

Bailey's Story

Written By Cheryl Haralson who is lovingly owned by Bailey! 9/08/2006



December, 2003 I was forced to make a decision about my 13 ½ year old Cocker Spaniel who had been with me since he was a puppy. It was a very difficult decision, but one I felt was best in light of his situation. Several days went by and I realized there was such a void in our home. My husband had always wanted a Miniature Dachshund so we decided to call Patti at Keystone Kennel. My sister-in-law had previously bought two puppies from her and, since she had registered, healthy dogs, we assumed Patti (owner of Keystone Kennel) was a reputable breeder. We spoke with Patti and they had just what we were looking for; a short hair red male.

On December 23, 2003 my husband, his sister and I traveled about two hours to see the puppy. When we got there we were shown to an old garage that housed quite a few dogs/puppies. It was dark so we were not able to see how many other dogs were on the property although we could hear barking. We spent some time looking around and checking out a few other puppies, but decided to purchase the one we went to look at. We paid \$400 cash for a Red Dapple Shorthair Miniature Dachshund and were given a receipt along with the puppy stating "The puppy comes with a 7 day health guarantee, a health record for you veterinarian and registration application". Patti explained she did not have the AKC paperwork and that the application would be mailed to me within six months. This information was also stated on my receipt. I didn't think anything about it at the time because my sister-in-law had followed this same process.

We took Bailey home and he adjusted well to his new home. I took him to our veterinarian and everything was as it should be. The holiday season came and went and I never heard anything from Patti about the AKC information so I emailed her on January 25, 2004. I included some pictures of him for her website and casually asked about the paperwork. I did not get a reply and, due to other commitments, did not think about the papers again until May.

I forwarded the email from January to Patti on May 23, 2004. I asked her to please check on the information and reminded her that we had purchased him on December 23, 2003 but still did not have the AKC information. I know that someone at her location read my email as I received a "read receipt" back stating that the message had been displayed on the recipient's computer. Again, I got no reply.

Over the next couple months I attempted, on numerous occasions, to contact Patti by phone. Each time I called I received a recording stating the voicemail was full and could not accept any messages. I also contacted the AKC and was told the litter had never been registered. On July 6, 2004 I filed a complaint with the Better Business Bureau and sent Patti yet another email. Again, this email was attached the previous two emails along with a copy of the read receipt from the May 23 email. I explained everything I had done to try to get my papers and asked for a full refund since I did not have an AKC registered dog. I also threatened legal action if I did not get a reply from her. I received a read receipt within ten minutes and, lo and behold, I got a response back! Patti stated that she would go online and let me know the next day what was going on. (No apology or mention of the length of time that had passed).

Coincidentally, my sister-in-law was emailing Patti to ask about not only my paper, but also her aunt's papers for a puppy she purchased early in 2004 (this puppy did have some health problems). Patti's response to her was...

"I understand their frustration, but I've just gotten really overwhelmed with all the things involved with running this business(paper work, emails, paper work, etc.)...there is not enough hours in a day..."

**I emailed Patti again on July 7, 2004 asking what she had found out. She replied back...
"I SHOULD BE ABLE TO GO ONLINE TONIGHT/TOMORROW AND GET THE LITTER REGISTERED AND THEN YOU WOULD BE ABLE TO REGISTER YOUR PUP IMMEDIATELY. I JUST NEEDED TO CONTACT MARGIE, MY FRIEND THAT PREVIOUSLY OWNED THESE DOGS TO MAKE SURE SHE CAN DO HER INFO FOR THE TRANSFER OF OWNERSHIP.**

I WILL EMAIL YOU TONIGHT OR TOMORROW WITH THE DETAILS AND CONFIRMATION FROM AKC."

Where did this come from??? I had never been told anything about someone else owning the dogs.

I emailed Patti again on July 8, 2004 asking her if the litter was registered and if not, when it would be done. Her reply...

"Okay, here is the update. I can not register the litter online, I have to send in a litter application. The reason is I don't own the father.

