to a local pet rescue or charity. It is a different organization each time, and we only give to those that serve our community.”

Margaret divides her time between *Walter*’s Lunchbox and her other Las Cruces-based business. “I own and operate IDEALS, inc. one of the few bona fide woman-owned engineering and construction companies in this region. I founded IDEALS in 2005, and over the past 11 years we have grown to 33 employees providing engineering, environmental, and construction services to private, local, and federal customers nationwide. IDEALS has been in a growth stage for the past two years, so finding adequate time for *Walter*’s Lunchbox has not been easy.” Like most small business owners, Margaret often sacrifices sleep so she can meet the needs of both her human and canine clients.

It may not be easy, but it is fulfilling. “Baking and creating unique treats for my pups is something I enjoy. The main reason I do this is to be able to give back something to those many dogs that I cannot personally adopt and to help support those volunteers who give so much of their time to these animal programs.”

Margaret’s long-term plans for *Walter*’s Lunchbox

still include opening a bakery and bistro here in Las Cruces that will feature menu items specifically created for the dogs in our lives.

Maybe we should get in line now....



Jack Pumphrey, artist
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575-525-8298

Jack Pumphrey might just be the nicest man in the world. He’s talented, too, which is immediately evident upon entering his home/studio in Las Cruces. The walls are a gallery of delicate, detailed pen & ink drawings and glowing watercolor paintings, most created by Jack, himself, though he has collected works by other artists for many years. His favorite subjects to draw include vintage cars, maritime scenes, houses and portraits. But the place of honor in his home—right beside the front entrance—belongs to two memorial portraits of his beloved, departed pets.

“This is *Once*—that’s Spanish for the number eleven,” he explained, pointing to an ink drawing of a Lab/Coyote mix, elaborately framed with paw print, collar and photo to form a lovingly-arranged display. “He was my late wife’s therapy dog. Eleven was her favorite number, because (Seattle Mariner’s great designated hitter) Edgar Martinez was her favorite baseball player—and *Once* had eleven white toes.” The portrait of the couple’s cat, *Skippy* the Manx, hangs just below *Once*. Each pet’s personality leaps off the page.

Jack has been doing commissioned works of art since high school, when he took a mechanical drawing class and discovered he liked it and was good at it. Between class assignments and friendly requests, he honed the skill that would eventually become his chosen career. “Nineteen eighty-nine was the last year I drew a paycheck from somebody else,” he says. “Then I struck out on my own as a free-lance artist and printing consultant.” In 1998, Jack and his wife Sue left the Pacific Northwest for the Desert Southwest and landed for good in Las Cruces.

He had done a brisk business in harbor scenes and drawings of custom yachts in the Seattle area but, “There weren’t too many big yachts down here—or small ones, for that matter,” he says, “so I had to switch gears, literally, and started focusing on vintage cars, instead.” He’s still going strong in this area, having just been awarded the honor of creating artwork for the 2017 International Cadillac & LaSalle Club Membership Directory. It came out in October.

Jack works exclusively from photographs, so it’s no surprise he’s also an accomplished photographer, capturing movement, light and expressions that change moment to moment so he’s able to

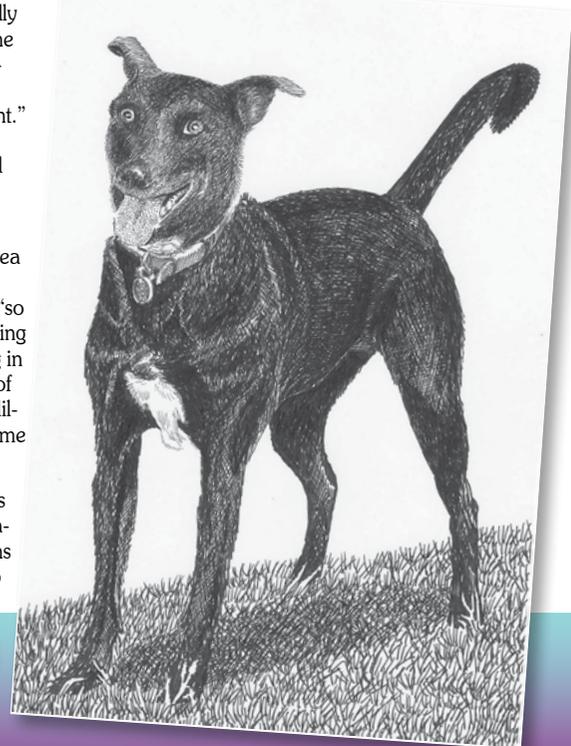
translate them to his chosen medium. He’ll draw anything or anyone who piques his interest—or who commissions him to do a particular project.

But the subject perhaps best suited to Jack’s pen & ink style of fine lines and dots is animal fur. “You know,” he says, “drawing pets is pretty easy for me, and it seems hard for others, so I think I found a niche. I just really enjoy doing it.” When Jack isn’t busy with a commission, he’ll draw a subject just for himself. Last year’s well-publicized death of Cecil the Lion in Africa really got under Jack’s skin, so he did a portrait to honor Cecil. “I thought, you know, I feel for that lion, and I love animals so much...I had to do a picture.” He often donates his time and talent to benefit local charity auctions—most recently for Critter Christmas.

