



# MAKING TRACKS

A TWICE-YEARLY PUBLICATION OF ANIMAL PROTECTION NEW MEXICO 2023 ISSUE 1

**PROTECTING  
NEW MEXICO'S  
BLACK BEARS**



## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Dear Friend of the Animals,

As 2023 unfolds, we are always reminded that despite the many ways Animal Protection New Mexico and Animal Protection Voters have improved the lives of animals in New Mexico over our 44 years of existence, there is much more we must do to ensure the larger systems around us protect and value the lives of animals.

This year, APNM's staff and board are embarking on updates to our long-term strategic planning. This work allows us the time to step back, examine our assets and strengths, consider what is holding back our work, and ask how we can best move forward in the next 5-10 years to achieve the most good for animals and the people and communities who care about them.

In the midst of constant demands for our time to help address the many ways animals are harmed, we consider it our duty to examine our future work in a planful, deliberate, contemplative way. Central to our ongoing work will be continued efforts to ask and answer how we can make our work more inclusive overall.

You, our supporters, know full well that APNM's and APV's missions are rooted in creating systemic change for animals, and along with that mission is the knowledge that positive change takes time. Still, we have ambitious goals for the next 5-10 years, we are hungry for more positive change, and we are mindful of the many ways in which animals could be helped within that timeframe.

APNM and APV take the broadest approach possible when looking for ways to strengthen animal protections and improve the way animals are viewed and treated in our state. That's because we understand fully that the overall wellness of our communities is inextricably linked with the wellness of our community's most vulnerable individuals, including animals.

Rest assured that APNM will continue to build and strengthen our resolve, our response, and our capacity to implement pragmatic and humane approaches that interrupt the many ways animals are still harmed in our Land of Enchantment. Thank you for supporting our work in ways that truly matter to us and the animals!

With deep gratitude,

Elisabeth Jennings  
Executive Director

# MAKING TRACKS™

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It's hard to believe that New Mexico's state animal is the Black bear. That's because some might assume that designating an animal to such a lofty position would ensure they were protected. But that has been far from the reality for Black bears in our state.

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The first ancestor of the modern Black bear existed in North America more than two million years ago. The Black bear evolved from this species about one million years ago and has survived, virtually unchanged, since then. Along with Grizzly bears, the Black bear inhabited the southwest and New Mexico specifically for the past 13,000 years—until Grizzlies were hunted to the extent that they no longer lived in New Mexico by the late 1930s.

### Geographical Distribution of the American Black Bear



Estimated former range



Current range (2018)

By 1996, our Black bear populations were threatened by hunting. At that time, the New Mexico Department of Game & Fish (NMDGF) had no bear management plan in place. Sandia Mountain residents, Jan and Dennis Hayes, became aware of this when they learned that over 700 bears had been killed every year for several years in a row, compared to the usual number of 300-400 per year in prior decades. This shocking and disturbing realization—along with their passion for protecting wildlife—lead them to start the organization they named Sandia Mountain BearWatch (“BearWatch”). Jan began pushing the NMDGF Commission (“Commission”), the rule-making body of NMDGF, for a management approach that would stop these large hunting kills.

She soon learned that the NMDGF was involved in the Hornocker Wildlife Institute Bear Study for the next four years and would not consider management decisions prior to learning the results of that study. (The study was conducted over eight *very wet years* in two of the most bear-rich regions of the state: the southern Gila Wilderness and the northern Sangre de Cristo area.)

When the findings were finally tabulated and shared, it revealed concerning facts about the state of the New Mexico Black bear population. While most of their data fit previous studies in other states, there were significant differences in New Mexico bears:

- 🐾 Sows (female adult bears of reproductive age) were older by 1-2 years when they had their first cub(s): 5.7 years old compared to 4 years old in other states.
- 🐾 There was a higher incidence of cub mortality.
- 🐾 NM bears entered their winter dens from mid-October to mid-November (sows and cubs entering first and older boars (male adult bears) entering later).
- 🐾 Bears leave their dens between mid-March and early June, dependent on the den location.

These differences should have been considered by the NMDGF in their management plan, but were not. The NMDGF followed up the study with a request for a bear population estimate for management purposes. BearWatch believed that the population estimate (5,947 bears) presented by the Hornocker Wildlife Institute study scientists was an overly optimistic extrapolation based on the two study areas, which had unusually high bear populations (compiled during a time of very wet weather) compared to the rest of the state. This high number resulted in the NMDGF adopting an overly high kill quota that did not reflect the true population vulnerabilities of New Mexico’s Black bears.

In 2002, BearWatch participated in a Bear Task Force organized by the NMDGF. For the next 20 years, Jan and Dennis, along with their BearWatch colleagues, worked to



ensure that the 'sow hunting quota' was lowered to reflect the true population. Despite this, large kill allowances were granted, and annual numbers killed were in the 700 range. After several of these large kill years, the reported kill numbers plummeted to approximately 350 (indicating a lower total bear population).

