

In Defense of Owning a Purebred

By Nancy Secrist, Easdale: the best pet care

One of my customers walked into our office with a gorgeous chocolate brown Great Dane puppy just too cute for words. As we began to create a profile and note his care instructions, the young man who loves this puppy told us a tale: An evening ended early for him when his first time date found out that he had bought his puppy instead of adopting a rescue. She vilified his choice and they parted ways quickly. He was at a loss--how could she judge him so harshly?

Rescuing pets is important but it isn't right for every owner and every family. Purebred dogs are more consistent in coat, size, behavior, shedding, and allergy traits. When you have a child who is allergic to some types of canine but not others, a purebred that allows your child to breathe normally is important! What responsible breeders produce can't be found in a pound.

Breeds are living representations of a people and a culture as they expressed the need for a companion and work helper in different ways under different situations throughout history. Many of our breeds are specialists with a particular set of skills. There are so many, such as the Newfoundland bred to rescue the capsized sailor from the high waves of stormy ocean - to this day, I know of children in a pool who fake thrashing and drowning just to make the family Newf jump in and come get them!



No random bred dog could ever do the work as well as purebred experts. If you had a family member with Alzheimer's wander away from home, lost, would you want a random bred dog to search for them or a Bloodhound? Scent hounds can follow a specific person's track that is many days old and won't be distracted until they find their person, potentially saving their life. Dogs trained as guide dogs for the blind, law enforcement dogs, or search and rescue dogs need to fulfill very specific goals to a high standard. They are specialists.

Purebreds are also an expression of art and history. When wolves killed sheep, you and your family might go hungry. Would you want a Great Pyrenees standing watch and a Border Collie or Shetland Sheepdog herding them home? Would you trust a random bred dog with all your assets or might you see a bloodbath out in the pasture? Historians estimate that vermin ate up to one third of the food produced in the Middle Ages.... a feisty terrier will go down that narrow dark hole and bring out the offender that could starve your family. Lhasa Apsos have a little kink at the end of their tail. In China, there is a story that when an empress wished to keep her rings safe during her bath, her little dog offered to guard them on its tail, resulting in a kink that continues to this day. True? Perhaps not, but it is part of the culture that produced them.

Responsible breeders are each stewards of a breed and it would only take about seven years of no breeding before all the females would age out of the ability to produce the next generation--effectively ending a breed. Meanwhile, the random bred would proliferate uncontrolled as usual. As stewards, we pass the torch to each generation or the hundreds of years of history and tremendous abilities would pass...Besides, without purebred Poodles, from where would people get their Doodles?

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