

KAR Friends

January 2013



Dear Reader,

Happy 2013! To get the New Year off to a good start, we are offering lots of tips and ideas for keeping your pets active over the winter months, and we have over 80 ways to keep indoor cats entertained.

This month, our animal spotlight shines on Dexter and China. These two Shih Tzus were rescued last spring from a puppy mill in Allegan County and are patiently waiting for the perfect forever home.

Danielle Wallis
Marketing Coordinator

Lynn Bolhuis
KAR Friends Editor

P.S. Check out the newly redesigned [KAR blog](#) where you'll find pictures of foster cats and dogs, happy adoption stories, and much, much more!

Winter Activities for Pets

By Katie Drenth

It's not always easy to stay active with your pet during the cold winter months, but veterinarians agree that it's important for your pet



to get daily exercise to maintain a healthy weight and to prevent boredom. While the snow may be falling and the temperatures chilly, here are some fun activities for you and your pet to do inside and out.

Indoor Fun

If the weather is keeping your pet indoors, interactive toys that dispense treats can keep your dog or cat entertained for hours. Laser pointers, catnip or feather toys can be great entertainment for felines. Recycle gift boxes to lure your kitten into playtime or construct a kitty mansion—if you're super crafty you can learn how to make a [cat playhouse](#)—where your cat can rule over its kingdom. Even setting up a perch near a window so your cat can see the birds at the bird feeder can provide tempting fun and bring out your feline's inner hunter. Teaching your pet a new trick,

IN THIS ISSUE...

[Winter Activities for Pets](#)

[Animal Spotlight ~ Dexter and China](#)

[Doggie Den ~ Collars and Leashes](#)

[Cat's Corner ~ 80+ Ways to Keep Indoor Cats Entertained](#)

[Holiday Fundraiser Success](#)

See Past Issues of
KAR Friends
HERE

hiding toys or treats around the house or even playing with a favorite toy can provide even more fun—just make sure breakables are safely tucked away for playtime.

Outdoor Fun

Are winter activities your thing? Chances are your dog will love playing in the snow too! Chasing snowballs or a brightly colored toy, choosing sides during an epic snowball battle, or helping the kids build a snowman is a great way for your canine to burn off extra energy. Just make sure your dog is always wearing current id—[ASPCA](#) cautions that more dogs get lost during winter months than any other season—and thoroughly wipe off your dog's paws, face, ears and coat to prevent ice or snow from being caught in places that may cause frostbite. If you're going to be outside for an extended period of time, you may want to consider dog boots that are specifically made for snow or a weather-proof coat—especially for short-haired dogs—to keep them warm and protected from the elements.

Social Activities

Social activities for both you and your animal companion can provide relief from winter boredom. Why not plan a get together for you and your friends with pets? You can bake [dog treats](#) or [cat treats](#) while enjoying some treats yourself. Not such a great baker? You and your puppy can head to the local pet store to pick up some favorite treats and supplies. A trip to the pet store is a great way to get relief from cabin fever and gives your dog an opportunity to explore new sights and smells and maybe even meet a new friend. You could also take a tip to a local dog park, like the [Bark Park](#), or head out for a calm winter walk—the [Celery Flats](#) provides a nicely maintained paved path year-round. You could even consider signing up for obedience or agility courses. The [Kalamazoo Kennel Club](#) and [Kalamazoo Dog Training Club](#) offer various courses from novice to advanced. By spring your canine companion might be able to sit, stay, rollover, jump hurdles and fly through tunnels like a champion.

Volunteer

The short days and cold temperatures can make the winter months a lonely time of year. If you're thinking about volunteering, you might want to think about including your pet by looking for therapy animal opportunities. An animal's unconditional love can brighten anyone's day. Consider volunteering at a local nursing home or hospital where therapy animals are allowed, like [Bronson Hospital](#). You and your animal companion could bring warmth, joy, and laughter to someone's day and a smile to their face.

