

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



Animal
Services
Center
OF THE MESILLA VALLEY



The Mission of the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley is to provide safe shelter for all lost, mistreated, and abandoned animals of the Mesilla Valley and surrounding communities. The Center utilizes all avenues available to it in placing each animal into a safe, loving, and permanent home whenever possible. We strive to meet the highest standards of humane animal care and husbandry, and to promote responsible pet ownership through public education and outreach.

Background

The municipal animal shelter facility located at 3551 Bataan Memorial West, in Las Cruces, NM is the only open-admission animal shelter operating in Doña Ana County. The facility was built in 1985 and operated by a third-party contractor, the Doña Ana County Humane Society (DACHS). The City of Las Cruces (City) and Doña Ana County (County) have been the primary financial supporters of this facility.

On January 29, 2008, the City and County entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) to temporarily operate the animal shelter after DACHS notified the City and County that it would no longer operate the animal shelter. The City and County determined it was imperative to enter into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to create an independent public agency to provide animal sheltering and related services. The City and County executed the MoA on August 4, 2008 to create the public agency known as the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley (ASCMV).

The board charged with governing this agency consists of local officials from both the City and County.

This will be the 13th comprehensive annual report released by the ASCMV, highlighting the progress being made by the agency towards achieving the goals of community education and pet ownership responsibilities during the past year.



Letter From the Executive Director

To say that 2021 was an exciting year for the ASCMV is quite an understatement!

First, the COVID 19 pandemic continued to wreak some havoc on our operations. The good news was that, by the end of the year, we were comfortable reinstating a limited number of hours for public walk-throughs to see adoptable animals (two hours on Fridays and Saturdays), a decision welcomed by local animal advocates. Some not-so-good news was that, not unexpectedly, the artificially low intake numbers of 2020 bounced right back to 2019 levels. That said, unlike in other areas of the country, the ASCMV did not see a jump in “pandemic

puppy/kitty” returns, for which we are grateful.

Second, every day during 2021 we pressed our collective noses to the window to watch the progress on the new building that will house our adoption center and administrative offices. Knowing that by the end of 2022 our animals will have new and tremendously improved living spaces and our staff will have appropriate office space is a great feeling!

Third, we warmly welcomed several new hires in 2021: a volunteer coordinator, a new vet tech, new front office staff, and a grant writer. We also are happy to have a volunteer in place as a foster coordinator. These positions took a while to fill, but everyone who came on board is making good progress. Our volunteer and foster numbers are growing, as is our social media following (Facebook and Instagram). The team makes sure new and relevant content about events, adoption specials, and statistics are updated regularly. As of August 2021, we again have a monthly column in the *Las Cruces Sun-News* called “Notes from the ASCMV,” and during the second half of the year I was scheduled as a guest on KTAL’s “Speak Up Las Cruces” and KRWG’s “Puentes a La Comunidad.” We’re getting the word out about the good work being done.

Finally, ASCMV staff celebrated the City’s new TNR ordinance allowing us to sterilize and return healthy community cats instead of euthanizing them. This was a huge relief, especially for the euthanasia technicians. That said, one position we have not yet been able to fill is surgical veterinarian, and because of this, our surgical capacity remains limited, as we currently rely on our medical director and contract veterinarians. The search continues for high quality/high volume surgeon.

I was reminded that addressing the animal overpopulation issue in Doña Ana County and the City of Las Cruces is analogous to turning a warship, not a speedboat. However, without additional low-cost surgical capacity, the progress we’ve made – and are making – is in danger of being torpedoed. We preach that spay and neuter will save us, but without the human resources to back this up, the words ring hollow in many ears.

That said, we are doing our best with what we have, and our best is pretty darn good.

We look forward to 2022 being an even better year for animals in Las Cruces and Doña Ana County.

For the animals,

Clint

Statistical Report

This report focuses on the following categories:

1. Intake Statistics

- **Methods of Intake**
- **Monthly Intake**
- **Species Intake**

2. Outcome Statistics – Adoptions, Euthanasias, Reclaims by Owners, Rescue Transfers, etc.

- **Overall Outcomes**
- **Adoptions**
- **Rescue Transfers**
- **Live Release Rate**
- **Euthanasias**

3. Public Services and Community Outreach

- **Pet Sterilization Surgeries**
- **Public Attendance**
- **Community Outreach & Public Services**