In 2020, BearWatch again worked to try to get the Commission to lower the now 800 allowed bear kills. Working with bear biologists, BearWatch analyzed the age of bears killed (using data about teeth from killed bears) during the prior four years. This research revealed an alarming fact: the ages of sows killed were declining, which meant the overall bear population was likely also declining. Since most New Mexico sows don't have their first cubs until 5.7 years old, if sows are killed at age six, that is a recipe for bear extinction.

BearWatch made several urgent requests:

- 🐾 The commission should set a strict 100 sow kill limit statewide.
- 🐾 The commission should allow only males to be killed in certain fragile population zones to give the sow population more time to become viable.
- 🐾 The commission should move the end date for the bear hunt to no later than November 15th to allow the sows and cubs to reach their dens safely.

Unfortunately, the Commission ignored the science and none of these requests were granted.

## Black Bears Need Our Help to Survive and Thrive

Because of irresponsible kill quotas and policies approved over the last decades, today the status of New Mexico's Black bears remains tenuous, and these important animals need all the help they can get from New Mexicans. This is where APNM and its army of supporters comes into the picture.

After 26 years of relentless advocacy for our state's Black bears, Jan Hayes was looking to turn over this work to another organization that would continue BearWatch's efforts with the same conviction and scientific and educational approach that would ensure our Black bears are protected. This decision became even more timely by the end of 2022, when Dennis Hayes passed away.

Jan asked APNM to pick up the torch that had been so ably carried for so long by her and her husband Dennis, and we are honored to be entrusted with this work. We are committed to protecting New Mexico's Black bears with the same persistence and dedication modeled by BearWatch, and look forward to expanding our impact in this area. APNM will continue BearWatch's effective initiatives, including community education on coexistence and advocacy for

statewide policy change, all within our Promoting Coexistence with Wildlife program.

To stay up to date on our work for Black bears and more, please be sure to sign up for our emails and follow us on social media.

All of us at APNM extend our enormous gratitude to Jan and Dennis Hayes for their vision and their many years of hard work devoted to protecting our beautiful, strong, and important state animal, the Black bear. ■



### A TRIBUTE TO DR. DENNIS B. HAYES

In early January 2023, New Mexico said goodbye to an unsung but important volunteer who for years had worked alongside his wife for the protection of our state's Black bears. Dennis Hayes, who was married to his wife, Jan, for 63 years, passed away after a brief illness.

Dennis was an accomplished physicist and a highly respected manager who had worked at Sandia National Labs and had consulted at Los Alamos National Labs.

But for those of us at APNM who were honored to know and work with him, Dennis will always be remembered for his intelligence, his sense of humor, his soft-spoken approach, and his dedication to helping Jan push for strong and scientifically defensible protections for New Mexico's Black bears. Dennis's contributions to Sandia Mountain BearWatch's crucial work over many years will always be remembered.





# From Freedom...to Suffering...

The Alamogordo Primate Facility (“APF”) chimpanzees’ journey to New Mexico began in the 1950s when the U.S. Air Force stole 65 infant chimps from their families in West Africa, and sent them to Holloman Air Force Base to be used in experiments to advance human space travel.

One such chimpanzee was Ham, who was born in 1957 in a rainforest in Cameroon. He was stolen from his mother, transported to New Mexico, and forced to participate in Mercury space program experiments. One such experiment included sustaining 18Gs of force during his space flight. The typical astronaut normally experiences a maximum of 3Gs during a rocket launch. Ham survived the 18Gs of force with a 16cm rectal thermometer in place while he simultaneously received purposeful electrical shocks for pulling the wrong levers during his space flight. While Ham survived the flight to space itself, he nearly drowned when the capsule filled with water after its ocean splashdown.



Ham in Biopack Couch for MR-2 flight.

*Photo of Ham: NASA/Wikimedia Commons*

The use of chimpanzees in space flight testing was horrifically cruel—but the federal government didn’t stop there. After using chimpanzees in the space program, the federal government began to use these and other chimpanzees in biomedical experimentation for human disease. Ultimately, our federal government wasted millions of taxpayer dollars subjecting hundreds of chimpanzees to ghastly and painful experiments for almost sixty years.

The federal government exposed these chimpanzees to deadly and life-threatening human diseases and toxins, forced them to endure surgeries, painful procedures, and invasive medical monitoring, all while living in a bleak laboratory. Contrast their lives in barren cages, in single-sex housing, being poked and prodded and hurt for years, with the life they would have lived in the wilds of Africa or in a sanctuary.

*(Continued)*



## ...to Sanctuary



Queenie B and Barbet relaxing at Chimp Haven *Photo Jessi Princiotta/APNM*

### A Momentous Event

In 2015, The National Institutes of Health (NIH)—following years of pressure from APNM and other advocates—announced that it was ending experiments on chimpanzees and moving all of the chimps it ‘owns’ to the federal chimp sanctuary, Chimp Haven, in Louisiana.