Jack’s main business is original drawings, which start at just \$100, but he also sells reproductions of his work (including Cecil) on Jack-Pumphrey.artistwebsites.com. And not just prints on paper—people can browse the images available and have them transferred to t-shirts, phone cases, canvas totes, greeting cards and other items. Folks who commission Jack to do pet portraits can also opt to see their pet’s smiling mug on their own coffee mug every morning!

Jack Pumphrey is now 81 years old and has been a successful professional artist for a long time. But he has sensed a changing attitude toward art and artists in recent years. “I talk to other artist friends of mine, and we all agree—the appreciation for real art is declining, with people’s attention focused more and more on digital images. People are also having to make more choices about what they can and can’t afford to spend their disposable income on, and unfortunately, art isn’t often considered a necessity.”

What a shame. Let’s all hope any decline in art appreciation is only temporary. We all need a little beauty in our lives, and while our gorgeous desert sunsets are free, they’re also fleeting. A Jack Pumphrey portrait offers a unique, two-dimensional immortality for your best furry friend.



Jack Pumphrey’s portraits capture your pet’s personality.



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Don't call them dog catchers—in the county, either!!!

After Vic's article on the Las Cruces Animal Control Officers, featured in the fall issue of *Dog'Cruces*, we both had opportunities to ride with the Doña Ana County Animal Control and Codes Enforcement Officers, as well! Keep reading, though—this is not a rerun! Much about the two departments is different, except their professionalism and the sincerity of their interest in the animals they rescue. During the eight hours I rode with Animal Control Officer (ACO) Jesus Friare, we raced up and down and back and across the county to the scenes of complaints, lost pets, found pets, injured pets, abandoned pets, and a devastating dog fight.

By "raced" to the scenes, I don't mean we broke any speed limits—county ACOs have neither that authorization, nor sirens, nor LED light bars . . . or even red beacons. They don't want to tie up the county dispatch line, either (except for emergencies), so they frequently pull off the road and use their department cell phones to communicate. So "racing" means that to make up the time, we never took a break, didn't stop for snacks or beverages, or meals (during an entire eight-hour shift) because time is a precious commodity for these

officers. No complaints, either. The next time you see an ACO at the side of the road on his phone or making both hand-written and electronic notes to document a case, give him a friendly wave.

These officers take as many as 32 calls per day in winter months and twice that number during the summer. They work eight hour shifts, seven days a week, covering the whole of Doña Ana County. That's a whopping 3,814 square miles—an area bigger than either the *state* of Rhode Island or Massachusetts. So, when Officer Chet Chay described taking 13 calls by himself the Sunday before my interview, I imagined him burning up the county roads from Anthony to Radium Springs to Organ to way west of Las Cruces. Sure enough, Officer Friare and I first went south, then north, then east, and so on, all the while knowing that we had other calls waiting in line.

Calls are taken in order of priority, so ACOs appreciate your patience when you've found a lost puppy and they have to tackle a bite call before they get to you. To the awesome citizen who waited patiently in her car, keeping a lost puppy safe and warm until our arrival, *great job!!!* Because you rescued him from the likelihood of being hit by a vehicle and because he was microchipped, we had him home to his joyful parents within an hour!



Phyllis arrives for her ride-along with
Doña Ana County ACO Jesus Friare

Sadly, the story probably didn't end as well for little Annie. I'm calling her Annie because she deserves a name, but when we responded to the report that she was lying by the side of the road, we found her without a name tag, a rabies tag, or a microchip. She was shivering from the cold but couldn't walk. We called Dr. Beth, took Annie to the Animal Service

Like a Dog

Square Miles of Desert to Cover

Center, and put her in a warm, safe kennel, but even after she stopped shaking, we couldn't assess the cause of her paralysis. Had she been hit by a vehicle and abandoned? Was she suffering from a condition too expensive for her owners to treat? Was she lost . . . or dumped? Hopefully, her parents missed her and checked the ASCMV, took her to her vet, and got her home happy and healthy, but Officer Fraire and I drove away in silence, both of us knowing that, if it came to it, she was an unlikely candidate for adoption.

Then there was the vicious dog. He had attacked and killed a neighbor dog (who couldn't escape because he was tethered), and by the time we arrived, it looked like Officer Chay might be next. We had come to assist. I had to wait in the vehicle—which those of you who know me, know was agony—until I saw the dog. I could not have run fast enough. With the owner's help, the agitated dog was eventually restrained, but the scene was etched in my heart, a scene of tragedy and grief... and risk. Officer Fraire told me that he has seen two, three, and four dogs pitted against one ACO. But these officers assume that risk and accept that responsibility, explaining that “[they’re] here to make the community safer...to walk animals, to ride bikes, to walk freely.”

