

VOLUNTEER!

By Judy Babcock, Quixote Humane

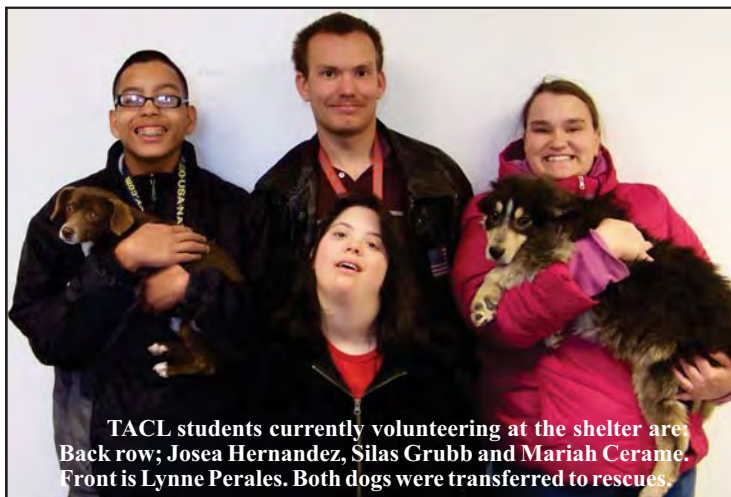
If you love animals and want to help make a difference in the lives of our shelter pets, consider volunteering at the Valencia County Animal Shelter. There are many tasks that can be done by volunteers that the staff does not have time to do on a daily basis. The volunteer tasks improve the quality of life for the shelter pets and brighten up the shelter facility to make it more inviting for people to come and adopt a new companion.

Some of the jobs include: walking dogs, bathing puppies and adult dogs, cleaning cat cages, dog kennels, and play area, doing laundry of blankets, washing dog and cat dishes, sweeping & mopping offices, picking up litter in the parking areas, cleaning crates for offsite adoptions and helping load the adoption van, organizing adoption kits, helping with intake of dogs and cats, answering the phone and taking messages, and showing adoptable animals.

The minimum age for volunteers is 18 years of age. Children 9 years old to 18 years old can volunteer to bath puppies, but must be accompanied by a parent or guardian. Training for volunteer duties will be provided, with safety of the volunteers, shelter pets and public as a priority.

Those who would like to volunteer but are hesitant to work in the shelter should consider volunteering at the offsite adoption clinics. Getting our adoptable dogs and cats to high traffic locations help improve their chances for finding a new home. Or, you might be able to help transport a single dog or cat to a local rescue or even make a trip to one of the shelters in New Mexico or Colorado that accept multiple dogs and cats, litters of puppies and kittens, in a long transport. Every transfer to rescue opens a space for another homeless pet to have a little more time to be adopted or transferred.

Anyone who wants to help can do something - you can make a difference. Come to the shelter, visit with the staff and see what appeals to you. Fill out the volunteer application and meet with Angelina Marquez to get started to help our shelter pets.



TACL students currently volunteering at the shelter are: Back row; Josea Hernandez, Silas Grubb and Mariah Cerame. Front is Lynne Perales. Both dogs were transferred to rescues.

Young adults from the Transition of Adults to Community Living Program (TACL) volunteer at the Valencia County Animal Shelter, one of the sites where they participate to learn job skills. They volunteer in hope of some day acquiring a position at a place of employment within their community. Other places they provide assistance are at Fred Luna Senior Center where they clean tables and help serve lunches. One young man, Josea helps at Mid West Cap filling food boxes to be distributed to the community. Other sites that provide work experience opportunities to these students are Los Lunas Bus Transportation, Calvary Harvest, St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Center, Benny's II, and Los Lunas Schools transportation. Other students work through WIA. WIA provides a salary so they can gain work experience.

Besides sites in the community, they have their own store called "Our Store" in Los Lunas. Our Store is a retail store for usable clothing & items. They learn retail marketing skills, such as sorting, pricing, stocking, cash register, customer services as well as independent living skills such as laundering, money and time management and other skills.

The ultimate goal is finding permanent part-time or full-time jobs for TACL students. Sites that have hired young adults are Albertson's, Wal-Mart, Trees That Please, RAKS, Flyer Press, and Arby's. TACL is a special education program from Los Lunas Schools for young adults that are 18 - 21 years old.

Contact TACL at 866-8319 or 866-8320 for more information.



THE BIG FIX

Quixote Humane is offering an added incentive to spay or neuter your pet this winter by sponsoring "The Big Fix". Make an appointment for spay or neuter to be done between January 1st and March 31st with one of the participating Valencia County veterinary hospitals and clinics: Animal Hospital of Los Lunas, Arrow Animal Hospital, Bosque Animal Clinic, Los Lunas Animal Clinic, Sun Ranch Pet Hospital, Valencia Animal Clinic, and VetCo, and your name will be entered into a drawing for three cash prizes. The first name drawn will win \$250, the second \$150 and third \$100. There are additional drawings for gift certificates from: **Fat Sat's Bar and Grill**, **Henrietta's Restaurant**, **Pete's Cafe**, **Ribs Hickory Smoked Pit Bar-B-Q**, **Teofilo's Restaurant**, the **Old Mill** farm and ranch supply, and other prizes.

Help prevent the next wave of unplanned puppies and kittens from coming into the shelter in the spring of 2011. There are not enough homes for all of them. For too many their lives will end before they even grow up. Thousands of others will be passed from family to family because they were given away as cute babies to homes that are unable to care for them.

Help stop the cycle, please spay or neuter your pets.

Win \$250, \$150 or \$100

The animals pictured below are only available for three days, but there are plenty of other choices! Visit the Valencia County Shelter, 1209 NM 314, one mile south of Main Street in Los Lunas. Open 8:00 am - 4:00 pm Tues - Sat. 866-2479