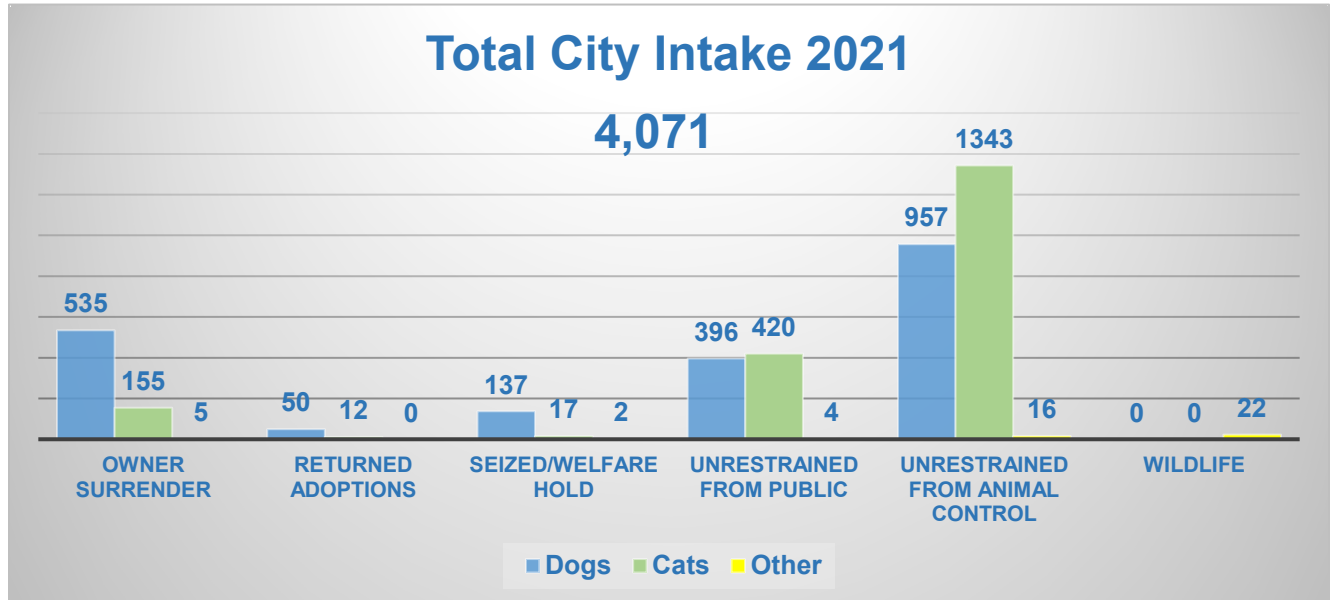
4. Volunteer Program

5. Financial Overview

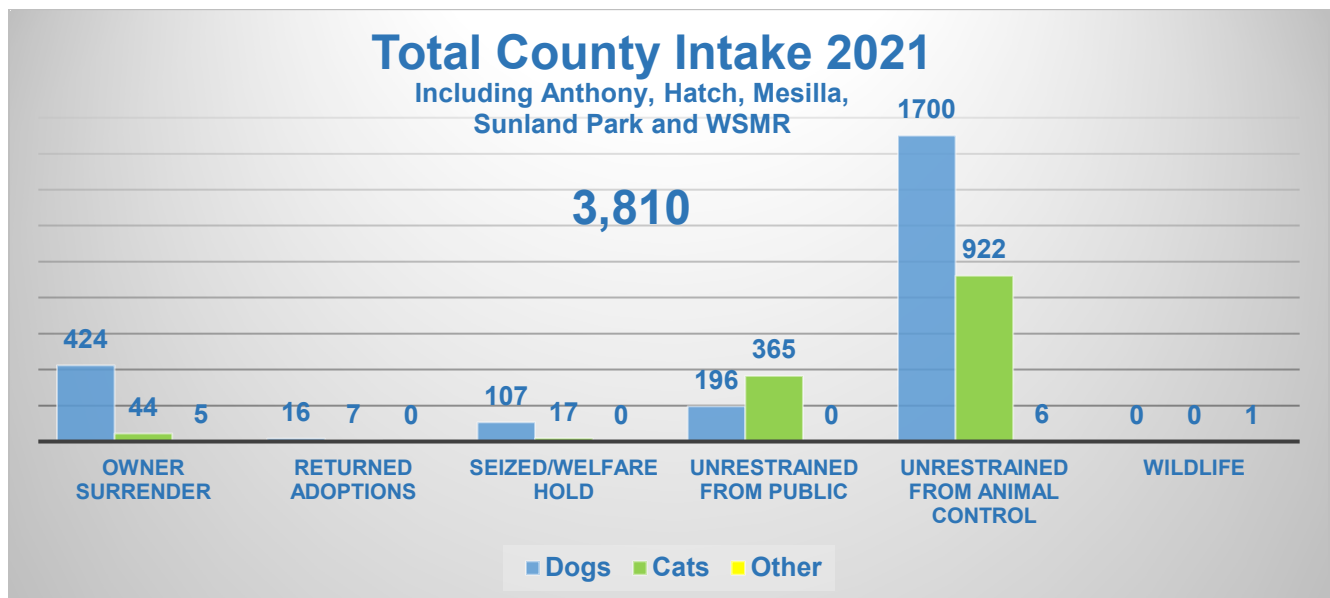
1. Intake Statistics

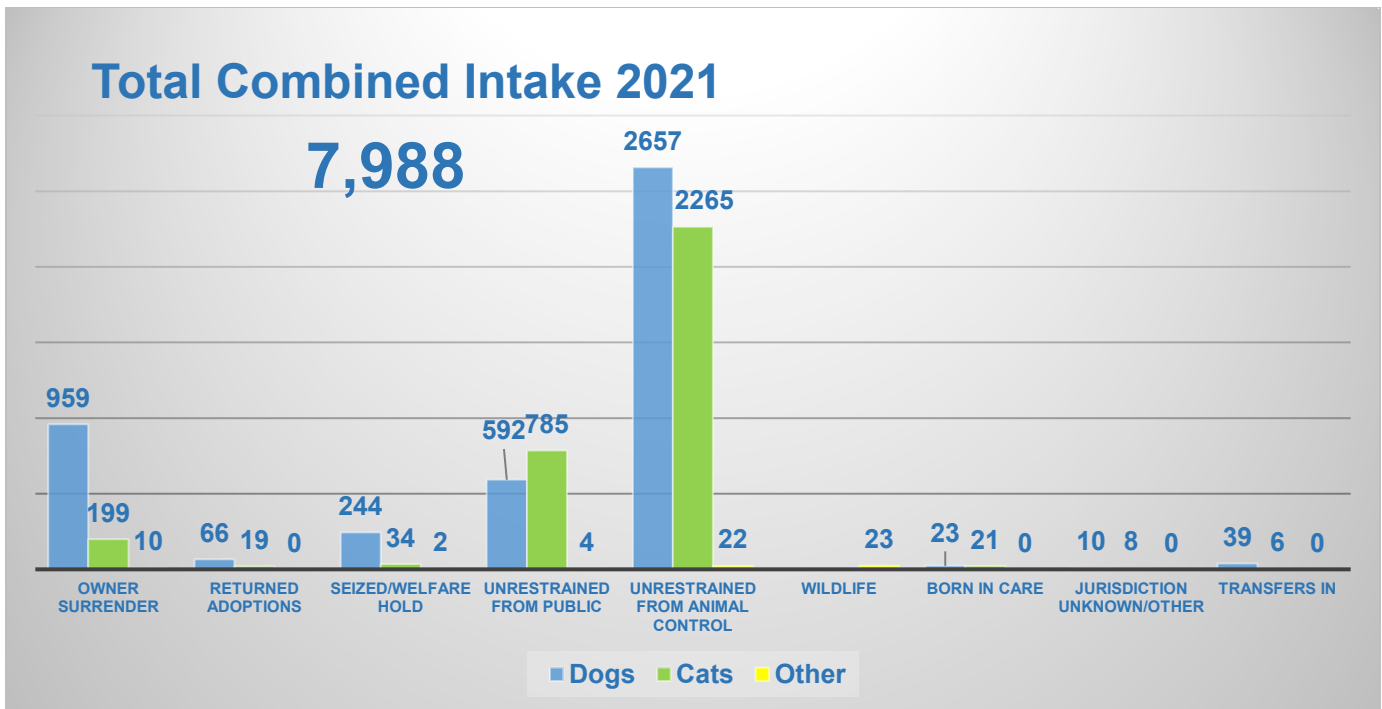
• Methods of Intake

The **ASCMV** is the only **open-admission** shelter in Doña Ana County. As such, animals can enter the shelter through several different means, including **unrestrained** animals brought in by **Animal Control** or by the **public**, animals **surrendered** by their owners (including **returned adoptions**), animals **seized** or placed on a **welfare hold** by Animal Control, and animals that are **born** while in **shelter care**.

