

# Puppy Fever

By *Jasmine Streeter, DVM*  
Special to *The Skanner*  
News

**P**uppy fever is in the air and there are bound to be puppies everywhere. Last week, while driving past the Tom McCall Waterfront Park, I saw multiple puppies happily strolling with their new families. This month I want to focus on the joys and responsibilities of puppy ownership.

Most of us, at one time or another, have wished for a little fluffy ball of fur to call our own. Pup-

considerable amount of time to potty train, teach, and socialize. Remember, a well-trained puppy will most likely become a well-trained dog. Therefore, consistency is key when it comes to training.

Some major factors of puppy ownership to consider are the size, breed and temperament of the dog you will be acquiring. A St. Bernard puppy may reach 260 pounds or more as an adult and may not make the best lap dog. A talkative, intelligent breed like the German Shepherd or

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pies bring us joy, love, numerous kisses and always have the sweetest puppy breath, but they are a serious undertaking. Just as we grow up, so do they.

If you are considering adding a puppy to your life, consider your schedule. Puppies require a

Standard Poodle may become bored or destructive without mental stimulation and enrichment. The American Kennel Club's website has an extensive list of breeds with their characteristic traits to help you choose the breed that is right for you. Visit [www.akc.org/](http://www.akc.org/)



Dr. Jasmine Streeter, Veterinarian relaxes with her dog Sheba

dog-breeds.

Financially, puppies require a lot of work on the front end. They must visit the veterinarian every few weeks until the age of 16 weeks for wellness exams, vaccinations and parasite prevention.

They should be spayed or neutered to decrease unplanned litters and prevent certain diseases. Other expenses like food, toys, bedding and life-long healthcare should also be factored in for the life expectancy of your

pet.

For owners that currently have pets in their households, ask yourself if you are ready financially, emotionally, and time wise for another puppy. Are your current pets receptive to having another member in the home that may vie for their attention? Will you be the primary care provider for this animal or will others assist you? Consider that even though a child may claim to be the primary caregiver, it is ultimately the responsibility of the adult to make sure all of the animals' needs are met.

Commitment is the greatest contribution

you can give your puppy. Commit to:

- care for that animal for their entire life, through good and bad, thick and thin;
- giving the best quality of life you and your family can provide; and
- not discarding your pet when they grow larger and the puppy phase has waned.

These are the commitments you should make to the puppy you have chosen as your own. And, if you do, I guarantee your years of loyalty will be returned tenfold.

Send your pet questions to [drjasmine@theskanner.com](mailto:drjasmine@theskanner.com).



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