

# KALAMAZOO ANIMAL RESCUE

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## KAR Friends

January 2010

Dear Reader,

**Happy New Year!** Now that temperatures are hovering at or below freezing, our feature story provides some tips on how to care for your pets during the cold winter months.

This month's Doggie Den profiles Cooper, a white German Shepherd mix that is winning big. Check out Cat's Corner for information on dealing with hairballs.

Danielle Wallis  
KAR Marketing Coordinator

Lynn Bolhuis  
KAR Friends Editor

## WINTER PET CARE

*10 Ways To Keep Pets Warm and Safe*

By The Kalamazoo Humane Society

Cold weather can be hard on pets, as it can be hard on people as well. Sometimes owners forget that their pets are accustomed to the warm shelter of the indoors just like the owners.

Some owners will leave their animals outside for extended periods of time, thinking that all pets are adapted to live outdoors. This can put their pets in danger of serious illness. There are things you can do to keep your pet or pets warm and safe.



1. Keep your pets inside as much as you can when the temperature is low. If you must take them out, stay outside with them. When you're cold enough to go inside, they probably are too. If you absolutely must leave them outside for a significant length of time, be sure they have a warm, solid shelter against the wind, thick bedding, and plenty of non-frozen water.
2. Some pets can remain outside safely longer in the winter than others: long-haired breeds like Huskies will do better in cold weather than short-haired breeds like Dachshunds. Cats and small dogs that have to stand shoulder deep in the snow will feel the cold sooner than larger animals. Your pet's health will also affect how long they can stay out. Conditions like diabetes, heart disease, kidney disease, and hormonal imbalances can compromise a pet's ability to regulate their body heat. Animals that are not generally in good health shouldn't be exposed to winter weather for a long period of time. Very young and very old animals are vulnerable to the cold as well. Regardless of their health, though, no pets should stay outside for unlimited amounts of time in freezing cold weather. If you have any questions about how long your pet should be out this winter, ask your veterinarian.
3. Cats will curl up against almost anything to stay warm – including car engines. Cats caught in moving engine parts can be seriously hurt or killed. Before you turn your

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## WINTER PET CARE (continued)

engine on, check beneath the car or make a lot of noise by honking the horn or rapping on the hood.

4. If you live near a pond or lake, be very cautious about letting your rambunctious dog off the leash. Animals can easily fall through the ice, and it is very difficult for them to escape on their own. If you must let your dogs loose near open water, stay with them at all times.
5. If you light a fire or plug in a space heater to keep your home toasty warm, remember that the heat will be as attractive to your pets as to you. As your dog or cat snuggles up to the warmth, keep an eye out to make sure that no tails or paws come in contact with flames, heating coils, or hot surfaces. Pets can either burn themselves or knock a heat source over and put the entire household in danger.
6. Pets that go outside can pick up rock salt, ice, and chemical ice melts in their foot pads. To keep your pet's pads from getting chapped and raw, wipe their feet with a washcloth when they come inside. This will also keep them from licking the salt off their feet, which could cause an inflammation of their digestive tract.
7. If left alone outside, dogs and cats can be very resourceful in their search for warm shelter. They can dig into snow banks or hide under porches or in dumpsters, window wells, or cellars and they can occasionally get trapped. Watch them closely when they are loose outdoors, and provide them with quality, easily accessible shelter.
8. Keep an eye on your pet's water. Sometimes owners don't realize that a water bowl has frozen and their pet can't get anything to drink. Animals that don't have access to clean, unfrozen water are more likely to drink out of puddles or gutters, which can be polluted with oil, antifreeze, household cleaners, and other chemicals.
9. Be particularly gentle with elderly and arthritic pets during the winter. The cold can leave their joints extremely stiff and tender, and they may become more awkward than usual. Stand directly behind these pets when they are climbing stairs or jumping onto furniture; consider modifying their environment to make it easier for them to get around. Be sure they have a thick, soft bed in a warm room for the chilly nights. Also, watch stiff and arthritic pets if you walk them outside; a bad slip on the ice could be very painful and cause a serious injury.
10. Go ahead and put that sweater on your pet if they'll put up with it. It will help a little, but you can't depend on it entirely to keep them warm. Pets lose most of their body heat from the pads of their feet, their ears, and their respiratory tract. The best way to guard your animals against the cold is keeping a close eye on them to make sure they're comfortable.

