

☞ **03hr_AC-Ag_ab0536_pt03**



(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2003-04

(session year)

Assembly

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on Agriculture...

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

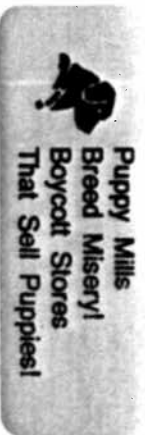
- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
 - (**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
 - (**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

* Contents organized for archiving by: Stefanie Rose (LRB) (August 2012)

Prisoners for Profit



Do you have a pet shop, puppy mill or classified ad animal story to share? Please send it to:

The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project

PO Box 516

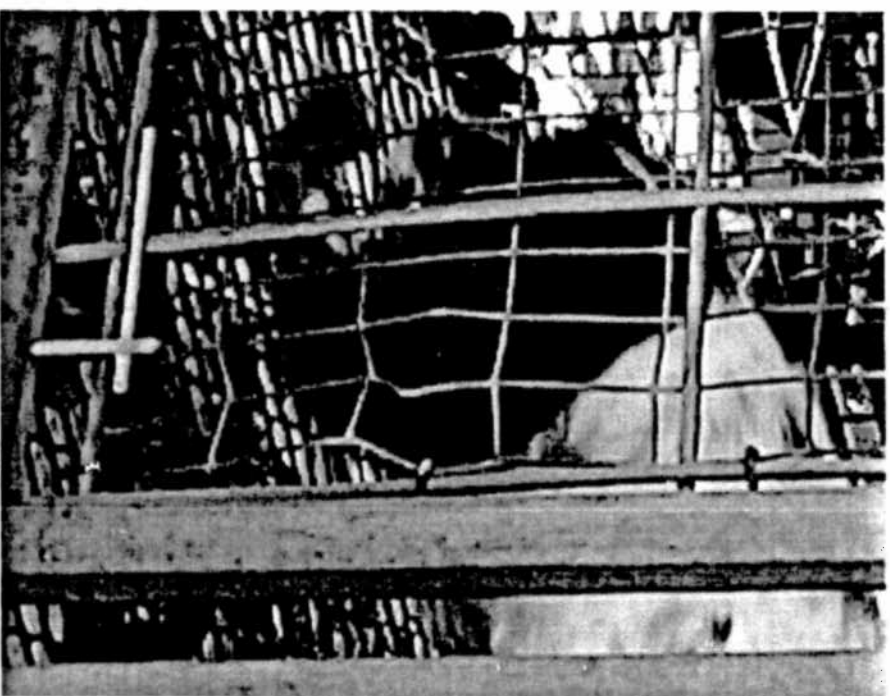
Elkhart Lake, WI 53020-0516

This booklet printed by The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project 2003.

Additional copies are available for \$3.00 each to cover printing and mailing expenses.

Send requests for copies to the address listed above.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. Please do not reproduce without permission.



True Stories of

WISCONSIN

Pet Shop and Puppy Mill Dogs

Dedicated to my beloved Mr. Peabody



26 October 1996 – November 16, 2002

*May I live a life that is worthy of
the trust and loyalty you gave to me.*
EKRR

What Can YOU do?

Never buy a pet animal from classified ads in newspapers. Responsible breeders do not advertise in the classifieds.

Boycott pet stores that sell live animals.

Adopt pet animals from shelters and breed placement groups. You can find available animals from reputable sources at <http://www.Petfinder.com>

Write or call your legislators to let them know you support humane care standards and laws to protect pets.

Report cases of animal abuse to local authorities and your area humane organizations.

*ALWAYS spay and neuter your pets.
An altered pet can never be used
for pet mill "breeding stock!"*

It is to Pea, and all the other dogs like him, that we dedicate this booklet.

The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project

© 2003

year-old son is no longer afraid when the seizures hit. He gets right in and helps Dusty through them.

Within the last year, Dusty has now started to develop ear problems. I have even gone to the extent of having him medicated so that the vet could thoroughly flush his ears to remove any particles that may be bothering him. The vet claims his ears are clear. He has prescribed ear drops to use to help with the discomfort. The drops seem to help.

I have no complaints about Dusty. He's great with kids, and he's extremely well behaved. I took him through two obedience classes, and he caught on quickly. He's wonderfully loyal to his family, and steals the hearts of everyone who meets him. My only hope is that this letter will help your cause.

Dusty will be a member of our family as long as I am able to keep his health under control. It's just so sad to see him go through all he's been through. I hope by sharing my story I can help others, animals and people alike.

Tracy Jacobson
Larsen, Wisconsin



*The question is not,
"Can they reason?" nor, "Can they talk?"
But rather, "Can they suffer?"*

Jeremy Bentham, 19th Century Philosopher, Oxford University



Introduction

In February of 1997 I "rescued" a Dalmatian puppy from a pet store in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. From the start, I realized that "something was wrong." My experience with my beloved Mr. Peabody lead me to ask questions. How could animals be treated this way in a "civilized society"? Why were there no standards to protect pet shop and mill raised animals from abuse and neglect in Wisconsin? What could be done to educate and protect humans from being "taken" by pet shop owners and irresponsible breeders who cared only for the profit and not for the animals?

I knew I could not be the only person asking these questions. I posted several classified advertisements in newspapers around the state asking others to share their pet shop and puppy mill stories. The letters poured in. Many were assembled into this booklet. Each author's story has been reproduced in their own words. *The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project is grateful to these authors for sharing their stories.*

Standards are needed to provide pet mill animals a level of care that is humane. We will continue to work with our legislators and the community to insure proper care of animals used for profit. Good ideas, based in a humane attitude with compassionate goals, are not always successful and never easy to attain. With your help, the humane community of Wisconsin will continue its efforts to protect companion animals from abuse and neglect.

*Eilene Ribbens Rohde
The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project*

**For more information on what you can do, please see
the back cover of this booklet and visit our web site at:
<http://www.egressetch.com/WisconsinPFL/>**

Special thanks to Michelle Crean for her dedication to homeless animals and her tireless efforts to design, build and maintain the Wisconsin PFL Website.

Awgy

Last November I called G. S., a "breeder" near Plymouth, Wisconsin, because he had an ad for a Pembroke Corgi. I have wanted one for as long as I can remember, and you can't find them around here. I call and the woman said just show up at anytime we'll be around.

I pull in and the place is a dump, to put it nicely. There were dogs shoved in chicken coops everywhere. When I pulled in, I should have just left because everyone always tells you not to buy from puppy mills.

"Every puppy in the place was whimpering for attention. I had to really hold back the tears. The hardest for me was seeing the yellow labs. At the time, mine was about a year, and all I could picture was him being crammed in there."

The woman brought me around and showed me where they were. They had every kind of puppy imaginable. Whole litters were stuffed in a little chicken coop no bigger than a medium cat carrier. There was poop all over the ground, and none of them had food or water. Every puppy in the place was whimpering for attention. I had to really hold back the tears. The hardest for me was seeing the yellow labs. At the time, mine was about a year, and all I could picture was him being crammed in there.

At about this time, G. S. had come over and I told him I wanted to see the male Corgi they had left. Awgy (that's his name now) went and hid in the corner of cage in a little ball, and this guy reached in and pulled Awgy out by one back leg. He put him in a tiny little playing area and he just laid there. He looked almost too scared to move.

again that her dog was not at fault, and I needed to deal with Cindy.

I told her that my purchase agreement stated that the seller had up two years to provide me with a replacement. I said that she sold me my dog, not Cindy. I also told her that I did not want to give Dusty back. He was now a part of our family. And, I did not want another dog; I had enough vet bills.

I stated that I wanted my money refunded, and I felt she should give me the \$250. She said that she would have to get the \$250 from Cindy first since it was Cindy's dog that was defective. She would then give the \$250 to me.

"Dusty will be a member of our family as long as I am able to keep his health under control. It's just so sad to see him go through all he's been through. I hope by sharing my story I can help others, animals and people alike."

At this point, I was very frustrated and didn't know what else to do. I decided that I had been taken, and I would never, ever recommend this lady to anyone. Even though I had lots of interest in her because my dog is so beautiful and wonderful with people, I refuse to recommend her as a breeder.

Much to my astonishment, on September 22, 1999 I received a check of \$250 from Teresa. It took me a year, but I did get my money refunded. The check came with a letter stating that she and Cindy had decided to give me the refund versus a replacement dog because their dogs are valued at more than \$250 now, and they would take a loss.

The seizures have been classified as grand mal epileptic seizures. We have learned to handle Dusty with his seizures. Even my five-

Because he was young, and the side effects that are possible with medication, they suggested that we not put him on medication unless absolutely necessary.

At this point I was extremely upset. My dog was two years old and he had two major medical issues. I dug out my papers from the breeder to see if there was any type of guarantee against medical problems. The papers stated:

"The puppy is guaranteed for five years, from date of sale, against any proven (autopsy and vet statement required) hereditary defects. Upon spaying/neutering of dog, replacement will be made. Seller has up to two years to provide replacement."

My vet considered both of Dusty's problems hereditary and suggested that I make an attempt at getting my money back.

I called Teresa and she totally blew me off. She said that no one else had complained that their puppy from this litter had any problems. She also said that the female was hers. She knew that dog was in perfect health because this wasn't the dog's first litter. If Dusty did have a problem, it came from the male used in breeding, and I would have to deal with that breeder, Cindy.

I decided I had enough of talking to Teresa on the phone. I got statements from my primary vet about Dusty's testicles and seizures. I also went to the emergency clinic, who first diagnosed Dusty with seizures, and received a written statement from them. I compiled my 'proof' with a letter and sent it to Teresa.

After several weeks, I did not hear from her, so I decided to call again. She denied receiving the letter. I sent her my package of 'proof' once again, this time via certified mail. I received confirmation that she had received my letter.

I then called her and asked her if she was going to honor her puppy guarantee. I had provided her with written vet statements, as her guarantee asked for, and I wanted my money back. She told me

I knew I couldn't leave him there, so I paid the \$400.00 and I wrapped him up in my baby blanket and we went home. Before we left, she shoved a pill down his throat so he wouldn't get carsick. Well, on the way home, he threw up all over my door and me. I knew he was breathing funny on the way home, and I probably should have known it was kennel cough, but I didn't.

When I got home, I took him up to my parents' house and let him out of the truck to run around. He never left my leg. As the days went by, he got more adventurous and a little more spunky. **He did have kennel cough and gave it to my Labrador.** Quite a few bills and a year later, all is good. The little stinker loves to chase my horses, though.



I holler at him every day, and he gives me that cute little look of his. Those two get along so good they're like two peas in a pod. There isn't a day that goes by that I regret buying him. He is definitely momma's little boy.

If there is anything that I can do to help you out, just tell me. I feel so bad for the animals that are born and bred there. It's very unfair!!!

Brent & Sarah Wentlandt
Larsen, WI



*I am in favor of animal rights as well as human rights.
That is the way of a whole human being.*

Abraham Lincoln



B.B & Pooh Girl – Soul Mate Sisters

This story is about B.B (a Bichon mix), and Pooh Girl (a Poodle mix). These little girls came to PetsMart today to be groomed, but while here they want to share their story with you.

These little girls entered Adams County Humane Society shelter before Thanksgiving, *as strays*. However, the woman who surrendered these girls as strays is known as a small dog breeder. With no positive proof that these little girls belonged to this woman and given the condition these girls were in, Tasha, the shelter manager at Adams County Humane Society, took them into her shelter. Because they were labeled as strays, they had to stay the seven days; ads were run that two poodles were found stray and, to no one's surprise, no owner was found. The day after Thanksgiving the girls' seven days were up, and they entered a Compassionate Companion Fund (CCF) foster home.

The truth is these two little girls were help captive by this woman and bred and bred and re-bred so that their offspring could find the pockets of this woman's purse. Now these two girls older and in such poor condition as you can see unable to make for their owner the almighty dollar anymore were dumped in the shelter as strays.

Another truth is that, in most shelter situations, these two girls would be considered *highly unadoptable* because of their condition and would be *euthanized*.

Someone from above was certainly watching out for these two girls, as in most cases when the breeder has washed out one of their breeding females they simply snuff them out themselves. The fact that this woman took these girls to the shelter as strays that was these dogs' first saving grace. Their second saving grace was they entered Tasha's shelter – a shelter as "no kill" as is humanely possible in this part of Wisconsin. Their third saving grace – Tasha and CCF worked together. Tasha, knowing these girls could not take shelter life for long, and that they needed so much medical work (which was not in the shelter's budget) called CCF.

spending \$250 on the dog, I definitely did not want to risk his health; I elected to have the surgery.

Dusty recovered fine from the surgery but, after a few weeks, I noticed he was favoring his hind leg. I took him back to the vet and questioned if something happened during surgery that would have triggered the limping. She assured me that the leg must be the result of a pulled muscle. I took Dusty home and he never really recovered.

We went back to the vet and they did X-rays looking for hip dysplasia. Even though this breed wasn't known for hip problems, she wanted to eliminate the possibility. The X-rays came back fine. She put Dusty on medicine for arthritis. The medicine still did not cure the limping. The vet then suggested that Dusty see a hip specialist.

The specialist did everything she could think of, and found nothing physically wrong. She suggested that, since winter was here, I keep him confined to the house and off furniture. She felt that maybe rest would heal whatever was bothering him.

Dusty did improve through the winter, but to this day his limping comes back whenever he overexerts himself. He can't go on long walks, he can't jump up on furniture, and he knows that 'herding' makes his condition worse. He's learned on his own how to control his discomfort.

Dusty seemed to be doing fine until August 1, 1998. At 9:00 that evening he went into seizure on the middle of the living room floor. Not knowing what has happening to him, I rushed him to the emergency vet clinic in Appleton. They ran numerous tests on him and diagnosed him with a seizure. They recommended that I follow up with my primary vet and have them treat Dusty as they saw fit.