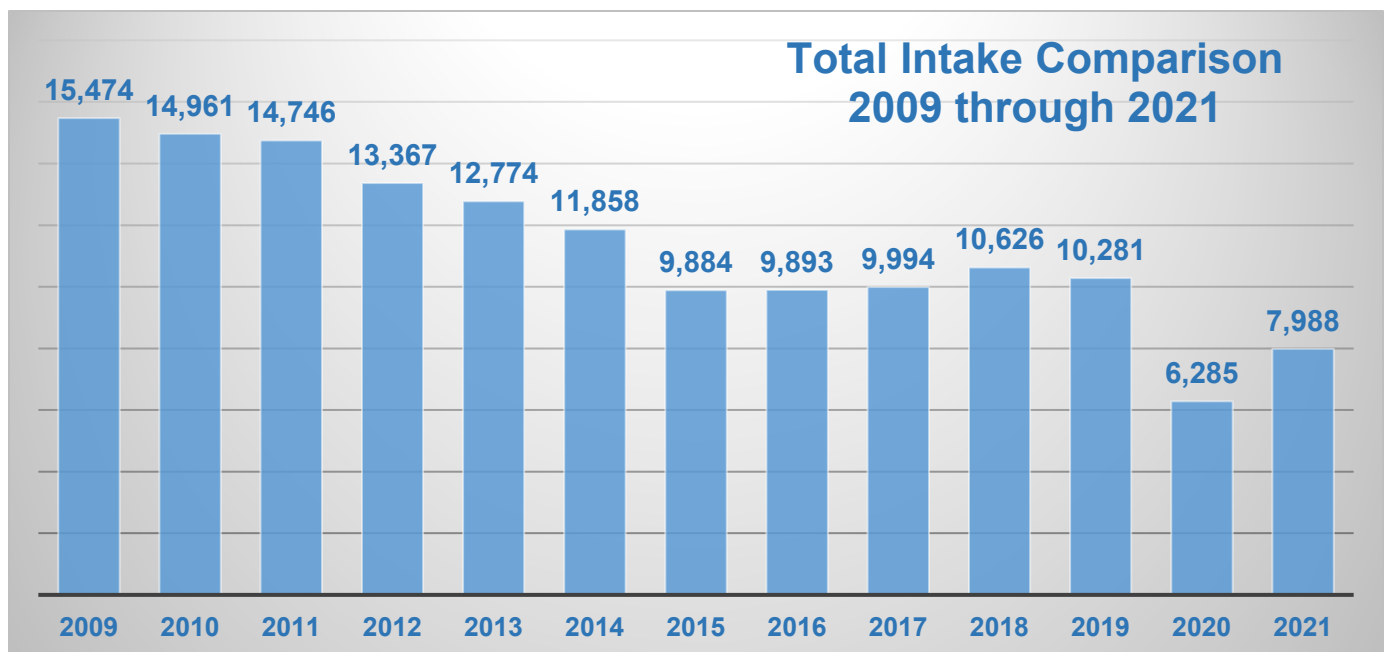


The number of animals brought in from the City of Las Cruces compared to those coming in from the county were nearly the same, with a difference of about 3%.



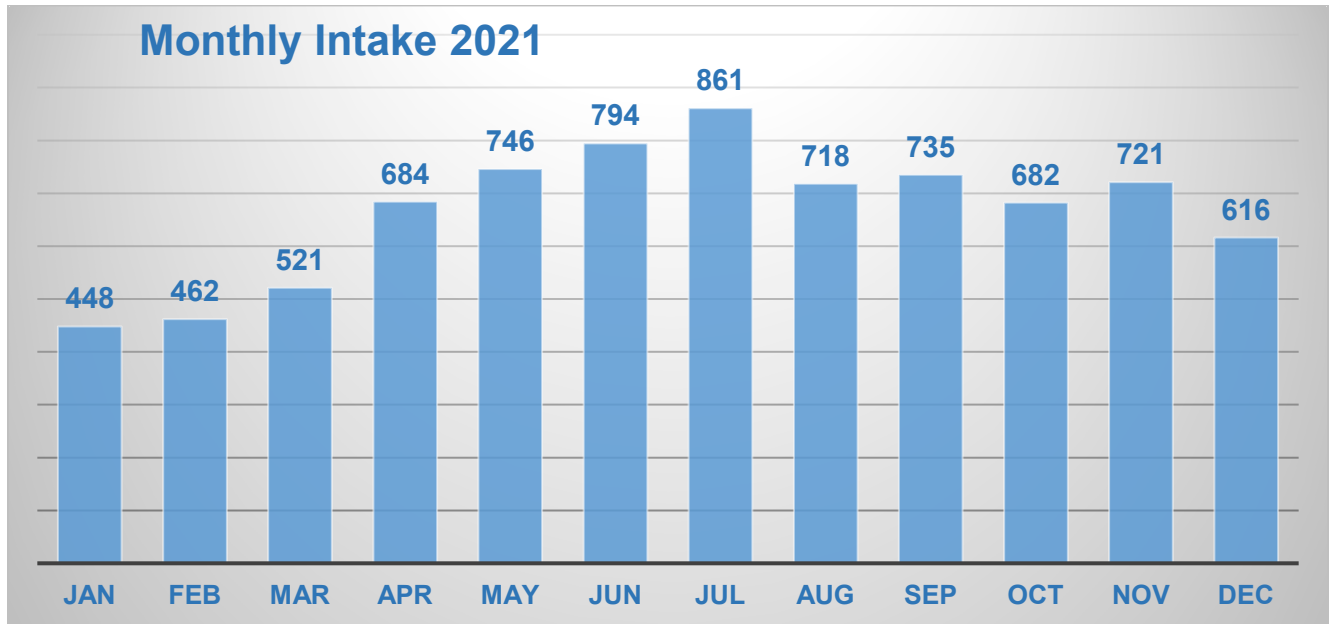


In 2021, **7,988** animals entered the shelter. Although the intake numbers were more than **2,200** animals **fewer** than in **2019**, this **increase** in numbers **over 2020** seemed to coincide with the changes in COVID-19 protocols.



