

ACTION Programs for Animals

Helping People & Their Pets Live Better Lives Together!

APA President Michel Meunier has decorated her personal van as a rolling reminder of APA's mission.

ACTion Programs for Animals (APA) is the youngest of the local animal-welfare groups; it was formed in 2009 to fill a gap in Doña Ana County. We are a group whose philosophy and efforts are based on the national No Kill approach of addressing age-old animal-welfare issues with modern, positive and progressive efforts and programs. The philosophy is about meeting challenges with a positive attitude and focusing on what can be done to address problem areas and save lives vs. alienating and blaming the public and doing the same things over and over again expecting different results.

APA's mission is to help people and their pets live better lives together. Our vision is that our programs and services will help transform our community, improve the quality of life for companion animals, and greatly reduce the number of abandoned and homeless animals impounded and killed at our municipal shelter.

We believe the majority in our community who provide good care for their animals and love their pet companions can help turn the tide for our homeless animals by finding ways to get involved and being rewarded for their lifesaving efforts. We also believe that when people learn and know better, most will do better by their animals.

Though we are young and our impact has not yet reached grand proportions, we do see that our work and that of other local groups has helped significantly reduce shelter intakes the past few years. We also see more utilization of the low-cost services available for vaccinations and spaying/neutering—so much so, in fact, that this year the Spay/Neuter Action Program (SNAP) ran out of funds and has struggled to meet the low-income community's demands for their services, and the

low-cost spay/neuter program at the animal shelter is often booked months in advance.

We help the public directly via our pet food bank program and low-cost vaccination clinics. We also provide online resources and outreach; we set up information tables and booths at community events, and we printed our Doña Ana County Animal Resources Guide, which is available at our pet food bank bin at PETCO.

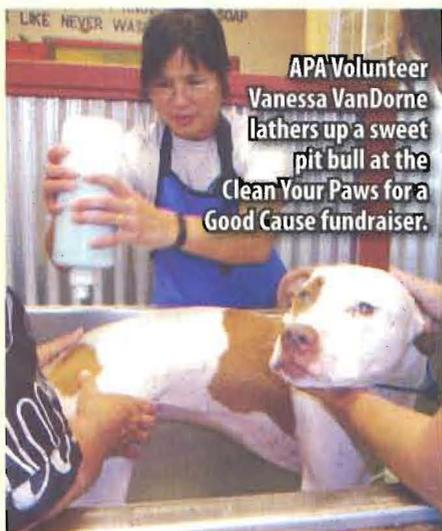
Built into APA's programs and services is an agreement that anyone who uses our services long-term must already be—or be willing to become—humane and responsible guardians of their animals and to “pay it forward.” We educate each family about the current situation for homeless animals in our community and ask them to do their part to reduce the killing of innocent animals. Many of our clients have become volunteers for our organization.

This year, APA's pet food bank program has an exciting opportunity to expand its operations by joining a national alliance of pet food banks. The alliance collects and distributes surplus pet food to its members (much like Feeding America does for people food banks). **APA is looking for donated warehouse space or a reduced rent in order to accept these larger loads of food.** With this

expansion, APA can distribute food to more groups who serve needy populations (such as Meals on Wheels and other senior programs) and to smaller rescues and sanctuaries in our area. It will also

help reduce the necessity of purchasing pet food at retail, which we often do to meet current demands.

APA is a small 501(c)3 animal-welfare nonprofit, and everyone who works for us volunteers their time. We operate using local donations, raising funds via various fundraising events held throughout the year, and with grants we receive from the PETCO Foundation and other national sources.



APA Volunteer Vanessa VanDorne lathers up a sweet pit bull at the Clean Your Paws for a Good Cause fundraiser.



APA's pet food bank serves about 35 families each week and is poised to expand.

Some of our fun events include our quarterly Canines & Cocktails doggy happy hours at the Hotel Encanto's Azul Bar Patio, our Clean Your Paws for a Good Cause dog washes at The Country Dog, and our pet altar and booth at the Dia de los Muertos festival in Mesilla. Coming next is our final Canines & Cocktails event of the year on September 24th from 5 to 7 p.m. at the Azul Bar Patio. Our guest speaker will be Kevin Armstrong, the President of the Las Cruces Dog Park Coalition. Join us there!

**ACTION Programs for Animals (APA)
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www.actionprogramsforanimals.org
Find us on FACEBOOK, too!

Article by Michel Meunier, APA President/Director

Over the past couple of years, ACTION Program for Animals has...

Distributed more than 160,000 pounds of pet food and supplies to qualified pet food bank clients (more than 660 families to date) and to small rescues in Chaparral and the emergency food bank program at Casa de Peregrinos.

Assisted at-risk pet food bank clients with their SNAP co-pays for more than 75 animals to help mitigate unwanted, unplanned litters in low-income homes with multiple pets.

Helped with hundreds of dollars toward vet care costs for pet food bank clients and other needy people in our community.

Provided hundreds of rabies shots and low-cost access to the other vaccinations for our clients; we also started to provide low-cost clinics in the underserved north part of the county.