I took him to my primary vet and was told that, at his young age, he would continue to have seizures the rest of his life. For now I needed to monitor the frequency and duration of the seizures. They would then make a determination if he needed medication.

Dusty

I purchased my sheltie on October 15, 1996 from Teresa G. He was 4-1/2 months old and I bought him for \$250. She told me she would sell him at that low price because he was the runt and the last of the litter. My sheltie, "Dusty", was born on June 28, 1996. After purchasing him on October 15, 1996, I took him to the vet for a checkup and any necessary shots.

At that time, the vet questioned the fact that Dusty didn't have testicles. I said I never thought to look at that. She said that at this age they should be noticeable. She told me to contact the breeder and ask the breeder what she intended to do about the defect of this purebred. She said that the \$250 I paid was worth a breed-able dog. Dusty was not breed-able.

I did not buy Dusty for breeding purposes. I had a sheltie-mix prior to Dusty that I had just put to sleep. The dog had a great temperament, and I wanted that breed again. I bought Dusty because he was a sheltie, not to breed.

"The vet told me to contact the breeder and ask the breeder what she intended to do about the defect of this purebred. She said that the \$250 I paid was worth a breedable dog. Dusty was not breed-able."

I contacted Teresa, and she told me that I wouldn't notice testicles until the dog was one year old. I didn't know, so I went back to the vet with her comment. The vet told me that wasn't so. Dusty's testicles should have dropped. She recommended that I consider surgery to have his testicles removed.

Her concern was that it was very possible for tumors (possibly cancerous) to form if this abnormality wasn't taken care of. After

Funds needed for the medical work was about \$400 for each of these girls. A lot of medical care was needed.

First of all, these girls were spayed. Then they had mammary tumors removed which were caused by being unspayed and from excessive breeding. Their ears were cleaned of ear infection. They had dental work done to remove tartar (black scum), and their rotten teeth were pulled (due to poor diet more than age). Their age is estimated at five years plus; in their neglected condition it is hard to get a true age.

These two little girls have prompted me to run this ad, that I hope you and everyone have seen in your Buyers Guide. B.B and Pooh Girl want you to see the reality of where these Christmas puppies come from, from thousands of mom dogs purposely bred to have their offspring for the holidays, as they have for years. The object is to line their owners' pockets with **tax-free money** while they live the life these two have until they can no longer produce.

B.B and Pooh Girl have a happy ending to their years in breeding slavery. But know that their happy end is a rarity. And we want the world to know the truth – spread the word. If we can get people to stop step 2, then step 1 will find puppy selling not as profitable. For Sellers that's what it's all about: **Money**. For Rescue Organizations and Shelters it's about **Love and Second Chances and New Life**.

CHRISTMAS DISASTERS

1. Every year thousands of dogs are purposely bred to have their pups just in time for Christmas.
 2. Every December thousands of pups are purchased, cute and cuddly, and given as Christmas gifts.
 3. Every January thousands of pups are surrendered to shelters and rescue organizations.
 4. Every January **Thousands Die**.
- To end 3 & 4 we need to start with 1 & 2.

Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project thanks Kim Stevens of Compassionate Companion Fund (CCF) for allowing us to reprint the flyer she wrote to tell B.B and Pooh Girl's story.

By a Puppy Mill Pup

I don't remember much from the place I was born. It was cramped and dark, and we were never played with by the humans. I remember Mom and her soft fur, but she was often sick, and very thin. She had hardly any milk for me and my brothers and sisters. I remember many of them dying, and I missed them so.

I do remember the day I was taken from Mom. I was so sad and scared, my milk teeth had only just come in, and I really should have been with Mom still, but she was so sick, and the humans kept saying that they wanted money and were sick of the "mess" that me and my sister made. So we were crated up and taken to a strange place. Just the two of us. We huddled together and were scared, still no human hands came to pet or love us.

"All day we stay in the small cage. Sometimes mean people will hit the glass and frighten us. Every once in a while we are taken out to be held or shown to humans. Some are gentle; some hurt us. We always hear "Aw, they are so cute! I want one!" but we never get to go with any."

So many sights and sounds, and smells! We are in a store where there are many different animals! Some that squawk! some that meow! Some that peep! My sister and I are jammed into a small cage; I hear other puppies here. I see humans look at me, I like the 'little humans', the kids. they look so sweet, and fun, like they would play with me!

All day we stay in the small cage. Sometimes mean people will hit the glass and frighten us. Every once in a while we are taken out to be held or shown to humans. Some are gentle; some hurt us. We always hear "Aw, they are so cute! I want one!" but we never get to go with any.

Aussie Puppy

I think one of the other things in regards to the public's apparent apathy to these situations, is that a lot of the people buy the puppy out of pity, they know it's the wrong thing to do, but they feel so awful for that puppy and want to get it out of that environment. I think that's how "puppy farmers" like the G. S. places of the world make their money, from pity.

I'd be willing to bet when the story aired about his fires, that his business went way up, vs. down. People probably went there just out of curiosity and left with a puppy because they couldn't bear to leave it there.

I myself almost left Puppy World Inc. in Milwaukee with a \$500.00 Aussie puppy because they were selling me such a bunch of lies about the dog (said Aussies were just like Labs, only smarter and calmer!), I couldn't stand to think what was going to happen to that puppy when a person expecting a Lab like puppy walked away with an Aussie... That particular Aussie puppy came from Nielson Farms in Kansas, that was one of the mills profiled on the Dateline NBC news story.

Puppy World Inc. is awful; they get all of their dogs from mills, and have a sign proudly displayed that says all of their breeders are USDA approved. They lie to make a sale, and say anything they think you want to hear. They also offer 90 days same as cash and have a banner for every holiday boasting what great gifts puppies make.

We can trace at least 3 of our rescue dogs back to there; one had to be euthanized because it was so psycho it would rip out my screens to jump out my windows to chase after children, and not to play with them.

Sheri Stack

Midwest Coordinator - Second Time Around Aussie Rescue

or the genetic problems the puppy has. The animals in the puppy mills are truly prisoners of greed.

The next time you walk by a pet store, stop and listen. If you try, you will be able to imagine the suffering and pain it took to put that puppy in that window. The broken jawed mother as she struggles to eat so she has enough strength to go on another day. The tiny puppy with the lower part of its leg missing because it was torn off while trying to free itself from the holes in the wires of the cage it calls home or was eaten by another dog because it was starving to death. The whimpering of the animals as they beg for the tender touch of a humane hand. The cries for help as they slowly die from neglect and starvation.

People wonder why some rescue people do puppy mill rescue, and now you know. They do whatever has to be done to help end the suffering of the animals in these places. You may not be able to go to a puppy mill and see the things many of us have, but you can help end the suffering right where you live.

Tell everyone you know not to buy products from pet stores that sell puppies and kittens. When the demand goes away, the mills will close. Help by promoting rescued animals as an alternative. Every animal that finds a new home from a rescue group makes room for another to be saved by rescue.

Donate money to help purchase the freedom of a puppy mill baby. The animals at auctions can and many are being rescued when the funds are available. Send a little note to a rescue person, thanking them for what they do to save animals. It's easy to become burned out in this business when we keep seeing so many animals that desperately need our help.

Wayne Mayes

Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project wishes to thank Nancy Jo and Wayne Mayes of Tender Hearts Rescue for their tireless efforts to save homeless and unwanted puppy mill cast off dogs. Wayne and Nancy Jo live in Missouri in the heart of the nation's largest puppy mill region. Many Missouri bred puppy mill dogs end up in Wisconsin pet stores.

My sister died last night, when the store was dark. I lay my head on her soft fur and felt the life leave her small thin body. I had heard them say she was sick, and that I should be sold at a "discount price" so that I would quickly leave the store. I think my soft whine was the only one that mourned for her as her body was taken out of the cage in the morning and dumped.

Today, a family came and bought me! Oh, happy day! They are a nice family, they really, really wanted me! They had bought a dish and food and the little girl held me so tenderly in her arms. I love her so much! The mom and dad say what a sweet and good puppy I am! I am named Angel. I love to lick my new humans!

The family takes such good care of me, they are loving and tender and sweet. They gently teach me right and wrong, give me good food, and lots of love! I want only to please these wonderful people! I love the little girl and I enjoy running and playing with her.

Today I went to the veterinarian. It was a strange place, and I was frightened. I got some shots, but my best friend the little girl held me softly and said it would be OK. So I relaxed. The vet must have said sad words to my beloved family, because they looked awfully sad. I heard severe hip dysplasia, and something about my heart... I heard the vet say something about back yard breeders and my parents not being tested. I know not what any of that means, just that it hurts me to see my family so sad. But they still love me, and I still love them very much!

I am 6 months old now. Where most other puppies are robust and rowdy, it hurts me terribly just to move. The pain never lets up. It hurts to run and play with my beloved little girl, and I find it hard to breathe. I keep trying my best to be the strong pup I know I am supposed to be, but it is so hard. It breaks my heart to see the little girl so sad, and to hear the mom and dad talk about "it might now be the time". Several times I have gone to that veterinarian's place, and the news is never good. Always talk about congenital problems. I just want to feel the warm sunshine, and run and play and nuzzle with my family.

Last night was the worst. Pain has been my constant companion now; it hurts even to get up and get a drink. I try to get up, but can

only whine in pain. I am taken in the car one last time. Everyone is so sad, and I don't know why. Have I been bad? I try to be good and loving. What have I done wrong? Oh, if only this pain would be gone! If only I could soothe the tears of the little girl. I reach out my muzzle to lick her hand, but can only whine in pain.

The veterinarian's table is so cold. I am so frightened. The humans all hug and love me; they cry into my soft fur. I can feel their love and sadness. I manage to lick softly their hands. Even the vet doesn't seem so scary today. He is gentle, and I sense some kind of relief for my pain.

The little girl holds me softly, and I thank her for giving me all her love. I feel a soft pinch in my foreleg. The pain is beginning to lift. I am beginning to feel a peace descend upon me. I can now softly lick her hand. My vision is becoming dreamlike now, and I see my mother and my brothers and sisters, in a far-off green place. They tell me there is no pain there, only peace and happiness.

I tell the family goodbye in the only way I know how, a soft wag of my tail and a nuzzle of my nose. I had hoped to spend many, many moons with them, but it was not meant to be. "You see," said the veterinarian, "Pet shop puppies do not come from ethical breeders." The pain ends now, and I know it will be many years until I see my beloved family again. If only things could have been different.

(This story is reprinted with permission from the author in the hopes that it will stop unethical breeders and those who breed only for money and not for the betterment of the breed. Copyright © 1999 J. Ellis)



We live in a world which is full of misery and ignorance, and the plain duty of each and all of us is to try to make the little corner he can influence somewhat less miserable and somewhat less ignorant than it was before he entered it.

Thomas Huxley



You would see puppies so far from the breed standard they looked like a totally different breed than the one they were supposed to be. You might see dead or sick puppies laying in the cages as the others walked over them. Like the rock song says, "The smell of death is around you." If we had time to hang around, we could wait for the puppy broker to come. You would see a truck or van stacked full from the floor to the ceiling with tiny plastic cages – many of them already crammed full of puppies of every imaginable breed – all stacked in there like cord wood. The sounds of hundreds of terrified puppies waiting in those dark cramped quarters waiting for their ride into the unknown.

“You would see animals that are terrified of people because all they have ever known was pain and exploitation at the hands of the millers. You would see diseased and dying and dead animals in some of the cages. One look in their eyes and you can see their plea for help: ‘Please help me.’”

The broker will take most of the puppies if they aren't too sick or so deformed he can't sell them. He will take any puppy the millers say is 8 weeks old. Many of the animals are under 6 weeks, but they are the right weight and size, so they are torn away from their mothers, by force at times, and sold to the broker.

As we walk away from this place, you remember back in school when you read about the concentration camps during WWII. This place is just like that. The animals are abused and exploited until they are no longer profitable to the miller, and then they are sold and most are killed. The females are bred every cycle from the time they first come in heat until they die. The puppies are sold to unsuspecting pet buyers all over the world as registered animals, and no mention is ever made about the hell holes the parents live in

top of the other where the urine and feces of the animals above fell down on the animals below – the piles of animal waste all along under the bottom row of cages.

You would see them crammed full of animals almost unrecognizable by any breeds you know of. You would see adults and puppies with missing limbs from being attacked by other animals while trying to get enough food to eat, injury from getting their limbs caught in the holes in the cages, and from mutilation by the miller.

“You would see them crammed full of animals almost unrecognizable by any breeds you know of. You would see adults and puppies with missing limbs from being attacked by other animals while trying to get enough food to eat, injury from getting their limbs caught in the holes in the cages, and from mutilation by the miller.”

You would see animals that are terrified of people because all they have ever known was pain and exploitation at the hands of the millers. You would see diseased and dying and dead animals in some of the cages. One look in their eyes and you can see their plea for help: ***“Please help me.”***

If you haven't already lost the cheeseburger you had for lunch in the first building, we could venture into the next building or room of the puppy mill. Behind that door, you would see rows of cages full of mothers with puppies.

You would quickly notice the deformed faces of many of the mother dogs and, when you asked, I would explain how the they try to defend their puppies when the brokers come. How most of these animals have never had proper medical care, and the broken bones are left to heal on their own.

Seamas

In the Spring of 1982, my sister answered a newspaper ad for AKC West Highland White Terrier puppies for sale. The breeder was located out in the country near Cadott, Wisconsin. I think we had vaguely heard of the term puppy mill even that long ago, but I doubt we had any clear concept of what that really meant. And perhaps this breeder really more closely fit the definition of backyard breeder than puppy mill.