When you're outside with your pets during the winter, you can watch them for signs of discomfort with the cold. If they whine, shiver, seem anxious, slow down or stop moving, or start to look for warm places to burrow, they're saying they want to get back to someplace warm.

Winter can be a beautiful time of year. It can be a dangerous time as well, but it certainly doesn't have to be. If you take some precautions, you and your pet can have a fabulous time taking in the icicles, the snow banks, and the warm, glowing fire at the end of the day.

Source: This article appeared in the [Kalamazoo Humane Society's Humane News & Views](#), [Winter 2009 newsletter](#). Reprinted with permission.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Visit the [“Events” page on our website](#) for upcoming adoption (and other) events.



## PROVIDING FOR OUTDOOR DOGS

If your dog is kept outdoors for any reason and for any length of time, Michigan State Dog Law requires pet owners to ensure:

- All dogs that are tethered by a rope, chain or similar device, must have a dog house accessible at all times. The tether must be at least three (3) times the length of the dog as measured from the tip of the dog's nose to the base of its tail.
- Any dog left unattended outside must have a dog house. A dog house is an enclosed structure with a roof and appropriate dimensions for the breed and size of the dog. The dog house must have dry bedding and a door covering when the outdoor temperature is or is predicted to be below freezing.
- A dog must have regularly available water and food, and must receive veterinary medical attention in order to maintain the dog in a state of good health.

## SPECIAL EVENT

*Adoption Event and Movie Premiere*

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue is pleased to have teamed up with Jason Slingerland, Robert Couch and Wilhelm Rumpf, three local filmmakers, to present the first charity showing of [Hobocon](#). A portion of all ticket and onsite DVD sales will go directly to KAR.



Hobocon follows Jason, Rob and Wilhelm as they work their way through one of the largest gaming conventions in the nation, GenCon. Doctor Boxcar (Jason), The Pixie (Wilhelm), and Benny (Rob) lived the “hobo” life and documented every second of it on video. Armed only with their wits (which are slim) and the good graces of other convention goers (which are no doubt wearing thin from it all), they made it through. This documentary was almost the death of Benny, it brought extreme fatigue to Doctor Boxcar and endless joy to the Pixie (he loves the crazy)!

Hobocon is not like other notable gaming themed documentaries. Hobocon “gets it”. They did not make a movie just for the hard core gamer nor did they set out to make a stare-at-the-freaks exposé. Hobocon is for everyone from the non-gamer to the over-the-top cos-player. Throughout the movie, Hobocon takes the time to interview a wide cast of characters and let them voice what this culture is all about. Simply put, Hobocon is more than just a fun look at GenCon it is a fun look into a world that is often never seen.

Hobocon has a run time of 1 hour and 19 minutes, and would be considered to be rated at PG-13 due to some adult-themed conversations.

**Date:** Thursday, January 28, 2010  
**Premiere time:** 7:00 p.m.  
**Place:** [Kalamazoo 10](#)  
**Adoption Event:** 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

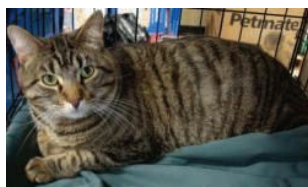
For more information, go to: [www.hobocon.com](http://www.hobocon.com). For an independent film review, [click here](#).

**Tell your friends and join us for this premiere and adoption event, and help to save some animals!**

## PETS OF THE MONTH



[Missy](#)



[Austin](#)

See all of our adoptable [Cats](#), [Dogs](#) and [Kittens](#)!

## BEHIND THE SCENES

*Volunteers of the Month, The Pellerito Family*

At age 12, Allie Pellerito was very interested in animal rescue and wanted to foster dogs. She did a lot of research to learn about the rescue groups in the area to determine which one to get involved with. She thought KAR was the best fit and approached her parents, Phil and Deb, with what she had learned. In July 2008, the family decided to give it a try and began volunteering.

The family has found dog fostering to be a very rewarding experience for the whole family. Allie takes on most of the fostering responsibilities but everyone helps take care of and love the dogs while they are in their home. The Pelleritos have fostered dogs from five months old to two and a half years old. They all agree that the younger dogs require more work because they need a lot more attention.

The family has two Labrador Retrievers so they typically foster medium to large sized dogs. They have fostered different breeds including pit bulls, which they have found can be very friendly and loving with proper socialization. When they first started fostering, their dogs required a little time to warm up to the foster addition. Now, the two dogs don't seem to mind the new dogs at all. The cats, however, are a different story. They don't really like the foster dogs and tend to hide for a while when a new dog is brought into the home.