Hundreds of chimps were subsequently moved from various labs to sanctuary, where they are thriving. Of those hundreds, 99 of the chimps living at APF were moved to the Chimp Haven sanctuary.

### The Surviving Chimps Still Waiting at APF

Unfortunately for about 29 chimpanzees remaining at Holloman Air Force Base, the promise of sanctuary has not materialized. That’s because in 2019, Charles River Laboratories (CRL), a company that receives more

than a million taxpayer dollars each year to warehouse chimpanzees on Holloman Air Force Base, announced it would refuse to transfer the remaining chimpanzees to sanctuary. CRL alleges that these chimps are too fragile to move and should instead spend the rest of their lives in a laboratory setting, instead of enjoying the balance of their lives in a safe and permanent sanctuary. It is important to note: CRL charges federal taxpayers more than double what a sanctuary charges to care for the chimps (\$118.72 per chimp/per day vs. a sanctuary’s cost of \$49.12 per chimp/per day).<sup>1</sup>

As a result of CRL’s refusal to transfer the chimps, NIH—which oversees the CRL contract for chimpanzee management—revoked its 2015 promise to transfer these remaining chimps to sanctuary. NIH did this despite its own previous estimation that some of the chimpanzees would potentially live until 2048.

(Continued)



This could mean at least another 25 years of prison life for these chimpanzees, instead of sanctuary life where they can socialize with other chimpanzees, enjoy fresh air, and receive superior veterinary and behavioral care.

In January 2021, APNM and the Humane Society of the U.S. (HSUS) sued NIH over its refusal to transfer the remaining APF chimpanzees, arguing that the federal government is violating the federal Chimpanzee Health Improvement Maintenance and Protection (CHIMP) Act (which was originally passed in 2000).

The CHIMP Act mandates all federally owned chimpanzees who are no longer needed for experiments be retired to sanctuary. Congress, in passing the law, recognized our nation's moral responsibility to provide lifetime care for these chimps in the best possible environment. By not retiring the APF chimpanzees to sanctuary, the NIH is not just deserting this moral responsibility, it is violating the law.

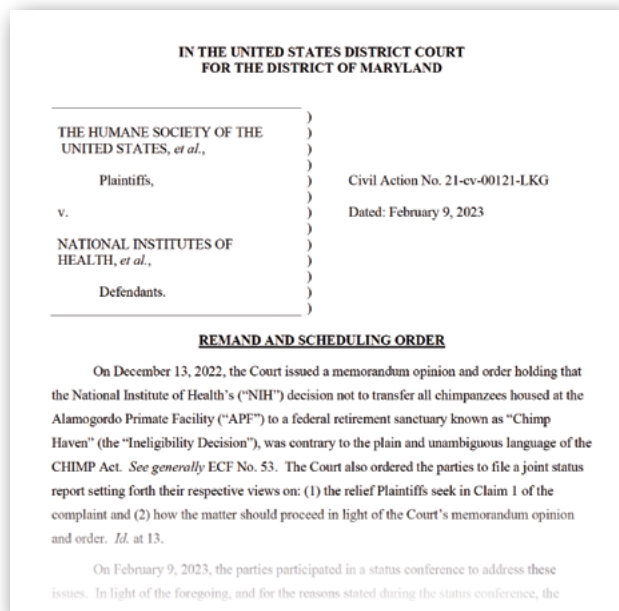
CRL/NIH's argument that the chimps would be at risk in the event of a transfer cannot be supported by the facts. Of the hundreds of chimpanzees of all ages and health conditions who have moved from laboratories to Chimp Haven, not one has died during transport. Experts believe it is in the best interest of the chimpanzees to be moved to sanctuary.

## Where We Are Now: The Lawsuit and More Federal Legislation

In December 2022, a federal court agreed with APNM and HSUS that NIH is in violation of the CHIMP Act by refusing to transfer the APF chimpanzees to sanctuary. And in February 2023, the court ordered that NIH provide detailed information about each APF chimpanzee, including the order of priority of transfer of each APF chimpanzee to sanctuary, any health or safety concerns, the space available at Chimp Haven, and the status of the expansion of the sanctuary necessary to accommodate the APF chimpanzees. **The lawsuit is still pending in federal court.**

In addition to our lawsuit, APNM is continuing to advocate for the APF chimps via additional federal legislation. In February 2022, with leadership from New Mexico Senators Lujan (D-NM) and Heinrich (D-NM), along with Senator Kennedy (R-LA) and Senator Duckworth (D-IL), we helped with the introduction of the Chimp Sanctuary Act (S 3613) in the U.S. Senate, which, if passed, would mandate the transfer of all remaining APF chimpanzees to sanctuary within 180 days.

Additionally, for the past three years, we have made sure that NIH's Congressional funding is contingent upon providing the members of Congress with detailed chimpanzee health reports.



