

# KALAMAZOO ANIMAL RESCUE

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## OUR SPONSORS



## KAR Friends

July 2009

Dear Reader,

Our feature story is about **Save Our Strays**, a volunteer group that partners with Kalamazoo County Animal Services and Enforcement to help shelter animals get national adoption exposure on [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com).

This month's Doggie Den tells the rescue and adoption story of Tresa, a three-legged, German Shepherd-Labrador Retriever mix. Our Cat's Corner provides some helpful information about declawing cats.

Danielle Wallis  
KAR Marketing Coordinator

Lynn Bolhuis  
KAR Friends Editor

## SAVE OUR STRAYS

By Sue Brodasky

Save Our Strays (SOS) is an all volunteer group that assists in advertising the animals available for adoption from Kalamazoo County Animal Services and Enforcement (AS).

The SOS group started in November 2004 through the grass roots and undercover efforts of some then Kalamazoo Animal Rescue volunteers who saw a desperate need for dogs being housed at AS to be listed on the national pet adoption website Petfinder™. Being credited for starting SOS are Kendra and Michael Fisher, Sara Harrison, Cassie Keech, Lauren Kristin, Mary Phillips, JoAnne Powell, and Kathy and Jeremy Winkworth. Their efforts were expanded one year later by Sue Brodasky and Denise Massey, who took on the task of including cats, available for adoption, at AS. Initially the group created a website and began regular photography sessions to post animal pictures nationwide.

While SOS has grown, it still remains a relatively small group and currently has a volunteer base of 10 active members. The work continues to primarily consist of visiting AS once a week to photograph the adoptable animals. The dynamic photos of some very needy cats and dogs are added to the AS animal database software which then automatically uploads all the available information about the animal to Petfinder™.

Even though photography is the primary role, SOS also prides itself on assisting AS whenever there is a need. Previously SOS led fundraising efforts to purchase new mobile cages for the remodeled AS cat room, which allowed cats to be housed in a



## OUR SPONSORS



## UPCOMING EVENTS

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



## SAVE OUR STRAYS (continued)

room separate from dogs for the first time. Pam Nash, a prior SOS Coordinator designed, solicited talent, and organized painting parties for the animal friendly mural that runs the entire length of the AS kennel facility.

SOS is vital in assisting in the transportation and handling of AS animals to events throughout Kalamazoo County. Organizing adoption events for AS animals at local pet stores, and participating in the Kalamazoo Humane Society's annual Dog Walk. As well as the ongoing fundraising effort to facilitate a new shelter, for more information on the shelter project please visit: [www.kalamazoo caresforanimals.org](http://www.kalamazoo caresforanimals.org)

There is a continual urgent need for new SOS volunteers. Camera skills are a benefit but not a necessity; however, some basic computer skills are required. You must be comfortable handling unfamiliar animals. If you would like information about becoming a SOS volunteer contact Sue, SOS Coordinator, at [sbrodasky@hotmail.com](mailto:sbrodasky@hotmail.com)

If you would like to see the available cats and dogs at AS, or to learn more about SOS, please visit: [www.saveourstrays.net](http://www.saveourstrays.net)

## SHOP AND SUPPORT KAR

*Harding's eScrip Community Card*

When you shop at Harding's Friendly Markets you can give to Kalamazoo Animal Rescue at the same time, and at no cost to you. Harding's eScrip Community Card is a program that gives back to the community by making contributions to a group you designate, like KAR.

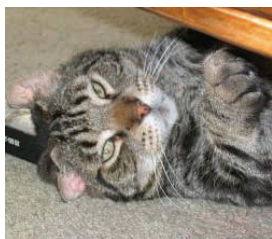


Participation is easy...

- 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.escrip.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. Four times a year Harding's sends a donation check to KAR. For the first half of 2009, Kalamazoo Animal Rescue received \$639 and is well on our way of surpassing the \$711 received in 2008. Happy shopping!

## PETS OF THE MONTH

ZiggyMelvin**BEHIND THE SCENES**

*Volunteer of the Month, Mary Phillips*

Mary started her journey with Kalamazoo Animal Rescue in May 2004 after she adopted two "Big Black Dogs" from a rescue in Eastern Michigan. After rescuing dogs for herself, Mary decided this was something she wanted to do...to help dogs in need find good homes.

In the beginning, Mary went to adoption events to help other KAR fosters with their dogs. With the help of a veteran dog foster volunteer, she began to look for the perfect, bulletproof, first, foster dog. When she thought she had found the right one, Mary approached her husband with the dog's credentials. He expressed his preference for fostering puppies only, so she became a puppy foster mom.

In addition to fostering, Mary has worked in dog intake where she fielded requests for bringing dogs into the rescue. She became the Dog Intake Coordinator and quickly learned how to upload and maintain the dogs available for adoption on both the Petfinder™ and KAR websites. She still performs these tasks and enjoys this work the most. Mary briefly served as the Dog Coordinator and now holds the position of Operations Coordinator, quite simply because it was everything she had been doing and is still doing.

"I love that KAR is able to provide for the hopeless and helpless animals that we care for," says Mary. "I came into the rescue with common goals and beliefs of the mission of KAR. I have seen many incredible people come and go, and some have stayed on. We have incredible volunteers and they all work so hard!"

