

educational services in Romania, where the need is so great. In my work, I was lucky enough to bring home a little street dog. I named her Vulpe and she's a perfect fit in our family. Keep up the good work.

—Bonnie Siddons
Gum Spring, Va.

Puppy Mills

Many dog parents at the local dog park tell me that they bought their dog at a pet store. When I tell them that over 90 percent of puppies in pet stores are from puppy mills, they usually don't know what puppy mills are. What a big problem. We need to discourage people from buying dogs at pet stores and encourage them to adopt from shelters and rescues. I hope you will write an article about puppy mills.

—Karolina

Ed note: Thanks for the note; take a look at our story on a puppy mill boycott on page 10.

Cattle Dog Construction

As the owner of two Australian Cattle Dogs (ACDs) living in the suburbs, I was interested to read your article on Treibball. Tasha, our first ACD, loved herding our son's basketball around the yard when they played together. I plan to try out the Treibball with Bella and Kepu (the ACDs we have now). In the meantime, Bella has come up with a unique way of expressing her desire to herd, using her cloth toys to make constructions. Our vet believes that making constructions is tied to Bella's herding and maternal instincts. For more on Bella's story, visit bellacanineconstruction.com.

—Deirdre Rand
Mill Valley, Calif.



Breeding Paradox

Finally, someone is addressing this issue. One only has to look at old paintings, prints and photos of our favorite breeds to see how they've changed over the years. Personally, I don't think most of these changes have been for the betterment of the dogs.

I'm the owner of a Chinese Shar-Pei and oh my, what a mess that breed is in. What the professional breeder has done with a very unique and interesting dog in a mere 50 years is beyond sad. They're riddled with skin problems, food allergies, deadly genetic disorders and temperament issues.

Mr. Woestendiek mentioned that the American Kennel Club (AKC) has funneled millions of dollars into research projects. If only the AKC breeders hadn't funneled all their efforts into ever-more perfect or exaggerated features, they might not be left with concentrated recessive genes that have turned our beloved dogs into medical nightmares. I hope

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