*The top page of the February 2023 court order in the ongoing lawsuit*

## The Bottom Line

APNM is not leaving any stone unturned in order to see all the surviving chimps reach sanctuary as soon as possible. APNM knows that not only is the chimpanzee care far superior in sanctuary, but also the cost of care to U.S. taxpayers is half what it is for housing them at APF. At Chimp Haven, the chimpanzees live in social groups, enjoy enrichment, receive expert veterinary care, and—best of all—choose how they spend their time. The mission of Chimp Haven says it all: “to provide and promote the best care of sanctuary chimpanzees...”

While APNM's/HSUS's lawsuit grinds slowly through the court system, APNM continues working urgently with bipartisan members of Congress to find other ways to pressure NIH to stand by its previous commitment to retire all federally owned chimpanzees to sanctuary. We will not give up and we thank our supporters for standing with us in this challenging and protracted pursuit of justice for the surviving APF chimpanzees. ■

<sup>1</sup> Chimpanzee Management Reports | Office of Research Infrastructure Programs (ORIP) – DPCPSI – NIH



## Animal Testing

expensive

unreliable

outdated

cruel

## MAKING PROGRESS for ANIMALS IN SCIENCE



## Non-animal testing methods

relevant

economical

modern

humane

After launching APNM's newest program, Protecting Animals in Science, in 2021, APNM is getting closer to uncovering and more fully understanding the scope and details of invasive animal experiments being conducted in New Mexico using taxpayer dollars. This is the first step toward eventually being able to reduce and/or eliminate horrific protocols being conducted on animals in multiple New Mexico laboratories.

But APNM is not just looking to make a difference locally with this new program. Last year, APNM publicly endorsed the FDA Modernization Act 2.0, worked tirelessly to increase support for the bill, and watched with glee as Congress passed the FDA Modernization Act 2.0 on December 23, 2022. President Biden signed the bill into law on December 29, 2022.

**Passage of the FDA Modernization Act 2.0 has the potential to prevent the misery of millions of animals each year, ushering in a new era of modern, science-based drug evaluation in the United States that will ultimately benefit people as well.**

The new law removes an 80-year-old mandate requiring drug developers for biologics and biosimilar drugs to conduct animal tests before human trials, and instead allows them to use non-animal, human-relevant methods. Currently, 90% of all drugs fail before getting FDA approval, due to reliance on animal tests. Millions of animals, including cats, dogs, mice, pigs, and rabbits, are used to develop drugs each year. By removing the FDA's mandate for animal testing, drug developers have the choice to spare the suffering of animals and use modern testing methods that are often cheaper and more reliable.

Bringing this consequential approach closer to home, APNM partnered with Albuquerque City Councilor Tammy Fiebelkorn to help pass Resolution R-22-73, The Reducing Animal Testing Act or "RAT Act." In collaboration with the University of New Mexico ("UNM"), this resolution allows UNM to test vaccines and drugs on tissue from the City's discarded spay/neuter surgeries rather than live animals. APNM secured experts to speak to the scientific validity of the proposal, mobilized Albuquerque residents to contact city councilors, and testified in favor of the bill, which passed unanimously. Next steps involve evaluating protocols that currently use animals and working with local scientists to convert those experiments to non-animal approaches.

Finally, building on progress made years ago when New Mexico's Public Education department policy mandated non-animal dissection choice for students objecting to the harmful practice of animal dissection in school, APNM is helping link students, parents, and educators to those choices. APNM's Protecting Animals in Science program hosted an informative Town Hall discussing Dissection Choice in New Mexico schools and the dizzying array of modern methods available for teaching anatomy and biology without animal dissection. Joined by the Director and Assistant Director of Animalearn — an education program of the Pennsylvania-based American Anti-Vivisection Society — educators, parents, and students were able to hear about the most effective and humane 'dissection' methods to teach and study science, all without harming animals.

In the fall of 2022, APNM continued to grow its Protecting Animals in Science program by hiring Sadie Jacobs, an attorney with experience in legal analysis and research related to state and federal legislation. As APNM's Protecting Animals in Science Program Manager, Sadie utilizes her background in public records requests and animal law to support systemic change in current practices and policies involving invasive experiments on animals in New Mexico and beyond. ■





## Responding to Need Created by Drought, Economy, and Wildfire

Over a decade ago, APNM launched its Equine Protection Fund (EPF) to build a safety net for New Mexico’s horses, donkeys, and mules through financial assistance with feed, gelding, humane euthanasia for suffering equines, and veterinary support for licensed equine shelters and government agencies. The intent of these services is to help equines stay safe at home with their human families through a crisis, and not end up in auction houses or the slaughter pipeline. **Since its inception in 2010, EPF has provided assistance to over 4,867 equines across New Mexico.**

2022 Equine Protection Fund Expenditures	
\$66,811	Emergency feed assistance
\$7,146	Gelding assistance
\$5,527	Humane euthanasia assistance
\$11,801	Shelter assistance

The shelter assistance included supporting the state’s licensed equine shelters with \$250 per equine taken in when they unexpectedly had to absorb 32 equines seized from abuse and neglect in the span of a month. Five of these 32 equines were court-ordered to be sold at auction, resulting in the shelters incurring additional expense when they were forced to bid against possible ‘kill-buyers’ intent on selling horses for slaughter across the border.

