

# KALAMAZOO ANIMAL RESCUE

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## KAR Friends

December 2009

### Dear Reader,

Happy Holidays! While Christmas is a joyous time of year, the hustle and bustle of the season can weigh folks down. Our feature article shares six ways animals can help to reduce the stress in our busy lives.

This month's Doggie Den profiles Paws With A Cause and the extraordinary work they do to train assistance dogs. Be sure to check out Cat's Corner for two rescue stories and for more information on declawing cats.

Is there a dog or cat issue you would like to see in *KAR Friends*? We are interested in knowing what topics you would like to see covered in the New Year. Please [email](#) us your suggestions.

Danielle Wallis  
KAR Marketing Coordinator

Lynn Bolhuis  
*KAR Friends* Editor

## SIX WAYS ANIMALS CAN REDUCE STRESS

By Stanley Popovich

Dogs and cats are a great source of companionship and love, but did you know they can also help to reduce stress, anxiety and fear. Here are six ways that pets can better enable you to cope with everyday life.



1. Whether you have a dog or cat, or help animals at your local shelter, spending time with a pet helps you feel better. Talking to your pet can also help to get your problems out in the open rather than keeping them locked up inside of you. Pets are good company for all of us and can prevent the fear of being alone when experiencing troubling circumstances.
2. Helping dogs, cats and other people through community service is a great way to overcome anxiety. There are many animals that can benefit from your time and talents. Doing something to help animals in need will give you a sense of pride and accomplishment, and can also lead to friendships with like-minded people.
3. Sitting around and accomplishing nothing will not make things any better, whether it's dealing with the fear of being alone or something else. Animals provide outlets for being active and focusing your energy and thoughts on them, instead of worrying about things that may or may not happen. This can help to prevent you from worrying about your current situation.
4. One of the ways to manage stress is to challenge negative thinking with positive thoughts. Animals help us relax and they allow us to focus on the good in our lives.

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**SIX WAYS ANIMALS CAN REDUCE STRESS** (continued)

This, in turn, will help us to focus positively on any situation. An added benefit is that playing with a pet can help reduce our fears and anxieties in any situation.

5. Animals offer a diversion to get your mind off of your problems. A person could do an activity with their pet that will give them a fresh perspective on things. Spending time with your dog or cat will give you an energy boost to do other things. Most importantly, playing with animals gives you self-confidence to cope so that you can get through the day.
6. Pets are 100 percent faithful and will be by your side through good and bad times. Everyone deals with anxieties, stresses and other life problems, and it is during those times when you need someone by your side. Your pet will never leave you regardless of how bad your problems may be.

Remember, there are many ways that animals can reduce the stresses of everyday life. However, they are not a substitute for getting help when you really need to talk to someone: a counselor, clergyman or other professional. The next time you feel stressed; spend some time with your pet. You may just discover that you are better able to cope with your worries.

*About the Author*

Stan Popovich is the author of "A Layman's Guide to Managing Fear Using Psychology, Christianity and Non-Resistant Methods," an easy to read book that presents a general overview of techniques that are effective in managing persistent fears and anxieties. [Click here](#) for additional information.

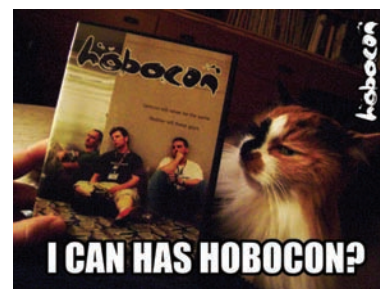
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If you don't have a pet but want to spend time with animals, consider dog or cat-sitting for a family member or friend; or offer to walk a neighbor's dog. There are many other opportunities right here in our community. Contact the [Kalamazoo Humane Society](#) if you are interested in volunteering at the animal shelter or to find other ways to interact with dogs and cats; and KAR is always looking for [volunteers](#) too.

**SPECIAL EVENT**

*Adoption Event and Movie Premiere*

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue is teaming up with Jason Slingerland, Robert Couch and Wilhelm Rumpf, three local filmmakers, to present the first charity showing of [Hobocon](#). The documentary follows this threesome as they work their way through one of the largest gaming conventions in the nation, GenCon.



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

A portion of all movie ticket and onsite DVD sales will go directly to KAR. Tell your friends and join us on the 28th for this premiere and adoption event!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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



## BEHIND THE SCENES

*Volunteer of the Month, Anne Pancella*

Anne joined KAR three years ago after meeting a gentleman who had some money he wanted to donate to help animals. She proposed to him the idea of starting a program to place senior cats with senior people. Anne approached Kalamazoo Animal Rescue to see if they would house the program if she secured the funding and managed it. KAR agreed so Anne recruited her friend, Nancy Dolan, to join KAR at the same time and help her out.



