



## Letters to the Editor: Feb. 21, 2008

### **Pets are lifelong commitment**

"Troubled pets ... it's all part of the furry package deal" (Saturday) was a wonderful article on the realities of pet ownership. It's nice to hear someone talk about it.

Often many of us get a cute cuddly puppy or kitten and, when they grow up, they are not quite like we expected. Even "pound" puppies or kitties can turn out to be quite expensive when health issues arrive or accidents occur and especially as they age. It is sad to see that when a pet becomes "trouble" or "worrisome," it no longer is part of our lives and is dropped off at the nearest shelter or worse -- abandoned.

One of the biggest problems is lack of education and training of not the pet, but the owner. In the realm of dogs, there is an abundance of training classes, trainers and a variety of dog sports and activities that adults, young people and children can be involved in. We could greatly reduce the shelter populations if owners would step up to the plate and educate themselves, add some training and realize that pets are supposed to be a lifetime commitment for the life of the pet. Cats have special needs too, and education would do a world of good in just reading up on breed personalities. The Web is full of ideas on problem solving.

Thank you, Laura Christman, for your commitment and creating awareness that pets are not perfect but they are special.

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