They have to be kind and firm and patient and fearless. They see terrible things. They know the places where people drive to to dump dogs out of their cars. People threaten them when they're trying to help, and refuse to slow down when they're performing a rescue at the side of the road. Still, Officer Fraire still says he “couldn't picture [himself] doing anything else.” He believes that he and his fellow officers serve as “the voice for those animals that have no voice.” There are too many.

The Doña Ana Animal Control and Codes Enforcement department is under the umbrella of Community Development. There are nine officers in the department, and two more in eight-week training programs. All are cross-trained for both animal and waste codes. Remember: 3,814 square miles! They are strapped for funds and working under the constraints of a hiring freeze, with three positions cut and unfunded, but when I arrived at the office, four officers greeted me enthusiastically.

Everyone is excited about the three-year-old Animal Control Environmental Survey (ACES) program, of which the county is deservedly proud. The plan is to educate the community first, and follow-up with enforcement. For instance, a pet owner may not know that “a person shall not

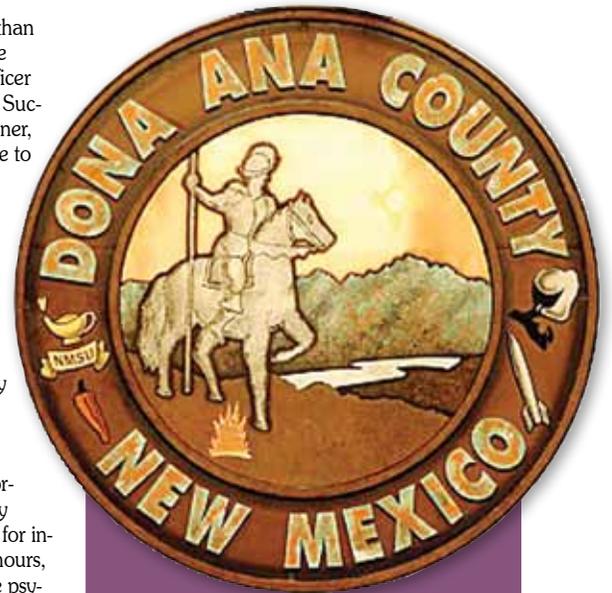
tether a dog to a stationary object for more than two hours in any twelve-hour period,” so the ACO explains it the first time around. As Officer Fraire says, they “want people to succeed.” Success is in the best interests of the pet, the owner, and the community. It's a chance for “people to use the money they would've spent in court on their pets.” But these officers are vigilant, too—if a pet owner ignores the lesson and the opportunity to be a better pet parent, the next visit will result in a citation. These are non-traffic citations that have the same legal teeth as any other citation. If the recipient of a violation does not pay his or her fine or appear in court, the judge is likely to issue a warrant.

The Doña Ana County Animal Control and Codes Enforcement website is a trove of information on ordinances and pet care, with very sensitive explanations. It reminds the reader, for instance, “a dog kept chained in one spot for hours, days, months, or even years suffers immense psychological damage. An otherwise friendly and docile dog, when kept continuously chained, becomes neurotic, unhappy, anxious, and often aggressive. In many cases, the necks of chained dogs become raw and covered with sores. Dogs have even been found with collars embedded in their necks.” Yes, one of the ACOs told me he had rescued a dog whose collar had grown into his neck.

The mistreatment of our most loyal companions and friends and family members is a tragedy of epic proportion. Officer Fraire says “a pet is not a toy—it's commitment,” and “every time your dog sees you, it falls in love again.” The question with which these officers wrestle daily is whether all pet owners have the same capacity. That dog whose neck was torn open by his collar no doubt loved his owners with every strangled breath.

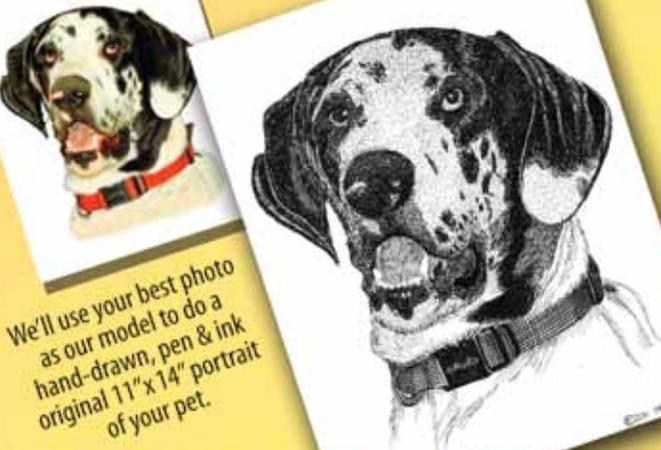
Paul McCartney believes that “You can judge a man's true character by the way he treats his fellow animals.” We've got a lot of character in this community. I hope we can make it shine. I hope our county leaders will recognize how much we respect and depend on these officers and fund the positions they've lost—and more. I hope that 2017 is the year that our community can say “no more abuse, no more abandonment, no more unwanted litters, no more dogs frozen in the snow and starved to skin and bones. No more broken hearts.

