

**Permission To Cross Post is Given, AND Encouraged By The Author Of
This Email: Lisa Martin**

Hundreds of neglected animals being housed by a Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensee. Another puppy mill raid, another X amount of animals having suffered immensely – and another Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensee making money at the animal's expense. To this day, I have no idea what Marie Hughes even looks like – but during my employment, I heard her name enough as being one of our “problem establishments” that I immediately recognized her name when this last cruelty case broke.

According to one of the first news articles published, another attempt by “officials” to “**negotiate**” with the alleged abusers.

An [OnlineAthens](#) news article, published on February 26, 2006, says the following:

*Jackson County sheriff's deputies were asked Monday to postpone arresting the operators of a Nicholson-area kennel on animal cruelty charges while authorities debate whether to **negotiate a settlement** instead. Deputies had planned to execute arrest warrants at L&D Farm and Kennel after Magistrate Court Judge Billy Chandler signed them Monday, said David Cochran, chief deputy of the Jackson County Sheriff's Office.*

*However, **deputies received a call early Monday to hold off on delivering the warrants**, Cochran said. Cochran said he did not know who placed the call.*

*The Jackson County Commission has scheduled a meeting for 7:30 this morning to **decide whether to pursue criminal cruelty charges against the owners or to negotiate a settlement that does not involve formal charges.***

First off, I want to know **who** made that infamous phone call on the Monday following the initial raid. Because that is the person, and the department, that should shoulder the blame for this case being handled the way that it has so far.

When Tiffany Butler initially reported this situation to the authorities, she contacted the Jackson County authorities, just as she should have done. Those authorities visited the property, discovered the horrendous neglect of those animals, and they did what they were supposed to do. They proceeded to secure warrants and arrest those responsible for their part for the cruelty inflicted upon these animals.

But it seems, to me, that as soon as the Georgia Department of Agriculture became involved, all of a sudden, things came to a grinding halt, with talk of trying to “negotiate” with the Hughes, to see if they could come to some sort of “settlement” with them instead of filing criminal charges. I'm assuming this was suggested to try to find a way for Marie Hughes to retain her Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection license.

This case is beginning to reek of how the Larry Wendt case in Augusta, Ga., was handled.

While the ongoing Marie Hughes case might appear to be out of the ordinary, it is my opinion that it is very ordinary. I say this not only out of past history involving cases like the Hughes', but also as a former Animal Protection Division Inspector for the Ga. Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division.

During my employment, I questioned situations similar to the Hughes' case – and Animal Protection Director (now also the [Equine Division Director](#), as well), Mary Greene, appeared to not like it one bit. Every time I stumbled on another licensee that was violating the rules and regulations (aka opening up a can of worms), I noticed that it would be “handled” in favor of the licensee that was guilty of violating the Animal Protection Rules/Regulations and/or Animal Protection Act – or in one particular case, a licensee that was allegedly violating numerous **state**

laws, who I will add that Animal Protection management pretty much flat out refused to intervene in the cruelty that was alleged against her by approximately 20 Chattooga County, Georgia residents.

This particular licensee was, three months after I left the department, charged with two felony counts of animal cruelty, and two misdemeanor counts. She was later, in February of 2005, convicted, having plea bargained, of the two lesser misdemeanor counts, fined and placed on probation. Ask Mary Greene if this person's license was then revoked. And ask her how many people contacted their department to inform them of the conviction, when it happened. Ask Mary Greene if they allowed this convicted licensee to remain licensed, and operating, until she attempted to renew her license approximately nine months later – and if they then accepted her \$200 license fee, then denied her renewal application, based on her conviction.

It seemed that every time I attempted to hold these licensees, the one mentioned above particularly, accountable for their actions, or lack of, Director Mary Greene attempted to paint me as being in the wrong. I spent my employment with the Animal "Protection" Division struggling with management in order to try to do the job I was responsible for. The job that most taxpaying citizens assume is being handled adequately by this department. At one point, I was told by Animal Protection Director Mary Greene, that I should think about being an activist.

That's ok, Mary, because I think the Animal Protection Division needs to do their jobs.