In March 2007, [Senior Cat Companions](#) was born. Since its inception, SCC has rescued over 100 senior cats and placed over 90, many with senior citizens. The program subsidizes adoption fees for those seniors who need it, and provides other services such as delivery of cats, and a guarantee to take a cat back if the senior can no longer care for it. SCC works to help both cats and people, as older cats have trouble competing against younger cats and kittens for homes. [Betsy](#), [Tiger Willy](#), [Annabelle](#) and [Smokey](#) (pictured above with Anne) are wonderful cats in this program currently looking for homes. Click on their names to learn more about them.

In her three years with KAR, Anne has fostered many cats, young and old alike. She has also been involved with training new cat foster volunteers and helping to run the regular cat operations. Anne has been KAR's treasurer for the past two years, handling many of the business aspects of the rescue and organizing the fundraising appeals that go out twice a year.

Kalamazoo has been Anne's home since 1996 when she married a member of the physics faculty at WMU. She and her husband live in the Winchell neighborhood, and have four cats of their own.

## DOGGIE DEN

*Paws With A Cause*

Paws With A Cause® trains assistance dogs nationally for people with disabilities and they provide lifetime team support, which encourages independence. PAWS® promotes awareness through education.

In 1979, Paws With A Cause, first named Ears for the Deaf®, was born when Michael Sapp, Sr. offered to help a friend. Marty Jansen and his wife, Dianne, wanted to know if he would train their Cairn Terrier, Crystal, as a hearing dog. Soon, other deaf/hard of hearing people showed up in the Jansen home each week asking if they could have their dog trained.



In 1979, guide dog schools made up the assistance dog community. They operated with residential team training programs but the service and hearing dog field was in its infancy. Only a few organizations existed to train dogs for the majority of the disabled population, which includes individuals with severely limiting disabilities. Approximately 97 percent of all people with disabilities are not blind; they are physically challenged in some other way and very few dogs were being trained to work with them.

## PETS OF THE MONTH

ViolaValentine

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

**DOGGIE DEN** (continued)

Paws With A Cause regularly visits 33 shelters in nine states. In the past five years, they have found a significant reduction in the number of adoptable dogs entering these facilities. Last year, they tested a total of 1,235 dogs in shelters. Only 80 of these dogs passed their temperament testing and went on for further evaluation. The good news is the ones that did not make their program are more adoptable due to their experience with PAWS.

A Paws With A Cause service/guide dog can help a person who is blind or visually impaired and has a physical disability requiring the use of a manual wheelchair for independent travel. A service/guide dog is trained to do both service dog and guide dog tasks. Service dog tasks may include opening and closing doors, turning lights on and off, dressing and removing articles of clothing, picking up and retrieving objects and pulling a wheelchair. Should the client fall, the dog can even be trained to act as a brace so the person can regain position. Guide dog tasks involve curb work, being sensitive to changes in elevation, guiding around clearance issues (pedestrians, overheads, etc.) and guiding a person safely around and through street traffic.

PAWS is also the largest provider of service dogs trained to deal with seizure disorders. A dog can be trained to (among other things) push life-alerts, help and/or comfort a person during a seizure, and get help or the phone for the client. Although they do not profess to train dogs to detect seizures, several of their seizure dogs have, after several years with a client, for reasons still not fully understood, developed the ability to alert their master of an oncoming seizure.

People with multiple disabilities typically rely on assistance from family members, volunteers or paid personal aides. A service/guide dog could help them achieve greater independence and enhance their quality of life. A service/guide dog may enable them to do the following:

- Increase their ability to travel independently
- Decrease the client's need for outside personal care
- Increase the client's participation in vocational/employment activities
- Expand the client's involvement in community and social events
- Increase the client's ability to function more self-sufficiently

A service/guide dog would be trained to assist the client with daily living activities and to guide them when they choose to travel. A PAWS service/guide dog will give a client the potential to maximize their independence and mobility through training techniques and procedures designed specifically for the client.

To find out more about PAWS, [click here](#) to visit their website.

**CAT'S CORNER***Declawed Cat Happy Tails*

By Danielle Wallis

This past July, we wrote an article on [declawing cats](#) in *KAR Friends*. We would like to add a few more thoughts on this topic and tell you about two declawed cats that recently came into the rescue.

When a potential adopter comes to us and expresses the need to have an adult cat that is declawed, KAR recommends that they consider one of the cats we have in the rescue who are already declawed, rather than declaw a cat that still has his or her claws.