Happy New Year!



A big welcome to the Doña Ana County Animal Control Department for joining our Dog'Cruces Facebook network! Now ACOs from both Las Cruces and Doña Ana County are taking pictures of lost pets picked up without ID and posting them to our Dog'Cruces Facebook page for our community to share. Thank-you officers, for helping get those furry friends home as quickly as possible!

Phyllis Wright is a contributing editor for Dog'Cruces magazine.



We'll use your best photo as our model to do a hand-drawn, pen & ink original 11" x 14" portrait of your pet.

Pet Portraits

by Jack Pumphrey

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Jack Pumphrey 575-525-8298

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Please send photos of your favorite pets to:

photos@dogcruces.com

Biscuit

Thank you for your years of service... we will miss you on the team. Keep a watchful eye on the Rainbow Bridge.

From Your Family,
MVSAR






Into Every Life...

by Cara Lewis

On August 11, 2016, the skies opened up over southern Louisiana and began to pour an historic amount of rain on the towns, people and animals in the area. Three times more water fell during this unnamed storm than during Hurricane Katrina, and 13 people died in the resulting floods.

News reports of the devastation caught the attention of Las Cruces resident and animal lover Cara Lewis, who headed into the flood area towing a horse trailer, determined to help in any way she could....

August 30, 2016 – My Facebook post read “East bound with the hammer down, will send pictures when I get to Baton Rouge. Thank you to everyone who donated to help the flood animals.”

I had been watching news of the Louisiana floods for days, and I felt like I should do something to help all of the animals. It appeared the people in the area were being taken care of, but aid for the animals was needed. So I decided to go. How many days? Where to? Who knows! My family and friends thought I was insane, but it seemed like the right thing to do. I had one contact with a rescue in Folsom, LA and no other direction but the national news reports. I hit Houston, TX about 2AM on the 30th and, thankfully, found a place in the big city to park my truck and horse trailer for the night.

August 31, 2016 – By the 5 o'clock rush hour I was in Baton Rouge, where I would find my “camp” spot for a couple of days. I threaded my truck and trailer through flood-torn downtown Baton Rouge, making many other drivers really ticked at how slowly I was moving. I was twice the size of their little sedans—the horse trailer and truck together are over 50 feet long and as wide as a semi trailer. Finally, I arrived at Farr Park Equestrian Center on the Mississippi River, next to the LSU campus and several beautiful horse and cattle farms. I got unhooked and settled in for the evening, thinking I would leave in the morning for somewhere close by to start the rescue. The next morning I couldn't reach the folks in Folsom because they were not answering. I didn't want to head out to the rescue without touching base with my contacts, so I scouted out the area and took the opportunity to get some basic supplies while I could. I walked on the Mississippi River trail that night, a one and a half minute walk from my trailer; it was beautiful.

September 2, 2016 – I woke up early and knew I needed to head to Folsom, Louisiana to Big Sky Ranch Animal Rescue, about an hour and a half away. I got in my truck and heard an awful squeal. Son of a gun! The fan belt was toast! I called every mobile mechanic I could find—including two Dodge dealerships—and they all either laughed and hung up or said they would get to me when the flood cars were removed. I tried Uber in hopes of getting to a parts store to buy another belt, but no luck. I finally got a call back from Chad's Mobile Auto at about 2PM. Chad was in Lafayette but was willing to come help. I won't go into details but...he is a genius! A fan belt, water pump, radiator and pump clutch later—at 9 o'clock at night—he had me up and running. Hands down, the best mechanic I have ever been around.

September 3, 2016 – I got my marching orders to Big Sky Ranch/Rescue in Folsom. It's a beautiful place, and the people are so hospitable and amazingly caring. I parked and went to work. We built enclosures for over 100 cats that were coming in within the week. Hot work in the swamp! The ladies were awesome and completely dedicated to their cause.

September 4, 2016 – I was grateful to have been able to help out at Big Sky, but I knew I could make a bigger difference somewhere else. My horse trailer and I were capable of moving animals much larger than cats, so the good folks at Big Sky pointed me towards Lamar-Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales, LA, about an hour away. There were horses and dogs there, and a need for volunteer help. I said my good-byes and headed off.

When I got to the Lamar-Dixon Expo Center, they were in the process of evaluating over 400 displaced horses and attempting to reunite them with their owners. They needed people to verify papers pairing horses with their proper owners—and just to navigate the general chaos—so I jumped right in and helped. Amazingly, in just a few hours we had returned all but seven horses and a colt. They were still unclaimed when I left.

Afterwards, I walked over to the dog barn where a private shelter called CARA's House Rescue (a happy coincidence!) had temporarily set up shop after their building had flooded. I introduced myself to the woman in charge, and went to work. There were already about 150 dogs there and they were expecting another 80

or more later that night. The ASPCA had received orders to evacuate *their* building before midnight, and CARA's House was the only area shelter willing to take their animals. We moved the dogs in crates from one barn to another for hours. At one point I saw the director of CARA's House barefoot in the dog kennels! She put me in charge of the moving while she went to check-in the dogs. We backed up trucks, loaded kennels and stopped carrying them by hand across the grounds. Daddy always said, “Work smarter, not harder!” I fell in love with a little blue Pitbull that night, but thankfully his people claimed him before I left.

