

Report on Pick of the Litter Kennels

Most conditions at Pick of the Litter Kennels which appear relevant to the Otter Tail County Sheriff's Office are those that would violate Statute 343.21 Subd.1-Torture, in that most of the cruelty that occurred was in the form of neglect of dogs that required veterinary care and did not receive it, or received inadequate veterinary care from the kennel owners self-diagnosing animals that went through prolonged deteriorating states. In addition, it appears as though the kennel owners are practicing veterinary medicine without a license, in violation of Statute 156.10 Unlawful Practice Without License or Permit; Gross Misdemeanor. Kathy Bauck and her daughter Corinne have given the pain killer Banamine and penicillin shots to dogs that are sick and injured without being seen by a licensed veterinarian, and without the medicine being prescribed to the dogs being medicated, which appears to be in violation of Statute 156.12 Subd.1-Practice.

Of concern is also how the dogs are dipped, which involves submerging dogs in a tub of Prolate-Lintox HD poured into water, which is not meant for dogs or to be put in an animals' eyes, nose, or mouth. The dip is designed for cattle and swine, and is corrosive to skin and the eyes, gives off harmful fumes when breathed in and can not be swallowed. Employees are offered rain suits, but no gloves, eye protection, or breathing masks. These intentional acts, with all of the kennel owners participating or present, caused direct suffering of the animals and are included in this report as a possible violation of Statute 343.21 Subd.7-Cruelty.

Information provided in this report on Pick of the Litter Kennels, including instances of neglect and cruelty, can be verified by video/audio documentation of the acts themselves, and/or conversations with kennel owners or employees explaining how certain acts of neglect occurred. What appear to be the most egregious acts of neglect and cruelty are noted below, with relevant footage to back up the claims listed by each instance.

Documentation was done with a covert video camera and microphone, recorded onto an MPEG 2 format flash card in a Sting recording device. In two instances, pictures and video were taken with a Samsung Blackjack 2 cellular phone. The investigator was wired every other day, to alleviate suspicion on if they were wearing a camera and how it would be concealed, so video and audio documentation are not available for every day the investigator was working at the kennel. Field notes, however, were typed up by the investigator every day, done at night within hours of that day's work.

American Bulldog – Bleach Water

A female white American Bulldog suffered open tears on her facial cheeks, likely from a dog fight. According to Kathy, the dog continually fights. The wounds were noticed by Donna and me on 4/22/08. The dog permanently limps with her front right paw in the air, which appears to be mangled from previous wounds. The wounds on her face eventually healed, though were covered in pus scars the entire time. Kathy and Alan Bauck instructed me to apply bleach water on her wounds as the treatment.

4/22/08: At about 17:00, Donna and I saw blood on the face of a female white American Bulldog on the western side of the southeastern barn. The dog, paired with another American Bulldog, limped with her misshapen front right paw in the air. The paw had fur missing from large pink bumps above the toes. The dog's cheeks were torn open on both sides and bleeding openly. The left side of the dog's face was the worst, with large gashes on her cheeks. The left side of her face had a tear about five inches long, with a slightly smaller tear on her left cheek that wasn't opened up as much. Donna got Kathy to look at it, who said the dog was always fighting. She then pointed out how the pen wall was covered in blood on American Bulldog in an adjacent northern pen had blood on its muzzle, and said that the dog had gotten

in a fight with the dog from the other pen. She then said nothing could be done, and walked off with Donna and me to discuss what dogs to groom tomorrow.

4/23/08: I told Kathy that the wounds on the face of the American Bulldog Donna and I saw yesterday appear to be infected. Kathy told me to put "Clorox water" on the wounds. Donna prepared the solution by pouring a small amount of bleach in a water bowl and telling me to dab it on the dog's face, saying that it would kill bacteria. I did so, though the dog kept pulling away and I did not try to get the solution deep in the dog's wounds, but instead dabbed it on the dog's two wounds lightly. The wounds were covered in pus, and when I returned to put the solution on her face after initially checking on her, there was additional bleeding from her left wound.

(relevant footage: MN 4-23-08 08)

4/26/08: I asked Alan today if I should keep putting bleach water on the female American Bulldog's face that is injured as Kathy told me to do earlier, and Alan said that I should because he didn't think anyone else had. The dog's wounds appear infected and were in worse shape this afternoon than when I viewed them this morning. The left side of her face seemed to have reopened and was bleeding again.