When they do not have a foster dog in the house, Allie helps other KAR foster volunteers at adoption events. She also loves to help Faye, who mentored the family when they started with KAR, when she has a litter of puppies. According to Faye, "Allie is great at helping with whatever needs to be done: bathing, feeding, cleaning up messes and, more importantly, giving the pups lots of loving. She has also learned how to temperament test the wee ones and has become very good at it."

Volunteering is a family activity in the Pellerito home and KAR is grateful for the love and care they show to their foster dogs until a forever home is found.



## DOGGIE DEN

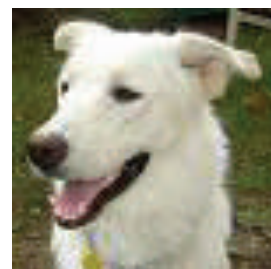
*UKC Champ – Cooper*

By Lynn Bolhuis

Cooper, a white German Shepherd mix, was less than a year old when he was brought into KAR in 2006. His foster mom described him as a fun-loving pup that enjoyed running, playing tug-of-war, getting lots of attention and napping with his people.

[Richard Paul](#) was looking online for a furry companion and was drawn to Cooper when he saw him. Recently, Richard contacted KAR to let us know that "Cooper is doing very well and that he is an awesome dog. He is my best friend, second to my wife, of course."

Three years ago, however, Cooper was a wild and rambunctious adolescent. To teach this young dog some manners, Richard decided to seek the help of a trainer. The first trainer's opinion of Cooper was that he was a ferocious dog that should be put down. The next trainer, Kris, evaluated Cooper and said that he wasn't mean, he just needed



## KAR LINKS

- [VOLUNTEER](#)
- Become a [FOSTER FAMILY](#)
- [Senior Cat Companions](#)
- KAR [Website](#)



Make a [DONATION!](#)

**DOGGIE DEN** (continued)

to learn some manners. Unfortunately, Kris wasn't offering any classes at the time so Richard found another trainer, Rick, who had experience with shepherds. They worked with Rick for a year and Cooper evolved into a respectful canine.

Richard felt that he and Cooper had learned all they could and it was time to advance to the next level. At about the same time, Kris began a new group class so they signed up. Thanks to Kris's guidance and support, Richard noticed that Cooper had become very eager to please and wanted to learn new things every day. Kris saw the dog's willingness and potential, and she encouraged the duo to compete.

On November 14, 2009, Cooper competed in the United Kennel Club Novice A, Obedience Ring at Dogsports of Genesee County. He received a score of 193 out of 200 points and a first place ribbon. Cooper competed against two other purebred dogs, a German Shepherd and a Golden Retriever, who both ended up with non-qualifying scores due to major deductions.



Naysayers had told Richard to either put Cooper down or keep him solely as a pet, but Richard didn't heed this advice. Instead, he sought help, worked hard and persevered – creating a well-behaved canine and champion, and winning in the end! Since adopting Cooper, Richard admits that he has learned some things from his best friend: “patience, love and a willingness to never give up.” Just recently, Cooper passed the AKC Canine Good Citizen® test and is now registered with the AKC to compete in their obedience trials. This duo will be going back into the ring in January (and beyond) to compete for high scores, and more first place ribbons and trophies. Best wishes for continued success Richard and Cooper!

**DOG LICENSE REMINDER**

It's time to renew or obtain a license for your canine companion if you live in Kalamazoo County.

- **All dogs 4 months of age or older must be licensed.** Area veterinary clinics, township and city offices, and the Kalamazoo County Treasurer will sell dog license tags through March 1, 2010. After March 1st, you must purchase your tag directly from Animal Services.
- New dogs over 4 months of age must be licensed within 30 days of obtaining ownership.
- Dogs turning 4 months old after March 1st must obtain a license within 30 days of turning 4 months old.
- Each dog being licensed must have proof of a current rabies vaccination.
- Dog license fees are reduced for spayed or neutered canines (proof is required).

For more information, check out the “dog licensing” page at the [Kalamazoo County](#) website or call Kalamazoo County Animal Services & Enforcement at 269-383-8775.

**CAT'S CORNER***Hairballs*

By Danielle Wallis



Hairballs, otherwise known as trichobezoars, are natural and very unfortunate mats of undigested cat's hair. It is a problem faced by our feline friends the world over, yet it is something many of us have not had the pleasure of dealing with, thankfully! Here is some information that could help you and your cat.

