

KALAMAZOO ANIMAL RESCUE

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OUR SPONSORS



KAR Friends

September 2009

Dear Reader,

Our feature story is all about adopting older cats and dogs. Mature pets make wonderful companions and we provide several reasons why.

This month's Doggie Den offers tips on how to select a boarding facility. Our Cat's Corner addresses Trap-Neuter-Return programs and how effective they are at controlling feral cat populations. .

Danielle Wallis
KAR Marketing Coordinator

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ADOPT AN OLDER CAT OR DOG

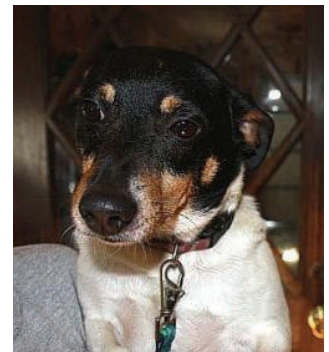
Adult Pets Need Homes Too...Here's Why

By Danielle Wallis

When people start planning to adopt a new animal, they often think about getting a kitten or puppy without fully understanding the work involved in training them, or giving thought to the potentially easier and happier option of adopting an older pet. No matter the age of the animal, they all deserve a second chance. By adopting an older pet, you'll be making a statement about how you and your family value life at all ages.

One of the biggest concerns people have about adopting an older animal is that they cannot understand why someone else "threw" their pet away. There must have been something wrong with the animal or the pet did something wrong. Kalamazoo Animal Rescue hears many reasons why animals are handed over and, in most cases; the pet is not at fault. An older dog or cat can come into the rescue for a number of reasons, including death of a guardian; no time for the pet; a new baby arrived; the family is moving or relocating to a place where pets are not allowed, or someone developed allergies to the animal.

Another common misconception people have is that an older dog or cat will experience health issues that require costly medical treatment, but this is not necessarily true. An "older" pet is generally defined as an animal over the age of three. In the case of dogs, some can live as long as 15 or more years and cats have been known to live well into their twenties. Whatever the age, it is important to have a



OUR SPONSORS

**ADOPT AN OLDER CAT OR DOG** (continued)

veterinarian thoroughly check the animal prior to adoption so you know that your new family member is in good health. Keep in mind that younger pets also incur medical expenses: annual vet visits and vaccinations, spaying or neutering, not to mention accidental injuries from being young and reckless!

Here are some great reasons for adopting an older pet:

- Kittens and puppies have lots of energy whereas older animals are usually calmer.
- A cat or dog over the age of three will have learned important behaviors like potty training, basic commands or which furniture is not allowed to be covered in fur!
- You will be able to tell if the cat is going to be good around dogs or the dog will be good around cats. You'll also be able to see how well the animal interacts with children and what size, shape and color they are going to be.
- You will know what you are getting to minimize surprises. And, the bond between you will be just as strong as if you had raised the pet from a kitten or puppy.
- Mature animals are the perfect option for senior citizens and owning a pet yields health benefits too! The cat or dog will be past the annoying kitten and puppy stages, have lower energy levels and enjoy being someone's companion.

Interested in an older pet? Be sure to check out KAR's [Senior Cats Companion Program](#) and the [cats looking for companions](#). KAR also has several older dogs waiting for their forever homes:

- [Marley](#) is a five-year old Labrador and Dalmatian mix
- [Buster](#) is a five-year old Rat Terrier and Jack Russell Terrier mix
- [Vivian](#) is an eight-year old Husky and German Shepherd mix

LOVE KNOWS NO AGE. Anyone who has adopted a rescued animal knows the wealth of love received on a daily basis from your furry friend. You also know how much your pet comes to see you as their human savior, never forgetting that you opened your heart and home to them.