(relevant footage: MN 4-26-08 18; MN 4-26-08 19)

Pekingese – Seizing and denied veterinary care

5/3/08: Also on the western wall of the Hay Shed, Kathy pulled a shaved orange Pekingese with a mowhawk who was struggling as she lifted him by his scruff. She handed the dog to Evan to place in the Red Barn at about 13:30, and I continued working with her until Evan returned. At about 16:00, I saw the Pekingese with three other small-breed dogs in a center pen of the western room of the Red Barn, kicking, thrashing, and going into what appeared to be a seizure. I grabbed the dog, who was very cold to the touch, and he bit my left ear as I lifted him and ran with him to Kathy's house. Kathy did not answer her door, so I set the dog on a towel in the break room where Evan was working. The entire time, the dog kicked his legs and thrashed his head back and forth. Evan said the Pekingese was acting like that when she told him to place the dog in the Red Barn, and that he noticed even then that the dog was cold. I asked him if Kathy said to do anything for the dog, and he said she had not. I put the dog back in his pen and put shavings on the floor and food down for the other dogs. The dog never stopped kicking jerking, and remained cold.

At about 15:00 Kathy met me in between the Hay Shed and break room barn. Her hair was wet, and she said she was in the shower when I had banged on her door. I explained the situation, saying the dog appeared to be seizing and was cold to the touch, and she said she knew what was happening to the dog and that she told Evan to put him in the Red Barn. She then walked back into her house.

(relevant footage and picture: MN 5-3-08 vid 1; MN 5-3-08 vid 2; MN 5-3-08 vid 3; MN 5-3-08 pic 1; MN 5-3-08 pic 2)

5/4/08: I worked from about 8:30 to 17:30 today. I began work in the puppy barns with Larry and Evan before helping load puppies in the Loading Barn, which is the closest barn to Kathy Bauck's house. Directly after clocking in, I went to the Red Barn where I found Larry and his son Cody working. Larry said that he had shown up for work that day at 6:30 am. I saw that the Pekingese that was cold and appeared to be seizing yesterday was no longer in its pen. I asked Cody what had happened to it and he said that it had died. I then verified with Evan that Kathy had known the dog was seizing when she told him to put the dog in a pen, and that she gave Evan no further instructions on what to do with it. I later spoke to Kathy about the incident. She said she believed the dog had a heart attack, saying such an occurrence was common with Pekingese.

(relevant footage: MN 5-4-08 01; MN 5-4-08 02; MN 5-4-08 04)

Emaciated pregnant and nursing dogs

Several pregnant or nursing dogs at the kennel are emaciated. Two are severely emaciated, with their hips, ribs, and spines clearly visible. Pregnant dogs are not treated with any medication at all, while I have information on the treatment of one nursing dog as a single shot of penicillin/gentocin and sugar syrup for the puppies. The most pertinent fact with this case is that three of the puppies that appeared to be dying were abandoned by Kathy as a lost cause and left to die. The next morning, kennel worker Larry McClendon told me the remaining three puppies were dead.

5/7/08: I told Kathy's daughter Corinne and Kathy that the pregnant brown and white English Springer Spaniel in the break room barn has a runny nose. Her left eye is still encrusted in green mucus discharge and she is still heavily emaciated, though she now has green mucus discharge from her nose. Kathy and Corinne said that nothing can be done for the dog, and Corinne pointed out that not even "cough syrup" can be given to her. They did not go look at the dog or ask any more information about her condition. Instead, Kathy immediately changed the topic of conversation to say she was expecting me to bring my dirt bike to her farm yesterday.

(relevant footage: 5-7-08 14 0'3")

5/10/08: The emaciated brown and white nursing English Springer Spaniel in the New Barn had two dead puppies out of her litter of nine this afternoon. I talked to Jeff about it, who was working the barn at the time, and said Kathy had him give "stats" (which Larry explained to me is a sugar syrup) to the puppies. The other is still severely emaciated, and several of her puppies' ribs, spines, and hips are visible under their taught skin, and they appear lethargic. I was barely able to tell that one of the puppies was breathing. I took the two dead puppies to Kathy, who then collected all but three of the remaining pups to put with another nursing mother. She said the remaining three weren't "going to make it," but that I could give them stats if I wanted. I did so, though one of the puppies held its mouth open and gasped after I put a small amount of the syrup in its mouth. I massaged its throat and it licked its tongue while the mother licked its mouth, and it appeared to breathe easier.