No matter what activity you choose, just remember that the most important thing is spending time with your pet—that's all they really care about. Even curling up with a good book with a cat on your lap or settling in for a movie with a dog at your feet can provide quality time together.

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Behind the Scenes

Animal Spotlight ~ Dexter and China

By Kim Bournier

Most animals come into Kalamazoo Animal Rescue a few at a time. Perhaps a litter of kittens found in a barn, a dog strolling on the side of the street, or a couple of cats hanging around a back porch. April of 2012 brought with it a horrific finding: 353 dogs were found in a puppy mill in Allegan County. Many kind souls stepped up to help. KAR accepted 11 of these dogs.

Two of these dogs are still waiting for their forever homes. Meet China and Dexter who are both about three-years old. These bundles of love are purebred Shih Tzus.

[Dexter](#) is outgoing and playful. Due to the situation in the puppy mill, he lost an eye, but that hasn't slowed him down. It actually makes it appear that he is winking at you. Dexter has a passion for life, people and other animals. He enjoys keeping you in good humor, so perhaps he is winking at you.



[China](#) is a cuddle bug and is a bit shyer than Dexter. She also lost vision in her left eye. With a bit of kindness, she'll warm to you and curl her paws around your heart forever.

Although these dogs could go to separate homes, it would be an absolute delight to all of the volunteers at KAR to see this pair end up together forever. Is your home the perfect one for them?

UPCOMING ADOPTION EVENTS

- January 19th and 26th, Petco
- February 2nd and 16th, Petco
- February 9th, PetSmart

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

Doggie Den

Collars and Leashes – Part I

By Lynn Bolhuis

Leashes and collars are important devices for dog owners to use when managing and training their canine companions. When used together, a leash and collar keep Fido under control--especially when on a walk--or they enable your pup to participate in various dog-related activities. Some collars can even be used to correct unwanted behavior(s).

In Part I, we'll explore the various types of dog collars and when it is appropriate to use them.

Simple Collar – aka Flat Collar, Rolled Collar, Buckle Collar, Quick-Release Collar, Break-Away Collar



This category offers a plethora of options, styles and materials, including cotton, nylon and leather with either a buckle or plastic closure (like a luggage strap fastener). The main thing to remember about the simple collar is that it does not tighten on the dog's neck once it has been adjusted and fastened around the dog's neck. These collars typically include a D-ring for attaching identification tags or a leash.

Head Collar — aka Head Halter, Halti, Gentle Leader, Promise, Snoot Loop



This collar is typically used to correct dogs that pull. They are designed to prevent Fido from pulling on the leash by controlling his head while he walks at your side. The concept behind the design is that if you can control the head (or nose), the body will follow, helping you to walk the dog without them pulling. Unlike a muzzle, the head collar allows the pup to bark, eat and drink.

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Harness — aka Step-in Harness, Easy Walk Harness, Vest Harness, Halti Harness

A harness is not a collar but many people use them in an attempt to stop the dog from pulling which is contradictory to the purpose of their design. A harness is a device



appropriate if you want Fido to pull you, especially for activities like rollerblading, [bikejoring](#) or [skijoring](#) together. Harnesses are also used in various canine sports like sled dog racing, carting or weight pulling because they do not put pressure on the dog's neck.

A harness can be the appropriate tool for short-snouted pups like Pugs; for canines that have throat issues; and for toy or small breeds like Yorkshire Terriers and

Pomeranians. A vehicle harness is another twist on this device to ensure your pet's safety while traveling in the car.

Slip Collar — aka Choker, Choke Chain, Snake Chain, Show Collar

This type of collar tightens on a dog's neck when he pulls, or when the handler performs a jerk and release action to give a correction in response to an unwanted behavior. This device can be made of chain, braided nylon, cotton or leather. Slip collars often have "O" rings on either end, are used for training and also for showing dogs. A word of caution, use of a choke collar can cause injury to a canine's neck, trachea or back if not used properly.