• Monthly Intake

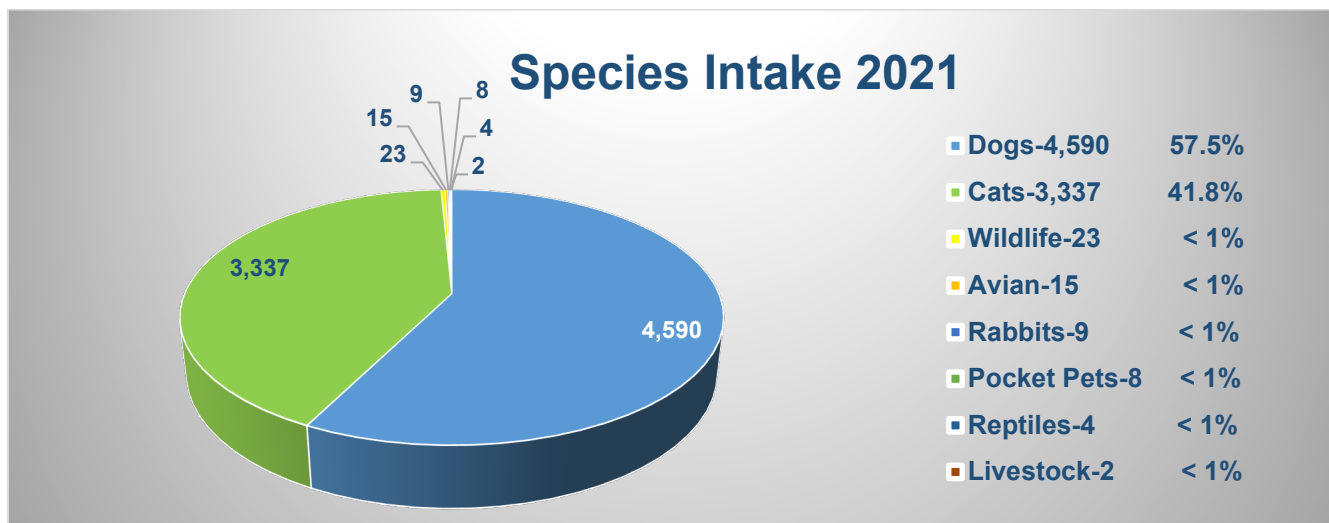
One thing that remains a constant over the years is a seasonal pattern in the monthly intake numbers, with intake numbers increasing during the summer months.



The ASCMV averages an **intake** of **22** animals **each day**.

• Species Intake

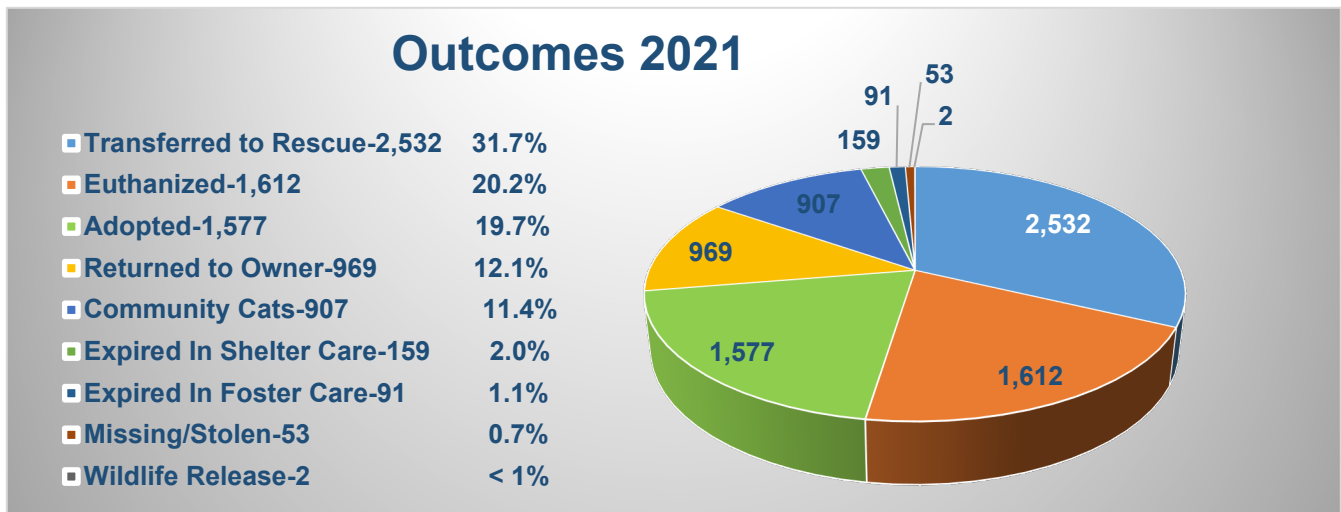
The number of **dogs** coming into the shelter in **2021** was approximately **900 more** than in 2020, while the number of **cats** that entered the shelter in **2021** was just **under 900** more than in 2020. The **total** number of **all other species** combined that entered the shelter accounted for only **0.7%** of intakes.



2. Outcome Statistics – Adoptions, Euthanasias, Reclaims by Owners, Rescue Transfers, etc.

Just as each animal that enters the shelter has an intake category in which it fits, there are also basic potential **disposition** categories for each animal leaving the shelter. Generally, these are: **Reclaimed by Owner**; **Adopted** or **Transferred** to a reputable rescue organization; **Wildlife Released** back to the environment; **Community Cats** (per the recent change in the City TNR [Trap, Neuter, Return] ordinance); and the last and least preferable, death (which would include **Expiring in the Shelter** and **Euthanasia**).