**DOGGIE DEN**

*Tresa the Three-Legged Wonder Dog*

By Donna Snell

Tresa was five-months old when I found her at Animal Services. She is a spunky German Shepherd-Labrador Retriever mix that had a painful start in life. Tresa had been in the shelter harboring a broken rear leg for two full weeks! OUCH! I rescued her from the animal shelter and took her to see a veterinarian. Upon examination, the vet deemed that her hind leg wouldn't grow and would be a hindrance to her. So Tresa's left hind leg was amputated.



Many people look at dogs with three legs as "handicapped," but I'm here to tell you that couldn't be farther from the truth. Tresa healed quickly after the surgery and was outrunning most dogs. She went for two-plus mile walks and wanted to keep going. The only reason we stopped was to drop off my other dogs who were tired. Tresa loved going for walks downtown and meeting people. Many people didn't even notice she was missing a leg until she walked away from them and they could see her from behind. Tresa's adaptability was amazing.

Applications for adopting Tresa were slow in coming. She stayed with me and my husband, Brian as a foster for many months. One day at a KAR adoption event at

## KAR LINKS

- ADOPT a [Kitten, Cat](#) or [Dog](#)
- [VOLUNTEER](#)
- Become a [FOSTER FAMILY](#)
- [Senior Cat Companions](#)
- KAR [Website](#)



Make a [DONATION!](#)

## DOGGIE DEN (continued)

PetSmart, a wonderful lady by the name of Amanda walked in to get her beloved pets some goodies. When she eyed Tresa, she put down everything she was holding, plopped herself on the floor and played with her. Amanda fell instantly in love with Tresa. She left the store only to return 30 minutes later with her boyfriend for a formal introduction. Tresa melted his heart too. Later that evening there was a wonderful application for adoption from this fantastic couple.

Tresa, who is now called Trinity, lives with her forever family which includes two other dogs and a feisty kitty that will box with her. I have had the privilege of keeping in touch with Trinity's forever family and have seen her thrive and grow into a wonderful pet. Trinity may have had a rough start in life, but she is living the good life now.

## CAT'S CORNER

*Declawing Cats*

By Danielle Wallis

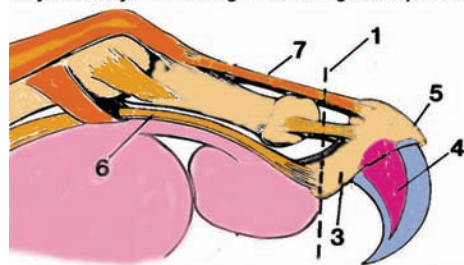
***An Onychectomy is also known as "declawing" and is an operation to surgically remove the claws and part of the toes, most often of a household cat. This surgery involves amputating all or part of the distal phalanx, or end bone of the animal's toes.***

Declawing is a procedure that should not be undertaken lightly. It is major surgery and can lead to problems, not only for the cat but for the owner too. Prior to considering this procedure it is important to ask your veterinarian pertinent questions to understand potential side effects while keeping your cat's best interests at heart.

Some cat owners believe that declawing their feline will prevent or stop unwanted behavior, such as scratching. Quite often the caregiver is not prepared for the side effects an Onychectomy can cause. Here are some examples:

- Any surgery carries the **risk of being under anesthetic** for extended periods of time. Since declawing is an elective surgery done primarily for the convenience of the owner, this risk should be considered.
- Declawed cats can become **insecure as a result of losing their first line of defense**. To compensate, a cat may become a biter or at the very least shy.
- Due to the painful nature of the surgery, using the litter box can be very uncomfortable for some cats. Owners who have had their beloved pet declawed may **see litter box avoidance**. The trade off is that the owner has saved their treasured items from the cat's claws but they now experience soiled rugs and repugnant odors wafting through the house.
- Some people declaw their animals to prevent a child from being scratched. Generally a cat will only scratch if provoked, so it is very important to teach your child to respect the animals in your household. Learning respect is a more healthy strategy for both the child and the cat in the long run.

Onychectomy: "Declawing" - Feline Digital Amputation



1. Line of Amputation; 3. Third Phalanx; 4. Unguis Process; 5. Unguis Crest; 6. Flexor Tendon; 7. Dorsal Ligaments - are all severed and amputated in the declawing surgery. Declawing involves 10 separate and painful amputations.

Adapted from: Textbook of Small Animal Surgery 2nd ed; Slatter D. W.B. Saunders Co.

**CONTACT US**

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Visit our [website](#)

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

**CAT'S CORNER** (continued)

Here are some helpful tips from [Cats International](#) on how to prevent cats from scratching furniture:

- Get two, **good quality scratching posts** and put them in high traffic areas. The posts should be at least 32" high and sturdy enough not to topple over. They should be covered in "sisal material or rope" and placed in "front of problem areas." The cat should then be praised for good behavior when she uses the post.
- **Trim your cat's claws** regularly.
- **Spraying water** at your feline will discourage unwanted behavior and is often recommended.
- Cats dislike anything sticking to their paws so you can use **double-sided tape** as an inexpensive way to deter the cat.
- Cats also detest perfumes. A good trick is to **place an air freshener** in or around the area where your cat likes to scratch.

Declawing cats has the potential to be a controversial issue. Kalamazoo Animal Rescue strongly urges adoptive families to investigate this elective surgical procedure. To see KAR's Declaw Statement please [click here](#).

For other views on declawing cats, check out these additional resources:

- [Top Reasons NOT to Declaw](#)
- [Understanding Declawing](#)
- [Declawing Your Cat](#)
- [Saving Your Couch](#)

**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.