Whatever the woman should have been called, we were quite distressed at the conditions in which we found these puppies and their mother. They lived in the basement of the house, and it seemed quite certain they never saw the natural light of day. Large dogs of some breed were apparently also being bred in the windowless confines of a shed or barn on the property. We could hear them barking, but we did not see them.

I think we knew at once that this was not a suitable place for puppies or bitches. Had we been wiser, we would almost certainly have left without buying a puppy. But pity led us to buy the smaller of the two remaining puppies, and we tried in vain to get the breeder to sell us the bitch as well, because her living situation seemed so hopeless.

The breeder required nothing of us but the purchase price: no spay/neuter contract, no inquiry as to whether we had a suitable living place for the puppy, no questions about what we planned to do with him. This breeder had no plans for taking the puppy back if we found him unsatisfactory in any way.

Concerned that our new puppy was quite underweight, we immediately took him to our veterinarian. Seamas, as we named our puppy, was indeed underweight. He was also full of worms and had a severe case of ear mites. He had received no treatment for either condition while at the breeder's, so we must assume the bitch and Seamas' littermates suffered the same untreated maladies.

Victims Of Greed

Seamas proved to be a happy puppy, full of sweetness and charm, good-natured and loving. For the first few years of his life, he enjoyed good health as well, but that was not to last for very many years. When he was about three years old, he developed terrible skin allergies. Eventually our veterinarian threw up his hands in despair and referred us to the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine. While there, Seamas underwent skin patch testing for 57 substances, 17 of which he turned out to be allergic to. Of these 17, the most severe reactions were to beef, pine, fleas, household dust and mold. From that point on, Seamas became a very expensive, uninsured member of the family.

As treatment for his allergies, Seamas required desensitizing shots daily for a period of time, then weekly, and eventually roughly every three weeks. He received these shots for nearly four years. The medication had to be custom mixed at the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine and shipped to us overnight express since it needed to be refrigerated.

During the worst years of Seamas' allergies, we pulled up all the carpeting in our house, and returned to wood floors in an effort to alleviate his symptoms. We cooked home made dog food, gave up real pine Christmas trees, and stopped walking in the parks.

Seamas suffered horribly from his many allergies. Two hot, humid summers in a row caused the skin on his underbelly to turn black and slough off in strips, leaving raw, sore patches. His feet were red, swollen and painful all summer, every summer. His inner thighs would break out in welts and pustules; the constant itching kept all of us awake many nights. Our veterinarian, a man of great skill and even greater kindness, worked with us to find an antihistamine that would alleviate the itching. We tried them all, plus the old fashioned remedy of lukewarm soda baths.

How can we be so sure these allergies were genetic? The professional and popular dog journals were beginning to discuss the growing belief that inbreeding was a key factor in the rapid increase of severe allergies among purebred dogs.

Driving down the winding back roads of America's heartland, our eyes take in the beauty of the world around us as we listen to the radio and forget about the cares of the world we live in. We feel the warm sun as it shines down around us, and look at all the trees and wild flowers, and wonder how things could get any better than this as we roar on down the highway to our destination.

If we were to turn off the highway on to almost any one of the millions of miles of back roads in the heartland of our country, turn the radio off, roll down our windows and drive slow, we'd hear a much different sound. We'd hear the sounds of song birds singing in the trees, we'd hear the sounds of cattle as they called to each other, and we'd hear the sounds of gravel as it crunched under our tires as we drove.

We wouldn't have to drive very far before we would hear a much different sound way off in the distance. This isn't the sound of some happy bird or the sound of any cow as it calls to its calf. It is the sound of an animal in distress. It is the sounds of hundreds of poor defenseless animals held prisoner because of greed. If you followed the sound, it would take you to some locked gate with a sign that said *NO Trespassing* or *Keep Out*, and what lies behind the gate would be left up to your imagination as you slowly turn around and drive away.

Let me tell you what lies past that gate and just out of sight. The first thing you would hear is the sounds of hundreds of animals whimpering and crying, begging for someone to help them. Your stomach would turn over as the intense smell of ammonia drifted out through every crack in the dilapidated buildings where the cries from help came from. Your heart would be breaking as you reached for the handle to the door of the first building, take a deep breath and try to hold it, and rush inside.

As the light streamed inside the building, the sounds of the animals gets louder as some bark while others too weak to bark just lay and whimper. You would see rows of tiny wire cages stacked one on

She was gone but just a day, when her sister was beside me,

She too had some more puppies, so small and weak and tiny.

The other day they came and checked me, while my puppies were being born,

“This one’s too big, there’s no use now, her insides are too torn.”

The scooped me up, it hurt so bad, the blood was everywhere, They never tried to help me, they didn’t seem to care.

They took me to that big green field, and laid me on the ground, The smell was heaven, and the ground so soft, I tried to look around.

They covered me with more soft soil, I had nothing to fear. I closed my eyes and just relaxed, I knew the end was near.

No longer do I imagine the feel of human touch, Or how it feels to run and play, here I have so much.

There is a great big colored bridge, and fields that go forever, I’m happy.

I’m home.

I’m someone’s friend.

It couldn’t get much better.

Author Unknown



Compassion for animals is intimately connected with goodness of character; and it may be confidently asserted that he who is cruel to animals cannot be a good man.

Arthur Schopenhauer (Philosopher)



We could see for ourselves that Seamas was poorly bred. In our eyes, he was beautiful, but to an AKC show judge he was oversized, his ears were huge, he had a fiddle front, his head was large and distorted, his body was too long, his feet were splayed, and he had a lumbering gait, to say nothing of an uneven back which was too high in the rear, too low in the front, and contributed to the poor set of his tail and the incorrect lay of his shoulders.

***“The evidence seemed incontrovertible:
the seeds of Seamas’ allergies were rooted
in his genes and not in our house.”***

The many physical characteristics that would quickly have disqualified him from serious AKC show competition did not deter the AKC, however, from willingly providing the breeder with his AKC registration papers.

In addition, we had two other dogs at the time Seamas lived with us, neither of whom showed the slightest sign of allergies to anything. One of these dogs was a bichon frise from a reputable breeder, the other was a Pomeranian mix from the local animal shelter. The evidence seemed incontrovertible: the seeds of Seamas’ allergies were rooted in his genes and not in our house.

After a year or two of dealing with the chronic allergies, Seamas began to have chronic ear infections. These seemed to be related to the allergies: when the skin lesions were at their worst, the ear infections would peak as well. Eventually, Seamas had to have extensive and expensive surgery to open both ear canals.

About a year after the ear surgery, we were out of town on vacation. Needless to say, a pet sitter willing and able to manage Seamas’ health problems was not easy to find, but we left town secure in the knowledge that the person in charge was capable of giving shots, antihistamines, soda baths and whatever else might be required. That was fortunate because, while we were gone, Seamas collapsed; his knees simply stopped working. The diagnosis: ACL (anterior

cruciate ligament), a very painful and crippling condition if not treated swiftly. The treatment: additional extensive and expensive surgery to both hind legs.

Seamas developed cataracts at quite a young age; whether genetic or from the Prednisone used to treat his initial critical allergic reactions, we were never sure. Following unsuccessful cataract surgery at the University of Minnesota School of Veterinary Medicine, one eye had to be removed to alleviate Seamas' pain. By the time he was 10 years old, Seamas was both deaf and blind. At the age of 12, he began to have severe seizures, and we had him euthanized.

“The cost of puppy mills and unregulated backyard breeders is astronomical in terms of consumer dollars, emotional heartache and animal suffering. In our society, there is no product other than pets for which the state and federal government would permit so many “lemons” to be foisted on so many consumers without local action being taken to protect the individual buyers.”

We never chose to add up the total cost of Seamas' veterinary bills; we think the result would have horrified us. We are grateful we had a local veterinarian who was willing to work with us to manage Seamas' care, but it was never easy to do.

We considered ourselves lucky for two reasons: in the first place, Seamas' disposition remained sweet to the very end of his life, which is often not the case with the genetic messes turned out by the puppy mills. We would not have been able physically to handle all of Seamas' medical treatments had he not been an exceptionally

How Much Is That Puppy In The Window?

by A Puppy Mill Mama

My bones ache, my muscles sore, so tired I have grown,
I sit within the small confines of this tiny cage I call home.

Many friends surround me, lots of different breeds,
They too share my aches and pains, with no humans to tend our needs.

I am a bitch or so they call me, I hear it's not a bad name,
Lots of puppies I have whelped, to them it's just a game.

I sit and watch day after day, so many puppies being born,
Where do they go, what happens to them, when from their Moms they're torn?

I can see the grass growing tall and green, I long to sniff, to feel it.
I've never walked upon that field nor have they let me near it.

Instead I walk upon this screen so hard, so rough so cold.
My feet ache, my toes are sore, I'm exhausted and feel so old.

My friends have told they lived in places, long before this one.
Where humans touched them every day and with children they could run.

I long to have just one human pet and kiss me,
and maybe play a game.
I know it will never happen, but I wish it all the same.

Instead they bring another dog and toss him in with me,
Another litter I must bear, there's no end that I can see.

The little girl that sits beside me, cried out the other day,
She screamed out loud then limp she went and the pups were taken away.

that the pup was born in APRIL, much to our surprise, as we were told the pup was 8 weeks old in September!!

Since we found ourselves in court in March with a formal hearing scheduled for April and we have had the dog since September with some very serious bonding, the case was dropped by us. Mr. C. showed his true colors, and we were not going to let Mr. C. get that pup back in the event that we won our case (which it looked like we were).

You may also find it interesting that Mr. C. came from a family of "breeders". He also claimed to us to have founded the Humane Society. Go figure.

Hopefully, this information will prevent someone else from having to deal with this individual.

Patty Kueck
New London, Wisconsin

P.S. Just for your knowledge, we started the dog on prescription dog food and eye drops. She is doing fine. We still feel the "breeder" knew something was wrong due to his comment regarding feeding. The pup was also checked out by the vet before the purchase but, since the "drunkenness" was only for 2-3 days, then normal behavior for 2-3 days. You can petty much choose when to show your dog to vets or customers.



*The greatness of a nation and its moral progress
can be judged by the way its animals are treated.*

Mahatma Gandhi



tolerant animal. And yet dogs that bite, snap and snarl are the more common face of the inbred puppy mill dog.

We were also lucky because my sister could afford to pay for Seamas' many health care needs. In sheer consumer costs, Seamas' health care bills were enormous, but we did not have to balance his bills with college tuition for children or house payments for a family. Many families would have had to euthanize Seamas by the time he was three simply because they could not afford to take care of him.

The cost of puppy mills and unregulated backyard breeders is astronomical in terms of consumer dollars, emotional heartache and animal suffering. In our society, there is no product other than pets for which the state and federal government would permit so many "lemons" to be foisted on so many consumers without local action being taken to protect the individual buyers.

What state would allow its residents to pay hundreds of dollars to buy a new kitchen appliance and then pay thousands of dollars for repairs without taking legal action against the manufacturers of the appliance? Yet that is exactly what state and federal government allow to happen with the purchase of purebred dogs.

We learned our lesson with Seamas, and will never again buy a dog from a newspaper advertisement, but how many well-meaning consumers have learned that same expensive and heartbreaking lesson since we brought him home in 1982? How many more consumers will pay the emotional and financial price of learning this lesson before the appropriate state and federal agencies have the resources and authority to put the puppy mills out of business?

Government agencies tend to dismiss the complaints about puppy mills as being those of the whiny animal rights activists, disregarding the fact that it is primarily average consumers who do not know the risks of puppy mill products who are, in fact, buying these dogs.

Cheryl Cutsforth
Eau Clair, WI

Shih-Tzu Puppy

We purchased a Shih-Tzu puppy from a lady by the name of Madame X (married and divorced) from Rural Spooner. It was definitely a puppy mill. I knew all the signs but, because we'd just had to have our dog put to sleep, I was desperate for a puppy. All the signs of puppy mill were there, but I simply closed my eyes and purchased one, knowing it was a "no-no". I paid \$250.

I called my vet the next day to have her checked out, and he was upset with me, knowing the woman and her reputation. I ended up having to repeat all her shots because Dr. Woods thought maybe she might have used old or unrefrigerated medicine. She itched and scratched so bad, I had to have her dipped twice, and the vet said he didn't like to do that to such a young puppy, but we had no choice. She had all kinds of skin problems, and has been on allergy pills since she was a puppy, and she's now five years old.

I just added up what we have spent in five years, and it amounts to \$440 plus \$6 each month for five years on allergy pills, and we're now doctoring for ear infection and eye infection and flaking skin. I could just go on and on. The place was so dirty, I can't begin to tell you.

I didn't want to hold the poor puppy until we got her home and gave her a bath. We love her dearly, but she has really cost us a lot of unnecessary expense because the puppy mill should have been closed down years ago. The sheriff's department has been called three different times, but nothing happens. She also sends a lot of puppies to Minnesota. She meets buyers at the state line, and away they go.

Please try to change the laws so these people are punished and watched so they are unable to no longer abuse these poor innocent animals that only want to give and receive love.

Mrs. Elaine Nelson
Rice Lake, WI

us of not taking proper care of the pup, and kept saying, "What are you going to do, take me to court? We never had a contract."

He also informed us he was not a breeder. He continued and continues today to say he is not a breeder, although I know of at least two other dogs he has tried to sell in the last year. He has the male. He has the female. Neither is fixed, and nature takes its course. Mr. C.'s dogs have puppies.

He did offer to take the pup back if we agreed to another pup at a future time. He said he had a litter coming in in December. Later, he reneged on that offer, saying the pups didn't come in. Yet, early this spring we were contacted by an individual (who heard of our ordeal) who was about to buy a pup from Mr. C. Guess he did have pups, after all.