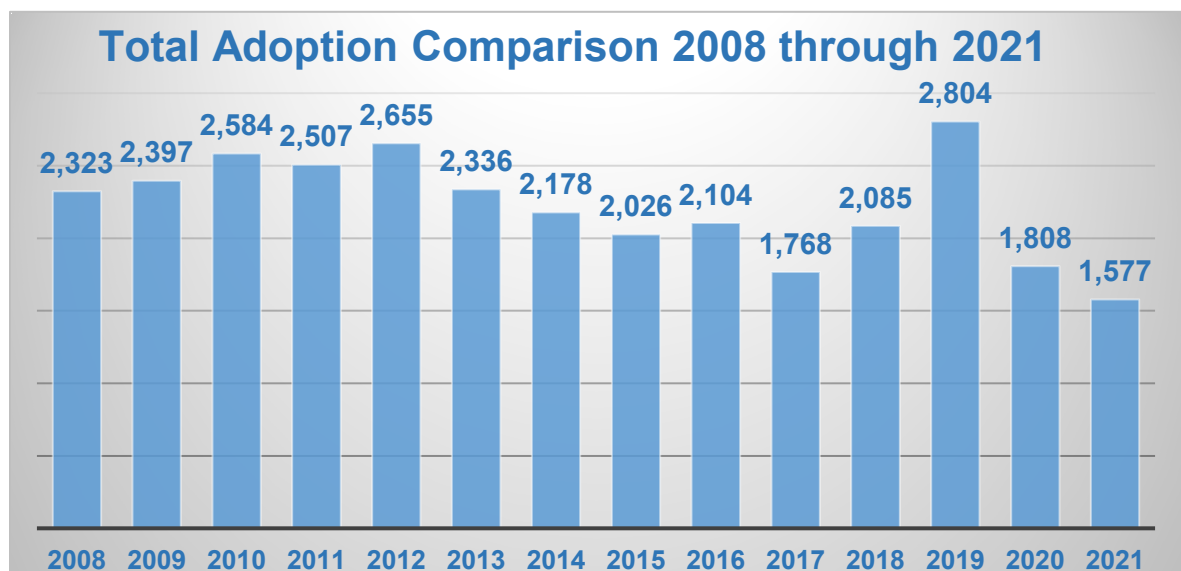
• Overall Outcomes

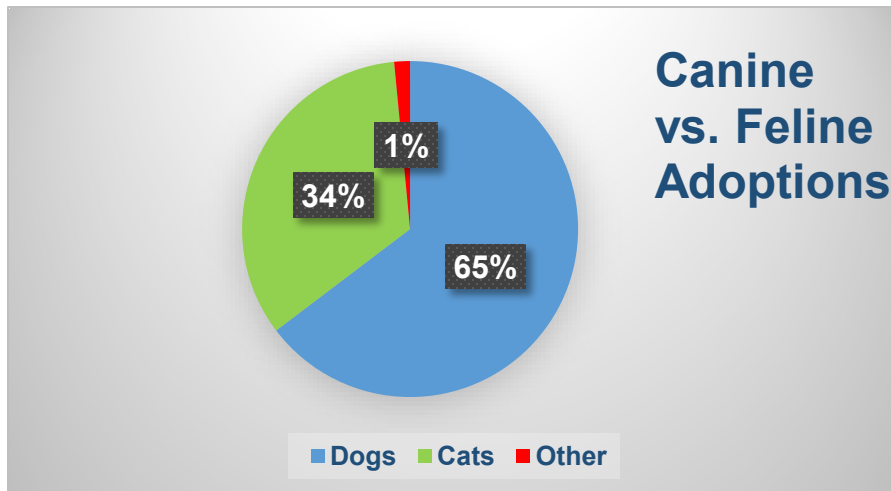


Transfer to a rescue out of the ASCMV was the **top outcome** in 2021.

• Adoptions

The total number of adoptions **decreased** once again, making this the lowest number of adoptions that the shelter has seen over the years.





As the percentage of **dog** adoptions **increased** by 4% from 2020, the percentage of **cat** adoptions **decreased** by 4%. This meant that the ASCMV had nearly **twice** as many dog adoptions as cat adoptions in **2021**.

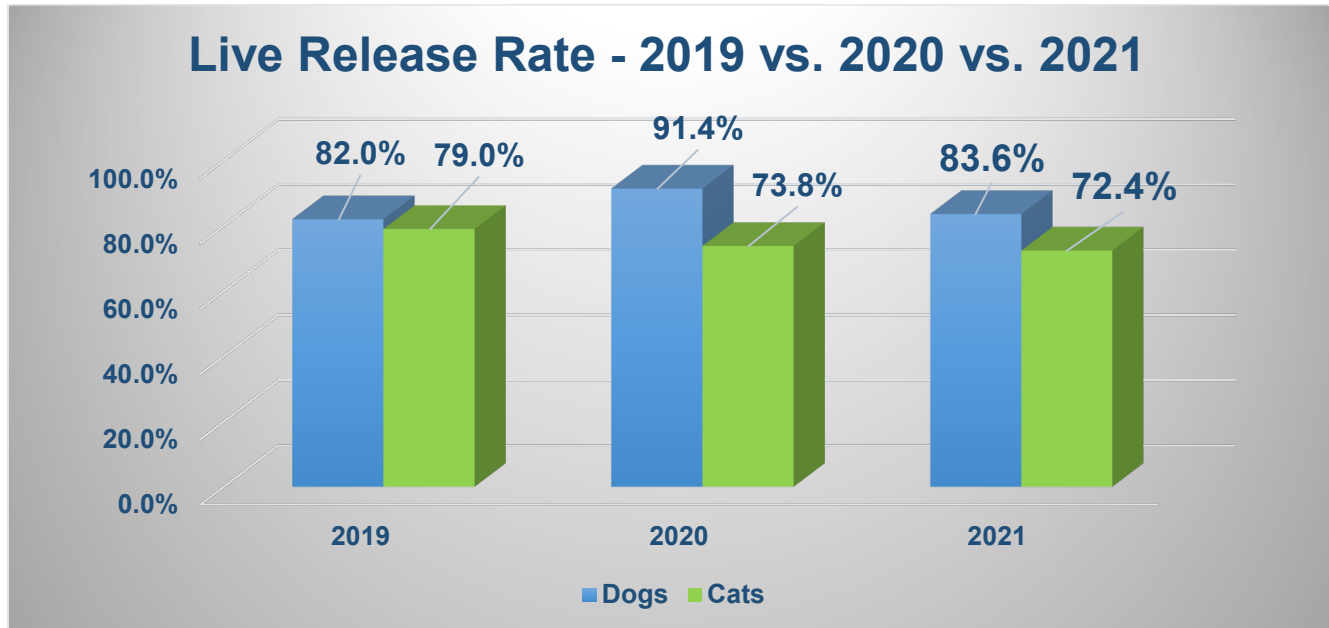
• Rescue Transfers



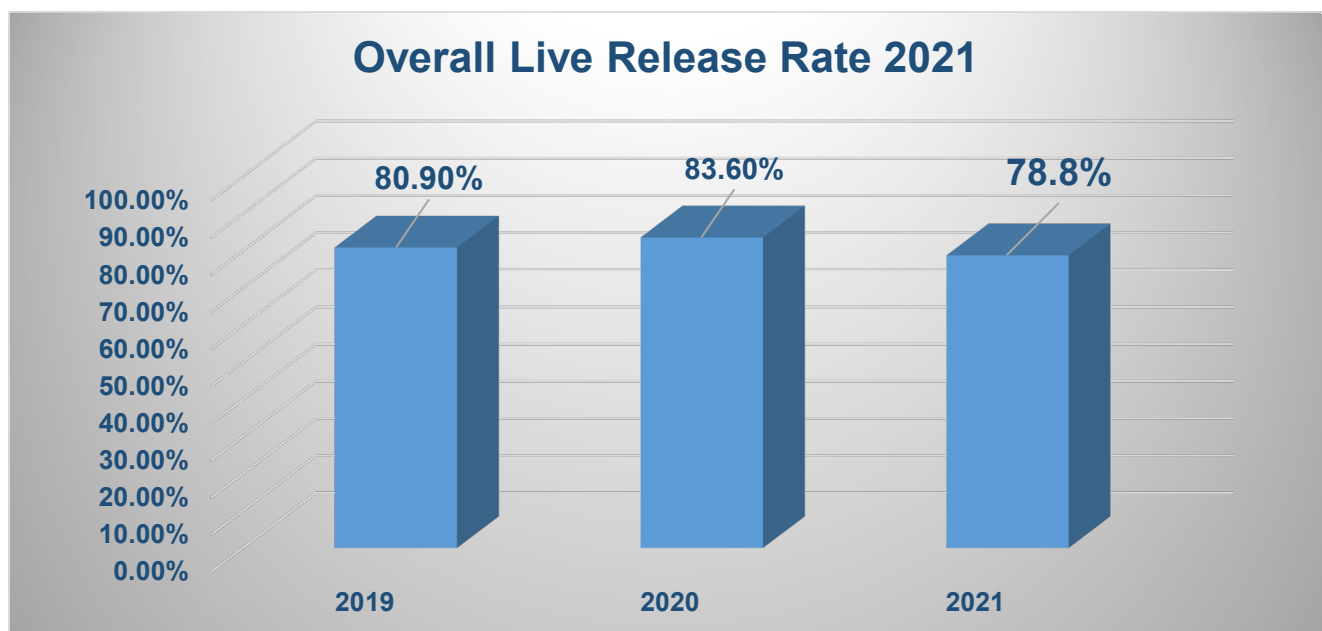
The ASCMV continues to establish working relationships with new **transfer partners** throughout the country. The number of **animals transferred** out to these other organizations **increased** by more than **300** from the previous year, as COVID-19 restrictions were lifted and organizations were able to take in more animals.

