

our founders

Colonel Edmund & Thelma Evans

Thelma

Thelma grew up on a farm in Kansas. She was an administrative assistant her entire career, until she and Edmund moved to Albuquerque in the 1950s. Her involvement with Animal Humane spanned 27 years, from 1965 to her retirement in 1992. She ran the day-to-day operations of Animal Humane with special involvement in the Veterinary Clinic.

Built in 1977 with funding from the George C. Whittell estate and donations from local contractors, the Veterinary Clinic provided care and spay/neuter operations for shelter residents with the help of volunteer veterinarians. Pets were fixed only after adoption.

An early advocate for pet sterilization, Thelma created a rebate program. Pet owners presenting a receipt for spay/neuter procedures from local veterinarians would receive a \$25 rebate check as an incentive to fix their pets. The Evans established and endowed a scholarship program for pre-vet and pre-med students at the University of New Mexico (UNM). All of these programs continue under the terms of her trust.

Thelma was active in her later years—still driving and going to the gym at the age of 91. In March 2003, at the age of 92, she passed away from cancer. In a final act in support of science, she donated her body to the Medical School at UNM.

Edmund

While many knew Edmund was a Colonel, few knew he was the Commandant of the nuclear facility buried in the Manzano Mountains. Following his retirement from the United States Air Force, the Colonel earned his degree in fine arts from UNM. He became an avid potter, firing his work in a kiln he built at his home.

Edmund served as the President of the Board in the early years until the end of 1977 when his term expired. He was the public face and spokesperson for our organization and continued as President until his death in 1988. He actively pushed for the city animal ordinance that required licensing for dogs and cats as well as a leash law that passed in 1973. Licenses cost \$5, and monies raised were used to hire additional animal control officers and to establish a city-run spay/neuter clinic. Dr. Glen S. Bolton was contracted as the city veterinarian. In 1974, Animal Humane and the City of Albuquerque announced a cooperative agreement to provide reduced spay/neuter rates for low-income pet owners and for pets that had been adopted from either shelter.

Edmund wrote a weekly pet column "Animal Outlook" for *The Albuquerque Tribune* in the 1970s and early 1980s. Familiar topics included how to protect your pet from the heat, training tips, what to do if your pet is lost, the importance of responsible pet ownership, as well as sad tales of animal hoarding and abandonment. He also used this forum to voice support for legislation banning dog and cockfighting in 1980. While the anti-dog fighting bill passed in 1981, cockfighting was not banned until 2008.

The Evans were committed to humane education for young people. As early as 1973, our Association had junior members and sought out opportunities for school outreach education. All education programs were carried out by volunteers until 1993.

In 1987, Edmund reported that "at 78 I feel like a new person," after he suffered a heart attack and received a pacemaker. Two weeks later, he wrote a letter to Pete Ford, President of Jaynes Corporation, whose firm had built the Veterinary Clinic. In the letter, Edmund updates Pete on recent fundraising successes and the Purina Pets for People Program (still in place today). In 1988, Colonel Evans passed away at the age of 79; however, his tireless efforts to promote animal adoptions and education continued to the end.

To learn more about our history, please visit AnimalHumaneNM.org and click on the 'About Us' tab.



Our first Campus building in 1969



Edmund with Pet Resident



Edmund with Governor Gary King



Edmund & Pete Ford, President of Jaynes Group, at Clinic Ground Breaking