Approximately two weeks after we discovered the liver shunt, we noticed the pup's eyes were clouding over (we thought possible side effect of the liver disease). We returned the pup to the vet where it was determined the pup was also unable to produce tears. She was to have prescription eye drops 3 times daily. Again, informed Mr. C., who just got more irritated.

"The judge did inform Mr. C. that the liver shunt was a birth defect, meaning the dog was born that way."

The first part of November, my daughter filed a claim in small claims court. The first hearing was with the judge in March. Mr. C. again claimed to the judge that it was our fault for the liver shunt by changing the dog food. He claimed the only reason we brought the issue to court as a problem between mother and daughter as to whether we have the dog or not. (?)

The judge did inform Mr. C. that the liver shunt was a *birth defect*, meaning the dog was born that way. Mr. C. also informed the court

My daughter took the puppy with her everywhere except school. While she was in school, the puppy was home (with our other dogs) alone for only about one hour a day. Shortly after the puppy stopped throwing up, it began to act strange. Falling over its own head, stumbling, and no interest in eating. It did occasionally eat from our other dogs' food (Pedigree). Remembering what Mr. C. said about eating, and acting like it was going to die, we started feeding the puppy Pedigree dog food.

Approximately 4 weeks had passed during all this trial and error in an attempt to see a complete adjustment to her new surroundings. At 4 weeks, the puppy was due back at the vet for another booster shot. It was mentioned to the vet about the vomiting and "drunken" behavior. He didn't seem to think it anything but adjustment.

"He continued and continues today to say he is not a breeder, although I know of at least two other dogs he has tried to sell in the last year. He has the male. He has the female. Neither is fixed, and nature takes its course."

After another week of "drunken" behavior, we returned the pup to the vet, when he pursued the issue further. He thought possibly it was a protein and/or sugar imbalance in the pup. Blood work was done and, to our surprise, it was determined that the pup has a liver shunt. Options on treating this were: (1) have the pup destroyed (she was not that bad); (2) allow it to continue on at its present condition; (3) prescription dog food with possible additional medication; or (4) surgery (\$2,000).

We immediately contacted Mr. C. as to what we had learned. He became VERY defensive, and blamed us for the dog's condition. He said he was not responsible for the liver shunt, as it was probably caused by our changing the dog's food. He also accused

Choco

I have three mini Dachshunds – one female and two males. I have had my female, Princess, since she was a puppy. She was the result of an 'accident'. But, nonetheless, she is a good dog.

My first male, Tadoo, I got from some people who were going to send him to the pound!! They paid \$700 for him from a pet store, and didn't want him! I walked away with him that day, and he never looked back. But he did come with some behavioral problems, and I think he may have been abused. He is aggressive toward other dogs and kids. He was only 6 months when I got him, and I have now had him for 2 years. He has improved, but will never be normal. This all took place in North Carolina. The store has since closed down!

"Sometimes at night he comes and curls himself around my head as if to say thanks for rescuing me. And all I can say is thanks for being my little boy."

My second male, Choco, (pronounced with a hard 'O'), is my rescue dog. I got him from a shelter in Missouri about a year ago. He has been very good and has overcome a lot. I have had his anal glands removed due to such a horrible infection.

His teeth were nasty, but I have gotten him some good food, and that has worked miracles. He has a bad overbite, and finds eating difficult, but their food is small enough for him to chew. They eat very expensive food, so his fur now looks really nice.

He has learned to play, and now knows that he is safe here. He swims when we take him to the lake, and sleeps in the 'big' bed where he can burrow under the blankets by our feet. Sometimes at night he comes and curls himself around my head as if to say

thanks for rescuing me. And all I can say is thanks for being my little boy.

I would really love to help end unethical pet breeders and sellers. I don't think that any animal should have to suffer a day in their life. Puppy mills do NOT have a place in this world, and the people who run them should face severe punishment. Anything I can do for you, I will, with pleasure!

Jenni Cortinas
Oshkosh, WI



*Not to hurt our humble brethren (the animals)
is our first duty to them,
but to stop there is not enough.*

*We have a higher mission—
to be of service to them
whenever they require it...*

*If you have men who will exclude
any of God's creatures
from the shelter of compassion and pity,
you will have men who will deal likewise
with their fellow men.*

Saint Francis of Assisi



Yorkshire Terrier

This past week you advertised for information pertaining to stories regarding the physical health or behavior of a puppy/dog purchased from a breeder or pet store. I feel you may be interested in our experience. I am writing this as it happened to our family, although my 17 year old daughter was the one purchasing the dog.

Last September, two weeks after school started, my daughter saw a man playing in the grass with a tiny Yorkshire Terrier. She struck up a conversation about the dog. Needless to say, she fell in love with the dog and asked how expensive this type of dog was. He informed her that he could get \$1,000 for this dog in Washington state, but he would sell it to her for \$400. She said she wanted the dog. I was quite surprised when she came home with the dog, planning on adding it to our family which already has 2 dogs.

After a long talk, about 3 hours, I convinced her to take the dog back to the breeder, and really think about what she was doing. The breeder is Jeff and Amy C. of New London, Wisconsin. Mr. C. agreed to take the dog back for one week while my daughter prepared for the puppy. Mr. C. told her the puppy was low maintenance, housebroken, and approximately 8 weeks old. No money had changed hands at this point.

One week later, my daughter returned to the breeder to pick up her puppy. Mr. C. then told her the price of the dog had gone up to \$450 because he had to get another shot for her. He warned my daughter to make sure the puppy ate, as it would "act like it was dying" if it didn't eat. He also sent her home with a small Ziploc bag of Science Diet dog food.

The first week she had the puppy, it threw up every night repeatedly (3-4 times per night). She took the puppy back to Mr. C. to ask what was going on. He thought it might be a reaction from the shot, or just an adjustment to her new home.

With this news our staff and volunteers became even more motivated to rehabilitate the remaining dogs in order to facilitate successful placements into loving homes. On October 9 the FVHA began an extensive Socialization Program driven by community volunteers. This program was a necessary step in teaching the frightened Chihuahuas that they could in fact trust humans.

Progress was slow in the beginning especially for the adult dogs that had been emotionally scarred by their experience in Polk County. But with the help of numerous volunteers, the nervous and apprehensive Chihuahuas slowly began to relax...and trust.

Finally, on November 7 the news came that the FVHA had been waiting for. All 19 Chihuahuas had tested negatively for the final Brucellosis test. The dogs were ready to start a new life in new homes! And that is exactly what happened. All of the Chihuahuas have been placed in loving, safe, nurturing homes.

Unfortunately, these events were preventable. The irresponsible actions of a few heartless, irresponsible breeders have devastating results on the lives of defenseless creatures. Fortunately, our state, local community and FVHA staff responded to this crisis and turned a grave situation into one filled with hope and love. One heartbreaking story has been transformed into individual success stories – complete with happy endings for each Chihuahua and the family that they have become a part of!

Reprinted with permission from Companion, The Quarterly Newsletter of The Fox Valley Humane Association, Ltd., December 2000.



He is your friend, your partner, your defender, your dog.

You are his life, his love, his leader.

He will be yours, faithful and true, to the last beat of his heart.

You owe it to him to be worthy of such devotion.

Author Unknown



Max

Max was purchased from Petland in Racine. He was a puppy coming out of a puppy mill from Goodman, MO. Remember the email a month back about discussion of Pfizer/Hunte Corp? Well, guess what, folks? Little Max came from these puppy mill breeders. And guess what, folks? Due to the disgusting ways of these puppy mill breeders, that some of us did not want to hear about, get involved with or read about, **he is now a Wisconsin GROW golden retriever rescue!**

I'm sorry, but I am very angry and frustrated right now. If any of you had talked, listened and cried with Max's current owner, Karen, perhaps you would understand my frustration and anger. To hear what this family has been through, to try and help Max medically, not to mention the money they spent – which, by the way, wasn't even a concern or issue. To hear the tears they cried and the emotions coming from her heart is unbearable, just because there are monsters out there who do **horrible, unimaginable** things to breed dogs for money!

Max was purchased for \$800. He was not eating or drinking. He has loose hips, diarrhea and has been throwing up water! He is ONLY 12 weeks old, and has already had umbilical hernia repair surgery through Petland, and is also suffering from a respiratory infection! His owner, Karen, has had him to her vet practically every week, if not more. She insisted her vet put him on an IV so he wouldn't starve. Can you even begin to imagine how horrible and sick this little guy feels? He is on so many medications and supplements – it's disgusting.

Karen was forced to give her pup to someone who would not put him down, and who would take proper care of him, because she just found out she is 6 weeks into a very **high risk** pregnancy. She must reduce stress in her life.

Karen and her family have never, ever had to give up one of their own...until now.

She DEMANDED her money back from Petland and got it. She *refused* to give back Max to Petland, and kept him, knowing he would otherwise be euthanized. Her husband yelled, stopped and told every customer in or near Petland *not to buy a dog from this store!*

For those of you who want to make a difference, who really care about the humane treatment and breeding of all dogs, and who disagree with puppy mills breeding just for *money*, we *will* be making arrangements to try and stop this inhumane treatment of dogs in the very near future. We need laws to protect pet and human victims of unethical breeders and pet sellers.

I also want to thank Kristi and Amy for taking Max into their loving home, hearts and arms. With their understanding, attention, education, experience and, most of all, their love for the golden breed, Max WILL survive, and through GROW they will find him a loving, safe and responsible "forever" home! They have also agreed to respect and honor Karen's request to keep her updated on Max and his progress. Amy may even send Karen some pictures of Max as he becomes the healthy, happy golden we all have in our own homes.

Thank you to all volunteers who are here to make a difference. To welcome these homeless goldens into their homes or other safe homes. To all of you who help transport, raise money, do home visits and assess homeless and unwanted goldens. We all make a difference in our own special ways through our warm and generous hearts unconditionally. Thank you to all of you.

Kim (-and Max too!)



There is no fundamental difference between man and the higher animals in their mental faculties... The lower animals, like man, manifestly feel pleasure and pain, happiness, and misery.

Charles Darwin



New Homes, New Hope – A Happy Ending for Our Chihuahuas

On September 11, 2000 the Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies coordinated the rescue to 227 dogs from an animal breeder in Polk County. The Fox Valley Humane Association (FVHA) along with 15 other humane societies participated in the removal of the dogs, mostly Chihuahuas. On the first day of the rescue a team from FVHA made the 13-1/2 hour, 500 mile round trip to Polk County and returned with 22 dogs. On the second day of the removal, the FVHA Board President volunteered to make a second trip to Polk County to bring back the remaining 38 dogs that had not been rescued. This left the FVHA with a total of 60 dogs.

In the days shortly following, many of the dogs were sent to other humane societies in the state leaving the FVHA with 20 Chihuahuas and one Cocker Spaniel. The staff and the very supportive community then embarked on a compassionate and emotional journey of rehabilitation and recovery.

Due to the horrifying environment these dogs were forced to live in by this irresponsible breeder, the emotional and physical conditions of the dogs was appalling. All of the dogs had parasites, fleas and disease. They were extremely frightened and understandably fearful of humans. The staff was diligent and patient as they set out to heal the Chihuahuas' broken bodies and spirits. Medical evaluations done on the dogs included a test for Brucellosis, a bacterial infection that is becoming more and more common in overcrowded puppy mills. Brucellosis test results from Cornell University obtained on October 22 showed that two Chihuahuas and the Cocker Spaniel tested positive for the infection.

It is widely believed that treatment for Brucellosis is unsuccessful and that the animals may remain carriers with the possibility to affect other dogs and people. Upon the recommendation of veterinarians from Cornell University and the FVHA veterinarian advisors, the dogs were sadly euthanized. The remaining 18 dogs were to be re-tested for the infection in four weeks and would be released from quarantine pending the results of the test.

We purchased a dog and, after we got home, the next day it became violently ill. Our new pet was vomiting, had diarrhea, and would not eat or drink anything. I called the vet and brought our 5 pound little puppy in to get checked out. The vet didn't understand it either, and we had to leave her there for the day to get hydrated and antibiotics. With the help of the medicine, she soon became better.

This little dog was so fragile and so anti-social. When you tried to hug it or love it, she would rather try to bite you in the face. With much love and attention, she finally realized it was okay to be loved.

Over one year later, we saw on television this same man being arrested by the sheriff, and several humane societies collecting the dogs from him. The reason he was finally busted was that people were complaining about their pets becoming ill and then the members in the family would become ill. We came to the realization that we had purchased our dog from a puppy mill dealer, and were shocked and appalled. When I asked him where he got the dogs to sell, he told me people called him and would sell their unwanted litters to him. What a lie that turned out to be. We learned a valuable lesson.

From now on, I will only purchase my future pets from the Humane Society.

Monica Augustin
Dousman, Wisconsin

*The quality of mercy is not strained.
It drops as the gentle rain from heaven upon the place beneath.
It is twice blessed. It blesses him who gives and him who takes.*

The Merchant of Venice
William Shakespeare

Laci

I bought a puppy from a puppy mill, but didn't know until I checked around that she was running one. The puppy I bought is healthy, thank God. She's a little poodle schnauzer. When we went to pick her up, I was very uncomfortable with the situation at her farm. She didn't offer to show us Laci's parents, and I forgot to ask. All she said was they were out in the barn.

Her house was atrocious! She had puppies piled in cages all over! All different kinds of puppies. Laci was in a cage with 5 other puppies. I think she didn't know any other way of life, because she was terrified if you took her out of the cage. She was so scared!!!!

