Music to Our Ears

Thank you so much for the “Local Hero” article (Summer 2008). We lost our wonderful 17-year-old beagle mix, Maggie, in May. Our other dog, Mona, was lonely, so in July we adopted an adorable beagle from Main Line Animal Rescue. We named him Maxwell. What a surprise to read the story about Latichia Duffy in Missouri and her help in rescuing 40-plus dogs, some of them originally from puppy mills. Our Max is one of those dogs! In fact, we all think he could be the dog described who was initially terrified but found his voice and wouldn’t stop barking about it.

Max still has some issues, as is expected with any puppy mill dog, but he is coming along. He isn’t nearly as terrified of people and noises as in the beginning, and he is learning he can be happy without barking. The best part is that from day one he and Mona bonded, and they love to play together. It is such a joy to watch them. I want to thank Ms. Duffy for all her hard work and to let her know that one of her rescues is having a good time in Pennsylvania.

— LINDA L. MAHAN, WEST CHESTER, PENNSYLVANIA

Sickening Spectacle

Thank you for your article on shark tournaments (“Cash and Carnage,” Fall 2008). I have summered on Martha’s Vineyard for more than 50 years, and the shark tournament makes me sick to my stomach. It’s a horrific sight to see, and what about its impact on the species! It is senseless killing and should somehow be stopped—please continue your good work and hopefully we can put a stop to it.

— PAT AUGE, CYPRESS, TEXAS

A Lesson in Kindness

I was reminded once more of man’s ruthless cruelty in the name of “sport” (“Cruelty in the Pennsylvania Skies,” Fall 2008). Tragically, the next generation of mindless, heartless killers of perhaps the most intelligent and loyal animal known to man is reared in the killing fields. I have read Winger by Jerry Spinelli with middle school students, and they are horrified at the story of one young “trapper boy” who cares for a friendly pigeon, only to see the bird become part of the slaughter. Miraculously, Nipper survives, and Palmer, the young boy who chose not to be a wringer, is scorned and laughed at by his 10-year-old friends and the shooters and families who have come to witness this annual event. His love and courage is deeply felt by all who have read it.

Children love animals. When I bring my birds to school and let the kids hold them and later release them for the short trip home, they cheer and ask me when I can bring them back. Here is a genuine learning experience that will hopefully save the lives of other “worthless pests.”

— JERRY TAVARES, WATERBURY CENTER, VERMONT