- **Live Release Rate**

In February 2014, the ASCMV began reporting the **Live Release Rate** (LRR) along with the euthanasia numbers in order to give the community a more positive outlook on the lives of the animals coming in and out of the shelter. The Live Release Rate is the percentage of animals that leave the ASCMV **alive**.

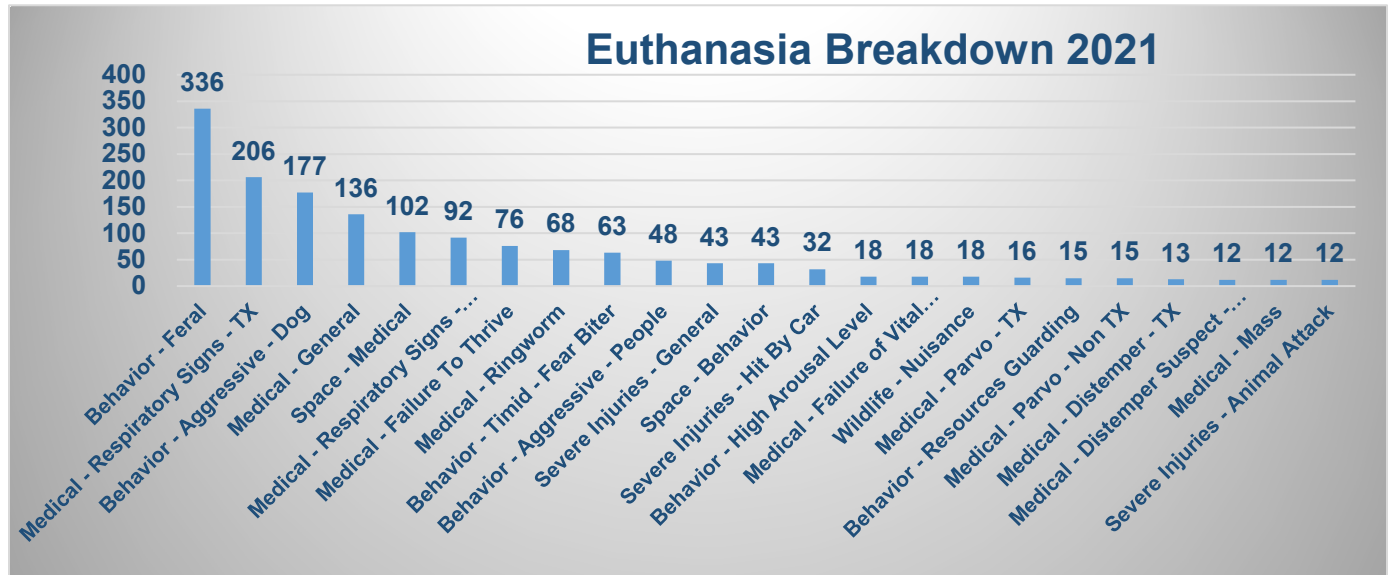


- With a steady increase in intakes once again and a decrease in adoptions, unfortunately the **overall** Live Release Rate **decreased** by **2.1%** from 2019 and nearly **5%** from **2020**.



• **Euthanasias**

The particular **reason** for each decision to **euthanize** an animal at the ASCMV is always determined and documented. Depending on the severity of an animal's illness, injury, or temperament issue, the ASCMV will isolate and treat such animals, as long as there is space and staff available for such care and treatment. This is part of what is known as the **Capacity for Care**.



Animals euthanized because of an apparent **feral** temperament was the **top** reason for euthanasia in **2021**, the majority being **feral cats**. However, with the new **change** in the City **ordinance** and everyone working together to establish a **TNR program**, we should see some significant changes in these numbers moving forward.

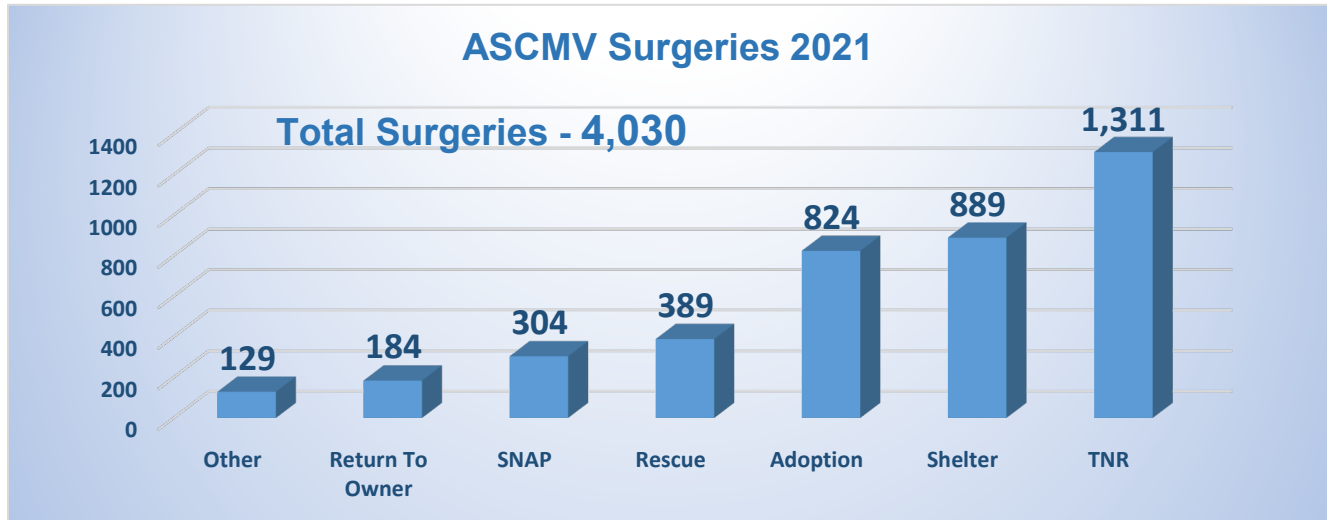


Although the number of euthanasias increased from 2020, due in large part to the decrease in intakes during COVID-19, the ASCMV continues to make strides in **decreasing** the number of **euthanasias** overall, euthanizing approximately **250 fewer** animals than in **2019**.

