



Animal Protective Association of Socorro

Barks and Mews

October 2015 Newsletter

Socorro Shelter Gets a New Look

What is that old saying, “You’ve come a long way baby.”

It has been decades since a gang of us, all APAS supporters, opened the door to Michael Olguin’s business office with the intention of unofficially kidnapping him. We asked him to come with us to see the shelter for himself. Michael is a dog lover, and we thought he might find “the shed” that served as the city’s shelter a candidate for funding.

I think he was the first legislator to come to our assistance with state funding for improvements. THANK YOU MICHAEL! Subsequently, Don Tripp, our current state representative, and another big dog lover, helped to steer even more funding toward building and improving the current structures. THANK YOU DON! All of these funds combined to help the city improve the facility that is now designated the Socorro Animal Shelter and Adoption Center; there is even a new sign just off the highway that sports the correct name.

The shelter, in a way, is like a jigsaw puzzle with many parts that must fit together to make animal control, safety, and humane care come together. With the appointment of our new shelter director, Victoria Murphy, we have another crucial piece in place. Victoria brings 30 years of professional training and experience in animal sheltering and control to our shelter. Mayor Ravi Bhasker and City Clerk Pat Salome are to be thanked for caring enough about animals to hire a director like Victoria and for supporting her requests for improvements and change. YEA! THANK YOU RAVI AND THANK YOU PAT!

Here is a partial list of the improvements instituted by our new director. I call Victoria OUR director



because she represents us all in providing care and protection for the city’s animals.

- Animals are vaccinated when they are admitted to the shelter.
- New signs throughout the shelter.
- The city has approved construction of a dog quarantine area along the west wall of the main indoor dog kennel area.
- A security door has been installed at the entrance to the dog kennel area with a sign posted saying “kennel employees only.”
- A new cleaning protocol has been initiated.
- The interior walls have been repainted.
- The kennel bathroom has been turned into an

isolation area for cats.

- A new walkway goes directly to the cat room.
- A “catio” will be built just east of the cat room.
- Eight new stainless steel cat kennels and three kitten “condos” have been added.
- Inventory board outside the cat room displays cat statistics (sex, when available, etc.).
- Outdoor dog kennels to the south now have concrete pads for easier cleaning, dog houses, and roofs. Dogs presently housed outside have kennel cough (requiring isolation) or are puppies with shots cohabitating a kennel in order to be socialized.
- Outside kennel to the east also has a new concrete pad, dog house, and partial roof.
- The puppy room is unchanged except for the new cleaning protocol and bedding for each animal (puppy or small dog).
- Improvements to Frank’s animal-control truck.
- A used van has been acquired from the city for animal transports.
- Additionally, Vicky has finalized an MOU (memorandum of understanding for “contract for shelter services”) with the County of Socorro. The county

has agreed to pay boarding, quarantine, and other costs for county animals admitted to the shelter.

- Vicky has revised the dog bite report form and the activity form used by the animal control officer and police officers.

The shelter still has some needs:

- A modular metal unit for cats that can be kept clean and disinfected, heated and cooled, and fitted with an air-exchange unit;
- A full-size washer and dryer; and
- Volunteers to help with fostering adoptable pets or with computer-related tasks.

We have come a long way. You, the APAS members are to be thanked, last but not least, for without your help and support over the years, we would still have a shed. My fellow APAS members and animals lovers, give yourselves a big pat on the back, for you helped mitigate the suffering and homelessness of our companion animals. I thank you all.

Our shelter is staffed by dedicated individuals who love animals. Stop in and say hello to Victoria, Lisa, and Frank. I know you will be pleased by what you see at the shelter. It is truly living up to the names “shelter” and “adoption center.”

—Kathe MacLaren

New APAS website

APAS has a new webpage to celebrate. We recently launched our revamped webpage, which offers a lot more information by category. The front page has meeting information, current news/events, and links to other areas of interest, such as how to get spay/neuter assistance for a pet, adopting an animal from our local animal shelter, links to APAS documents, becoming a member, contacting us, and a special section for our business sponsors.

In the future, we hope to offer a way for people to donate and pay for memberships to APAS via Paypal. We’ll let you know when we get that finalized. In the meantime, please visit our webpage and have a look around. www.socorroapas.org



APAS donation to Sheriff's Department

As residents of the City of Socorro, we are fortunate to have a local animal shelter complete with facilities, equipment, and staff dedicated to the care of lost, stray, and otherwise unwanted animals in our community. This is not the case with the greater Socorro County, however. Ordinances developed in 1998 by the county to deal with issues involving domestic animals charges the sheriff's department with handling these calls, but they have no animal shelter available to house animals, no dedicated animal control officer to respond, and little equipment to deal with the situations to which they are dispatched, including catch poles (an animal control officer's number one tool), and kennels to transport animals.

The problem was highlighted a couple of months ago when the sheriff's office responded to an animal situation in Veguita, New Mexico. It turned out to be an elderly, probably well-intending person overwhelmed with animals and no real resources to deal with them. Many local and state animal rescue organizations and individuals chipped in to help deal with the situation, and things are quickly coming to a manageable level.

But the larger problem the event revealed was that the sheriff's office didn't have the equipment to effectively respond to these calls. Hearing of this need directly from Sheriff William Armijo and Under-sheriff Ed Sweeney at our monthly meeting, APAS chose to purchase necessary equipment. Thanks to some generous help from two APAS members, we donated three collapsible dog crates and two catch poles last month to the Socorro County Sheriff's Department. We hear that the equipment was put to use within days of receiving it, so we are happy this made such a difference to them.

Another positive outcome of this event is that the county has decided to update their animal ordinances after 17 years! APAS plans to submit comments and ideas, and we'll keep you posted.

I would also like to mention that the GRIZZ Project out of Magdalena spearheaded the response to the situation mentioned above, and the Socorro County Sheriff's office went above and beyond their duties in dealing with the situation in a professional and collaborative manner gaining the full cooperation of the owner. Kudos to them!

—Kitty Pokorny



From left to right, Sheriff William Armijo, APAS members Jean Eilek, Kitty Pokorny, and Nelia Dunbar, and Under-sheriff Ed Sweeney.



Animal Protective Association of Socorro

PO Box 451, Socorro, NM 87801

Thank you

to our business sponsors

Animal Haven Veterinary Clinic
Beckham & Penner, CPA
Duane H. Beers, DMD
Disabled American Veterans
First State Bank
Magdalena Friends of Animals
National Radio Astronomy Observatory
Owl Bar
Raks Building Supply
Sundance Gifts
Thrifty Tienda
Gambles-True Value Hardware
Tripps, Inc.
WalMart Foundation

Membership/Donation Form

Name(s) _____ Date _____

Address _____

Email Address _____

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

Individual Membership \$5.00 \$ _____

Organization Membership \$5.00 \$ _____

Each membership type is entitled to one vote in APAS elections and motions and will 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 Business sponsor*

____ Other (Any amount is greatly appreciated!)

* Business sponsors will have their logo included on our Business Sponsors page of our website.

Membership and Donation Total: _____

Membership year is January 1 to December 31.