I camped alongside the flood victims at the shelter. Right there with us was a crew made up of sheriffs, police officers, state troopers, ATF officers, probation officers, etc. They were so nice. They cooked me dinner, invited me for drinks and thanked me for being there—even though their jobs are so much tougher and more important than my few days of volunteering would ever be. It was a great few days there at Lamar-Dixon.

I ended up with a pretty good “ding” on my tailgate from a jam in San Antonio on the way home, but that was the only scratch! What a wonderful, fulfilling trip—I'd do it again in a heartbeat.

I've heard it said “to whom much is given, much is required.” I hope that the little I gave of myself made a difference in the lives of those animals and the awesome people who take care of them and make them family.

Cara Lewis is the owner of Country Chick and Clutter Cleaners. She will be forever grateful for this experience and the people and animals of Louisiana.

Big Sky Ranch and Retreat is an all-organic ranch, farm and animal sanctuary that was inundated with displaced and rescued cats and other animals during the floods.

www.bigskyranch.org

CARA's House is not a rescue group, but rather an open-intake animal shelter (they cannot turn away any animals) that had to evacuate their own premises in Sorrento, LA and relocate to the Lamar-Dixon Expo Center in Gonzales. The Expo is the only flood shelter for humans in Ascension Parish that also allowed pets.

www.carashouse.com



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City of Las Cruces
PEOPLE HELPING PEOPLE

Traveling With Your Best Friends

by Vic Villalobos

No Girlz Allowed!

A year has passed since we “foster-failed” and added *Scout* to our family—and what an...um...interesting year it's been. My wife and I both have sacrificed more than a few articles of clothing because we forgot what it's like to have a puppy in the house (I still retrieve socks from the backyard on a regular basis), not to mention the numerous broken and eaten items that we could have sworn were out-of-reach for any normal-size dog.

Despite a few growing pains, *Scout* has become a full-fledged member of the family—and the only other boy in the house. He's progressing well in his Search and Rescue training, so when we got the opportunity to go to northern NM for a weekend of SAR K9 training in November, we said “yes!”—while my wife and the girls said “no thank you.” Wow! Just *Scout* and me in the RV (not “The Crammer” on this trip!) with no other occupants! Room to spread out, watch what we want on TV, eat snacks in bed, and spend a few days training in unfamiliar territory. A bonding vacation for me and the boy.

We loaded up the RV and hit the road, and *Scout* was asleep in the bed before we even got on the highway. I didn't see him again until we hit Albuquerque. I am so used to *Ruby* riding shotgun as my awake and alert copilot that I felt a little lonely on the ride up. But, no matter. Upon arriving, we set up our yard, unpacked our gear and settled in. The Great Mancation of 2016 had begun!!

Scout was overjoyed. He had the whole setup to himself, inside and out. He could go wherever he wanted, play with whichever toy he wanted, and receive 100% of my attention—a dog's dream. After a good night's sleep (with both of us under the covers) and a shared breakfast on the sofa, we headed out for our first day of training.

It's not often that we get the opportunity to

do this type of extended Search and Rescue training with members of other SAR teams from around the region. Our MVSAR dog team trains as a group once a week, with each handler trying to get some one-on-one training time with his or her dog during the week. This weekend provided an opportunity to learn some new training techniques, while also sharing with others some of the



Scout “gears up” for a long day of training.

unique issues we face here in Southern New Mexico—like our blazing hot summers and the abundance of goat heads we encounter during our searches. We're already incorporating the new knowledge and techniques into our local training program, so we can continue to improve as a team.

There are practical differences between training on the road and training at

home. First, we had to fit all our gear in the Toad (our 2001 Chevy Tracker tow vehicle), which is slightly smaller than our usual full-size Yukon Denali dogmobile. This didn't sit well with *Scout*, so when we parked the Toad at the training site, I set up a small living room behind the vehicle so we could hang out. Others attending the training found it amusing that we had our own little spread. Second, we had never trained for this long a period of time, and by the time we got back to the RV and had a little dinner, we were both ready for bed. No TV, no late night snacks, no crazy parties. What was happening to our mancation!?

By the third day we were so tired we barely even wanted to have dinner and were falling asleep on the sofa. This was quickly turning in to the Great Sleepcation of 2016!

My buddy Steve and his puppy *Wave* had parked their RV across from ours. We joked about all the room we had... and decided our wives and girl dogs

needed to bring a *third* RV next time we all traveled together. (Uh-oh, probably shouldn't have put that in print.)