(relevant footage: MN 5-10-08 27 2'48"; MN 5-9-08 02 0'2"; MN 5-4-08 11 0'52"; MN 5-2-08 06 0'10")

Pug with infected eyeball

A Pug had a massively swollen right eyeball that appeared to be suffering from some kind of infection. Kathy eventually treated the dog and the condition seemed to improve but then began to get worse, with increased swelling.

4/30/08: In the break room barn, I saw several new health concerns. Most notably, an adult female Pug in the puppy room adjacent to the break room had her right eye bulging out of its head. The eye was swollen to about twice the size of the other eyeball and appeared bloodshot. I asked Maria Rose Robinson what was done for the dog, and she said she gave the Pug penicillin to prevent an infection, but that she did not know what could be done to reduce the swelling. Corinne told me that she had seen the condition previously for her Pekingese dog Pixy, and the problem went away on its own after a veterinarian gave Pixy a steroid shot and no additional treatment. She said a vet could give the Pug a steroid shot, and that the condition was caused by an infection from a bite in or around the eye.

(relevant footage: MN 4-30-08 06 0'18")

5/1/08: While shaving dogs, I saw Maria and Kathy medicating the Pug in the puppy room adjacent to the break room with its right eye swollen and bulging out from its head. I saw Kathy applying an ointment to the dog's eye but was unable to note what medication was used or to find out what her medical plan was for the dog.

5/2/08: The Pug in the puppy room with the injury to its right eye appears to have more energy and the swelling on the eye is reduced.

(relevant footage: MN 5-2-08 05 0'16'')

5/8/08: The female Pug in the puppy room of the New Barn with an injured right eye now has a pink and yellow swell like a large pimple coming off of her right eyeball.

5/12/08: I noticed the Pug in the puppy room of the New Barn with the injured right eye appears to be in worse shape. What appears to be a fluid-filled growth is protruding from her eye, much larger than I noticed forming there previously.

(relevant footage: MN 5-12-08 08 0'24''; MN 5-10-08 27 0'24''; MN 5-9-08 01 0'51''; MN 5-4-08 07 0'15'')

Bichon with stillborn puppies

A Bichon had a stillborn and two live puppies, and one that began to breathe after Kathy resuscitated it by blowing hard into its mouth and slapping it on the back with some force. A few hours later, the puppy was dead. Another puppy came out dead after it was pulled to pieces with surgical clamps by Kathy, Corinne, and Andy, though it's unknown if the puppy was already dead inside the mother.

5/5/08: I worked from about 8:30 to 17:30 today. I began chores in the puppy barns, and I found that a Bichon on the eastern row of the western room of the Red Barn was having puppies. One puppy, that appeared to be partially flattened, was dead on the pen flooring while a live puppy was hanging from an umbilical cord from the mother. I told this to Kathy, who told me to bring the dog to her. She injected the mother with calcium sulfate to "aid contractions," and then spent about 15 minutes trying to reach inside to pull a puppy out. She did not wash or sanitize her hands before reaching into the dog's cavity. She brought a puppy out that was not breathing, and blew hard into its mouth and nose before slapping its back repeatedly and very hard. She would then keep blowing air into the puppy and rubbing its chest until the puppy began to breathe shallowly, though it was dead about two hours later. At about that time, Kathy tried again to get another puppy from the Bichon, and she got the help of Corinne and Andy. The three women alternated using two pairs of surgical clamps that they grabbed the puppy with inside the mother. Kathy tore the tail off of the puppy, and all three women kept pulling tufts of fur attached to bloody skin, until Kathy pulled a rear leg completely off the puppy. About five minutes later, the puppy came out dead and it was decided that no more puppies were in the mother.

(relevant footage: MN 5-5-08 vid 1-3)

5/7/08: I worked from about 6:57 to 17:44 today. I began the day doing chores in the puppy barn with Larry. I noticed the Bichon mother who had stillborn puppies on Monday, 5/5/08 in the Red Barn had no puppies in her pen at all today. Her pen was covered in feces-stained shavings and her hindquarters were filthy with what appeared to be the remains of afterbirth. She was laying on her side and I tried twice to get her to stand, only to have her fall back down. On the third attempt she stood for a few seconds before walking several inches to the nearest corner of her pen and sitting down. Larry said that Kathy knew about the dog's condition and said she would check on her later.