Limited Slip Collar — aka Greyhound Collar, Martingale Collar

This device is a combination of a simple and slip collar. It works well with sight hounds that have a tendency to slip out of their collars,

PETS OF THE MONTH



[Rosie](#)



[Peanut](#)

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

such as Greyhounds, because their heads are smaller than their necks. The limited slip collar can be used with other breeds too. It is adjustable and will tighten around Fido's neck, applying even pressure, but it stops before actually constricting the neck like a choke chain.

Prong Collar — aka Pinch Collar, Plastic Prong Collar

This collar is used similarly to the choke collar, for training and to correct a dog's behavior by using a jerk and release motion. It should not be used if your dog pulls or yanks on the leash consistently. The collar has prongs linked together that dig into the dog's neck and pinch him if he pulls. It mimics a mother dog grabbing a pup by the scruff of the neck with her teeth. A prong collar can be an effective training tool if used and fitted properly. The collar should be adjusted by adding or removing prong links so that it fits snugly around the dog's neck, leaving half a finger space between the dog's neck and the prong tip.

Training Collar — aka eCollar, Electronic Collar, Shock Collar, Remote Collar, Bark Collar, Anti-Bark Collar

These devices are used for training and to correct unwanted behavior. Advocates often refer to this as a remote or eCollar while detractors call it a shock collar. There is a lot of controversy surrounding this device which delivers an electric shock, causing discomfort or pain to the dog when delivering the correction. Improper use of the electronic collar can destroy a dog's self-confidence.

Another twist on the eCollar is its use in tandem with wireless or underground fencing systems to keep Fido contained.

GPS Collar — A GPS unit is attached to a collar to assist you in locating your pet should he dart out the front door or escape your yard. While helpful in locating escape-artist canines, GPS collars are also used by hunters to keep tabs on the whereabouts of their hunting dog companions.

As you can see, there are a multitude of canine collars. The intent of this article is to convey information about them and how they might be used. The author and KAR are not advocating the use of one collar over another. A collar is a tool and, as such, its effectiveness is in direct proportion to it being used properly. The choice of which collar or harness to use with your pet is entirely up to you and the results you are trying to achieve.

In Part II, we'll explore the various leash options available to dog owners and what collar/leash combinations work best to help with certain situations.

Additional Resources

- [Different types of collars](#)
- [How to determine suitable collar width and length](#)
- [Dog harness](#)



Cat's Corner

80+ Ways to Keep Indoor Cats Entertained

By Katie Drenth



The safety of an indoor lifestyle means indoor cats will live up to two times longer than outdoor cats. However, it's important to prevent boredom by providing stimulation and recreation for your kitty to maintain good health. This is often known as "environmental enrichment" and it only takes a little bit of time and effort to ensure you have a happy feline—after all a happy kitty is a cat with

less behavioral problems. You can help prevent boredom by making sure your feline's environment is stimulating—windows to look out, places to hide, climb and scratch, safe toys to play with, entertaining activities and quality time with you.

Toys (Purchased and Household Items)

No one knows the wonder of a cardboard box, a paper bag, or a milk ring like a cat. Your kitty will love to hide, sleep and pounce on them. Throw a few toys in a bag or be daring and make an ultimate feline fortress out of cardboard boxes. You don't always have to buy toys, because sometimes things that aren't meant to be toys are the most fun!

1. Laser pointer
2. Mouse-shaped toys
3. Balls – ping pong balls, balls with a bell inside
4. Milk rings
5. Pens
6. Cardboard box
7. Paper bag
8. Crinkled holiday wrapping paper
9. Toilet paper or paper towel cores

Homemade Toys

1. [Feather toy](#) – interact with your furry feline and enjoy playtime together. You can purchase feather toys or make your own with simple materials—felt, string, jingle bell, jump rings—that your kitten is sure to love.
2. [Catnip socks](#) – repurpose clean old socks by filling them with catnip and then sewing them closed or tying a knot. These are a great craft for kids and a fun toy for kitty.
3. The [Cattail](#) and [Heart-Shaped Mice](#) are simple and easy projects for any sewer and provide detailed step-by-step instructions. One is so easy that it only requires one seam! Not only are they cute, but they'd make great gifts for your sewing-challenged cat-owner friends, not to mention your cat will love them, too!