This unfortunate need for shelters to bid against kill-buyers for horses is a problem in the law that Animal Protection Voters worked to correct through Senate Bill 271, which passed the state legislature in 2023 and was signed into law by Governor Lujan Grisham on March 30th.

While EPF has always provided gelding assistance on an individual basis, in 2022 we took a pro-active approach by hosting two gelding clinics in the village of San Ysidro (Sandoval County), resulting in the castration of 13 stallions.

Photo: Nina Eydelman/APNM



Castration of domestic stallions plays an important role in equine population management, especially in communities with limited access to veterinary care or where domestic horses graze alongside other free-roaming ones.

**During 2022’s devastating wildfires EPF provided thousands of pounds of equine feed to evacuation sites in Las Vegas and Taos for distribution to those forced to leave their homes with their large animals**, and we continued to provide feed assistance to individuals as they returned to their homes.

In January and February of 2023—with little forage on the winter ground, hay prices skyrocketing, and many New Mexicans struggling financially—we initiated a wave of aid to both individuals and communities:

2023 January/February Feed Assistance	
\$127,222	Nambé Pueblo
	San Felipe Pueblo
	Santa Clara Pueblo
	Pojoaque Pueblo
	Taos Pueblo
	Kewa Pueblo
	Zia Pueblo
	Mescalero Apache
	Ramah Navajo Chapter
	Rock Springs Navajo Chapter
	Manuelito Navajo Chapter

Our outreach to these Native Nations was facilitated by APNM’s Tribal Liaison, Ruben Lucero. This direct support is a response to the needs identified by these communities, and helps keep horses with those who care about them, safe from the gruesome horse slaughter pipeline.

If you know someone who could benefit from Equine Protection Fund services, we are here to help. Individuals can fill out online applications for assistance at our website [apnm.org/horsehelp](https://apnm.org/horsehelp), call us at (505) 803-3770, or email us at [epf@apnm.org](mailto:epf@apnm.org) ■

“Thank you, thank you, thank you...I went to Diamond G this morning and got the feed for my horses. You don't know how much this means to me and them...I can at least get a couple of bills paid off this way and be on my way to have a little more money. Hay went up again to \$28.00 a bale and they are NOT big bales...I really do not like to ask for help, but I have to feed them, and my next choice was to NOT pay the bills...Oh, you just don't know what this help means to me and my horses. Thank you, thank you, thank you.”

– *Emergency hay feed recipient*





## Tribal Outreach: Learning From *and* Partnering With New Mexico Communities

**As part of Animal Protection New Mexico's commitment to learn from and partner with more communities across New Mexico to help animals and those who care about them, APNM launched its Tribal Outreach initiative in May, 2022.**

This vital effort was conceived and planned by APNM's Challenging Animal Cruelty Program team and is being administered by Cruelty Case Manager Ruben Lucero, a Tribal member of the Isleta Pueblo and a 2015 Law Enforcement Milagro Award winner.

The first phase involved sending introductory letters and a short online survey to New Mexico's tribal leadership with all nineteen Pueblos, two Apache Tribes, and the Navajo Nation. Responses to the survey noted the following priority issues: care and safety of their communities; providing rabies vaccinations; establishing or updating animal ordinances; protecting animals from abuse; addressing dogs running at large; and obtaining animal control officer training.

The survey and follow-up also gathered important tribal contacts and information about animal control

administration and ordinances. Over the year, at the request of tribal governments, APNM reviewed and provided feedback to three communities requesting assistance with enacting or revising their animal ordinances. APNM also provided training scholarships to five animal control officers with three Pueblos.

In June, members of APNM's Tribal Outreach team and Teaching Compassion for Animals team were invited to attend a meeting of the Jemez Pueblo Animal Control Coalition, where we discussed their priorities and needs, as well as the available APNM programs and resources available. Jemez was one of many Pueblos interested in APNM's educational programs for their tribal members.

Finally, through this Tribal Outreach work, we connected with Indian Health Services, whose Lay Vaccinator Program helps train and certify tribal members who are not veterinarians or vet techs to administer the rabies vaccine. This led to the Tribal Outreach team helping to plan and then presenting at the Lay Vaccinator Conference facilitated by Indian Health Services on October 19.

APNM is excited to continue strengthening its existing tribal relationships and forging new ones as our Tribal Outreach work reaches more communities and addresses the highest community needs. ■

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For more detailed information about APNM's extensive tribal outreach related to equine direct services, see our feature story starting on page 10.

