

Solving Pet Behavior Issues

By Karren Jensen

Have you ever been completely mystified by some behavior your pet has suddenly and unexpectedly showed? Sometimes our pets surprise us, and the changes seem to come out of nowhere to disrupt our lives. How do we cope? You may find yourself needing to be a bit like Sherlock Holmes as he solves a mystery, making observations and trying to find explanations. There are some logical steps you can pursue to help in this search for answers, however. Ready? Grab your deerstalker cap and your large magnifying glass and let's start sleuthing!

In general, our pets want our approval and love, so a negative change in behavior that causes your animal companion to lose your approval is distressing to both of you. Sometimes things that we take for granted can be very stressful for animals who crave stability and routine. Here are some suggestions to assist in your search for answers to pet behavior issues and some tips for dealing with them.

- One very common and obvious reason for a behavioral change for the worse is a new health issue. A great place to start your analysis of the root cause for a modification in your pet's normal behavior is with a visit to your veterinary healthcare

professional. Sudden aggression or other negative behaviors may indicate the existence of health problems. Your veterinarian can help you explore the possibilities and rule out potential causes.

- Ask yourself whether some change in your normal routine has impacted your pet. For example, a new pet added to the household, a new family member, or a change in your daily routine will cause stress for your pet. Be prepared to give plenty of reassurance to current pets when adding a new pet (or child or change in household routine) to the mix. Sometimes territories must be revised and a pecking order established all over again when someone new comes into the family. Large doses of love and attention will help your four-legged friend adjust to the new situation.
- Never physically punish a pet who is exhibiting objectionable behavior. Striking a pet will be interpreted by him or her as an attack rather than as discipline given with love. If your pet feels frightened of you, your influence will be diminished and the negative behavior is likely to grow worse. Your pet understands a timeout or withdrawal of attention for bad behavior but

physical punishment is just frightening, as the person they depend on suddenly and inexplicably becomes an enemy.

- Reward good behavior in your canine or feline friend. Praise, treats, and other coveted responses from you are a great way to reinforce desired behaviors. Be patient, though, because even the most intelligent and intuitive animal has a learning curve and needs time to learn and understand your expectations.
- Be consistent. Always discourage an unwanted behavior—don't give it a pass sometimes and a negative response at other times. Inconsistency causes confusion and is likely to result in frustration for both you and your furry friend.
- Finally, invest some time in researching the behavior you want to prevent and see what the experts have to say about solving the problem. There is plenty of wisdom to be gleaned from the advice of specialists in animal behavior and also from consulting your veterinarian about problems and solutions.

Your furry companion wants to give and receive love but needs you to understand how a situation appears from their perspective. A little detective work on your part can help to avoid misunderstandings and lead to peace and harmony in your home. 

Munchkin: Volunteering at KAR and Taking Home the Work

By Kimberly Jako

I started volunteering for KAR after meeting the wonderful volunteer who took in two two-day-old orphaned kittens I found in the parking lot where I work. I decided that I would like to make a difference in animals' lives as well so I started volunteering at Kitty Kamp. I often heard from friends and family, "I don't know how you do it! I'd want to take them all home!" I would explain that they will all get the best home for them and that they are well taken care of and loved in the meantime, so it isn't as hard as some might think. Then Munchkin happened.

I had been volunteering Sunday mornings at Kitty Kamp for over a year and fell in love with scores of cats and kittens but had resisted the urge to bring them home. When Munchkin arrived, he wasn't in the best of shape. He had goopy eyes and a goopy nose, and he had to be on several medicines. He was full grown but quite small, his head always tilted to one side, and he had chronic upper respiratory issues. But no matter how bad Munchkin felt, he was still sweet and loving and he wouldn't hold it against you when you gave him medicine. He quickly

became adored by the volunteers.

Then one day I came in for my shift and Munchkin was gone; he had been adopted. I was happy for him but I missed him. As it turns out, that home wasn't the best fit for him so he came back to Kitty Kamp. I started talking about him to friends and family and showing them pictures. I think they all knew where this was heading and that he would have a forever home soon. With me.

As I drove home with him, he purred from his carrier the entire way. When we got into the house, and I put the carrier down, he strutted out and made himself right at home. He joins two senior cats and another KAR rescue around his age. They had heard about him and were only a little upset at his addition.

Munchkin has the purest heart I have ever known. All he knows is love. I have never heard him growl or hiss. Things just don't seem to faze him. He has a very loud purr and loves to give kisses. He loves every cat he meets; he befriended numerous cats at Kitty Kamp, and my cats grudgingly accept him. This summer I had two foster kittens, and



he doted on them. He would play with them, clean them, comfort them, cuddle with them, and sleep with them. I started referring to Munchkin as their foster mom.