Overall, we had a great time, but we did miss having the girls around (a little). *Scout* and I had an amazing training weekend, and it was also a great bonding experience. We became much closer during this trip, and he has been by my side a lot more ever since—which is exactly the result I wanted, since the relationship between handler and dog is absolutely key to success in the field. *Scout* also ended up with a nickname—*Boy Scout*—because I would constantly tell him, “You're such a good boy, *Scout!*” while we trained. I guess it's an appropriate badge of honor my little scout earned on our mancation.

It would be nice to be able to do this more often—I need the training, and *Scout* loves to be the Golden Child and get all the attention! But it will probably be a while before *Scout* and I take another boys-only road trip, and that's just fine with us guys. We're already looking forward to our next adventure with the whole family when our spacious, two-occupant RV becomes “The Crammer” once again.



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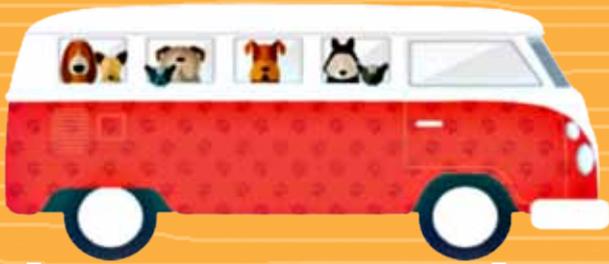
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Penny for your Thoughts

by Jennifer Woods



Over the Rainbow

A singularly magical moment occurred on the lawn of St. Claire's Bistro during September's Yappy Hour. Cast members from the Las Cruces Community Theatre production of *The Wizard of Oz* were in full costume, mingling with the crowd of dog lovers, when a glorious, horizon-to-horizon double rainbow appeared—an ephemeral arch framing the sun-drenched Organ Mountain backdrop.

Emcee Wayne Sinclair seized the opportunity to cajole Oñate freshman Clarivel Garcia, as Dorothy, to sing the show's signature tune. To everyone's delight, we were treated to a spontaneous, a cappella rendition of *Over the Rainbow* by a girl in a blue gingham dress and ruby slippers. It. Was. Perfect. And in her arms, of course, was *Toto*.

In the story of *Oz*, *Toto* is the catalyst that sets events in motion with one small nip at the wrong wicked woman. In the behind-the-scenes story of LCCT's production, *Toto* is the star—but *not* the hero. That role was taken on by the folks whose brains, heart and courage resulted in four innocent souls escaping death.

When director Janet Beatty-Payne said, "I think I want to use a live dog in the show..." Susie Ouderkirk knew exactly what to do. Susie is a 20-year veteran of LCCT, a horse trainer by trade, who has worked as an animal wrangler in films and on stage. (She also made more than 50 costumes for the denizens of *Oz* and played Aunt Em in her spare time.) Thirty-something years ago, Susie's mother had trained a rescued *Sandy* for a stage production of the musical *Annie*, after which she ensured the dog was adopted into a good home. Susie would follow the same path for *Toto*.

It's no surprise that people who devote themselves to community theatre are equally committed to the community as a whole—and they know how to engage others to work together towards a common goal. Susie turned to Kelly Barker, founder of Uncaged Paws, to help her conduct a nationwide search of animal shelters in hopes of finding *Toto*. Or rather, the *Totos*, plural. They decided to cast two dogs to share the role, so as not to overburden a single dog, and also, simply, to rescue two deserving animals instead of one.

The search began in June, and within a month the two *Totos* had been found—rescued, literally, without a moment to spare. Amazingly, both were here in New Mexico—one in a shelter in Artesia, the other in Roswell—and both dogs were scheduled for imminent death. What a beautiful story! How perfectly poetic that these two furry souls,

about to be forced across the Rainbow Bridge, were instead swept up by a force of (human) nature to land somewhere over the rainbow with a second chance at life.

But there was work to do! Susie took both *Totos* into her home to foster and began their training and socialization. She chose two names for the rising stars, *Tori* and *Moto*, which sounded enough like *Toto* to make transitioning to the stage easier. Both dogs were eager to please, and each excelled in his or her role-of-a-lifetime.

Part way through training, Susie noticed that *Tori* was gaining weight. Sure enough, the little dog had been pregnant before being rescued and was about to have a litter of five puppies. Sadly, three were stillborn. The other two, *Joey* and *Liza*, were healthy and perfect. That's two *bonus* lives saved by this wonderful *Wizard of Oz*! Ultimately, both pups were adopted by the same family, so they will grow up together as siblings.

The show was a huge success. If you didn't get a chance to see it, well, you missed something special. *Tori* and *Moto* split time on stage, both appearing in every show in different scenes. Each dog had his or her strengths, and professional wrangler Susie Ouderkirk knew how to get the best performance from each of her two tiny stars. But after the last standing ovation from the final sold-out crowd, when the sets had been struck and the stage was dark, it was time to find forever homes for *Tori* and *Moto*.

People interested in adopting were encouraged to fill out applications in the Las Cruces Community Theatre lobby or online at Tails from the Shelter. The prospective adopters were screened, the choices narrowed, and the winner drawn from a hat. Sew What's New owner Rhondla Hardin was overjoyed to become *Tori*'s new mom.