Top left: Queena comforts a pup prior to transport, *photo by Bro & Tracy Animal Welfare*; Top right: Emergency hay delivery is received, *photo courtesy of Nambé Pueblo*



## Remembering Debbie Coburn

On October 25, 2022, our New Mexico equine protection community lost a key leader who had been working tirelessly for horses in our state for decades: Debbie Coburn.

Those of us in APNM got to know Debbie through our work to keep horses out of the ghastly horse slaughter pipeline, something we pursued in earnest starting in 2010. As APNM leaned into the gruelling work of protecting horses from slaughter, and specifically of preventing the opening of a horse slaughter plant in New Mexico, we found ourselves working closely with Debbie. Debbie, along with her husband Terry, founded the Four Corners Equine Rescue (FCER) located in Aztec, NM. In that role, they have provided shelter and the chance for a forever home to hundreds of horses over the years.

Beyond the exhausting, important, and daily work involved in operating an equine rescue, Debbie played a crucial role in coordinating the efforts of the state's nonprofit equine rescues by founding and chairing the NM Equine Rescue Alliance (NMERA), and helping rescues work together so the contributions of the whole alliance have been greater than the sum of its parts. Debbie and FCER was always first in line to offer to take in horses needing to be rescued, serving as a role model and inspiration for others.

But she didn't stop there. When APNM and its legislative arm, Animal Protection Voters, needed a shelter representative to testify in favor of bills to help horses, Debbie would drop what she was doing and drive to the state capitol, sometimes waiting into the night to give her supportive and valuable testimony. Debbie was fearless, always willing to go outside her comfort zone if it would help the animals. She lobbied her northwest legislators to always vote with the horses in mind, and they listened to her. Debbie lived her mission,



which was to do everything possible to create permanent, safe haven for New Mexico's equines.

Perhaps Debbie's most powerful asset was her ability to relate to and earn the trust of others. She was the real deal. She understood that people with horses sometimes were struggling financially. In August 2012, Debbie penned a powerful and unapologetic OpEd published in the Albuquerque Journal, denouncing horse slaughter and the cynical voices pushing for a cruel and needless approach to disposing of horses no longer wanted by their guardians:

"Horse owners should know that asking for help for their horses is an act of compassion, and that there is no shame in seeking assistance, especially when the alternative is a starving animal."

Debbie will be forever missed and also remembered as someone who built a legacy of caring and strength that lives on in all those she inspired. Her commitment and invaluable contributions for New Mexico's horses are visible in the progress made for horses that we see all around us. ■

*Photo: courtesy of Terry Coburn*

**"I feel blessed to be a part of the sacred work of APNM!  
It gives me hope for our world that you do what you do!! Truly."**

– Susan Siebert, APNM and APV supporter





Real change for animals doesn't happen overnight. It takes years to pass a bill, move chimps to sanctuary, and see true changes in attitude toward animals in a community. You can help ensure we continue to advocate for animals, tomorrow and always, with a legacy gift.

For more information visit  
[apnm.org/legacy](https://apnm.org/legacy)  
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## plan for a kinder future



Animal Protection  
Legacy Society

### APNM EVENTS

Follow us on social media and sign up for our emails to hear details and up-to-date news about what we're working on (APNM: [apnm.org/signup](https://apnm.org/signup) and APV: [apvnm.org/signup](https://apvnm.org/signup)).

### AUGUST 2023

See us at the  
**New Mexico Humane Conference**  
August 24–25, 2023  
Albuquerque

Annual APNM fundraiser  
**August for Animals**  
August 1–21, 2023  
online

### SEPTEMBER 2023

See us at  
**The Link Conference**  
September 18–19, 2023  
Albuquerque

Distribution of  
Animal Protection Voters  
**2023 Scorecard**





# THANK YOU

**Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham**

**For signing SB 215 and SB 271 into law.**

The sexual abuse of animals is now a crime in New Mexico and more horses will be kept out of the slaughter pipeline. Share your gratitude with the governor:

[www.governor.state.nm.us](http://www.governor.state.nm.us)



**ANIMAL  
PROTECTION  
VOTERS**



Have you seen our “Animal Shelters are Full” social media campaign on Facebook or Instagram? Please like and share it to spread the word.

## Shelters are Full. Here’s How You Can Help.

New Mexico animal shelters face a crisis. Events from the COVID-19 pandemic created a perfect storm for companion animal overpopulation. The impact of delayed spay/neuter services, a national veterinarian and vet tech shortage, and a high rate of “pandemic-pet” surrenders

as people return to the workplace and struggle with the increasing cost of animal care, all contribute to the current situation: shelters are filled to capacity—in many cases, overcapacity. As one longtime New Mexico shelter director told APNM, “It’s the worst I’ve ever seen.”