On the way home, Laci was wild-eyed and scared. She wouldn't come out of the carrier we supplied for her; it was like it was her security. I feel sick about leaving all those puppies to her mercy. Even my vet knows she is running a puppy mill. He says they can't do anything about it as long as she supplies the puppies with food and shelter.

The Humane society knows about her too. She explained how when they are just born, she cuts their tails off because you can do it with a pair of scissors then. This evil woman's name is Sandy R. She lives in Pittsville, Wisconsin. She doesn't even have a phone.

Marlene Brown
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin



*A righteous man cares for the needs of his animal,
but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel.*

Proverbs 12:10



His Name Is King

He was a helpless victim of a puppy mill. No, not one of the cute little puppies whose hope is to eventually escape to a pet shop. It is estimated that 90 percent of the puppies in pet shops come from puppy mills. Little do their new owners know of the torture and misery the breeding stock is subjected to to bring them their cute little puppies.

He was a stud dog. Alone in a small cage, he spent his life. Day after day, week after week, and year after year. Once a day enough food and water to sustain him. Once in a while a short visit with a fellow prisoner, a female, whose only value to them was the number of puppies she could produce in a year. His only other living contact was when he was being beaten for barking. When the beatings didn't prevent him from barking, they cut his vocal cords to keep him from ever making a sound, neglecting to even remove the stitches from their butchery.

With his wonderful eyes sad, his spirit depressed, his beautiful coat matted with dirt, his mouth filled with the pain of gum disease, forced to survive in his own waste, he existed.

Then it happened. In the middle of the night, his cruel owner yanked him quivering and crying from his cage. He drove into town, opened the door and shoved the little dog out. In the strange, new world he'd been abandoned to, the little dog wandered. He was alone, frightened, hungry and tired. Each new sight and sound was something to fear.

Suddenly he sensed danger. Running for his life, he found himself trapped in a corner. He fought hard, but he was no match for the strong humans, and once again he was a prisoner in a cage. However, this time the cage had a clean, warm place to sleep, plenty of good food and fresh water, and best of all people with soft, gentle voices. In his tortured state, he could not see the goodness in these people, and he lashed out at them angrily. He could not know that at last he'd found salvation in the kind people of the South Wood County Humane Society.

Our Sick Puppy

Three years ago we purchased a dog through an ad in the paper advertising all types of different breeds, pure and mixed. The name was Puppies Unlimited. We went to the address given when we called, and were surprised to see as many dogs as we did. Inside a barn were large wooden pens filled with straw and puppies, as many as 25 to 30 in one pen. We were told we could not go around and pet the animals, and had to wash our hands in 4 different solutions before handling a dog we were interested in purchasing. This amazed me since dogs love socialization, and these puppies had none.

“Inside a barn were large wooden pens filled with straw and puppies, as many as 25 to 30 in one pen. We were told we could not go around and pet the animals, and had to wash our hands in 4 different solutions before handling a dog we were interested in purchasing. This amazed me since dogs love socialization, and these puppies had none.”

There was a supposed vet on site that was to have checked all puppies' health, and we were told if the dog became ill within a certain amount of time after purchase, to bring it back to them. I saw many older dogs locked in other pens inside the barn, and a Saint Bernard was tied outside in the hot sun along with several German Shepherds. I questioned why the dogs were in the hot sun and why no water was readily available to them. I was more or less told to mind my own business and that they were fine. When I mentioned I volunteered at the humane society, the owner said he hated them, and did not agree with their ideas about dogs.

I have tried numerous times to contact Jenny by phone, with no luck. I am planning on trying again tonight, and until I reach her. I believe she has much to tell me, that should have been laid on the table the night I picked him up. She cannot deny that he is over one year old, and not five months old, like she said, because I have not one, but two vets that say he is. On the AKC registration papers, his birthdate is listed as August 2, 2000. Jenny's signature, along with the litter owners (Doris E.) appear on the paper, swearing all information to be true and accurate.

I told my story to a wonderful man at the Clark County Humane Society. He has been very helpful in both listening to my frustrations with the situation, along with offering advice. They are sending a person out to investigate Jenny's residence, either tonight or tomorrow. Hopefully some evidence can be found to use against her, so another animal never has to live in the same conditions little Casper had to.

If I do not get my money for the vet bills reimbursed by her, I will take this all the way to court. I am so angry that someone can raise animals for profit only, and neglect them so terribly. The money won't solve little Casper's problems, of course, but it will be one small way to make her pay for her negligence.

Laura Pichler
Marshfield, Wisconsin



We must fight against the spirit of unconscious cruelty with which we treat the animals. Animals suffer as much as we do. True humanity does not allow us to impose such sufferings on them. It is our duty to make the whole world recognize it. Until we extend our circle of compassion to all living things, humanity will not find peace.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer



We are "dog-walkers" at this facility. In our spare time we take the dogs from their cages and give them exercise and companionship. They need that as they wait for that special someone to give them a home. Although they are well cared for, they yearn for the love that only a home can bring. We walked back to the cages to say "Hello" to all our favorite dogs and chose one to walk with.

"When we saw the little dog, we knew. We knew this little dog deserved a second chance. A chance to know another side of people. A chance to feel love and gentleness and kindness. A chance to have good health. A chance to feel caresses on a clean shiny coat. And if he could still feel love from somewhere deep inside him, if he was willing to give people a second chance, we wanted to be those people."

When we saw the little dog, we knew. We knew this little dog deserved a second chance. A chance to know another side of people. A chance to feel love and gentleness and kindness. A chance to have good health. A chance to feel caresses on a clean shiny coat. And if he could still feel love from somewhere deep inside him, if he was willing to give people a second chance, we wanted to be those people.

We brought that little four pound Yorkshire Terrier home. A beginning. A lady stopped us to say, "How cute, he must be a munchkin or a peanut or....?", at which point we interrupted her to say, "Oh, he's much too big for that. His name is King!"

Joyce A. Kitemble

Oliver's Story

I'm writing on behalf of Oliver. He is an 11 week old sheltie puppy that started his life in an Iowa puppy mill. He was purchased by a pet store in Appleton at the Fox River Mall. He was purchased two weeks ago for \$629.00, almost double what a pet quality sheltie is selling for from a reputable breeder. Today he's homeless again. His owners tried to return him to the store for a refund, but of course their check has already been cashed and since there is nothing physically wrong with the puppy, they won't take him back. The pet store has its money, and that's all they care about: the money.

The sad thing is that this is not the first "Oliver" who started his life at that pet store. Oliver is the seventh sheltie from this pet store that has ended up at Wisconsin Sheltie Rescue. I know of MANY other breed rescues that have also received the throwaway dogs that originated there.

American Eskimo Rescue in Madison just had to euthanize an 8-month-old puppy that came from this same store. She was sold to a person who put an ad in the paper for "\$100 (or best offer)" about 2 months later because she had uncontrollable behavior problems (biting). She was sold for \$100 to another family and, two weeks later, surrendered to rescue. By this time, she had bitten many people and, after sessions with a private behaviorist, the difficult decision was made to euthanize her. Her poor breeding and background made it impossible to overcome the behavior issues that would claim her life.

The pet store made a cool \$650.00 profit, though, and that's all they care about: the money. They continue to sell puppy mill dogs with poor breeding and background to anyone gullible enough to pay the price. I have called the store and the Fox River Mall Management offices many times to inquire about what could be done to stop this. From the store manager, I got this response: "I don't have time for you. It's not my fault that people are stupid." From the management offices, I got, "Don't worry; their lease will be up soon, and it won't be renewed."

Over the last 2 weeks, Casper has become more snuggly, but a new behavior has also shown itself. He is most comfortable with my 21 year old daughter, who loves him to death, and carries him around constantly, trying to show him there is nothing to fear. At night, when he barks (a lot!) she is able to calm him better than my husband or myself.

In the morning one day before I left for work, she snuggled in my bed with Casper beside her, and Taffy at the foot of my bed. That is how the 3 of them fell asleep when I left for work. Amber later called me at work, and told me Casper jumped up from a dead sleep, growling and bearing his teeth, and lunged for Taffy. Amber reprimanded him, a few seconds later, bent down and gently asked "What are you doing that for..." Casper whirled around and, bearing his teeth again, went for Amber's face. She blocked him in time, but of course this worries us tremendously. Was he dreaming? Was he remembering? Just a mean streak?

Earlier in the morning, before I left for work, I watched him outside as he sat on our front steps. He would suddenly jump, and spin around as if extremely frightened. Seconds later, he would do it again and again. It was almost as if he was having some sort of seizure, or hallucinating, or perhaps having sharp pains of some sort.

"Besides worrying about him biting one of us, I will not be able to comfortably leave him by my grandkids when they come over to visit."

The events of today have upset me the most. Any of the health problems such as the skin infection, the toenail, and any others, we can work with and nurse him back to health. However, it is his mental and emotional well being I am worried about. Although no one wants to think of getting rid of him, not even Amber, who he lunged after this morning for no apparent reason, I cannot honestly say right now if we will have the opportunity to raise him for the rest of his life.

The third day Casper was with us, he took his first trip to the vet. I was worried because he was so thin, and he also needed vaccinations. While checking Casper over, she looked in his mouth and was surprised to see how mature his teeth were. She told me if I were to bring him in off of the street and asked how old he was, she would have had to guess between 1 and 2 years old. Honestly, I didn't know how that could be possible, since he weighed in at just 7-1/2 pounds. Also, if he were that old, he was behind in an awful lot of shots.

Two days after the first vet visit, I called and made an appointment with another vet in town. The night before, we noticed Casper's penis was crusted and dried with greenish material and was red in the area around it. Other than the normal squirting they do when being examined, he also "jumped" as if in pain, yelping and pulling away. The vet stated that was not just being frightened from being examined, so he asked my permission to draw a tube of blood to see if anything internal was wrong with him. The result of that was a low enzyme count and a high phosphorous count, which could be a cause of muscle pain or soreness.

His advice, since we do not know the actual history of Casper, is to watch it and see if it gets better or worse. His examination of the teeth proved the same results of the first vet's. His guess would be a minimum of 1 year old. This time I asked just how it could be possible, and he said along with him being undernourished, and maybe just small to begin with, it was quite possible. The vet showed me his back teeth, and the plaque and tartar buildup on them, and said to have that at 5 months of age was virtually impossible. During that visit, he also diagnosed a secondary skin infection, and prescribed antibiotics.

Now, just 4-5 days after having Casper in our home, we knew we did not buy a 5 month old puppy. He was at least one year old, with a variety of health conditions. As angry as I was/am at the seller, we had no thoughts of giving Casper back. He deserves a loving home, and we were determined to love him back to health.

Isn't it ironic that the Fox River Mall would not allow the Salvation Army on its property to ring bells during the holidays for charity, but they will support the puppy mill industry by allowing a puppy mill broker to lease space? The Bay Park Square in Green Bay and the Forrest Mall in Fond du Lac no longer have this pet store chain occupying their facilities. It's about time the Fox River Mall woke up and did the same.

That pet store and other pet stores that sell puppies will try to tell you that they only purchase from reputable breeders. This is a blatant lie. Reputable breeders would not leave the decision of where their puppies go to in the hands of a 16-year-old store clerk whom they've never met. Reputable breeders would not send their pet quality puppies out into the world without spay/neuter contracts. Reputable breeders only research and breed ONE breed of dogs so that they can consider themselves experts on that breed.

Reputable breeders make a very slim profit, if any, in selling puppies due to all the care, genetic testing and vet care that's involved in creating and raising a quality puppy. Don't believe me? Ask the pet store to give you the phone number of the reputable breeder who sold them the puppy, and visit this person's facilities, to judge for yourself whether or not you're receiving a quality puppy.

Oliver will be neutered on Tuesday and a good permanent home will be found for him. And then the cycle will repeat itself...until people figure out that pet stores are NOT the place to find a quality dog.

Lisa Martin
Wisconsin Sheltie Rescue



I hold that the more helpless the creature the more entitled it is to the protection by man, from the cruelty of man.

Mahatma Gandhi



Mr. Peabody, My Pet Store/Puppy Mill Dog

"Dear Daughter," the letter began, "I was at the Mall in Sheboygan today and saw a poor little Dalmatian puppy in a glass box in front of the pet store. No dog should have to live like that." It was the third letter I had received from my father in my life. He's not much of a letter writer, feeling the need to write only when something is really important to him.

He was not the first person to share the plight of this poor animal with me. It's no secret that I am madly in love with Dalmatians. Perhaps people thought I would want to know about this little creature. I tried very hard not to go to the mall. I had heard sad stories about pets bought at these "pet" shops. But, my father's words nagged at me until I decided to go.

I got to the store in the middle of the afternoon. The little Dal was in a wire pen. He had an empty kibble dish and a nearly empty bowl of cloudy water, but nothing more to keep him occupied.

I peered through the glass partition. Something about him looked different. He looked sort of bow-legged. Odd, I thought. I asked to see him and a careless young woman opened the cage and set him on the floor. He sniffed around, acting confused and not too interested in me. As the clerk walked away, she muttered something derogatory. I carefully picked up the puppy and he began mouthing me. It was winter and I was wearing a coat so I didn't take much notice.

I asked Little-Miss-I'm-So-Bored-And-I-Hate-My-Job, "How much is this puppy?" She told me \$500 and I nearly had a coronary. I asked her to put him back and left the store. But oh, the nagging worry when you love dogs and you have made fur to skin contact with one you think may not make it if you don't do something.

I called later on in the afternoon and was told that someone else had looked at him and was coming back for him tomorrow. I was relieved that the puppy would get a chance in the world.

knew we would need to give him time to adjust, but we were not prepared for his odd and unusual behavior. Casper would tuck his tail and lay low to the floor whenever one of us would walk 5-6 feet from him. He was obviously very frightened, and not used to people at all. To get him to come to us, we would have to lie on the floor and call to him. He would slowly and cautiously approach us, but still would not trust us when we extended our hand to him.