Additional Resources:

- [What age dog is right for you?](#)
- [Adopting an older dog](#)
- [Older Americans and mature pets](#)
- [Adult cat versus kitten](#)
- [If you're really brave adopt a kitten](#)

SPECIAL EVENT

Dinner and Silent Auction

This year's annual dinner and silent auction is just around the corner...November 15th! This is KAR's biggest fundraising event and the money generated will supplement veterinary expenses and other costs associated with rescuing dogs and cats in need until they find their forever homes.



UPCOMING EVENTS

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



DINNER AND SILENT AUCTION (continued)

Please help. Here is our *wish list* of items to have for the silent auction:

- Gift cards or certificates to shopping venues, restaurants, spas or salons, sporting goods stores, etc.
- Gift certificates for services that you or your company offers, such as plumbing, electrical or carpentry skills; IT or computer support, house cleaning, lawn and yard care, dog training, pet sitting, veterinary care, etc.
- Gift baskets containing beverage selections, sweet treats, cheeses, gardening supplies, bath salts and soaps, etc.
- Tickets to plays, concerts and sporting events
- Handmade items that include afghans, baby/toddler blankets, clothing, baby items, etc.
- Home décor and household items like antiques, small appliances, artwork and collectibles
- Gadgets: iPod/MP3 player, portable GPS navigator, digital camera, etc.
- Toys for kids: bicycles, wagons, Razors, skateboards, Barbie dolls, etc.
- And, any other auction item ideas you may have.

If you have:

- An item you would like to donate, or
- Would like to volunteer to help with the dinner and silent auction

Please contact Dusty Reeds at (269) 629-9454. Thank you for supporting KAR!

BEHIND THE SCENES

Volunteer of the Month, Joanne Powell

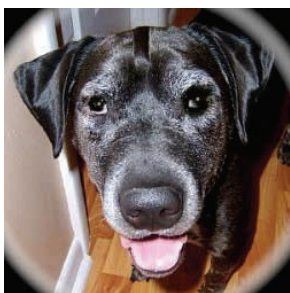
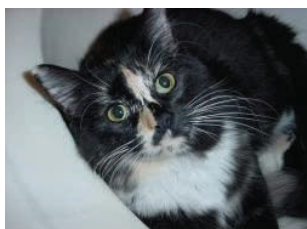
Joanne has been a volunteer with KAR since 2001. Her involvement started when the rescue opened its store in Maple Hill Mall and Channel 3 did a news story and talked to several volunteers. Prior to joining KAR Joanne did rescue work on her own, paying for the expenses herself, but it was very expensive to continue doing this. She is also a founding member of [Save Our Strays](#), a volunteer group working with Kalamazoo Animal Services. For three years she took pictures of adoptable animals that were used on Petfinder.com.



Joanne has served the rescue as a volunteer coordinator, a store volunteer, intake person, adoption follow up person, transport person, and she served on the first core team. Joanne was one of the volunteers that introduced temperament testing and microchipping to KAR.

As a volunteer, Joanne fostered adult cats and kittens but when she developed allergies she had to stop. The thing she loves about fostering is knowing that she makes a difference. After cats, Joanne started fostering German Shepherds but switched to pit bulls when she became aware of the over population and stigma

PETS OF THE MONTH

MarleyLittle C**BEHIND THE SCENES** (continued)

surrounding these fabulous dogs (and the fact that she hates to vacuum and they hardly shed).

Joanne has fostered dogs that people said she would never be able to find homes for—large, adult pit bulls with mange that looked awful—and the people that adopted these dogs still remain friends of hers. Some of these folks joined KAR as dog foster volunteers themselves. Joanne has fostered close to 150 pits bulls, over 200 dogs in general.

Being part of KAR has presented many opportunities for Joanne to network with other rescue people and she has made many lasting friendships. She also enjoys the chance to do community education for pit bulls. According to Joanne, “People that never would have considered a pit bull have adopted from me and they have become advocates for the breed too.”

Joanne loves doing rescue work and feels empty if she doesn't have a couple strays in her home reminding her what it's all about—that we have to give something back before our time on earth is through. Joanne has been a critical care nurse for 20 years. While her profession is important work, according to Joanne, “it does not compare to the satisfaction of saving animals because they cannot speak for themselves.”

