



Animal Protective Association of Socorro

Barks and Mews

April 2015 Newsletter

Socorro Gets a New Shelter Director

After somewhat of a tumultuous end to 2014 at our local shelter with the resignation of both the Director and Office Manager in November, the City has hired Victoria Murphy as the new Shelter Director. Her impressive resume reflects several decades of experience in animal welfare, and she says that she is up to the challenge of bringing our shelter “up to date.”

A native New Mexican, her interest in animal issues began at age fifteen as a volunteer at the Doña Ana County Animal Shelter. After just two years there, she asked to be hired on and became an Animal Control Officer at age seventeen, spending many years in the field not only handling animal cases, but building a rapport with the people in the community. Eventually she moved to Albuquerque and got a job with the Albuquerque BioPark, working with exotic animals, especially cats and carnivores. When a position became available as a Kennel Supervisor at the Albuquerque Animal Welfare Department, she was hired to oversee the work of up to sixteen employees. From Albuquerque Animal Welfare Department, she became the Shelter Manager for the Edgewood, New Mexico, facility. She helped build the Edgewood shelter from the ground up, writing a Standard Operating Procedure manual, helping write the town’s animal ordinances, serving as the Animal Control Officer, offering community outreach, and bringing down their euthanasia levels. Her final job before coming to Socorro was with Animal Protection of New Mexico. Victoria’s position in this highly respected organization was to travel the state, visiting shelters and advising how the shelters can function at optimal levels for both animals and staff. This enabled her to really see what works and what doesn’t when running a shelter. She compares running a shelter

to cooking, in that it takes the right “recipe” and the right “ingredients” to achieve success, whether it is making an elaborate meal or making a shelter run smoothly and efficiently.

The “recipe” to reach her goals for the Socorro Shelter starts with public outreach and education. She truly believes that building a good rapport with animal owners, sometimes with just helping someone with a pet problem, can build beneficial relationships that spread throughout a community and take a positive step in curbing animal problems. She wants to professionalize the position of Animal Control Officer and all the staff at the shelter and make sure that they receive training and are familiar with law enforcement pertaining to animal issues. She wants to strengthen Socorro’s animal ordinances and increase spay/neuter by collaborating with local vets. Finally, she wants the community to see the shelter as a positive resource for animals and pet owners.

Take a trip to the Shelter and welcome Victoria. Share your animal stories with her and let her tell you about her three dogs, three cats, two horses, and her two-year-old daughter. To borrow a line from the movie *Casa Blanca*, having Victoria as our new shelter director is truly “the beginning of a beautiful friendship!”

—Stephanie Mitchell

Donations Save Lives

Since 2010 Socorro residents have been able to add a little something extra to each month's utility bill for the sole purpose of helping shelter cats and dogs find permanent, loving homes. These generous donations included in monthly utility-bill payments continue to improve and even save lives at our city's animal shelter. For example, last November a driver near Belen witnessed a mixed breed puppy being thrown from another moving vehicle. The concerned citizen stopped to rescue the young dog. Because Valencia County's shelter was closed the puppy was brought to Socorro's shelter where it received prompt life-saving medical attention. A week later the pup had recovered enough to be transported to a rescue organization in Colorado for adoption.

A more recent rescue saved the life of a six-month old dog that had been savagely mauled by other dogs. Left for dead by the side of the road, the young animal could only wag his tail when a good Samaritan stopped to look for signs of life. His remarkable recovery can be seen in these photos that show the dog soon after receiving care at the veterinary ER and as he looks today.



Through utility-bill donations, the necessary emergency medical treatment is available to dogs (and cats) when they come to our shelter. Today, the dog left by the side of the road is called Asterix, named for the diminutive but fearless hero in the French comic book, *The Adventures of Asterix*, who is endowed with superhuman strength after drinking a

magic potion. Despite his ordeal, Asterix is a sweet, loving companion in a new home.

To Socorro's utility customers, we say "thank you." Your continuing donations each and every month have helped a few animals, such as Asterix, receive life-saving veterinary care, and they have enabled literally hundreds of animals receive the vaccinations required for transport to rescue groups and adoption centers, like Animal Humane New Mexico in Albuquerque.

More than 300 animals were adopted from Socorro's Animal Shelter/Adoption Center in both 2012 and 2013. Transports to rescue organizations increased from 312 in 2012 to 578 in 2013. Yes, money in the utility-bill fund is saving lives!

—Jane Love and Lisa Simpson



HAVE YOU HEARD?

The APAS Yard Sale & Silent Auction is coming!



Saturday & Sunday, April 25 & 26

8 am - 2 pm

901 Duggins Lane

From California, east on Otero,
north on Chaparral to Duggins Lane.



Animal Protective Association of Socorro

All Proceeds benefit Socorro animals through our spay/neuter program! It's not too late to donate. You can drop off items between 1-5 pm April 18-23, or call 575-835-0259 for an appointment. Have large items? Call 505-440-9488.



Animal Protective Association of Socorro

PO Box 451, Socorro, NM 87801

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to our business sponsors

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Membership/Donation Form

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

I would like to receive my newsletter by email. Yes No

Individual Membership \$5.00 (one vote) \$ _____

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All memberships are \$5 and each membership type is entitled to vote and receive one newsletter per address/email. Should you wish your donation to be anonymous, please mark so clearly on this form. **Please mail this form and donation to: APAS, PO Box 451, Socorro, NM 87801.**

Donation:

____ \$50 Silver ____ \$100 Gold ____ \$150 Platinum ____ \$250 Platinum Business

____ Other (Any amount is greatly appreciated!)

Membership and Donation Total: _____

New membership year is January 1 to December 31, 2015.