If you pet him, he purrs. If you talk to him, he purrs. If you simply exist around him, he purrs. While I had three cats and didn't *need* any more, he has brought a lot of joy and love into my life. I'm thankful that volunteering at Kitty Kamp gave me the opportunity to meet and officially adopt him. 🐾

**Fostering saves lives.
Give it a try!**

About Us

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

KAR is dedicated to providing refuge to homeless, stray and abandoned cats and dogs in Kalamazoo and the surrounding communities.

Our volunteers give their time and energy to the efforts of rescuing animals and helping them to find permanent, committed and life-long homes.

Adopt

If you or someone you know is looking for a furry companion please consider adopting from KAR. Animals live in private foster homes until adopted. To see the available cats and dogs, visit www.kalamazooanimalrescue.org

Connect with KAR



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KAR Friends

Looking for great tips and information on caring for pets? **KAR Friends** is a monthly eNewsletter providing helpful pet-related articles, heartwarming rescue stories, news about upcoming events, and special offers from area sponsors. Previous issues are archived on the KAR website. To receive your own personalized copy, go to our website and subscribe today!



Lincoln and Laci

By Kara Harmsen

An unhappy and too-common beginning, Animal Services was called to seize several pit bulls, a male German Shepherd, and a female German Shepherd from a property. The female was pregnant and after she was placed in her cage at the shelter she went into labor. Animal Services called KAR, as they were concerned the pups might be crushed in the cage or at the least exposed to disease. Although the mother was underweight and heart-worm positive, much to everyone's surprise she

delivered 12 German Shepherd/Redbone Coonhound pups!

A couple found the pups online at KAR and came all the way from Indiana twice to see them. Since they were first-time dog owners,



Kathy G. (KAR foster mom for the pups) suggested they wait a couple weeks before deciding to adopt a second puppy. They decided to provide a forever home to two of the adorable little ones (then known as Einstein and Maci) and renamed to Lincoln and Laci.

A few years have passed now and the family says the dogs are still just the best. Lincoln and Laci are patient and loving with everyone. Two more human kids have been added to the family and the dogs are wonderful with them. Lincoln finally stopped growing and topped out at 120 lbs., while Laci grew to about 75 lbs. The family thanks KAR for all the hard work and love provided to that big litter of pups! 🐾

Harding's New Rewards Program

Earn Money for KAR When You Shop

Harding's Friendly Markets has a new community rewards program to support organizations like KAR based on in-store purchases. The old program entailed using the eScrip Community Card. Now, all you need to do is complete the online registration, select your favorite charity, and then enter your 10-digit phone number during checkout. Participation is as easy as 1-2-3:

1. Go to the Harding's website

(www.hardings.com) and select eCoupons.

2. Go to My Profile by clicking the head icon on the far right corner.
3. Click Community Rewards and select a charitable organization, like Kalamazoo Animal Rescue, and then click Add Community.

Shop and earn money for KAR at no cost to you! The next time you are at Harding's, enter your 10-digit phone number on the pin pad during checkout. No card

required. The best part, Harding's will send a donation check to the rescue four times a year.

Last year, KAR earned \$1,755. **Please sign up today to help KAR rescue and care for cats and dogs in need!**

P.S. There are many more ways that you can help us, many at no cost to you, ranging from searching and shopping on certain online sites to tracking exercise distance to donating much needed supply items. Check out the Donations page on the KAR website. 🐾

I want to support KAR and give hope to homeless animals. A tax-deductible donation of \$20 can buy dog or cat food, \$50 purchases vaccines, and \$100 pays for one dog or two cat spays.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please make your check payable to: Kalamazoo Animal Rescue Amount enclosed: \$ _____

Mail this coupon with your check to: Kalamazoo Animal Rescue • P.O. Box 3295 • Kalamazoo, MI 49003

Dinner Auction 2016

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At the Gull Lake Country Club
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3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Dinner and Entertainment begin at 5:00 p.m.

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Seating by reservation only!

Tickets are \$40 if reserved before
November 6th, \$45 if reserved after

Visa and MasterCard accepted.

For Reservations Call: 269-547-7277



Community Fundraising Efforts

A sincere thank you to these groups and businesses who held fundraisers to benefit KAR:

- Benevity Community Impact Fund
- Pfizer Foundation Matching Gifts
- Pfizer United Way
- Truist Co.

KAR would also like to extend special thanks to our many individual and family donors for their support.

Adoption Statistics

So far this year, KAR has placed 477 cats and 74 dogs into loving and permanent homes.