I have the application filled out, signed and will mail it tomorrow. I will receive a email from AKC when they process it and I'll pass it on to you. I am sorry it has taken so long, but this litter and the mother were actually owned by a friend of mine and I just had to get with her to have all the paper work signed.

I was hoping we could do it online, but we couldn't. I will keep you posted.

As usual, I did not hear anything back from Patti, so I emailed her again on July 15, 2004 asking if she sent the application, if she heard back from the AKC and could I register Bailey. A few days later I got a read receipt but no reply.

On July 22, 2004 I emailed Patti again. I stated that is had been two weeks since she said she was mailing the application and I had not heard anything. I also stated that I had a read receipt from the email dated July 15, 2004 showing that someone at her location read my email (this was provided as an attachment). I also let Patti know that I had contacted the AKC and was told that no application had been received in their office. I again asked for a full refund. Her reply (more excuses)...

"I am in the process of getting the paper work done to get the applications to you, it is not my fault how long AKC takes to process their paper work....you need to relax and I will let you know when I receive this info so that I can register the litter.

I will check into it tomorrow during business hours and let you know. We had a storm take out our phone/DSL lines for a week, just restoring it Tuesday....I am doing the best I can."

On August 3, 2004 I received an email from the Better Business Bureau stating that a copy of my complaint had been forwarded to the firm. Unfortunately the complaint was closed on September 23, 2004 due to no response from Patti (surprise, surprise). I was informed however the complaint would be reported for three years.

On August 5, 2004 I faxed a formal complaint to Diane with the Animal Protection Division of the Department of Agriculture. Included in the complaint was an overview of what had taken place thus far, a copy of the paperwork I received from Patti the night I purchased Bailey and a copy of the email thread between me and Patti.

I emailed Patti again on August 21, 2004 asking her what had been done and letting her know that I felt I had been more than patient. I got a read receipt within couple hours, but no reply from Patti.

I called the AKC again on August 25, 2004 and was told 1) Patti had no ownership/lease of the bitch and 2) no attempts had been made to register the litter. I then spoke with Joy Young, Department of Agriculture, and was told to email any requests I had of them. I was

also given Ray DeLuca's name and number. I contacted Mr. DeLuca and was told that he had visited the location himself.

On August 29, 2004 I emailed Joy Young to request a copy of the inspection of Keystone Kennel. I received 40 pages of documentation. Included in the documentation was a quarantine notice and statements from veterinary clinics regarding diseased puppies. I did contact the Department of Agriculture again as I did not understand why I had been sent this information since it was not related to my complaint. I was told that I was sent all the information they had and they had no jurisdiction for matters regarding obtaining AKC papers. My question...Who Does???

Out of the blue on September 13, 2004 I received an email for Patti...

"I wanted to update you on your puppy's AKC papers. I have gotten the dams owner to sign the litter form and transfer, however the sire, which I own, has qualified for the "frequent sire program" and therefore his DNA is required before we can register any more litters from him.

I have applied for the DNA kit from AKC and will send in his sample once I receive it. At that point we can then send in the litter registration application and then register the litter. Once all that is done then individual application will be mailed to you.

I am truly sorry for the length of time it has taken, this litter took longer because of the circumstances with the dam and sire, transfers and the DNA requirement (which I didn't know about until about a month ago).

Please understand you WILL get your puppy's papers, it has just taken longer than normal. I understand your frustration, but hang in there."

That's funny...on July 8 she said she didn't own the father!!!

At this point I had already given up. I had other obligations and it had become obvious to me that I would never have an AKC registered dog. I did not buy Bailey to breed so the papers were not important in that regard. What is important is that I did not get something that I paid for. I find it very, very unfortunate that someone can operate a business and continually get away with the scam that Patti is running.

I sent my final email to Patti one year to the day that we took Bailey home. I basically stated what I have stated here. My final comment to her was "it is really a shame that breeders aren't held accountable for not providing what their customers pay for. I will, however, make sure that anyone who asks my recommendation for a Dachshund breeder fully understands my dealings with you".

Thank goodness "The Real Keystone Kennel" story is finally being told.