

KAR Friends

April 2013



Dear Reader,

Even though spring is slow in coming, we're all looking forward to the change of seasons and the rejuvenation that comes with it. Our theme this month is the *joy of having pets in your life!* Spring is a wonderful time to adopt a new friend so you can reap the benefits of pet ownership as described in [Top Five Benefits of Pet Ownership](#) and [Angels in Fur](#).

One furry friend you might consider is Appa, a young pup looking for her forever home. You can glean useful information about leashes in Doggie Den, and don't forget the Kalamazoo Humane Society's annual dog walk for a great time with your favorite canine.

Thank you for your continued interest in KAR and for your love of animals. Please forward this newsletter to your friends so that we can spread the good word about how pets make our lives better .

Danielle Wallis
Marketing Coordinator

Lynn Bolhuis
KAR Friends Editor

P.S. There is a special fundraiser to benefit KAR at Olga's Kitchen in the Crossroads Mall on Sunday, May 5th. Bring in a [copy of the special flyer](#) and a percentage of your bill will be donated to the rescue.

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Top Five Benefits of Pet Ownership

By Katie Drenth



While the benefits of having a furry family member abound, here are the top five ways pet ownership positively impacts your life.

1. **Heart Health** — Pets offer us unconditional love and fill our days with happiness and laughter. Not only do they bring a smile to our face, but they've also proven to be a positive impact on our overall heart health. Long-term research

See Past Issues of
KAR Friends
HERE

shows that owning a cat or dog is beneficial to our hearts by lowering blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglyceride levels all of which contribute to lowered risks of cardiac diseases.

2. **Stay Active** — Pets can act like personal trainers by encouraging us to exercise, stay active, and get outdoors. A 2011, Michigan State University study showed that dog owners who walked with their dogs averaged 30 minutes of exercise at least five times a week. Only one-third of non-dog walkers averaged at much exercise. Not only will physical activity benefit you and your pet—lowering obesity risks—it can also be a lot of fun. Try jogging, running, walking, biking, hiking, agility training, or even yoga or dog (dog yoga) with your pet!
3. **Meet and Greet** — Pets allow you to increase your social network and help you have a more fulfilling social life, by making meeting new people easier and less stressful—they can act like an instant ice breaker. Widening your social network can be beneficial to your health as well—helping fight depression, loneliness, and give you a higher self -esteem. Dog parks, trails, pet-friendly restaurants or events—like the KHS Dog Walk or the SPCA Woof Stock—can be great places to make new two-legged and four-legged friends.
4. **Reduce Allergy Risks** — A number of studies have shown that having a pet can actually lower a child's likelihood of developing pet-related allergies in the future by up to 33% and help develop stronger immune systems.
5. **Well Being** — Pets are natural mood enhancers—the body actually goes through physical changes. Levels of cortisol (stress hormone) decrease and serotonin (well-being chemical) increase and reducing stress means less wear and tear on your body. An animal's unconditional love actually allows our bodies to heal faster and help stave off feelings of loneliness or depression. Our pets are a source of nonjudgmental comfort, support, love, and joy.

For even more healthy benefits to pet ownership, check out this *KAR Friends* ["Blast from the Past" article](#) as well as these additional resources:

- [Pets improve your health](#)
- [Pets and health benefits](#)

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Animal Spotlight

Curriculum Vitae ~ Appa

By Kim Bourner



Name: Appa A. Dorable

Desired Position: To be your faithful, furry, four-legged friend.

Experience: I was born in November of 2012 and have nearly five months experience being a loveable, playful, and kind canine. I am skilled at interacting well with dogs and kids alike. I appreciate a family with lots of activity. I jump super high when a treat is offered. At the end of the day, I sleep in my crate the whole night through. If you move me while I'm sleeping, I will whimper for you (it's really cute).

Education: I am still working on potty training. I have excellent skills in playing, napping, and being cute all day long. I run around outside to expend my youthful exuberance and energy. I am eager to learn more and know that I can achieve this with the guidance and patience of a loving, forever family.

Interests: My favorite things in the world are a little rope toy and a rawhide stick. My greatest disposition is happiness, and when I'm really glad, it looks like I am smiling.

I am available for adoption at \$225. You can [learn more about me on my web page](#). Please contact KAR if you are interested in submitting your resume so that we can find the right fit for me!

UPCOMING ADOPTION EVENTS

- April 20th and 27th, Petco
- May 4th, Petco
- May 11th, PetSmart

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

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Cat's Corner

Angels in Fur

By Karren Jensen

Many people define "angels" as helpers, protectors, comforters, or loving companions who take a personal interest in our welfare. The concept of angels in our lives is a very popular one, even for people who are not otherwise religious. Let's explore how these definitions can apply to our pets.

- **Pets as Helpers:** there are plenty of documented cases of domestic pets aiding their humans in all sorts of ways. A familiar example that comes to mind is service dogs assisting people with disabilities ranging from blindness to seizures to impaired mobility. In addition to these jobs requiring special training, our canine and feline friends can also be helpers through their empathetic presence. Check out more examples of [pets helping people](#) here.