KAR LINKS

- [Volunteer](#)
- Become a [foster family](#)
- [Senior Cat Companions](#)
- KAR [Website](#)



Make a [donation](#) and help KAR help animals!

4. Check out [15 more homemade cat toy ideas](#) here

Treats

1. Entice and engage your cats by hiding some of their favorite toys around the house. Try putting them in areas that your cat frequents and loves to play already.
2. Hide treats and make your kitten seek them out
3. Food puzzle – put treats into a puzzle toy they have to figure out in order to enjoy
4. Cat grass – available for purchase at the pet store or [grow your own](#)
5. Homemade cat treats – check out [16 cat treat recipes](#) you can make at home for your favorite feline or to give to pet-loving friends as gifts

Cat Furniture

Providing cat trees, kitty condos, perches, window seats or shelves, and scratchers for your cat are all good ways to satisfy your kitty's need to climb and scratch. Cats often like to be higher off the ground and giving them appropriate places to do so will prevent them from climbing on shelves or furniture you don't want them to be on. Places perches near windows, especially with bird feeders, will engage your feline's senses. Pet stores have an assortment of options. With a few materials from the hardware store and a carpet remnant, you can customize your very own door scratcher to keep your naughty feline's claws off the furniture.

1. Scratching post
2. [DIY door scratcher](#)
3. Kitty condos
4. Cat trees/climbers
5. Window seat/bed
6. Here are [21 do-it-yourself cat furniture](#) items

Cat Entertainment

DVDs, internet videos, TV shows or sound recordings of wildlife can be great ways to entertain your feline friends. Many cats love to watch and track the motion on the screen or search the house to find out where that bird call is coming from. You could even put up birdfeeders around your house where your cat can see them from various windows.

1. Fish tank – be sure fish are adequately protected
2. Birdfeeder or bird bath – cats enjoy watching birds, especially older felines who like to lounge around in a warm place. Place multiple birdfeeders around the house and then have a kitty condo or window seat nearby to give them a front row seat for watching avian T.V.
3. Play soothing music or turn on the radio
4. Leave the television on and tune in to wildlife shows which can provide hours of entertainment for your feline friends.



For more great ideas on keeping felines entertained, check out these tips:

[Provide a happy indoor environment for your cat](#)

[Ways to keep your cat entertained](#)

Other

1. Grooming – some cats enjoy being brushed. This gives you both some one-on-one quality time and helps your kitty maintain a healthy coat free of mats and tangles.
2. Take your feline for a walk – believe it or not some cats can be trained to walk on a leash.
3. An all-seasons or screened-in porch can give kitty a new environment to explore or lounge away the day.
4. Quality Time—spend time cuddling, training or playing with your kitty every day.

Feline Friends

Another cat can provide much needed companionship and keep your kitten entertained. If you are interested in adding another feline to your family, check KAR’s adorable [kittens](#) and [cats](#) looking for a forever home.

CONTACT US

Kalamazoo Animal
Rescue

P.O. Box 3295

Kalamazoo, MI 49003

Phone: (269) 226-8570

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

Visit our [website](#)

Holiday Fundraiser Success!

By Kim Bourner



The holidays are over. It is time to put away the decorations, recover from countless parties, and get back to life as usual. However, there’s one more thing we need to do.

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue wants to give special thanks to Sue, the owner of Sticks and Stones. She provided room in her store for us to sell Christmas ornaments. Another big thank you goes out to Angie, a KAR volunteer who made a majority of the ornaments that were sold. These women made a remarkable donation possible to care for the dogs and cats in the rescue. All totaled, the ornaments raised over \$1,270.

Many other volunteers came together to make the sale of the ornaments possible by creating tags with the rescue’s logo, delivering donation canisters, and holding dogs at a special Sticks and Stones adoption event. Teamwork made a joyous holiday possible for the four-legged friends awaiting their forever homes.

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.