Though definitely *not* planned ahead of time, *Moto*'s fate could not have been scripted any better—he found his permanent home with Clarivel Garcia, the young lady who bonded with her canine co-star while bringing Dorothy to life on stage. Clarivel and *Moto* may never be as iconic a pairing as Dorothy and *Toto*, but they're *real*, and that's so much better.

So *this* story culminates with the timeless message so poignantly realized at the end of the play. You all know the line I'm going to use here, so close your eyes, tap your heels together three times, and say it with me... "There's no place like home, there's no place like home, there's no place like home!"



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Walter's Lunchbox

by Walter Dubbin
(as told to Margaret Dubbin)



Moving & Improving for the New Year!

Happy New Year, Peeps! Hope y'all had a PAWsome Holiday full of a cornucopia of great food, good friends, and well-behaved, leashed family. I know I sure did! Mom cooked up some great grub for Dad and us pups (she cooked one whole turkey just for *Butthead* and me!). Leftover rotisserie turkey has got to be one of the greatest leftovers that exist. In fact, according to the vet, *Butthead* and I had 15 extra pounds worth of fabulous holidays showing when we stepped on the scale.

Due to Mom's constant working—which annoyingly interferes with our fun activities together—we haven't been running on a regular schedule since mid-summer. This is why all three of us have gained some extra pounds this winter. Fortunately, due to my superior genetics, I have gained a mere 5 pounds, whereas *Butthead*, with his presumably-Labrador (aka. dumpster diver) genes, has gained more than 10 pounds—and we won't discuss Mom's gains over the past few months. I may be deaf, but I'm not dumb, and I know from observing Dad's mistakes that talking about Mom's weight is a no-no!

The new year always brings New Year's Resolutions to shed those extra pounds, quit smoking, and improve overall health and wellness—so Mom has put us all on a new fitness regimen. Mom always struggled with staying in shape until she found the right activities that work for her. There are many schools of thought that say cardio is better than weightlifting or CrossFit is better than Zumba, etc. Despite Mom's certifications in CrossFit and USA Weightlifting, she says there is no single one-size-fits-all solution to fitness, and it doesn't matter what sport or activity you do to get active and fit—as long as you make the genuine effort to do it. The point is to MOVE!

There's a sport or activity out there for everyone—no matter what your age or physical limitations. For Mom, it's Olympic Weightlifting; for Dad, it's hockey; for me, it's running (although, when I have to drag Mom along it's more of a slow jog). The whole point is to get up, get out, and do something active. Even better—do that something with your dog! It doesn't matter if you walk, hike, or run. Get out there, enjoy the 360 days of sunshine and free vitamin D we get here in the LC, and take your dog with you! No dog to run with? Then go ADOPT one or two (or three)! There are hundreds of fantastic walking/hiking/running partners out there looking for FURever homes and families.

If you and/or your pup are new to fitness or have been on a long sabbatical from fitness, make sure you start up slowly. Don't go all-out and give 200% in the first week only to end up injured. That will set you back even more. If you do experience a setback, don't let it discourage you—just find another way to move while you heal. If you can't run, then row, bike, or swim. Again, the point is to find a way to MOVE! When Mom is unmotivated to get up early and run with me and *Butthead*, she tells herself (yes, she often talks to herself) that all she has to do is get up and walk. That's enough to get her lazy butt out of bed, and then before you know it, she's awake and ready to run. Well, jog...her sprint, run, and jog all seem to be the same pace to me.

I challenge everyone to set a fitness goal for you and your pup, and get after it! Getting fit does not need to be expensive—the biggest investment will be the investment of time you are putting into your and your pup's improved health.

Of course, no fitness regimen is complete without an abundance of healthy, delicious snacks...

Ginger Chicken Biscuits

- 2 C Brown Rice Flour
- ½ C Flaxseed Meal
- 1 Tbsp Ground Ginger
- 1 Tsp Dried Parsley
- ½ C Chicken Bone Broth
- 2 Eggs
- ¼ C Coconut Oil (melted)



Preheat oven to 375°F. Combine brown rice flour, flaxseed meal, ground ginger, and parsley. Stir in one egg, chicken broth, and oil. Knead mixture to form a stiff dough. Roll out sections of dough to ¼" thick and cut with cookie cutter of choice. Place cut shapes onto parchment-lined cookie sheet, brush with remaining egg and bake for 25 minutes or until firm. Turn off oven and leave cookies in the oven until cooled completely.

Turkey & Cheddar Cucumber Bites

- 2 Mini Cucumbers
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- 1 Slice Cheddar Cheese
(cut into 8 strips, American or Swiss work, as well)
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Wrap 1 strip of turkey meat around 1 strip of cheese and 1 cucumber section. Serve immediately as a treat or store in refrigerator up to 3 days.



