



KAR Friends ~ January 2018

Dear Reader;

We've opened the books on a new year, which can be a time for taking stock of where we are and where we're going in the year ahead. I assume that most of our readers are doing better with their resolutions than I am, so in this first *KAR Friends* issue of 2018 we're focusing on what we can do to keep our four-footed friends healthy and happy, even in the teeth of inclement weather.

We'd also like to call your attention to what we were able to accomplish in 2017, thanks to our generous volunteers, donors, and friends: **637 cats and 80 dogs found their forever homes last year!**

Best wishes to you, your family and your beloved pets as we launch into 2018!

Please feel free to share this issue with friends and family. We appreciate your continued support of KAR's mission to help homeless, stray, and abandoned cats and dogs. Together we make a difference!

Sincerely,

Pat Hollahan
KAR Friends Editor

It's A New Year: Shape Up!

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Our Sponsors



Pets of the Month



By Karren Jensen

Now that the holidays are over, our thoughts naturally turn to getting into shape for the new year, to be healthier and ready to accomplish all our goals for 2018. **Do you have a**

tubby tabby or a portly pooch in need of better health and more energy? Our pets need our help to live their best lives, getting enough exercise and maintaining a healthy weight that will promote a long and active life.

While we love spoiling our canine or feline family members with treats as we celebrate the holiday season, those health-challenging habits need to be discontinued so that each furry friend can feel great all year long. Here are some things to consider and suggestions for positive changes as you make New Year's resolutions for your pets (and yourself).

- We often use treats as a way of telling our pets "I love you" but there are other, healthier strategies for pampering our furry friends which you might want to consider. Who can resist a pair of pleading eyes in a precious dog or cat face when enticing food is abundantly available during the holidays? Unfortunately, many human foods are harmful or even deadly to pets, who are attracted by enticing aromas which they don't recognize as being dangerous. Human food, and especially highly processed human food, should be kept off limits for your furry family members to avoid any potential tragedy.
- Remember that your pet is smaller than you are and has very different nutritional needs. It is easy to think of a "diet" as less than 2,000 calories a day, which is reasonable for a human. However, a fully grown cat or small dog may need as little as 200 calories a day for optimum health



Read [Winnie's](#) Story



Read [Hitchcock's](#) Story

Upcoming Events

- January 20 ; PetSmart
- January 27 ; MVPets

Please check the [KAR homepage](#) for other events as they are announced

KAR Links

- [VOLUNTEER](#)
- [Become a Foster Family](#)
- [Adoptable Dogs](#)
- [Adoptable Cats](#)
- [Adoptable Kittens](#)
- [Special Needs Pets](#)
- [Senior Cat Companions](#)
- [KAR Website](#)
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- Anna Kushner

and every additional treat, even if just a few calories, can be enough to trigger weight gain resulting in obesity. Be sure to consult with your veterinary health care provider for specific food and calorie recommendations to meet your pet's daily needs.

- Now you may be scratching your head and wondering "how can I show my love to Fluffy or Fido if I can't give treats and lots of food?" While your pet may thoroughly enjoy food treats, what s/he really craves is your time and attention. Select activities appropriate for the pet's species, age, and state of health. Some good activities for your canine friend include longer and more frequent walks, playing with a ball, and chasing a frisbee. Cats can enjoy playing with a laser pointer, interacting with a "cat teaser" wand with a dangling feather toy, and any mechanical toy which moves in a way that stimulates stalking behavior.

The nationwide estimates of [pet obesity](#) provided by the Association for Pet Obesity Prevention show that 54% of dogs and 59% of cats are overweight or obese. These alarming statistics point to a future of shorter and less-healthy lives after many years of lifespan gains for domestic pets. Even the best medical care and a loving home are not enough to counteract the toll of obesity on your fur baby's life. This year, let's all resolve to ensure that our pets reach the best weight and healthiest lifestyle possible. The bonus, of course, is that you might find yourself exercising more and feeling better, too!

Additional Resources:

- [Obesity in dogs](#)
- [Obesity in cats](#)

Doggie Den

Helping Fido Stay Warm and Healthy This Winter

[Email us](#) with any newsletter suggestions or questions!

Contact Us

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By Kara Harmsen

Even if your dog loves the wintertime and snow, you should still prepare them for the cold. Many people think that because their pets have fur, they can handle almost any cold weather - not so!



- Winter walks and outdoor time: Walks can be easier on your dog (and you) during the later morning or early afternoon, when temperatures are a little warmer. Ears, paws, and tails are all susceptible to frostbite. Don't leave him outdoors for long periods of time. Frostbite is not always obvious; watch for signs of pale or gray skin. If you notice whining, shivering, or appearing anxious then it's time to bring the dog in.
- Wipe those paws please! You should trim the hair that grows between her pads to prevent ice buildup. Winter salt can hurt and burn your dog's pads and is toxic, so wipe her paws or consider booties.
- Get cozy: Place your dog's bed in a warm spot away from drafts, cold tile, or uncarpeted floors. And remember that space heaters and fireplaces pose a major threat.
- Supplements: Help prevent dry, flaky skin by adding a skin and coat supplement to your dog's food. Coconut oil is a good natural moisturizer. Ask your vet about joint supplements.
- Mas agua por favor: Remember hydration is very important for your dog's health.
- My coat please ... Little dogs or dogs with thin coats or short fur may need a coat or sweater. Chihuahuas, greyhounds, and whippets are examples of dogs that need extra layers.

Cat's Corner

The Cat In Winter



By Pat Hollahan

Brrr! But I'm strong and fearless and I have a fur coat ...



Despite what our feline friends might try to claim, they do need extra consideration when the weather outside is frightful, especially if they're cats who live exclusively out of doors.

Outdoor cats often need winter help from their human friends : dry food, reliable sources of water, and shelters that can keep them warm and dry. It's also important to remember the hazards of snow melt (which can be poisonous) and antifreeze (which is both toxic and attractive to cats and dogs), as well as the hazards of cars parked outside, which can be seen as warm, sheltered places to nap. For more information, please check out [Alley Cat Allies](#) and related sites.

If your feline friend likes to come and go, please consider keeping him or her inside during the coldest weather, with comfy spots to nap, entertainment (bird feeders are very attractive), and bathroom facilities in a warm but secluded spot. If your cat is determined to get outside for exercise, you might want to consider a reflective collar if your feline friend likes to go solo and a warm vest or jacket if you and kitty are braving the elements together.

Indoor cats aren't nearly as inconvenienced by the cold, though you'll want to take precautions for those who aren't in the best of health or the bloom of youth. Most feline friends will enjoy plush beds and cozy spots in the house (raised off the floor if possible), a chance to luxuriate in whatever sunlight may present itself, and a

humidifier (which, according to a friend of mine, can double as a kitty TV). Do be sure that litter boxes aren't relegated to the coldest depths of the basement and be careful of space heaters.

And remember, someday it will be spring!

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.

Visit our website [here](#) for more KAR information!



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