## KAR LINKS

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



Make a [DONATION!](#)

## CAT'S CORNER (continued)

Although the vast majority of cats in Kalamazoo Animal Rescue are not declawed (and we hope the cats adopted out will not be declawed), this year we brought in over 35 declawed cats, mostly strays. Why so many? KAR thinks it is important to get these cats into the rescue for these reasons:

1. Declawed cats have lost their first defense against predators or other cats.
2. They have fewer ways to escape danger, such as by climbing trees.
3. They have no easy way of catching food, like mice or birds for instance.

Declawed cats are therefore destined to have a much harder time on the streets, and they stand a greater risk of being injured or of starving to death.

But, there is hope for some. One lucky fellow, Bagheera, came into the rescue in September 2009. He was a stray that had all four paws declawed by a previous owner. Bagheera was being fed by a kind woman in a Kalamazoo trailer park for nearly two months. KAR was aware that he was in need of rescuing, but we had no foster home space at the time. Bagheera slept under the woman's porch each night, scared and defenseless. The lady stayed in touch with the rescue and eventually space opened up for him to come into a foster home.



Bagheera was an older, black cat so his chances of a quick adoption seemed slim. The kind people at Eighth Street Veterinary Clinic told one of their clients about him. The clinic had treated him when he was first rescued and they were amazed at how loving he was, and how willing he was to trust humans again. The client and her husband contacted the rescue and met him a few days later. It was love at first sight!

Bagheera (aka Bags and Kittybaby) now lives happily with his new family in a large house. He gets along great with the other cat and Saint Bernards in the household. According to his new family, he is the "easiest cat to come into our household" and Bags settled in right away. "We received the best present we could get for the year," and Bagheera gets to sleep with his human brother each night, content in knowing that he is loved and safe once more. This is one of the reasons so many of us foster. It is an amazing feeling when you are able to match animals with people and know it is a commitment for life, and the animals are so thankful to have a home.

Noel (previously named Snowball) was rescued from Animal Services in the nick of time by one of our cat foster volunteers moments before she was scheduled to be euthanized. She is a very friendly, declawed, all white cat. Noel isn't posted to the KAR website yet. You may [click here](#) to learn a little more about her, or call us at (269) 226-8570 if you are interested in giving her a new home for the holidays.



**CONTACT US**

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue  
 P.O. Box 3295  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49003  
 Phone: (269) 226-8570  
 Visit our [website](#)  
[Questions or suggestions](#) for the newsletter?

**FUNDRAISING SUCCESSES**

The November Dinner and Silent Auction was a rousing success! This year's event netted \$15,052 to KAR. This money will be used to help cover veterinary care, food and other expenses we incur while animals are in our care.

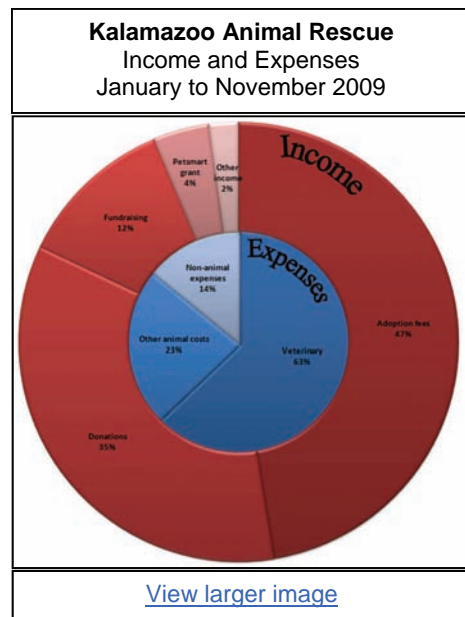


Our special fall appeal mailing generated almost \$8,000 in donations. Kalamazoo Animal Rescue greatly appreciates the financial support we receive which enables us to continue saving dogs and cats in our area. **Thank you!**

**KAR WISH LIST ~ DECEMBER**

Did you know that KAR's adoption fees only cover a little more than half of the direct animal care costs we incur for a dog or cat while it is in the rescue? It's true. We rely on fundraising and donations to make up the difference, as well as to keep dog and cat adoption fees affordable. Without donations, KAR would have to double adoption fees – the cost to adopt a cat would be over \$200 and a dog over \$400. As a result,

many people could not afford to adopt a new pet so more animals would be euthanized or continue to suffer as strays.



As we go to press, 213 dogs and 462 cats have been placed into new homes in 2009. The contributions we received this year made these happy endings possible. We hope you will consider making a tax-deductible donation before the end of the year. Your financial gift will enable KAR to continue rescuing cats and dogs in our community who need a second chance.

If you would like to help, you may make an online donation through our website, [click here](#), or you can mail a check to:

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue  
 P.O. Box 3295  
 Kalamazoo, MI 49003

**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.