**Why do cats get hairballs?**

Cats groom themselves fastidiously, every day, to keep themselves clean and improve their appearance. This grooming ritual creates issues for their gastrointestinal tract because the fur that is swallowed needs to be digested. Cats in the wild have coats that change thickness depending on the season. For instance, a cat will have a thicker coat in the winter for obvious reasons. Naturally their coats will shed to prepare the animal for the warmer months ahead. This is not the case for domesticated cats, the felines we have living in our homes. These pets have grown accustomed to the warm central heating and comfortable surroundings, and their coats, unfortunately, will shed year round, making indoor cats more susceptible to experiencing hairballs on a regular basis.

In most circumstances, cats can deal with the hair that is swallowed and the fur is usually expelled in their stool. Problems occur if the hair does not move through the stomach and intestines, and instead it will form a ball in the stomach.

**How will I know if my cat is suffering with the problem of hairballs?**

Most cat owners will be unaware of them but for those of you who see your cat retching or even vomiting, these are the signs. You will sometimes see a hairball in the cat's vomit. If cats have a problem hairball in their stomach, you may see them wanting to eat grass (to induce vomiting) or going off their food entirely. Once the hairball has shifted they will begin to feel better.

The occasional hairball is perfectly normal, and many healthy cats throw up once or twice a month. However if your cat stops eating, is unable to defecate, vomits frequently, or acts like it doesn't feel well, it is definitely time to seek help from your veterinarian.

**How do I solve or prevent the problem?**

- Grooming – Grooming your cat regularly will remove some of the loose hair they would have to deal with themselves. The added bonus is keeping the hair off your furniture and clothes! Long-haired cats require more regular grooming like once a day, whereas short-haired cats require weekly grooming.
- Fiber – Remedies are available to add bulk and moisture to your cat's stool. Cat grass is another alternative.
- Laxatives and Lubrication – Hairballs are sometimes eased through the digestive tract with the help of a laxative coating or lubrication. There are many flavors and varieties so speak to your veterinarian about the best alternative for your cat.
- Dry Food – Some cat foods on the market offer recipes that help with hairballs, such as easily digestible food for indoor cats.
- Canned Food – Canned cat food contains water that is good for your cat. You can also mix in extra water. Canned food is closer to a cat's natural diet.

**CONTACT US**

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Phone: (269) 226-8570

Visit our [website](#)

[Questions or suggestions](#) for the newsletter?

- Water – This is an extremely important part of a cat's diet. Cats lose as much water urinating as when they groom themselves. It is a crucial part of their digestion so make sure there is always enough fresh water for your pets. A pet water fountain may help attract your cat to the water bowl and get them to drink more often.

Additional Resources:

- [Hairball control](#)
- [Cat hairballs](#)
- [A hairy dilemma](#)

**DONATION THANK YOU**

A sincere thank you to the students of Indian Lake Elementary School for donating cat and dog items to KAR in December. The food and toys that were collected helped our foster dogs and cats to have a very happy holiday season.

**KAR WISH LIST ~ JANUARY**

Sign up for a Harding's eScrip Community Card and earn cash for KAR when you shop at a Harding's Friendly Market. The Harding's eScrip Community Card gives back to the community by making contributions to a group you designate, like Kalamazoo Animal Rescue, at no cost to you!



Participation is easy...

- Pick up a personal eScrip Community Card at any Harding's store.
- Register the card by calling 1-800-931-6258 or activate the card online by going to <http://www.escrrip.com/merchants/identity/hardings/index.jsp>. During the registration process, select the charity you want to support.
- If you already have an eScrip Card, you can add KAR to the charities you support.

The next time you go shopping at Harding's, show your eScrip card to the cashier during checkout. Harding's calculates the donation to KAR based on a percentage of monthly purchases and they send a donation check to KAR four times a year. In 2009, Kalamazoo Animal Rescue received \$1,365.

**Your participation in the eScrip program could enable KAR to rescue more animals in 2010!**

**About Us**

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue is an all-volunteer, federally recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that was founded in 1991 and is funded entirely through private donations.

KAR is dedicated to providing refuge to homeless, stray and abandoned cats and dogs in Southwest Michigan.

Our volunteers give their time and energy to the efforts of rescuing animals and helping them to find permanent homes.