DOGGIE DEN*Tips for Selecting a Boarding Facility*

By The Humane Society of the United States

Finding a good place to leave your beloved pet while vacationing can be a stressful situation. With the help of one of our sponsors, [Camp Ravenwood Kennels](#), we have provided some tips on selecting a kennel for your dog (or cat) so that you can relax, have peace of mind and enjoy your time away.

**How to find a good kennel?**

The best way to identify facilities to consider is to ask for referrals—check with friends and neighbors; your veterinarian, groomer or dog trainer; and even the local animal shelter or humane society for their recommendations.

Also, find out whether your state requires boarding kennel inspections. If it does, make sure the kennel you are considering displays a license or certificate showing that the kennel meets mandated standards. In the State of Michigan, the county enforces state laws, issues kennel licenses and conducts annual kennel inspections.

Once you have the names of a few facilities, confirm whether they can accommodate your pet for specific dates and can address their special needs (if any). If you're satisfied, schedule a visit to check them out, tour the facility, and determine whether it meets your expectations.

What to look for?

On your visit to the kennel, ask to see all the places your pet may be taken. Here is a list of items to pay attention to:

- Does the facility look and smell clean?
- Is there sufficient ventilation and natural light in the boarding areas?

KAR LINKS

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



Make a [DONATION!](#)

DOGGIE DEN (continued)

- Is a comfortable temperature maintained?
- Are there provisions for keeping the pet comfortable in winter (heating) as well as summer (air conditioning)?
- Is a comfortable temperature maintained? Are there provisions for keeping the pet comfortable in winter as well as summer?
- Does the staff seem knowledgeable and caring?
- Are pets required to be current on their vaccinations, including rabies and the vaccine for canine kennel cough (Bordetella)? Such a requirement helps protect your animal as well as others.
- Does each dog have their own adequately sized indoor-outdoor run or an indoor run and a schedule for exercise?
- Are outdoor runs and exercise areas protected from wind, rain and snow?
- Are resting boards and bedding provided to allow dogs to rest off the concrete floor?
- Are cats housed separately from dogs?
- Is there enough space for cats to move around comfortably?
- Is there enough space between the litter box and food bowls?
- How often are pets fed?
- Can the owner bring a pet's special food?
- Can the pet have toys and treats during the stay?
- What veterinary services are available?
- Are other services available such as grooming, training or bathing?
- How are rates calculated?
- Are discounts available when kenneling multiple pets?

How to prepare the pet?

Be sure your dog knows basic commands and is socialized around other people and animals. If your pet has an aggression problem or is otherwise unruly, they may not be a good candidate for boarding. Before taking your animal to the kennel, make sure they are current on vaccinations. It's also a good idea to accustom your pet to longer kennel stays by first boarding them while you go away on a short trip, such as a weekend excursion. Some kennels offer doggie daycare that can be used to accustom your pet to the boarding experience. These options allow you to work out any problems before boarding the animal for an extended period .

Before you head for the kennel, double-check that you have your pet's medications and special food (if any), your veterinarian's phone number, and contact information for you and a local emergency backup.

When you arrive at the boarding facility, remind the staff about any medical or behavior problems they have, such as a history of epilepsy or fear of thunder. After the check-in process, hand your pet to a staff member, say good-bye and leave. Avoid long, emotional partings, which may upset your pet. Finally, have a good trip, knowing your pet is in good hands and will be happy to see you when you return.