### Here are some things you can do to help.

**Adopt your next dog or cat.** Nothing benefits shelter animals more than finding their forever home. When you choose to adopt rather than buy your companion animal, you are having a direct, life-saving impact. And no matter who you’re looking for—big, small, purebred, pure mix—your dog or cat is out there. Visit your local shelter or search online at [petfinder.com](https://petfinder.com) and [adoptapet.com](https://adoptapet.com) to get started.

**Foster a dog or cat.** Providing a temporary home gives a shelter animal a break and opens kennel space for another.

**Donate dollars, toys, equipment.** New Mexico shelters, especially in rural areas, are often underfunded. Your donation of dollars and/or dog beds, blankets, towels, leashes, crates, etc. can stretch the shelter’s budget and boost staff morale. Contact the shelter first to see what’s on their wish list.

**Volunteer for a shelter/rescue.** From walking dogs to greeting adopters, from raising funds to socializing felines, your gift of time and skill can have a big impact.

**Support a companion animal food pantry—or start your own.** The number one reason guardians surrender their animals is the high cost of care. You can help a family who loves their animal as much as you love yours avoid this heartbreaking decision. Donate dollars or food to your local companion animal food pantry. Want to start your own? APNM’s Companion Animal Food Effort (CAFÉ), funded by the Bonner family of Albuquerque, can help. Contact [elizabeth@apnm.org](mailto:elizabeth@apnm.org).

**Show ’em some love.** Shelter staff and veterinary professionals face enormous challenges and stress. Show up with a bouquet. Order them a pizza. Let them know they’re not alone. Let them know you care. ■

Take action in whatever way you can. Every action makes a difference, and every one of us can do something to solve New Mexico’s animal shelter crisis.







## Honoring Volunteer Extraordinaire: *Geri Aron*

**40+ decades  
of service to  
New Mexico's  
animals**

Since its beginning, Animal Protection New Mexico has been benefiting from the tireless efforts, caring heart, and determination of our longest-serving volunteer: Geri Aron.

Geri celebrated her 100th birthday last year, and while that milestone alone is worth celebrating, APNM also celebrates and honors Geri's more than four decades of service to New Mexico's animals.

Geri and her husband Gunther visited Santa Fe in 1968, fell in love with the area, and eventually moved from Chicago to Lamy. Later they moved to Santa Fe and reconnected with some Chicago friends that were now living in Santa Fe: Fran and Claude Bentley, early board members of APNM's predecessor group, Sangre de Cristo Animal Protection (SdeCAP). Geri and Gunther immediately got involved with SdeCAP right after it was founded in 1979, and their friendship with the Bentleys grew as a result.

Geri remembers her early years serving on SdeCAP's board with the Bentleys and others. Geri recounted lobbying for a ban on dog fighting in 1981, and making and creating posters and flyers about spay/neuter to distribute around the Santa Fe area. Geri recalled cutting out pictures of euthanized dogs from a Life magazine article, and making a dramatic collage on spay/neuter that was featured in the Santa Fe Main Library for many weeks. Geri and others organized a march against fur trapping and even approached fur wearers on the Santa Fe plaza.

SdeCAP soon started publishing a newsletter, and Geri made sure SdeCAP's place in our state's history was preserved by having every edition of the newsletter saved in the state

archives! At the time, spay/neuter was a main topic and, of course, it still is today.

Geri grew up as an only child with a dog in the Chicago suburbs, and she always loved animals. Their family always seemed to take in whatever dog needed a home, and it's been that way for her ever since. All shapes, sizes, and colors found a home with her. Also, in her late teens Geri had a pinto horse, named Rhythm Lee.

Today, Geri lives with two cats and a white and brown Chihuahua named Dallas, all of whom came to her because their guardian died. She continues her many years of operating APNM's Santa Fe Veterinary Medical program services, which offers financial assistance to residents in the Santa Fe area who need help paying for their animals' veterinary care. Over the years, thousands of animals and their caregivers have benefited from Geri's generous gift of time and her passion for the humane treatment of animals.

When asked about the growth and achievements of Animal Protection New Mexico, Geri became contemplative, "It is unbelievable, it started like something around a kitchen table, and now look at it. It's beyond belief. I'm just so proud of the organization. It's something to be in a tiny little organization that seemed to be going nowhere, and now this."

*Geri, APNM is incredibly grateful to you for your tenacity, your strength, and your caring heart, all devoted to the cause of helping New Mexico's needy animals. Thank you for all you do for others!* ■

**Statewide:** APNM's Animal Control Officer (ACO) Scholarship program has provided New Mexico's animal control officers with crucial training and certification through the National Animal Care & Control Association (NACA) for decades. In 2022, the program provided 59 scholarships to 31 officers in 15 different locales. Since 2018, we have provided an astonishing 193 scholarships to 131 officers in 25 counties and 3 pueblos, thereby supporting officers' professional development and honoring the essential role ACOs play in keeping communities safe for everyone, both animals and people.