3. Public Services and Community Outreach

• Affordable Pet Sterilization Surgeries

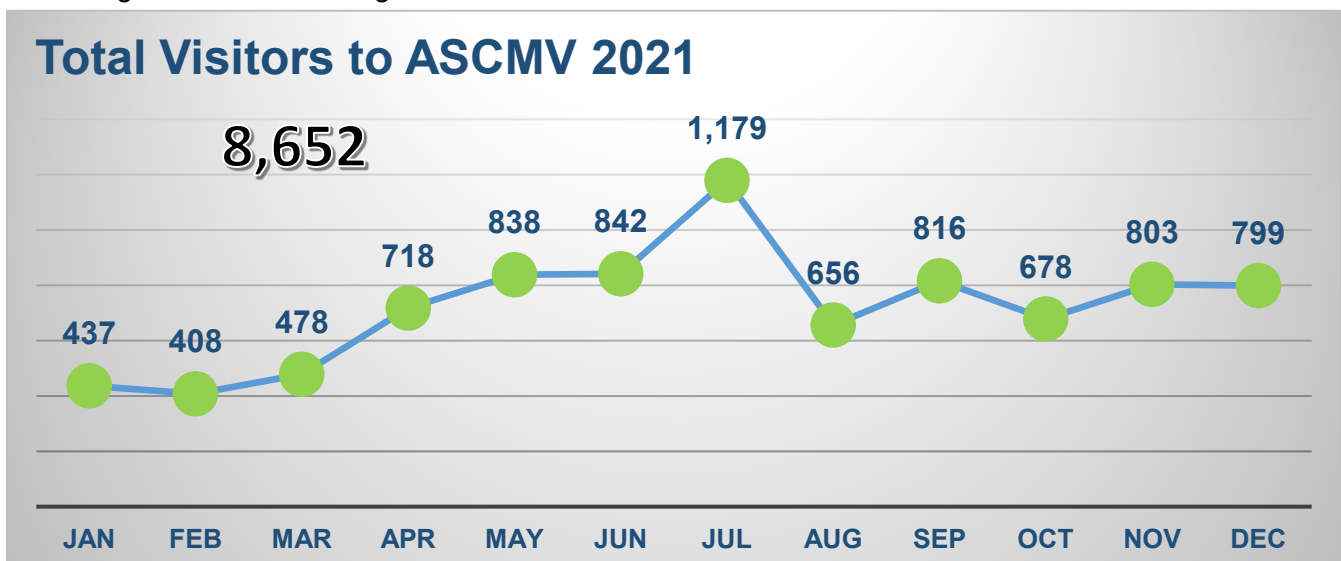
The ASCMV's medical team performed **more than 4,000** surgeries in **2021**. As the number of visitors allowed in the facility began to increase with the lifting of COVID-19 limitations, the ASCMV **increased** the number of sterilizations offered to **rescues**. With the new **TNR** ordinance, ASCMV also **increased** the number of **Community Cat** sterilizations.



The ASCMV continued to offer vaccinations, affordable pet identification microchips, and licensing to animals brought in by rescue groups and to the public for animals that underwent sterilization at the ASCMV.

• Public Attendance

The ASCMV began to make **appointments** in 2020 for visitors wanting to adopt or reclaim an animal. As COVID-19 restrictions were lifted, the ASCMV kept the appointment system in 2021 in order to **better serve** each client coming to the shelter and to try to **reduce the stress of the kennel environment** for the animals. The ASCMV has begun to see an **increase** in the number of **visitors** entering the shelter once again.



- **Community Outreach-Social Media**

ASCMV on Facebook:

The ASCMV **Facebook** page continuously posts information about the shelter such as **Pet-of-the-Week**, **Special Adoption Events**, and **Clinic Events**, **Rescue Transfers**, **Special Needs Animals**, and articles related to **Pet Ownership Responsibilities**. A regular post called **Daily Stats** gives our community a better understanding of what happens at the shelter on a daily basis.

Volunteers continue to post information on the ASCMV Facebook page about **lost and found** pets to help reunite animals with their owners. **Lost2Found Pets Las Cruces**, run by a shelter volunteer, posts all of the shelter intake photos on behalf of the ASCMV to assist with reuniting lost animals that enter the shelter with their families. They also post lost and found reports that the ASCMV receives from concerned citizens in our community.

Two Facebook groups continued to be utilized. **ASCMV Volunteers/Fosters** is an open group formed for posting volunteer and foster opportunities at the shelter. **ASCMV Rescue Partners** is a closed group, used to post stories about injured animals in need of immediate rescue.

The **Dog Cruces** Facebook page continues to share information regarding lost and found pets in collaboration with the ASCMV and several organizations throughout our community.

The graph below shows the number of Facebook **page views** each month in **2021**.



ASCMV Website:

The ASCMV website, [ASCMV.org](https://www.ascmv.org), continues to go through changes and upgrades to make it easier for the community to utilize.

All of the animals **impounded** at the ASCMV are **photographed** upon intake, and these pictures are posted on the **website** for those who are looking for a missing pet.

There is also a section available on the website for anyone to **report a found or lost** pet.

All animals that are **available** for **adoption** at the ASCMV are posted on the website. This allows anyone from the community to find an animal they would potentially like to adopt. They then contact the Center for an appointment to visit with the animal and hopefully complete an adoption.

Resources are available on the website regarding specific issues, including cat-related issues, caring for abandoned kittens, what to do if someone has found an animal, and what to do if someone is considering surrendering an animal.

Information on opportunities to assist the shelter can be found on the website, such as volunteering, fostering, and donation needs.

All of the **monthly** and **annual reports** for the ASCMV are also on the website.



Conversations at the Center

Conversations at the Center is a **public forum** that allows community members to speak openly with the ASCMV executive director, staff, and local animal advocates regarding animal issues at the ASCMV and in our community. These monthly meetings are recorded and posted on the ASCMV website.

Instagram

This social media outlet has also become a key tool in helping promote animals here at the ASCMV. We use it a bit differently than we do Facebook, as not all stats are posted. However, **animals** and **events** are promoted regularly. The community sees more of the animals at our off-site adoption events through Instagram, which helps generate more **adoptions**. A lot of the hard work that **volunteers** put into helping all of the animals at the ASCMV is shared through this outlet, too.