The second odd thing we noticed was how he "dug" his food out of his dish. He did not know how to eat from a dish. He dug and dug until his food was all over the kitchen floor, then he would eat it from the floor. He is also very, very aggressive whenever Taffy, my 2 year old Westie comes near his food. He bears his teeth and growls, and chases her from the dish. Casper is under weight, only weighing 7-1/2 pounds, but he has the temperament of a Rottweiler when someone gets too close to his dish.

"One of the first things we noticed about Casper was how skittish and afraid he was... He was obviously very frightened, and not used to people at all... He would slowly and cautiously approach us, but still would not trust us when we extended our hand to him."

Along with his small size, and boniness, we figured he had to fight for any food he got at his previous home(s).

Casper's right rear paw has a deformed nail on it. Our vet said it sustained some sort of trauma to it while he was small, damaging the nail bed. It looked to be healed, but at times he still acts as if it is bothering him. Whether something heavy was dropped on it, or a cage door was slammed on it, we don't know.

Casper

The story I have to tell is one of a little dog named "Casper". It breaks my heart to think we may not be able to keep him, but he is very disturbed and was not socialized as a pup, so he does not act like a "normal" Westie. In December of 2000, I saw an ad in our local paper advertising West Highland White Terriers for sale. I already own a 2 year old female Westie, and have wanted another for quite some time. Taffy has always been well behaved, sociable and loving. I thought a playmate would be perfect.

I did not answer the ad in December due to the excitement of the holidays. About 2 weeks ago, I went to our library, looked up the old paper, found the ad, and called to see if and/or when another litter would be expected. The gal that answered, Jenny, said it so happened that they still had one puppy left from that litter, and she would sell it to me for \$150.00, since it was now getting older and she wanted to sell it. I should have known right there that something was not right, because purebred Westie pups sell anywhere from \$500-\$600 and up.

When we got there to pick the pup up, Jenny could not find the AKC application to send in for the registration papers. I thought how unorganized she was for a person who sold pups, knowing the paperwork should be kept together. She looked approximately 15 minutes before coming out with a health record and the application. The health record listed 2 things on it; one being a dewormer.

When I asked about the parents of Casper, Jenny told me the litter actually belonged to one of her friends. Her friend had hurt her back, I was told, about the time the pups were ready to sell, so she asked Jenny to sell them for her. The friend needed back surgery and was unable to care for them. Jenny said the parents were both show dogs. She said the litter owner had other Westies and that she showed some of them.

One of the first things we noticed about Casper was how skittish and afraid he was. Knowing that he was in a strange place, we also

Two weeks passed. My neighbor called to tell me that the Dalmatian puppy was still at the store. Please, please, please don't tell me this, I thought. I can't afford to help, I just can't. It will be trouble for sure. My husband doesn't want a third dog. Would my other two Dalmatians even accept an addition to their pack?

I couldn't get this little soul out of my mind. I prayed every day to God to send a loving person to free him from Animal Auschwitz before it was too late. God answered my prayers, all right; soon that pup found a new home with me.

Now that I know what I know about pet shops and puppy mills, I am ashamed for having made space in that store for another mill dog by rescuing Mr. Peabody, but I will never be ashamed for saving his life.

"Now that I know what I know about pet shops and puppy mills, I am ashamed for having made space in that store for another mill dog by rescuing Mr. Peabody, but I will never be ashamed for saving his life."

When I got him home, I bathed him three times before the water rinsed off clean. His ears were packed with feces. His back was swayed and his feet were spread out like a web-footed duck from living on a wire floor. He was frightened and only calmed down when I cuddled him in my arms.

My husband was furious. This pathetic puppy didn't have a clue about going "potty" outside. He couldn't walk more than a few steps at a time. His back and leg muscles were atrophied from confinement. When I walked my other dogs, I set him down for a few steps, then carried him inside my coat, then set him down for a few more steps, and so on. It was a painful process for both of us.

I made a padded "den" for him in my bedroom and got up every two hours to take him out. There were accidents. By the third day, I realized I had a problem on my hands. The pet store offered a free vet check, but I didn't trust them to recommend a vet. I had already seen the results of their obvious lack of concern. I decided to take him to my own vet, fearing he would tell me the pup needed to be euthanized.

Doc said, "No, I think the little guy might have a chance, though he's terribly undernourished." Then he told me something that chilled me to the bone and made me cry. "You know," he said, "they underfeed these puppies on purpose. Everybody wants a puppy and an underfed dog will stay small. It gives more 'shelf life' to the product."

I wanted to scream.



Mr. Peabody is now three years old. He was nearly impossible to house train as a result of being taken from his mother too early and having to eliminate in the cage where he lived his life before he came home with me. He has hip dysplasia and arthritis. He is fear aggressive. He bit a lady on the street in a split second and we nearly lost our house because no homeowner's policy can be had once you have a "dog bite" claim. I spent more money at the vet's than I care to admit. There have been many tears. But, oh, I have

this wonderful piece of paper that says he is an AKC purebred Dalmatian. I had him neutered.

I have learned so much from Mr. Peabody. I learned about puppy mills. I learned about socialization and the effects of cage living on an animal that was meant to have human contact. I have learned to loathe those sick "humans" who make their living on the broken bodies and spirits of the dogs they ruthlessly crank out of their mills.

"I have learned so much from Mr. Peabody. I learned about puppy mills. I learned about socialization and the effects of cage living on an animal that was meant to have human contact. I have learned to loathe those sick "humans" who make their living on the broken bodies and spirits of the dogs they ruthlessly crank out of their mills."

I also learned patience and love even when it was difficult. My "Little Pea" will be safe with me as long as he lives.

Eilene Ribbens Rohde
Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin



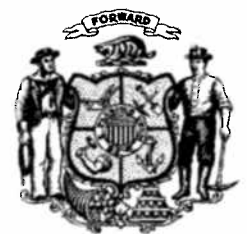
Our task must be to free ourselves...
by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the
whole of nature and its beauty.

Albert Einstein





WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



BADGER KENNEL CLUB, INC.

MADISON, WISCONSIN, USA

 Search

[Home](#)
[About BKC](#)
[Classes](#)
[Activities](#)
[Events](#)
[Breed Info &
Breeder
Referral](#)
[Rescue Info &
Referral](#)
[Puppy Mills](#)
[Frequently
Asked
Questions
\(FAQ\)](#)
[Links](#)
[Contact BKC](#)

Puppy Mills

The problems of puppy mills, puppy brokers and irresponsible breeders are receiving more media coverage. The public is becoming more educated on the importance of buying a puppy/dog from ethical, responsible breeders in order to avoid both the physical and psychological problems associated with dogs from poor sources. Everyone selling puppies proclaims himself or herself to be a responsible breeder, even those selling puppies from puppy mills! It is up to the buyer to determine whether or not someone trying to sell them a puppy is a responsible breeder.

Education is the best weapon against puppy mills' indiscriminate breeding, animal neglect and abuse. To help you, future dog owner, recognize and avoid purchasing your puppy or dog from a puppy mill, BKC proudly posts the following articles:

- "How To Recognize a Puppy Mill: Don't be fooled by marketing: learn to spot poorly reared high-priced pups,"
- "Undercover at a Puppy Mill: Good bluffing can easily fool just about anyone," and
- "The Truth About Puppy Mills,"

which originally appeared in the Madison Pet Gazette as a three-part series in the February, March, and April 1998 issues. Thank you Vesna Kovach (editor, Madison Pet Gazette) and Sharon Savage, MS for allowing us to post the series. "Sharon's puppy mill series is right on point with a lot of valuable information many people have not seen or thought about before, and it's important to get it to as many readers as possible." ~Vesna Kovatch

- I think I've found a puppy mill, what can I do?
- How can I find a responsible breeder or rescue organization?



How To Recognize a Puppy Mill

Don't be fooled by marketing: learn to spot poorly-reared high-priced pups

By Sharon Savage, MS

This is the first column in a special Well-Tempered Pet series about "puppy mills" and what every potential dog owner should know about them: how to recognize one, and why it matters to you.

As a dog behaviorist, I often treat dogs purchased at "puppy mills". Clients usually say that

they bought from a particular kennel due to its "huge selection." Sadly, they later end up dealing with numerous temperament and training problems.

A "puppy mill" is a commercial enterprise that breeds large numbers of puppies for profit. There is nothing intrinsically illegal about puppy mills, and many are inspected and licensed. Often, puppy mills do not sell their stock directly, but ship to dealers and pet stores in other states. Puppy mills are only considered newsworthy if multiple puppies have died from disease or neglect.

The term carries a negative connotation, and I'd like to think that most people wouldn't knowingly patronize such an operation. But, surprising as it may seem, without a solid grasp of the particular tactics these establishments use to sell, sell, sell, you may never realize that a place is, in fact, a puppy mill. Before you inadvertently add to a puppy mill's coffers, do some research. If you want to avoid the very real problems associated with puppy mill dogs, learn to recognize them by these warning signs.

Puppies! Puppies! And more puppies!

As modern consumers, we equate a large inventory and broad selection with a satisfactory shopping experience. But with puppies and other pets, just the opposite is true.

Breeding healthy and well-adjusted puppies is a time- and energy-intensive endeavor. After testing the parents for genetic problems and providing veterinary care for the puppies, breeding seldom leads to lucrative profits. An ethical breeder breeds to improve his or her "line," and normally uses puppy sales only to offset the costs of showing the parents.

The puppy mill sales strategy, on the other hand, is to make it difficult for prospective customers to go home empty-handed—so they provide a large assortment of breeds. With pets, a big selection is a danger signal! Be wary of any breeder that breeds more than two breeds of dogs or that ever has more than two litters available. In the long run, it's better to resist this appeal to your customary shopping sense.

Learn about which breed or mix is right for you before you actually go to look for your pup. An impulsive choice can lead to a boatload of regrets later! Reserving a quality home-raised puppy of a particular breed can sometimes mean a several month wait, but will pay huge dividends.

"A huge inventory is a bad sign when it comes to pets... and a home-raised puppy is worth the wait."

For those who want a selection but don't want to support the puppy mill industry, consider one of the wonderful pets available at the Dane County Humane Society. For more on the topic of how to choose what type of dog to get, see the article in January, 1998's Madison Pet Gazette, "Choosing Your New Dog: proceed with care—the life you save may be your pet's!" (available by mail or on our website).

Are the puppies in a home environment with plenty of stimulation?

A puppy should have plenty of early experience in its future habitat: the human home. A puppy that has been raised in a cage or barn will be undersocialized to people and to the sights and sounds of a normal household. Puppy mill puppies are so understimulated that, as adults, they may tremble upon seeing a falling leaf or hearing a cupboard door click shut. Look for a puppy who has been well-socialized to family and visitors and that lives in an active area of the house. Also, puppies should always have plenty of toys available.

Do the puppies have access to a "potty area"?

Housebreaking is extremely difficult for puppies purchased from puppy mills. Most spend their formative weeks in small cages with wire bottoms that allow wastes to drop through onto a tray. This teaches puppies that 1) it doesn't matter where they eliminate because they never have to step in it, and 2) they can't get far from the smell, so they'd better learn to live with it. The end result is a puppy that can't be housebroken using a crate (cages are self-cleaning!) and that doesn't have any desire to eliminate outside of its home turf (no use trying to escape from that poop smell!). On the other hand, puppies raised in a large pen in a kitchen learn the difference between living areas and elimination areas. This makes it very easy to teach indoor/outdoor discrimination later.

"Housebreaking is difficult after early life is spent in a small cage—with the inescapable smell from the catch tray beneath."

Is the mother of the puppies present?

Unscrupulous breeders may tell customers that the mother is absent because "she's protective" of the puppies, or because the puppies are "being weaned." These could be simply excuses. In reality, the puppies' mom might be kept in a filthy barn or basement with dozens of other breeding dogs. Breeding stock animals are often caged together, and parents' names on puppy registration papers may be no more than guesses.

By the way, if the puppies' mom is less than enthusiastic about your approach, the pups themselves may grow up to treat guests the same way. You don't need the hassle of a puppy that had a "protective" (i.e., fear-aggressive) mom! And as far as weaning is concerned, never consider buying a puppy so young that it is just being weaned.

Is the father of the puppies also owned by the breeder?

Except for show or sport breeders with titled stud dogs, be suspicious of breeders that own both parents. Naive "backyard breeders", as well as puppy millers, find it profitable to use whatever male is handy. However, a stud should be specially selected to improve on the female's traits. For instance, he may be chosen for his excellent temperament with other dogs, his straight legs, weatherproof coat or herding ability. A stud dog that perfectly complements one female is often a poor choice for another, and even show breeders rarely own a "matched pair."

How old are the parents?

Make sure the puppy's parents were at least two years old before being bred. This allows time for genetic or temperament problems to be discovered before they are perpetuated.

Know how to read the registration papers and pedigree


If you are buying a purebred puppy, make sure that the breeder lets you review the AKC or UKC registration papers. Puppy mill puppies are often registered with official-sounding organizations that are really mail-order fakes. The Continental Kennel Club, for instance, readily supplies "papers" for any mixed or purebred puppy for a fee.

Even AKC or UKC papers say nothing about the quality of the puppy, except that the breeder knew enough to write in the names of two registered purebreds as the parents! Similarly, a pedigree is nothing more than a listing of the family tree. Speaking of pedigrees, don't be impressed by a few champions in your pup's ancestry. Virtually every purebred dog is from a "championship line" if you go back two or three generations!

Next month, read about my "undercover" visit to a puppy mill.