(relevant footage: MN 5-7-08 13 0'1'')

5/8/08: The female Bichon in the Red Barn whose puppies have all died was lying on the floor of her pen today, and I did not see her get up or move at any point. Between 7:15 and 9:45, she was laying in the same spot and position.

5/9/08: In the Red Barn, I found the Bichon with microchip # 065-822-819 who had stillborn puppies on 5/5/08 dead in her pen. She was still filthy and her hindquarters covered in afterbirth.

(relevant footage: MN 5-9-08 03 0'13'')

Dipping Dogs

5/9/08: The entire afternoon was used to dip dogs from the Hay Shed, Freedom Barn, and the Dollar Barn. The dogs were dipped in a plastic tub about six feet long and 3.5 feet wide and tall, and filled about three feet high with water and Prolate/Lintox-HD. Dogs were dipped by either Kathy or Alan, who would submerge either the entire dog or all but the dog's head in the dip, and then set them on a tray to wipe them down by hand to get some of the dip off of them. The dogs that were completely submerged blinked repeatedly, and some gagged. One American Eskimo from the freedom barn went into seizure which Kathy said was due to the stress of dipping, and moved to another pen in the Red Barn to be culled from the kennel. Occasionally Bill would dip his own dogs if Kathy and Alan were busy.

(relevant footage: MN 5-9-08 11-27)

Tail and ear docks

4/22/08: I then helped Donna shave dogs in the Red Barn. Larry, Donna, and I gathered small-breed dogs from the southwest barn and took them to the Red Barn to await shaving. At one point, Donna noticed blood on a whelping Schnauzer three pens down from the doorway in the middle aisle of the western room of the building. There were about seven newborn puppies with her, and I noticed one had a lot of fresh, bright blood on its right ear. Donna said, "Oh, I guess she clipped their ears. Or..." and then she became silent. I noticed all of the puppies' ears had just been clipped and had blood on them, the one puppy's ear bleeding without clotting. I told Donna the puppies' ears had in fact been clipped, and then went back to grooming dogs with her without further comment on the matter.

4/23/08: I worked from about 7:00 to 17:45 today. I began work in the Red Barn, performing what are now my routine chores as described in earlier field notes. I noticed that one of the Schnauzer puppies in the litter that had ear croppings done (middle row of pens, third pen down from the doorway in the west room of the barn) was breathing shallowly and emaciated. I pointed this out to Shawn, who said that the mother may have sat on the puppy. He gave me a sugar solution to give to the puppies. I told him that one of the puppy's ears was bleeding yesterday, as though they had just recently been cropped. He said it looked as though "she" (indicating Kathy Bauck) had cropped the tails a while ago, but agreed with me the ears may have recently been done. I told Donna that only some of the puppies' ears were cropped, and she said it was probably because they were the only puppies sold.

Shawn said nothing further could be done for the sick puppy, which later died and Donna had me put on a sheet of paper and set on a supply table in the adjacent room for Kathy to find.

I also found a litter of nursing Bichon puppies in the center aisle of the same room as the Schnauzer puppies in which most of the puppies' tails were docked.

(relevant footage: MN 4-23-08 01 0'15''; MN 4-23-08 02 0'6'')

4/27/08: I worked from about 9:00 to 16:00 today. I worked with Corinne this morning in the Red Barn, performing routing chores. In the pen containing the whelping Bichon with eight puppies, seven of which have their tails docked, I found two of the puppies dead this morning. I told Corinne, who told me to place them in a trash can.

(relevant footage: MN 4-28-08 01 0'12'')

4/30/08: I worked from about 7:00 to 17:30 today. I did chores in the puppy barns with Larry before helping Corinne groom dogs from the break room barn. I began work in the Red Barn, where I noticed the

Schnauzer puppies born Monday, 4/28/08 in pen # 328, who did not have docked ears or tails on that day, had docked ears and tails today.