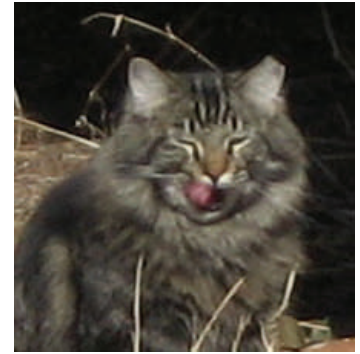
Additional Resources:

- [Choosing a boarding kennel](#)
- [Finding the perfect kennel](#)
- [Kalamazoo County kennel information](#)

CAT'S CORNER*Dealing With The Feral Cat Population*

By Danielle Wallis

"TNR (Trap Neuter Return) is the humane, non-lethal method of population control for outdoor cats and kittens that is more effective than the traditional method of trap and kill and is more reflective of a caring society." [Alley Cat Allies](#)



TNR is a program that has been in existence for almost 40 years. Although unclear, it is said to have started in Europe before being adopted by a nationwide network, Alley Cat Allies here in the United States in the 1980's. TNR is an alternative to killing and exterminating the feral population of cats, in hope that over time their numbers will significantly decline.

Feral or wild domesticated cats are the offspring of unfixed pet cats who became strays and have gone on to have offspring. The kittens become feral when they stay unfixed and under socialized with humans. The cats live outdoors in colonies and start reproducing at four to five months of age, resulting in large populations of wild, feral cats who are unable to be re-homed if captured. This cycle goes on and on. There is somewhere in the region of 60 million cats nationwide. TNR is one way that has proven, time and time again, to be successful at combating this issue.

According to the [Humane Society of the United States](#), "Trap-Neuter-Return is a strategy to help improve the health and quality of life for feral cats and to prevent more cats from being born into this dangerous and difficult existence."

After a feral cat has been spayed or neutered, the cat is screened for FeLV (feline leukemia virus) and FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus). It is also given a rabies vaccine and then the animal is returned to its original colony where it can live out a full, healthy and non-reproductive life. TNR has proven to be the least costly and most efficient and humane way of stabilizing feral cat populations. Ear-tipping, as shown in the picture, is universally recognized as a sign that the cat has been TNRed.

It is imperative that we all try to help this situation. If you are feeding a cat outside and it appears friendly, you should take the right steps to re-home the animal, or at the very least have it spayed or neutered before it is too late. If the cat is still unfriendly after the third or fourth day, then you should look to find local TNR programs in your area that can assist you.

The people or groups who do TNR will make sure the cats have some form of shelter and someone willing to feed them before they are rereleased. [Click here](#) to get helpful advice on how to conduct TNR.

If we begin by seeing the feral cat population as a universal problem to fix, one where everyone's help and support is needed, in time there will no longer be a problem.

Additional Resources;

- [Feral Feline](#)
- [TNR Video](#) (YouTube)
- [Paws Chicago](#)
- [TNR History](#)
- [AlleyCat.org](#)

CONTACT US

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Visit our [website](#)

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

FELINE PHOTO ALBUM

Kristy has been with Kalamazoo Animal Rescue for a few short months. Since joining, she has really taken to fostering and created a [photo blog](#) of the felines in her care...Queen Moo Moo and her seven kitties. Initially they were very sick and in a bad way but that didn't deter Kristy. It is great to see how some foster parents take advertising into their own hands to get their foster animals more exposure. Thank you Kristy we are so pleased to have you on the team!



Kristy is making every effort to ensure all these felines find new homes—King Julian and Tigartan have found families. Check out these links to learn more about [Queen Moo Moo](#) and her other kittens: [Marty](#), [Pongo](#), [Kung Fu Panda](#), [Happy Feet](#) and [Willy](#).

KAR WISH LIST ~ SEPTEMBER

If you can help or know someone who might like to help, Kalamazoo Animal Rescue is in need of the following items:

- Scoopable cat litter (\$10)
- Cardboard cat scratchers (\$6)
- "Purina One" dry cat food (\$12)
- Large litter boxes (\$12)
- Litter box scoopers (\$2)



If you are interested in donating a *wish list* item, you may bring it to an [adoption event](#) or place it in our bin at Pet Supplies Plus, 5230 S. Westnedge Avenue (across from Meijer). KAR also welcomes monetary [donations](#) that will allow us to purchase these items.

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.