About the author:

Sharon Savage earned her M.S. in Zoology/Animal Behavior from the University of Wisconsin, and currently lives and works in England. From 1996-99, she ran K-9 Behavioral Solutions, providing in-home dog behavior counseling and classes to over 700 clients in Wisconsin and surrounding states. She has two dogs: Piper, a Jack Russell Terrier, and Dagger, an Australian Cattle Dog.

 [Up to Top](#)

Undercover at a Puppy Mill **Good bluffing can easily fool just about anyone**

Part 2 of 3

Recently, I visited my first puppy mill.

Although clients never identify their dogs as having come from puppy mills, I have noticed the same kennel names cropping up again and again. After seeing six "unhousebreakable" puppies in a row purchased from the same kennel, I decided to do some detective work. I needed to see what was convincing people to buy puppies from what was clearly—to me—a puppy mill.

I started by dialing the number in the dealer's classified ad (Puppies galore! Dobermans, Dachshunds, Schipperkes, Mastiffs! Open 7 days a week!). (Part One of this article series explains the many reasons why a wide selection is a bad sign when you're shopping for a puppy.)

Posing as a prospective puppy buyer, I talked to a pleasant-sounding woman who said they had

plenty of puppies available for Christmas.

Not quite a dog's life

My partner, Michael, and I arrived after an hour's drive through the countryside. The puppy farmer shook our hands and led us to the puppy barn, as half a dozen cold and filthy dogs tagged along.

The building contained forty wire cages, each 2 feet by 3 feet, stacked two high. Each cage contained food and water and up to five puppies...but not a single toy. Although the waste trays were relatively clean, the stench was overpowering.

Name that breed

The puppy farmer confidently went from cage to cage identifying each occupant's breed. Unfortunately, he was only right about half of the time. Nevertheless, he was close enough to fool a person who had only seen photos of adults. After all, eight-week-old Maltese and Bichon Frise puppies are best described as "white puffballs" by a non-expert! There were also many mixed-breed puppies that the puppy miller told us had been donated by local families.

We pretended to take an interest in a one particular munchkin the puppy farmer identified as a Jack Russell Terrier (correct!). We were encouraged to "take him out for a test drive"—to the building with the cash register.

Lifelong behavior problems in the making

As we approached the puppy's cage, the whole litter seemed eager for attention, bouncing around merrily. But when we opened the door and reached in, the puppies huddled against the far side of the cage! Tragically, this signaled a lack of socialization.

Why the sudden change in disposition? Puppies don't naturally recognize the human hand, and need to be taught about it. Normally-raised puppies at eight weeks have already learned that hands are fun for cuddling, chewing on, playing tug games with and eating out of. Sadly, these puppy mill pups still saw the human hand as dangerous.

When the puppies saw us from a distance, they apparently considered us as possible social contacts. After all, two eyes a nose and a mouth can be recognized as friendly by a puppy. However, when we put our hands near them, they were suddenly confronted with an object they were not familiar with. It was like a weird outer space being suddenly sticking some dangerous antennae near them. After all, dogs don't ever aim their feet towards another dog's body!

These improperly-raised pups may someday learn to accept their future owner's hands out of necessity. But without a lot of socialization, a dog with this type of start in life will always be suspicious and nippy toward a visitor who extends an arm for a friendly pat.

The paperless pup; or, The facts about Jacks

Back to our story. Unaware that her husband had already identified our pup's breed as Jack Russell, the woman in the adjacent building alternately referred to our pup as a Rat Terrier or a Terrier/Heeler mix.

We asked to see the puppy's parents, and to our astonishment, she immediately sent the puppy farmer to a far-off barn. He returned with two dogs. (Part One of this article series explains why it's usually a trouble sign when both parents are owned by the same breeder.)

Now, the puppy miller had solemnly explained that the reason our pup didn't come with papers because the Jack Russell breed was not officially recognized. However, once we saw the parents, we knew the real reason: his dogs were of such poor quality as to be unregistrable.

In fact, Jack Russells are officially recognized, and by numerous respectable organizations including the UKC (United Kennel Club) and the AKC (American Kennel Club). But certain "conformation" to breed standards is required for a dog to be registered—and these dogs fell short of the standards.

For instance, both dogs had prick ears instead of the required folded "button" ears—a serious flaw in the Jack Russell. Also, Jack Russells should be 10–15 inches tall. But Dad stood an astounding 18 inches! Either fault would make the adult dogs unregistrable with the JRTCA or UKC.


False appeal

I left with an understanding of why nice people continue to buy from puppy mills. The puppies I saw were relatively clean, well-fed and vaccinated. Both parents were on the premises. All the purebred puppies—except for the Jack Russells—came with AKC registration papers. The puppy farmers seemed nice, and we had driven so far. And what a terrific selection!

Next month, learn more common deceptions and distractions.

About the author:

Sharon Savage earned her M.S. in Zoology/Animal Behavior from the University of Wisconsin, and currently lives and works in England. From 1996-99, she ran K-9 Behavioral Solutions, providing in-home dog behavior counseling and classes to over 700 clients in Wisconsin and surrounding states. She has two dogs: Piper, a Jack Russell Terrier, and Dagger, an Australian Cattle Dog.

 Up to Top

The Truth About Puppy Mills: Part 3 of 3

In last month's installment, I described the poor quality, in terms of conforming to breed standards, of the dogs we saw during our undercover visit to a puppy mill.

This might not seem to be such a serious problem. Most puppy buyers aren't interested in entering their pet at dog shows. So why should it matter if your puppy grows up to be fifty percent too tall and have the wrong type of ears?

The first answer is that many people truly don't have a preference regarding the size or shape of their pet dog. But in that case, why pay premium prices for a puppy mill purebred? The Dane County Humane Society has terrific pure- and mixed-breed dogs available at nominal cost.

The second answer is that people who are looking for a purebred usually have specific goals in mind. They may need an adult dog that weighs under 20 pounds so it can stay in their apartment legally. Maybe they like a particular personality trait, or need a dog that will not shed. These people would be disappointed to find that their adult dog had grown up to be nothing like they imagined.

In Part One of this series, I mentioned some of the warning signs that you may see on the premises of a puppy mill. For instance, puppy mills typically have large quantities and multiple breeds of puppies for sale. Puppy mill pups are usually separated from their mothers and raised in small cages without access to "potty areas" or human social contact. A puppy mill breeder usually owns both the parents, and may breed the dogs at too young an age. Finally, puppy mill dogs may be registered with disreputable, "mail-order" organizations.

This final installment of our special puppy mill series will mention some additional warning signs you may spot at a mill.

Where are the papers from?

Check the registration papers for the puppy's state of origin.

Although some respected breeders live there too, be cautious of puppies bred in Kansas, Iowa or Missouri. These states have huge puppy mill industries that ship puppies to local middlemen.

Has the advertised genetic testing really been done?

For example, if the parents are advertised as having "good hips," the breeder should show you the documentation from the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) or from a veterinarian. Upon questioning, I've found many breeders advertising "OFA parents" who did not even know a hip x-ray was required to receive an OFA rating!

Are males and females different prices?

Puppy mill operators use this tactic to insinuate that female pups are more valuable because you can breed them and "earn your money back." Breeding purebred animals is an intensive life pursuit, in terms of time, energy, and money. It is simply dishonest to suggest it as a source of some easy pocket change. Any ethical breeder would insist you neuter or spay your non-show


quality pet—which no one would pay you big bucks to breed with, anyway.

Does the facility claim to be a shelter as well?

Be aware that many puppy mills claim to be "no-kill animal shelters" in an attempt to sell used-up breeding stock to kindhearted people. If you want to save a life without lining anybody's pockets, adopt a dog from the [Dane County Humane Society](#) or from a [recognized purebred rescue club](#). The only way to shut down puppy mills for good is to stop buying there!

About the author:

Sharon Savage earned her M.S. in Zoology/Animal Behavior from the University of Wisconsin, and currently lives and works in England. From 1996-99, she ran K-9 Behavioral Solutions, providing in-home dog behavior counseling and classes to over 700 clients in Wisconsin and surrounding states. She has two dogs: Piper, a Jack Russell Terrier, and Dagger, an Australian Catt!e Dog.

 Up to Top


I think I've found a puppy mill, what can I do?

If you think you've found a puppy mill:

1. **Collect the facts.** What's the name of the facility/breeder, where are they located, what breeds are involved, how are they being cared for (clean water, food, shelter, sanitation, veterinary care), how are they identified (collars with tags, tattoos, microchips?), how are they housed (together or separately), who are they selling to (brokers, pet stores, labs, public)?
2. **Document the facts.** Write down your observations. Be objective--not emotional. Take a friend for your safety and to corroborate your observations. Be prepared to write, write, write, and call, call, call till the cows come home. Putting a mill out of business takes a lot of time, effort and commitment.
3. **Contact:**
 - o Your local humane society or SPCA can act in cases of abuse or neglect
 - o Your local Better Business Bureau can register complaints
 - o Your local health department can deal with threats to public health (sanitation, disease)
 - o Your state veterinarian and state APHIS Veterinary Services Area Office
 - o Your USDA Animal Care contact can investigate licensed breeders and unlicensed brokers
 - o For violations of record-keeping (proper paperwork) and identification (no id on each and every dog) practices:
 - For "AKC" advertised or registered dogs: AKC Investigations and Inspections Department; 5580 Centerview Drive; Raleigh, NC 27606-3390; 919-854-0152.

- For "UKC" advertised or registered dogs: United Kennel Club; 100 East Kilgore Avenue; Kalamazoo, MI 49001-5598; 616-343-9020
- For failure to collect and report sales or income tax. Your state Department of Revenue
- Your local media, kennel clubs, and anyone else who will listen!

For more detailed information and access to databases, visit the [Puppy Mills](#) site (www.nopupmills.com) and/or [contact BKC](#) (info@badgerkennelclub.com) for additional information.


 [Up to Top](#)

How can I find a responsible breeder or rescue organization?

So where does one look for a puppy or adult dog? An excellent site, the *Dog Owner's Guide*, offers [help with finding a dog](#) by discussing the pros and cons of the various sources for obtaining a puppy including a section on rescue organizations.

Is this breeder reputable? How do you find a responsible breeder or rescue organization? Locating responsible breeders and rescue contacts can be difficult. You won't often read their ads in the local newspaper, nor will you see their puppies at a pet store. But don't get discouraged, you've already come a long way!

An all-breed club like the Badger Kennel Club can be an excellent resource for referrals to responsible breeders and rescue contacts. Other dog owners (of the breed you're fancying), veterinarians, purebred dog registries, such as the American Kennel Club ([AKC](#)), United Kennel Club ([UKC](#)), and American Rare Breed Association ([ARBA](#)) can also be good starting points. Acme Pet offers some additional tips on [choosing a quality dog breeder](#). And Club member, Sheryl Bolton, offers several [signs of a responsible breeder and possible signs for concern](#).

 [Up to Top](#)

[E-mail webmaster](#)
Last modified:
25-Apr-2003

Badger Kennel Club, Inc. 24-hour InfoLine: 608-221-1955
Badger Kennel Club Training Center - 6900 Mangrove Lane - Monona, WI 53716 - [Map](#)
Copyright 2001-2003 Badger Kennel Club, Inc. All rights reserved. [Disclaimer](#)





[AKC Home](#)

	<p>Companion Animal Recovery</p>	<p>A 24 Hour-A-Day Recovery Service for Microchipped and Tattooed Pets</p> <p>More Information</p>
--	---	---



[Home](#) | [Legislative Alerts](#) | [Taking Command Newsletter](#) | [Brochures](#) | [Homeowners' Insurance Center](#)

Canine Legislation Position Statements

[PDF Version](#)

- [Air Travel for Dogs](#)
- [Animal Terrorism](#)
- [Breeding Restrictions](#)
- [Canine Population Issues](#)
- ["Dangerous Dog" Control Legislation](#)
- [Dog Auctions](#)
- [Dog Fighting](#)
- [Ear Cropping, Tail Docking and Dewclaw Removal](#)
- [Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act](#)
- ["Guardian" v. Owner](#)
- [Homeowners' Insurance and Dangerous Dogs](#)
- [Proper Care and Humane Treatment of Dogs](#)
- [Protection for Puppy Purchasers](#)
- ["Puppy Mills" and Sale of Puppies Through Pet Shops](#)
- [Purebred Dog Rescue](#)
- [Purebred vs. Mixed Bred Dogs](#)
- [Spaying and Neutering](#)
- [The Right to Keep and Enjoy Dogs](#)
- [Use of Dogs for Assistance and Service](#)
- [Use of Dogs in Research](#)
- [Use of Dogs in Sporting, Working, and Competition Activities](#)

*Canine Legislation Position Statements as of July 2003. If you have any questions regarding canine legislation, please contact us at the numbers below.

Air Travel for Dogs

To ensure the safest air travel possible, the American Kennel Club strongly supports thorough training of airline staff who handle dogs, adequate environment controls in cargo spaces, and careful attention to record keeping.

The ability to ship dogs by air as excess baggage, cargo, or in the cabin is vital to dog owners, breeders, handlers and exhibitors who want to travel on the same flights as their dogs. We encourage airlines to serve their customers by continuing to offer these necessary services.

Animal Terrorism

The American Kennel Club abhors acts of violence committed against dog owners, dog handlers, kennels, and research facilities by those who object to the keeping and use of animals. The AKC respects the right of all individuals to express and advocate personal opinions in lawful ways. We strongly condemn illegal actions such as the "liberation" of dogs or destruction of property. The AKC supports the right of Americans to breed, own, train, interact with, and exhibit their purebred dogs without interference.

Breeding Restrictions

The American Kennel Club strongly supports and actively promotes a wide range of programs to educate the public about responsible breeding practices and the responsibilities of dog ownership.