(relevant footage: MN 4-28-08 02 0'6"; MN 4-30-08 02 0'12")

Sedatives:

4/24/08: A Bichon was in the puppy room of the New Barn waiting to be groomed, but the dog was trying to bite me and Corinne when we tried to grab it. Corinne got Kathy, who put the dog on the flooring by its scruff, before injecting about 1 cc of a clear fluid into the dog's left hip. The dog was very mellow while being groomed by Kathy for about 15 minutes, after which I carried it to its cage without any trouble. After about another 20 minutes I took another dog back to a cage when it was finished being groomed and noticed the Bichon Kathy had given an injection to was lying on its flooring with its head slowly moving from side to side. The dog didn't respond to my voice or me waving my hand in front of it. I asked Corinne if Kathy had given it a sedative, and she said Kathy had not. When Kathy told me the dog was easy to groom, I said that it was because she had given the dog a sedative, and she laughed and admitted she had.

5/3/08: I worked from about 8:30 to 17:30 today. I worked with Evan (Caucasian male, 19 years old, about 5'7", 185 lbs, with short brown hair) in the puppy barns today, and helped Kathy check small-breed dogs for being in heat (what Kathy calls "heat checks.") At one point, we came across a Bichon in the southernmost cage on the west wall of the Hay Shed who was trying to bite Kathy as she tried to pick the dog up to check to see if she was in heat. Kathy put a leash around the Bichon's neck to pull her out of the cage, saying she was going to shave the dog after giving her a shot. I managed to hold the dog by her scruff and belly and carried her into the western room of the break room barn, where Evan and I saw her give about a 1cc of a clear fluid with a syringe into the dog's left hindquarter. In less than a minute the dog was drooping in my arms, and Kathy had Evan and I put the dog in the sink and cover her with a rubber mat while we continued heat checks. Over half an hour later, I reminded Kathy about the dog, who said she forgot. About ten minutes after that, I saw her shaving the Bichon, who appeared completely sedated. Kathy said the shot was a tranquilizer. I asked her, "Is it Ace?" She simply replied, "No."

Pain Killers and Penicillin use:

5/7/08: An English Bulldog in an outdoor pen at the eastern edge of the kennel was lying immobile on the concrete. Corinne said the dog had been like that all day. I went into the pen to inspect the dog and saw that her left rear leg was swollen about 2.5 times the size of the right one, and her left ear was swollen about three times its normal size near its base. There were two pus-covered lacerations on the leg and blood scabs covering the ear. I took the dog into the break room, where Corinne and I were met by Kathy who said the dog had been attacked 5-6 days ago by another dog, and that the Bulldog was supposed to have been brought inside. When Corinne said the dog could die, Kathy mentioned the dog had eaten eggs. Kathy then said to put the Bulldog in a cage in the puppy room of the break room barn. First, I watched her give a shot of penicillin and Banamine to the dog, and then put the dog in a cage with a plate of turkey eggs Corinne brought. Corinne said that I should give food such as hot dogs to the Bulldog, and that the Banamine would make the dog "act funny," but that it will wear off. She said the dog will occasionally need another shot of Banamine.

(relevant footage: MN 5-7-08 26 0'1", MN 5-7-08 27 0'1", MN 5-7-08 28 0'1")

5/9/08: A black and white Husky from the Driveway Barn had an open wound about eight inches in diameter on its right side today. It appeared as though the skin was ripped completely open, though it was dry, indicating it was not recent. Kathy poured hydrogen peroxide on the wound and then gave the dog a shot of penicillin and banamine. I commented the peroxide may hurt after she used it, and she replied that she used "food-grade peroxide."

(relevant footage: MN 5-9-08 10 0'1"; MN 5-12-08 12 0'5")

5/10/08: The brown and white nursing English Springer Spaniel in the New Barn had two dead puppies out of her litter of nine this afternoon. I talked to Jeff about it, who was working the barn at the time, and said Kathy had him give "stats" (which Larry explained to me is a sugar syrup) to the puppies. The other is still severely emaciated, and several of her puppies' ribs, spines, and hips are visible under their taught skin, and they appear lethargic. I was barely able to tell that one of the puppies was breathing. I took the two dead puppies to Kathy, who then collected all but three of the remaining pups to put with another nursing mother. She said the remaining three weren't "going to make it," but that I could give them stats if I wanted. I did so, though one of the puppies held its mouth open and gasped after I put a small amount of the syrup in its mouth. I massaged its throat and it licked its tongue while the mother licked its mouth, and it appeared to breathe easier. Kathy said she had treated the mother with a shot of penicillin/genocin.

(relevant footage: MN 5-10-08 27 2'48")