**Zuni Pueblo, Ramah Navajo Chapter, and other areas of the Navajo Nation:**

In 2022, the APNMF Val King Fund distributed \$44,387 to Bro & Tracy Animal Welfare, helping vet and transport 416 surrendered, stray, and injured animals to shelter and rescue partners with access to a higher number of adoptive homes.

**Statewide:** A \$350,000 state appropriation secured by Animal Protection Voters in 2022, combined with state tax check-off contributions from caring citizens, resulted in a total of \$360,000 for the Horse Shelter Rescue Fund to support the life-saving work of licensed equine shelters. APNM collaborated with the NM Livestock Board and Equine Rescue Alliance to arrive at an equitable distribution of these funds, providing much-needed relief to New Mexico's licensed equine shelters amidst rising hay prices and mounting effects of climate change on land and horses.

A litter of pups await examinations before loading up for transport. Photo: Bro & Tracy Animal Welfare



**Witness animal cruelty or neglect?**

CALL THE **APNM Animal Cruelty Helpline**

**1-877-5-HUMANE**  
(1-877-548-6263)

We can help and refer the situation to the right agency in your area. *Confidentially.*





A stallion awaits gelding surgery at a gelding clinic we funded in San Ysidro.  
Photo: Nina Eydelman/APNM

## Simple. Efficient. Life-changing. (That's how giving monthly feels.)

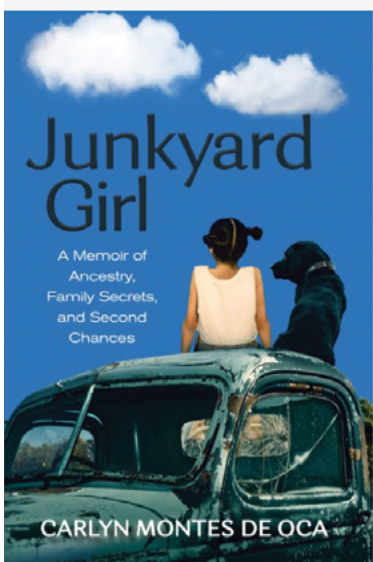
Because so many animals in New Mexico are at risk **every day**, your monthly gift will ensure we can protect them **year-round**.

A convenient, automatic recurring donation is the easiest way to advocate for the humane treatment of all animals. Become a monthly donor today and see how easy it is to make a life-changing difference.

Animal Protection New Mexico:  
[apnm.org/monthlygiving](https://apnm.org/monthlygiving)

Animal Protection Voters:  
[apvnm.org/monthlygiving](https://apvnm.org/monthlygiving)

Questions? Contact Tisha Edmonds at 505-895-2904 or [tisha@apnm.org](mailto:tisha@apnm.org)



### Carlyn Montes De Oca's New Book Shares Profits with APNM

APNM is fortunate to count Carlyn Montes De Oca, an accomplished author based in Santa Fe, as one of its most ardent supporters. Carlyn serves as one of APNM/APV's hard-working ambassadors, helping to raise awareness of, and support for, APNM and its legislative arm, APV. Carlyn

recently published her new book *Junkyard Girl: A Memoir of Ancestry, Family Secrets, and Second Chances* and is donating 10% of the proceeds to APNM. On behalf of New Mexico's animals, we thank you, Carlyn, for using your considerable talents to uplift our work in New Mexico.

**"An astonishing tale, told by a gifted storyteller."**

– Jay Rabinowitz, award-winning  
motion picture editor

*"You know, I used to think that all this about animal welfare and animal rights was pretty much just fluff. But that speaker you brought in from that animal group [APNM] really convinced me that it does matter."*

–Anonymous, shared with an  
APNM board member





PO Box 11395  
Albuquerque NM 87192

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BIG THANKS TO OUR BUSINESS SPONSORS!



VIOLET CROWN

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APNM **FACES**



*Photo courtesy of Leslie*

## Leslie Rudloff

Leslie Rudloff, Esq., APNM's Chief Program & Policy Officer, joined APNM in 2021, bringing with her over two decades of legal experience to advocate for animals. Leslie grew up outside of Nashville, Tennessee with three siblings, as well as dogs, rabbits, and horses. She is a lifelong equestrian and spends her free time lovingly caring for her five-year-old Tennessee Walking horse, Al, and her beloved rescue cat, Sonny.

So far, Leslie has maximized her time at APNM by zealously advocating for the Alamogordo Primate Facility (APF) chimpanzees via a federal lawsuit and the introduction of federal legislation mandating their retirement to sanctuary. Leslie also helped to pass a federal law allowing non-animal methods (potentially saving millions of animals' lives) to be used during the FDA drug development process. And more recently, she helped to pass an Albuquerque city resolution allowing the University of New Mexico to use the City's discarded spay/neuter tissue to test chemicals in lieu of live animals.

Over the years, Leslie has presented at legal seminars and conferences around the nation, networking with numerous animal organizations and individuals, including the American Bar Association and state bar associations, to enhance and support the protection of animals.