The American Kennel Club opposes the concept of breeding permits, breeding bans or mandatory spay/neuter of purebred dogs. Instead, we support reasonable and enforceable laws that protect the welfare and health of purebred dogs and do not restrict the rights of breeders and owners who take their responsibilities seriously.

Canine Population Issues

The American Kennel Club believes that breeding programs should be undertaken responsibly for the purpose of improving a breed and that puppies should be placed only in homes where owners are committed to responsible dog ownership.

We believe that the majority of unwanted dogs in the United States are the result of irresponsible breeding, irresponsible marketing, and owners who are unwilling to train and care for their dog. We commend breeders and dog fanciers who are educating the public and breeders about the need for long term commitments and responsibilities.

The American Kennel Club considers the euthanasia of adoptable dogs abhorrent. We believe euthanasia should be employed only as a last resort when all reasonable efforts to place adoptable dogs have failed.

"Dangerous Dog" Control Legislation

The American Kennel Club supports reasonable, enforceable, non-discriminatory laws to govern the ownership of dogs. The AKC believes that dog owners should be responsible for their dogs. We support laws that: establish a fair process by which specific dogs are identified as "dangerous" based on stated, measurable actions; impose appropriate penalties on irresponsible owners; and establish a well-defined method for dealing with dogs proven to be dangerous. We believe that, if necessary, dogs proven to be "dangerous" may need to be humanely destroyed. The American Kennel Club strongly opposes any legislation that determines a dog to be "dangerous" based on specific breeds or phenotypic classes of dogs.

Dog Auctions

The American Kennel Club considers auctions and raffles not to be reasonable and appropriate methods to obtain or transfer dogs.

AKC's current inspection program shall include kennels/individuals offering dogs for sale at auctions.

Any dog sold at auctions that is under 8 weeks of age or without microchip identification will be ineligible for AKC registration and shall be placed on permanent referral.

The American Kennel Club discourages Parent Club rescue groups from purchasing dogs at auctions. Although Parent Clubs may be doing good things for individual dogs purchased at auctions, it perpetuates the problem and tends to create a seller's market. Reciprocally, auctioneers seek more dogs of those breeds to offer at auctions. AKC applauds the work of Parent Club rescue groups on many fronts. However, AKC believes that the purchasing of dogs at auctions is not overall in the best interest of purebred dogs.

Dog Fighting

The American Kennel Club supports state laws making any form of participation in organized dog fights a felony. The AKC unequivocally opposes dog fighting and the breeding and/or training of dogs for fighting. The AKC opposes the training of dogs for uncontrolled aggressive behavior toward other dogs and people.

Ear Cropping, Tail Docking and Dewclaw Removal

The American Kennel Club recognizes that ear cropping, tail docking, and dewclaw removal, as described in certain breed standards, are acceptable practices integral to defining and preserving breed character and/or enhancing good health. Appropriate veterinary care should be provided.

Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act

The federal Animal Welfare Act enforced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is intended to regulate wholesale breeders, dealers and caretakers of dogs. The USDA has regularly strengthened the standards for humane care and treatment of dogs and other animals by persons regulated under the Act. The American Kennel Club supports increasing the number of USDA enforcement personnel dealing with wholesale dog operations and strong enforcement of the requirements of the Animal Welfare Act.

"Guardian" v. Owner

The American Kennel Club supports the use of the term "owner" rather than "guardian" when referring to the keeping of dogs. The AKC believes that the term guardian may in fact reduce the legal status and value of dogs as property and thereby restrict the rights of owners, veterinarians, and government agencies to protect and care for dogs. It may also subject them to frivolous and expensive litigation.

The term guardian does nothing to promote more responsible treatment of dogs. We strongly support efforts to educate the public about responsible dog ownership to ensure that all dogs receive the care, love, and attention they deserve.

Homeowners' Insurance and Dangerous Dogs

The American Kennel Club believes that insurance companies should determine coverage of a dog-owning household based on the dog's deeds, not the dog's breed. If a dog is a well-behaved member of the household and the community, there is no reason to deny or cancel coverage. In fact, insurance companies should consider a dog an asset, a natural alarm system whose bark may deter intruders and prevent potential theft.

Proper Care and Humane Treatment of Dogs

Dog owners bear a special responsibility to their canine companions to provide proper care and humane treatment at all times. Proper care and humane treatment include an adequate and nutritious diet, clean water, clean living conditions, regular veterinary care, kind and responsive human companionship, and training in appropriate behavior. The American Kennel Club believes that dogs should not be kept in circumstances or numbers where these needs can not be adequately fulfilled. Anyone convicted of animal cruelty where charges involved a dog will have all AKC privileges suspended.

Protection for Puppy Purchasers

The American Kennel Club supports reasonable laws and regulations intended to protect the pet-buying public in obtaining a sound dog of the breed represented. Breeders and/or sellers should be responsible for providing certain refunds, replacements or reimbursements should the dog sold become ill or die from a condition contracted prior to the purchase. Such remedies should be conditioned upon the buyer's scrupulous adherence to the care and feeding program prescribed by the breeder and/or seller, as well as a timely examination by a state licensed veterinarian. Breeders and/or sellers should provide buyers with a written bill of sale detailing the responsibilities of both the buyer and seller. This bill of sale should also detail any exclusions to refunds, replacements or reimbursements.

"Puppy Mills" and Sale of Puppies Through Pet Shops

The American Kennel Club endorses breeding of dogs by responsible breeders for the purpose of improving breeds of purebred dogs. We oppose random, large scale breeding of dogs solely for commercial purposes. We believe all breeders bear a responsibility to assure that those who purchase their dogs understand and are capable of carrying out their responsibilities as owners. The AKC supports scrupulous enforcement of the federal Animal Welfare Act and state and local regulations governing the humane care of animals. We further recommend and support programs that teach the public to purchase puppies from responsible breeders and to avoid impulse buying of dogs.

Purebred Dog Rescue

The American Kennel Club supports and encourages the efforts of clubs, organizations, and individuals to rescue adoptable purebred dogs. These dogs may originate from animal shelters, or from owners who can no longer care for their dogs in a responsible manner. The American Kennel Club encourages all such groups and individuals, after exhausting all possible means to contact the breeder of such animals, to spay or neuter all adoptable purebred dogs prior to placing them with a responsible owner.

Purebred v. Mixed Bred Dogs

Responsible breeders breed dogs with desired characteristics, abilities and instincts. The offspring of their breeding programs are predictable in appearance, temperament and instinct. Purebred dogs are true to type when mated.

The American Kennel Club currently recognizes and includes more than 150 breeds in its stud book, and various dog registries throughout the world recognize more than 400 breeds. Some of the breeds are of relatively recent origin, while other breeds have existed since civilization began.

Neither the appearance nor the genetic characteristics of mixed breed dogs are predictable or self-perpetuating. The choice of a purebred dog permits the prospective dog owner to select the desired size, appearance, disposition and instincts with assurance that a puppy purchased from a responsible breeder will possess those defined characteristics. The belief that mixed breed or mongrel dogs are more vigorous, healthy, or well-adjusted than properly bred purebred dogs is a myth.

Spaying and Neutering

The American Kennel Club encourages pet owners to spay or neuter their dogs as a responsible means to prevent accidental breedings resulting in unwanted puppies. The American Kennel Club encourages breeders to discuss spaying and neutering options with puppy buyers who do not wish to participate in conformation events.

The Right to Keep and Enjoy Dogs

The human-canine bond predates history. Since the dawn of civilization, people have enjoyed the companionship and assistance of dogs. Dog ownership has existed in all cultures, races, climates and economic situations - by monarchs, monks, nomads, and peasants.

The American Kennel Club strongly endorses the right to own, keep and breed dogs in a responsible and humane manner. We believe that responsible dog ownership is compatible with most living arrangements. The AKC opposes unreasonable limitations on pet ownership, such as the prohibition of dogs for residents of senior citizen and government subsidized housing facilities.

The American Kennel Club recognizes the special obligation of dog owners, not only to their pets but also to their neighbors. The AKC supports "curbing" and clean-up ordinances, leash laws, nuisance laws, and other reasonable regulations designed to ensure that dogs and their owners remain respected members of their communities.

Use of Dogs for Assistance and Service

The American Kennel Club strongly supports the training and use of dogs to provide assistance and service to humans. Dogs provide valuable service as: seeing eye dogs; hearing dogs; therapy dogs; handicapped assistance dogs; drug, bomb, and arson detection dogs; and tracking dogs to locate missing persons and fugitives.

The American Kennel Club opposes those who seek to define the assistance and service dogs provide to humans as exploitative. The AKC encourages the continuation and further development of the use of dogs for these and similar purposes.

Use of Dogs in Research

The American Kennel Club recognizes the invaluable contributions to both human and veterinary medical knowledge and practices that have resulted from medical research on animal subjects, including dogs. The American Kennel Club believes that all efficacious alternatives to the use of dogs should be explored before using dogs, that the research should clearly necessitate the use of dogs, and that standards of humane care and treatment of such dogs should be scrupulously observed. Also, the American Kennel Club strongly believes that individuals who utilize dogs in research should bear full responsibility for ascertaining the source of their dogs and for assuring that suppliers comply with federal, state and local regulations.

Use of Dogs in Sporting, Working, and Competition Activities

The American Kennel Club encourages and strongly supports the interaction and mutual enjoyment of owners and dogs in sporting activities such as hunting and field trials; in working circumstances such as herding, tracking, and pulling; and in competition events such as dog shows, obedience trials, agility trials, and other performance events and tests. The AKC believes that dogs should be properly cared for, humanely trained, and not pushed beyond reasonable limits for which they were bred.

[Home](#) | [Breeds](#) | [Life with Dogs](#) | [Dog Events](#) | [Clubs](#) | [Shop AKC](#) | [Registration](#) | [News](#) | [Inside AKC](#)
© 2003 American Kennel Club | [Contact AKC](#) | [Corporate Advertising](#) | [Privacy Statement](#) | [About This Site](#)



536



FRANCIS G. SLAY
Mayor

HUGH F. STALLWORTH, MD, MPH
Director

MELBA R. MOORE, MS
Commissioner of Health

July 14, 2003

Honorable Skip Mange
Councilman 3rd District
St. Louis County Council
441 South Central
Clayton, MO 63105

Dear Councilman Mange:


The amended Animal Control Ordinance in the City of St. Louis has been an overwhelming success. Prompted by a fatal stray dog attack on a young boy, we aimed to eliminate strays (caused by overpopulation) by adding a "differential licensing" provision, rewarding pet owners for neutering their animals with nominal fees, and raising license fees for "intact" animals. This approach has been proven repeatedly in other municipalities.

Not only have we seen hundreds of animals spayed and neutered but have increased revenue by approximately \$80,000.00. Additionally, registration has not decreased, as may have been expected initially. In fact, in the first year, registration actually INCREASED by about 1200 animals.

I whole-heartedly endorse this approach. I have been with St. Louis City Animal Control for over (20) twenty years. I can testify that neutering and mandating humane treatment of our animals can make St. Louis City and County a safer, healthier better place to live.

RS/mb

Sincerely,


Richard Stevenson
Manager, St. Louis City Animal Control Center

cc: Hugh Stallworth, MD, MPH
Melba R. Moore, MS
Larry Kettelhut, MPH
file



634 N. Grand
PO Box 14702
St. Louis, Missouri 63178

Phone: (314) 612-5100
Fax: (314) 612-5105



10/14/03 : Pet Facilities Bill (AB 536)
Public Hearing

* Balaw, Wood, Chothian:

- Balaw - On Going Problem

Set Standards + Provide Penalties

- Proper ventilation, flooring, etc.

- Wood - Bi Partisan effort

- Chothian - Fees ~~are~~ on the beneficiaries of the program.

* May Increase State revenues:

According to a study by a state animal group, about 80% of sellers do not report income from the sale of animals.

* Unscrupulous sellers doing a disservice to consumers - dangerous & expensive for pet owners

* Pietrowski → Why were inspection / license fees not specified in the bill - to be set by rule
Wood - left open to allow for determination of admin. costs

* Suter → Pet Dealer Definition needs to be clarified... "exchanges or offers for adoption"

Could impact people who give puppies away - ie farmers

Dr. Bellay (DATCP):

- Sets reasonable + consistent levels of standards
- Because there are no current regulations or tracking, the number of facilities this would impact is not known.
- Less than 1/3 of dogs are licensed.
 - * Kustell → will higher fees deter licensing
 - * Bellay → has not in other areas
 - reason for low compliance is lack of enforcement

Schultz → Tax pet food rather than dog license fees

↳ per Mark P. ∴ not a good idea...

Ruth Heike (DATCP):

- Inspectors will have to request permission to inspect properties.

- re: WVMA request → Dept. opposes. If vets board, they should have to be held to the same standards.

- Vet Exam. Bd. would not have the authority to take punitive actions

Dr. Rick Chad (Constituent):

- Currently no guidelines at all for the humane treatment/housing of animals.

*Would set a standard of care

Clark Co. Sheriff's Dept.:

- Due to an influx of puppy ~~mills~~ mills in their area, animal welfare complaints rank #3 of all complaints.

- Puppy mills are coming to WI to hide → they've been "kicked out" of other states

- These places are hard to find because they mostly sell to brokers who sell to pet stores → do not directly sell to public

WI Veterinary Med. Assoc.:

- Wants an amendment to exempt vets who board from inspections, etc.

*Hines: Vet who board do this as a separate business - should be held to the same standard. *Uniformity*

*Balaw → What about "off duty" vets?

- WVMMA would not want them exempt.

Merri Hinsley - Worked w/ Duff → move in
opposition

- State you would cut into local
humane society funding...

- No cat license fee even though they
are the biggest problem.