

### KAR Rescues 43 Cats and Kittens from Foreclosed Home

By Anne Pancella


The phone call came in on a Monday in March. A woman whose home was being foreclosed on was asking for our help with a large number of stray cats that she had left behind in her former home. The cats needed to be out by Friday or she would have to take them to Animal Services. There were at least four momma cats nursing newborn kittens, she said, four additional pregnant cats, and a couple of unaltered male cats. All were friendly. The heat was off, the house was empty, and there was two feet of water in the basement due to spring flooding of the nearby Kalamazoo River.

This was not the first call for help we had gotten from that area, which is close to the county's Animal Services facility. Residents suspect that many of the stray cats that keep appearing come from people bringing cats to Animal Services who change their minds when they get there and release them nearby. Neighbors confirmed that these cats had turned up a few months earlier. At first they lived on

the caller's front porch, but as they started giving birth, she moved them inside to help the kittens survive the bitter winter. Now they were alone in her cold, damp house, and time was running out.



KAR cat fosters stepped up to take the cats when they heard of their plight. Nine different foster homes split the 25 cats and kittens removed from the home that week. When the four pregnant cats taken from the home delivered an additional 18 kittens in the following weeks, the total number of cats and kittens saved from that one house rose to 43.

The future looks bright for these 43 cats. KAR volunteers will ensure they are adopted into good homes, and because they will be sterilized prior to adoption, they will not contribute any more unwanted litters. 



### Happy Tail—Homer

By Lynn Bolhuis

Little did he know, Homer was facing his last day on earth. By some miracle, Bonnie Vermeulen visited Kalamazoo Animal Services in early October, looking for her first foster dog. Bonnie wanted to make the right choice yet she was overwhelmed by all of the animals in need. She walked up and down the aisles, peering into each cage. Bonnie came upon Homer and his face grabbed her attention. He looked sad, like he needed a friend. Bonnie decided to take him out of his cage and get acquainted. She was impressed by his sweetness, calm demeanor and gentle spirit.

Homer was a stray that had been picked up by Animal Services wandering the streets of Kalamazoo. No one had come to claim him and Homer's time was up. Bonnie decided she had to get him out of there to save his life, and that is just what she did.

Bonnie took Homer, a 40-pound German Shepherd mix home with her that day. He was the perfect foster dog. Homer got along fabulously with Bonnie's German Shepherd, Mya, and with all the cats and kittens in the house. He was already housebroken and knew quite a few commands. Homer loved to sit next to Bonnie and give her a hug by burying his head into her leg. He also loved to cuddle and play. Homer and Mya had many hours of fun together.

(continued on page 3)

## Homer (continued)

Homer did so well in Bonnie's home that she seriously considered adopting him. At about the same time, a couple of adoption applications came in for him. One of the applicants, Esther, came to meet Homer with her niece. Esther raised her family in a large farm home with lots of acreage and they always had a family dog. Esther lived alone but was often surrounded by many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was looking for a gentle dog that would enjoy being lavished with hugs and kisses by adoring children.

During the visit, Bonnie could see that Homer and Esther would be great companions for each other...a match made in heaven! As a matter of fact, as Esther said



Bonnie, Esther and Homer.

good-bye to Homer following their initial visit, she was brought to tears at the thought of leaving him.

Needless to say, Esther proceeded with the adoption process so she could bring Homer to his new forever home several days later.

Since being adopted, Homer has gained some notoriety of his own. Esther's granddaughter, Lisa, is a veterinarian with Pfizer. She arranged for Homer and Esther to be profiled on Pfizer's Veterinary Research and Development web site to promote the benefits of pet companionship.

According to Lisa, "Homer has been a delightful addition to Esther's home and heart. She is buzzing around enjoying things so much more with Homer in her life. Homer has assumed many roles including companion, alerting service dog, greeter for company, and even 'Esther locator' for family." 🐾

## Happy Tail—Sundancer

By Nancy Dolan

Sundancer's story in his own words: I'm sure you remember what a bitterly cold winter we had. Well, I was living outside in a remote area when I found my way to a building where a kind woman worked. It was against the rules to have animals inside so she leaned a board against the building and I found shelter there. I was starving so she gave me her yogurt. With the weather turning dangerously cold, she contacted the nice people at Kalamazoo Animal Rescue. A volunteer arranged to meet her to pick me up; it was almost midnight and minus two degrees below zero. I jumped inside the cat carrier and purred the entire drive because the blanket was soft and warm and I had a wonderful feeling my life was about to change.

First things first, I was immediately seen by the veterinarian for a physical exam, neutering, x-rays for an injured leg, and treatment for a stuffy nose. Then, after several weeks of TLC in my foster home,

my photos were posted on the Internet and I was made available for adoption, for all the world to see...wow!

It's been several months and you'll be happy to hear that I am now settled into my new, forever home. My human "dad" is a big guy, like me. He always had dogs but decided his lifestyle was now more suited for a cat. We had great chemistry the moment we met. He sent my foster mom an email telling her how I'm doing: "Sunny follows me around the house; at night he roams and explores. He likes to talk to himself so sometimes I wake up to him walking around the house talking, I don't know who he's talking to but he's carrying on a conversation. He's become quite the little character. Now that he's over his fear of the TV he comes into the living room and rubs on me and then tries to get me to come into the bedroom and lay with him. Overall I'm very happy with him; he's very clean and well mannered. Thanks



for the opportunity to be his new owner and thanks for taking care of him for so long. Chad." 🐾



Printing services provided by J.B. Printing Co.