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Dog-wash fundraiser cleans up

By Lauren Toney For the Sun-News

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LAS CRUCES - Pooches - from purebred teacup poodles to German shepherds - indulged in a little pampering Saturday during a charity dog washing event in Las Cruces to raise money for ACTION Programs for Animals.

The organization's first Clean Your Paws for a Good Cause event was held at The Country Dog where bathing and nail grooming were provided to pups while owners enjoyed refreshments and raffles for doggy door prizes.

"We thought this would be a great event that both people and their pets would enjoy," said Michel Meunier, director of APA. "And it's benefiting pets and their owners who are in need."

Through the organization's pet food bank, launched last year, about 55,000 pounds of food have been distributed to more than 370 pet guardians with little or no income, Meunier said.

"We continue to provide anywhere from 4,000 to 6,000 pounds of food per month," she said. "We want to keep pets and their owners together by providing assistance to those who may otherwise feel as though they need to give up their pet to a shelter."

"We were shooting for the sky," Lisa Westbrook, owner of Blue Ribbon Pet Sitting, a sponsor of Saturday's dog wash, said of the event. "We hope to

make this at least an annual event in Las Cruces."

Four-year-old T.D., a pint-sized poodle "enjoyed all the attention," said owner Veronica Melendrez of Las Cruces. "She even got a little massage. She loved it!"

Daughters Nevaeh Melendrez, 8, and Francine Zuniga, 11, helped pick out

bandanas for T.D. and 4-month-old Yorkshire terrier, Tiny, after they had been groomed.

"She looks so cute now," Nevaeh said of her poodle.

For more information on APA or to donate, call (575) 644-0505, or visit actionprogramsforanimals.org.

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