- **Pets as Protectors:** dogs come to mind when we think of animals as protectors. Stories of faithful canines who laid down their lives for their human family members abound. There are also stories of feline protectors who used sharp claws and teeth to repel an attack by an intruder upon a beloved human. More [protector stories](#) can be found here.
- **Pets as Comforters:** our animals often have empathy for us and will give comfort in whatever way they can when we are distressed. Last year when I came home from surgery for a hand injury feeling miserable, tired, and cold I collapsed into bed to recover from the anesthesia. My three cats cuddled close to me all afternoon, warming me with their body heat and purring soothingly as I lay huddled in bed. They patiently kept vigil instead of going about their usual business. This has happened many times when I have been sick or discouraged, and there are many other [stories of feline friends providing comfort](#).
- **Pets as Loving Companions:** do our animals really love us? Many skeptics would answer that question with an emphatic “no.” Although pets can’t express their love in words, both [felines](#) and [canines](#) show us by body language and concern that they care about us far beyond our role as their caregivers.

Do you have special memory about how your cat or dog acted as an “angel in fur” in your life? Spread the word about the positive impact of pets on your life. We can all work to counteract the myths and misconceptions that cause so many people to misunderstand pets, giving them little value or credit for their good deeds. When KAR rescues animals to place in a new and loving home, we’re helping cats and dogs but the reason we continue in this endeavor is that we know how much the animals enhance our lives. Take time to say thanks to your “furry angel” for all that he or she does for you!

PETS OF THE MONTH



[Paco](#)



[Gracie](#)

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

Doggie Den

Collars and Leashes – Part II

By Lynn Bolhuis

Earlier this year we introduced [Collars and Leashes – Part I](#) where we explored the plethora of dog collar options available to pet owners and the various ways they are used.

Across the nation there are laws requiring dogs to be under their owner’s control and on a leash. Some municipalities now go a step further to specify a leash length in their ordinances. For example, a leash cannot exceed six feet in length.

In Part II this month, we provide you with information on the variety of leashes available to dog owners and how best to use them.



Leash Materials – There are lots of options including nylon, leather and chain. Nylon leashes are economical, strong and come in

various lengths. Leather leashes look nice, have a natural stretch to them, are strong and hold up in any weather. If your pup has a tendency to bite the leash, leather or chain may work best.

Leash Length – the best length for walking Fido and keeping him under control is 4 to 6 feet. A rule of thumb: the longer the leash the more freedom of movement the dog has which means less control for the handler.

Leash Types

- **Slip Leash** – proper placement of this leash is high on the dog's neck right behind the ears. The leash does not attach to a collar.
- **Leash with Snap Hook** – easily attaches to a collar or harness. This leash works best with dogs that walk at your side and need minimal to no correction.
- **Multi-function Leash** – has two snap hooks and three "O" rings to enable the leash to be adjusted to multiple lengths, used as a coupler for walking two dogs, and as a waist or over the shoulder leash.
- **Flexi-Lead** – aka Retractable Leash, Cord Leash

This device can work in an environment where it is safe for Fido to explore away from you. However, many dog trainers do not like flexi leashes as they teach a dog to pull.

- **Long Leash** – aka Long Line, Long Lead

A long leash comes in handy when you are working with Fido on training exercises, such as stay and come from a distance. A long leash can also be used when hiking or participating in dog sports like tracking. This leash enables you to retain control while training or safely participating in other activities with your dog.

Leash and Collar Combinations

- **Simple Collar and Leash** – The best position for walking Fido is by your side or slightly behind you. If your dog doesn't have issues on the walk and positions himself accordingly, a simple collar and standard leash will often suffice.
- **Slip Leash** – This leash is designed to control Fido's head and neck, and allows for quick corrections. It is most useful if Fido has issues on the walk such as being distracted by other dogs or animals. A quick tug to the side gets Fido's attention to help correct his behavior and get him back on track.

Just as our canine friends come in many different shapes and sizes, there are a plethora of leashes and collars to choose from. When selecting a combination to use, keep Fido's size and strength in mind, as well as any behavioral issues you might be addressing or the activity you are participating in together.

Additional Resources

- [Choosing the right leash and collar](#)
- [Dog walking 101](#)



Special Event

Kalamazoo Humane Society Dog Walk

By Karren Jensen



Spring is when everybody (including the dog) wants to be outside enjoying the great weather. Here's your opportunity to do just that and have fun with your canine companion at the same time. The Kalamazoo Humane Society's Annual Dog Walk event is a chance to participate

in fun activities, meet other dog lovers, and show off your skills as a pack leader.

Date: Saturday, May 4, 2013

Time: 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Place: [Prairie View Park](#) (click for map/directions)
899 East U Avenue
Vicksburg, Michigan

The registration fee is \$20 if purchased by midnight April 21st, or \$25 after this date. [Go here for details of all activities and to register.](#) This is Kalamazoo Humane Society's biggest fundraiser so join in the fun and support a worthy organization that helps animals all year long!

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.



KAR LINKS

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



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

CONTACT US

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