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Kat's by Kat Lacy Korner

The Forgotten Feral

You may have seen wild, domesticated-looking cats living in your neighborhood or have even tried to feed them at times in your own yard. Many people are afraid of these wild felines, thinking they carry rabies or are prone to attack, but in reality they are very likely tame, abandoned cats that are simply afraid. There is quite a lot of misinformation about feral cats that we can dispel with facts.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, cats only occasionally become victims of rabies. There has not been a human case of rabies transmitted from a cat since 1975. Ninety-three percent of reported rabies cases come from wild animals such as raccoons and skunks. Animal advocacy groups like FCaMP (Feral Cat Management Program) that operate Trap-Neuter-Release programs help keep the feral cat rabies numbers low, because they vaccinate for rabies in addition to sterilizing the cats they trap.

Another myth associated with wild cats (or even your own cat who hunts) is that they carry a high risk of having Toxoplasmosis—a disease that results from infection by one of the world's most common parasites. It is not dangerous to most healthy people, but could pose problems for those with weakened immune systems. The most common way a human acquires Toxoplasmosis is eating undercooked meat. Just to be on the safe side, pregnant women should not clean out litter boxes (in case the *Toxoplasma gondii* parasite is present), but they should be just as emphatic about avoiding undercooked meat.

The myth that feral cats kill endangered bird species can also be debunked. Both feral and domestic cats prefer rodents over birds, and reducing the number of rodents is a very important, health-related service cats perform for us humans.

Studies show that cats do *not* impact wild bird populations, as evidenced by the fact that it is almost impossible to count bird populations in areas where feral cats reside—primarily in urban settings. Most abandoned cats live off of garbage and the food left out for them by kind-hearted people. Catching a bird requires a higher level of skill than catching a mouse or showing up at the back door of the butcher shop, and opportunistic cats always prefer to take the easy way to a good meal. Other studies have shown that the most common species in any given area end up being the primary diet of cats who hunt. If there are lots of rabbits or doves around, they are the primary hunting targets, not rare birds. If a feral cat does take down a rare bird, it is very likely that bird was suffering from some ailment that would have shortened its life anyway.

Another myth is that feral cats live horrible, short lives. The average lifespan of a feral cat that makes it past the kitten stage is approximately 10 years. Many people assume these felines suffer in life, but the evidence does not show this. You could look at it this way: domestic cats can suffer from a sedentary indoor life filled with low-quality kibble, diabetes or death due to tooth decay, while feral cats engage in a life of hunting, scavenging, and basking in the sun. So it depends on your definition of "suffering." Obviously, though, if you encounter a dangerous or ill feral feline, don't hesitate to call Animal Control to remove it.

If you want to help reduce our feral cat population, please spay and neuter your own pets to avoid unwanted litters. If you want to feed a stray cat, first trap it (contact FCaMP or Animal Control to borrow a trap) and get it fixed and vaccinated—then feeding him or her will be much more rewarding. A proper balance is key to the ecosystem of *all* animals in our neighborhoods. After all, are we not the stewards of this beautiful world?



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1740 Calle de Mercado

Pet Barn

1600 S. Valley Dr., Suite B

PetCo

3050 E. Lohman

PetSmart

2200 E. Lohman

Ride On Sports

2001 E. Lohman

Salud! de Mesilla

1800 Avenida de Mesilla, Ste. B

Sonic Drive-In

1210 N. Solano, 1603 El Paseo, 3471 Foothills Rd., 930 N. Valley Dr. and 2925 N. Main St.

Spirit Winds

2260 South Locust St.

Spotted Dog Brewery

2900 Avenida de Mesilla

Starbucks

2808 N. Telshor, 2511 E. Lohman, 1500 S. Valley, 985 E. University

Sutherlands

845 El Paseo

Sweet Cece's Frozen Yogurt

901 E. University, Suite B and 3841 E. Lohman

The Bean

2011 Avenida de Mesilla

The Feed Store

5165 Doña Ana Rd.

Tractor Supply

1440 W. Picacho Ave.

Weinerschnitzel

2800 N. Main and 1028 El Paseo

Zeffiros

136 South Water St.

If we forgot your business — SORRY!! Please contact us at info@dogcruces.com, and we'll include your dog-friendly business on our website.

Nacho's Petiquette Guide

The way your pet acts in public is not only a reflection on you, but on every pet owner. It is so important that you and your pet are on your best behavior so this “pet-friendly” trend keeps growing!

- Leash your dog *before* it gets out of the car. Make sure to keep your pet close to you and under control so as not to trip other customers or servers!
- Call ahead for availability or check at the door before bringing your pet inside the business. A special event or circumstance could effect accessibility.
- Show consideration for those people who don't care for pets (they do exist), and make sure your pet does not invade others' space.
- Do not allow your dog to sit in chairs and do not place them on the table at restaurants. This is a health department violation in several states.
- Don't let your pet eat from or lick your plate or silverware! Even if you do this at home, it appears unsanitary in a public eatery.
- Try to keep your pet from barking and making loud noises. This behavior encroaches on other patrons' enjoyment.
- Scoop the Poop! Every person who steps in your dog's poop is one less pet-friendly advocate.

*Always tip well
for the extra work!*



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