



KAR Friends ~ August 2017

Dear Reader;

August is a bittersweet time, I think. Some of us are finally getting away for that trip to the beach or the mountains or the family reunion; some of us (like me) are looking at the calendar and our summer to-do list and indulging in a bit of quiet despair. Wherever you are on the spectrum, your furry friends are there for and with you, with snuggles and purrs and wagging tails! (To which my Quaker parakeet adds: don't forget the feathered! Some of us purr too.)

This month we're looking with gratitude at what our furred (and feathered, and scaled) companions do for us. I'm probably not the only cat lover who's wanted to sneak her friend into the office when times get tough -- really I'd be a lot nicer if I could just pet my cat for five minutes every hour. And the enthusiastic dog who wants to wag and wriggle and go for a walk because you're the greatest ... So here's a tip of the editorial chapeau, not only to the formally recognized service dogs and therapy animals who help in so many ways, but also to the "everyday" home pets who snuggle and purr and wag and generally keep us moving forward.

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

Service Dogs And Therapy Animals

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By Anna Kushner

You've likely seen someone with a service dog that is easily identified by a vest or special harness. **What you may not know is how a canine companion qualifies to be a service animal or the difference between service and therapy pets.**

Service dogs have been trained to perform a specific task for individuals who have disabilities, which can include mobility problems, sensory issues, cancer, autism,

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Pets of the Month



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Upcoming Events

- August 19 & 26; PetSmart
- September 2, 9, 16; PetSmart

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- [Adoptable Dogs](#)
- [Adoptable Cats](#)

epilepsy, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) entitles any disabled person to a service dog, which is permitted in most public places. Service animals are generally divided into three categories: guide dogs for the blind, hearing dogs, and dogs that help individuals with various disabilities. For example, mobility animals work for the physically disabled by picking up dropped items, opening and closing doors, and turning on lights, among other things. Dogs can assist with medical problems, such as neurological, developmental, psychiatric, and diabetic disabilities. In general, larger dogs are used as guide dogs or to pull wheelchairs, while smaller dogs might be trained for medical-alert purposes.



Therapy dogs generally do not have special training to perform specific tasks. Furthermore, these animals, which may include cats and other animals as well as dogs, are not covered under the ADA or any specific federal laws, so permission must be given by each place that a therapy animal enters.

Dogs aren't the only animals that can be therapeutic. Recently, cats have become popular among people suffering from drug or alcohol addiction as well as Alzheimer's disease. Therapy cats are mainly used by people who are either bedridden or must remain indoors, which is why they are often not talked about as therapy animals as much as their canine counterparts. However, "Cat Cafés," feline-themed businesses whose attraction is that cats can be watched and played with, are becoming more and more popular, not only because many people love cats but because they offer people an opportunity to relax and de-stress.

All therapy animals offer their people significant benefits, both physically and mentally. Physical benefits include lowering blood pressure, improving cardiovascular health, and releasing endorphins, which have a calming effect. Just petting a dog or cat produces an automatic relaxation response in humans; this effect can reduce the amount of medication some folks need. Mental benefits of a therapy animal can also include lessening depression, diminishing feelings of isolation and alienation, increasing socialization and sense of community, and decreasing anxiety.

Therapy animals are used to help children overcome speech and emotional disorders as well as to bring comfort and joy to those who are ill or living in poor conditions. Many people are able to "connect" with calm and well-behaved animals, with demonstrable therapeutic effect. In order to bring a therapy pet into a situation in

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Newsletter Team

- Pat Hollahan, Editor
- Lynn Bolhuis
- Kim Bourner
- Kara Harmsen
- Karren Jensen
- Anna Kushner

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

Contact Us

Kalamazoo Animal Rescue
 P.O. Box 3295
 Kalamazoo, MI 49003
 (269) 226-8570



which pets are generally not allowed, you must have an official letter written by a licensed mental health professional, such as a psychiatrist, licensed clinical social worker, or psychologist.

For even more health-related benefits of having pets around -- whether or not they're officially recognized as service or therapy animals -- check out these additional resources:

- [Pet Therapy](#)
- [Pet Ownership: Animals Offer Healthy Benefits](#)
- [Therapy Cats](#)

Doggie Den

Chewy: Seeking Adult Resort



By Kim Bourner

Resume: [Chewy](#), named in honor of Chewbacca of Star Wars. He's a stitch hairy.

Objective: Seeking a forever home with adults (other dogs are welcome) and your undying affection.



Experience: In his three years, he has developed a fear of children, has been rescued from a Craigslist's posting, and just recently was surrendered by his owner. He remains fond of people and fellow hounds. His time in his foster home has only proven that he's ready for some serious love and friendship that will last all of his days.

Skills: Lover of cuddles, house-trained, lap-friendly, and plays well with adult humans and dogs. As with all of our rescued pets, he was tested for heartworm; is on heartworm preventative; was treated for worms, fleas, and ear mites; vaccinated; and microchipped. If he was not already neutered, he is now, per KAR policy.

Community Recognition: Sweetness award from his KAR foster mom. This young dog is a star among his breed as a gentleman.

Special Needs: Fenced-in yard, adults only, and one family from here on out. He loves snuggling, kindness, kisses, and a cat-free home. Chewy's first three years are not fully known, but during that time he has become afraid of children. His reaction is not one of aggression but he does respond by peeing.

Recommendation: Adopt him and he will give his thanks henceforth.

Cat's Corner

Melvin, The Little Jaguar With Thumbs



By Kara Harmsen

If you're looking for a unique kitty, then Melvin might be your man. A look-alike miniature jaguar, Melvin has the coolest paws ... with thumbs! He is a superstar lap cat and would be his best self in a chill home. He's a bit timid at first and likes to warm up slowly but



this guy will make you smile and has plenty of love to give. [Melvin](#) is great with other cats if you're looking for a buddy. Thumbs up for this one ... literally!

Meet Melvin and other cuddly felines at the new [Kalamazoo Cat Café](#)! Owner Abbey Thompson says that six resident cats at the café have already been adopted and they've only been for open three weeks! Reservations are recommended at the café. Okay two thumbs up!

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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