The ASCMV also created a **Snapchat** account, another **social media** outlet used to promote the animals and activities at the ASCMV.

Pet-of-the-Week:

In order to promote **pet adoptions**, the ASCMV continues to send out **Pet-of-the-Week** information to all local media (newspapers, radio, and television), and posts a bio of the Pet-of-the-Week online at **ASCMV.org** and on the ASCMV **Facebook** page. The City and County public information officers receive the Pet-of-the-Week bios and distribute the information through their respective channels as well.

**Radio:**

Local radio stations **KVLC 101Gold**, **KMVR Magic 105**, and **KXPZ 99.5 FM Zia Country** continued to host regularly scheduled spots for the ASCMV to discuss the **Pet-of-the-Week** and other happenings at the ASCMV. Several **public service announcements** to promote **pet responsibility** also received airtime.

**Publications:**

The **Bulletin** continues to publish a weekly promotion for the **Pet of the Week**.

We have also been fortunate to have the **Bulletin** and the **Las Cruces Sun-News** publish wish lists on our behalf.

The ASCMV once again started a monthly column in the **Las Cruces Sun-News** called “**Notes from the ASCMV**,” which covers a wide range of topics that are of importance to the community.



Several publications have assisted in providing coverage of ASCMV events whenever needed.

**Television:**

Television news crews responded to and covered ASCMV press releases for special events or special needs animals.

Special Programs and Events:

Wilson-Binkley Advertising and Marketing continued a powerful advertising campaign with the ASCMV, reaching out to the community through **radio and social media**. Promoting **education** and **pet owner responsibility** is always the main focus.

Two special **drive-through** vaccine clinics were held in 2021, offering low-cost **vaccinations** and **microchipping** for mostly dogs but also some cats. **Hundreds** of man hours were put into making these events successful! More than **2,100 vaccines** were administered and nearly **500 microchips** were implanted.



4. Volunteer Program

The ASCMV ended 2021 with **296** volunteers in the Volunteer Program, **138** of them new as of August 2021. Volunteers continued to participate in activities including **dog walking**, **transporting** shelter animals, **veterinary assistance**, **off-site adoption events**, shelter animal **photography**, **laundry** assistance, and **office** assistance.

Volunteers were regularly scheduled to assist in the ASCMV **Adoptable Cat Room** and **Stray Cat Room** starting in August 2021 and have been enjoying supporting shelter staff operations.

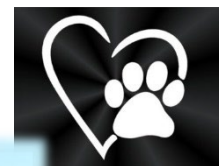
The **Dog Walking Program** and **Dog Photography Team** also saw an increase in interest with volunteers attending training with our **professional and licensed dog trainer** Claren Mulhall. **Claren** has been a long-time ASCMV volunteer and has since returned to help train new volunteers how to properly enter kennels to leash dogs and walk them on a designated **walking trail** that has had several changes due to construction. **Dog walking trainings** were offered twice a month as of September. Some volunteers have an interest in photography, and several dog walking volunteers come together once a month to walk dogs and have new **photos** taken.

Monica Arvin, another long-time volunteer, put together lists of walkable dogs who also need new profile photos. We've noticed that once rescue partners see new images, they tend to pull these animals a lot faster rather than when their pictures are not very attractive (usually intake photos).

The ASCMV has also been accommodating students from the community from the **Academic Career Experience (ACE)** program, as well as student volunteer groups and interns from New Mexico State University (**NMSU**). Groups from NMSU have significantly increased the number of volunteers at the ASCMV. Groups from Burrell College of Osteopathic Medicine have assisted front office staff with **data entry** (after vaccine clinics) and public **walk-throughs**, which also started in December 2021.

The ASCMV continued to attend **off-site adoption events** at **PetSmart**, **Petco**, and the **Farmers Market** on a regular basis, and hosted several **on-site adoption events** at the ASCMV to promote more in-shelter animal adoptions in 2021, such as **Clear the Shelters** in August/September of 2021.

Volunteers at the ASCMV play an extremely valuable role in supporting staff and shelter operations. **We very much appreciate all of our volunteers** and their continued dedication and support for the ASCMV.



Financial Overview

Since the ASCMV is operated under a joint powers agreement, most of the operating funds are from the City and the County. The City of Las Cruces is the fiscal agent for the ASCMV. Funds and separate line items are established to account for money allocated to a particular purpose, and to demonstrate compliance with legal and contractual requirements. All revenues and expenses are carefully evaluated, such as personnel, utilities, food for the animals, vaccinations, medicines, etc. The budget for the ASCMV runs on a fiscal year from July to June. The chart below shows the ASCMV budget for FY2021.

Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley Statement of Activities and Governmental Funds Revenues, Expenditures, and Changes in Fund Balances For the year Ended June 30, 2021

	General Fund	Capital Projects Fund	Total	Adjustments (Note 8)	Statement of Net Activities
Revenues					
Charges for services	\$ 188,047	\$ -	\$ 188,047	\$ -	\$ 188,047
Operating grants	25,632	-	25,632	-	25,632
Operating contributions:					
Doña Ana County	1,250,000	-	1,250,000	-	1,250,000
City of Las Cruces	1,770,255	-	1,770,255	-	1,770,255
Investment income (loss)	522	-	522	-	522
Other revenues	32,497	-	32,497	-	32,497
Total revenues	3,266,953	-	3,266,953	-	3,266,953
Expenditures/Expenses					
Current					
Animal services:					
Personnel	1,898,414	-	1,898,414	-	1,898,414
Repairs and maintenance	48,790	-	48,790	-	48,790
Services	298,862	-	298,862	-	298,862
Insurance	39,479	-	39,479	-	39,479
Supplies	281,938	-	281,938	-	281,938
Pension-PERA	-	-	-	218,919	218,919
Pension-OPEB	-	-	-	(77,342)	(77,342)
Other	17,687	-	17,687	-	17,687
Capital contributions to primary government	-	-	-	1,767	1,767
Depreciation	-	-	-	42,798	42,798
Capital outlay	26,410	1,767	28,177	(28,177)	-
Total expenditures/expenses	2,611,580	1,767	2,613,347	157,965	2,771,312
Revenues over (under) expenditures	655,373	(1,767)	653,606	(157,965)	495,641
Other financing sources (uses)					
Transfers	-	-	-	-	-
Total other financing sources (uses)	-	-	-	-	-
Change in fund balance/net position	655,373	(1,767)	653,606	(157,965)	495,641
Fund balance/net position, beginning of year	171,749	31,565	203,314	(288,125)	(1,974,599)
Fund balance/net position, end of year	\$ 827,122	\$ 29,798	\$ 856,920	\$ (446,090)	\$ (1,478,958)