But let's discuss the Chihuahua puppy that was housed in a pet store in Cumming. Ray knows which store it was. I called him, over the course of about three weeks, just to inform him of the deteriorating condition of this puppy. This puppy was visibly sick, with vomit in his cage, lethargic, I knew he was sick, and I made Ray aware of him being sick. I told Ray the puppy needed immediate medical care. But each time I called Ray, I was told that as long as the pet store owner was "treating" the puppy (with molasses and vitamin supplements from a filthy squeeze tube) there wasn't anything we could do. I argued with him about the fact that 'molasses and vitamin supplements' were not considered "adequate veterinary or medical care" but he told me "Our hands are tied. With the way the law is worded, it doesn't fully describe adequate medical care. As long as the store owner is treating the puppy, there's nothing we can do".

We, Mary, the Animal **PROTECTION** Division, couldn't intervene to save a sick, and dying, puppy in a Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensed pet store. A puppy that needed medical care and who, according to the vet who later saw him, died from pneumonia. That puppy didn't have to die, Mary, but he did. This particular establishment required two manila folders just to hold all of the complaints and reports in my state vehicle. But ask your Field Supervisor about how he came to the conclusion that 'molasses and vitamin supplements' were 'adequate medical care'.

I have numerous other situations I can bring up – but to keep this email shorter than what it could be, I won't list them all here.

All I am asking of the Animal Protection management is to stop trying to portray this department in the light of not knowing Marie Hughes was housing her animals in filth. I am so very sick of every time a filthy (licensed) breeder is busted, your PR and 'Yes People' want to try to dupe the public into buying the bit about how your department didn't know the conditions were so bad, or how your department wasn't aware of a 'hidden' kennel on the property. For God's sake, stop with the excuses and start doing the job that the taxpaying citizens of this state think you are doing.

Another question I've been wanting to ask of you – during my employment, a (now former) office employee of yours pulled me to the side one day when I was in the office to tell me that if I had any inspection reports or other documents that I thought I might need later, I should find a place in the office/conference room and hide them, or make copies of them. When I asked her why, she said, and I quote, "Mary has a habit of shredding what she doesn't want getting out". That was said to me in 2004.

Around January of this year, 2008, I called this former employee and brought up that particular part of our conversation in 2004. Her response to me was, and I quote, "Girl, it wasn't just Mary, Venessa was doing that too".

So before you begin denying this, or any thing else said by me in any other media outlets, please know that I did decide to take this former office worker up on her statement of advice of making copies of documents that I felt might be important later. And as well, I will say now that should any former or current Animal Protection employee's "opinion" differ than what I have recounted here, I'll suggest a polygraph for all parties. I stand 100% behind everything I have stated in this email, and I simply don't like for people to suffer from selective memory when it's convenient for them.

And after reading the [2000 State Audit](#), as well as the [2003 State Audit Follow Up](#) – even Russell Hinton's office commented, several times, in their documentation about how many reports 'could not be located'.

And, just in case, for the sake of 'damage control', the Animal Protection Division attempts to portray me as 'just another disgruntled former employee' – let me add that you are damned right I'm disgruntled. Make sure you include how disgruntled I was during my employment, as well as how disgruntled I am, now, reading, and hearing, about the Marie Hughes case. . Over the course of my employment, I honestly started feeling ashamed, being the animal lover that I was, and am, to have been affiliated, in the slightest way, with this department. A department that claims that they are in place to ensure that the Animal Protection Act isn't being violated, and who are protecting the housed animals in Georgia.

When I left this department on July 29, 2004, I knew in my heart that one day, this would all come out when I found the right timing – and I fully believe that right now is as good a time as any.

And yes, Mary, you listed on my separation papers as "Terminated". And that's ok – at that time, when Venessa and Ray got out of their vehicle that day intending on terminating me, I handed my state vehicle keys to my car, already entirely cleaned out for the last two hours prior to their arrival, to Venessa – and told her that I was through with the Animal "Protection" Department. When Venessa told me that that was why they had driven there, I told her I didn't want to challenge Mary's decision solely because at that time I only wanted out of that entire façade of animal "protection". Up until that day, I had never been terminated from a job in my 42 years.

But yes, I quit before being terminated – but you, Mary, can continue to tell people that you fired me – because it gives me the chance to tell people how proud I am that I attempted to do my job, but due to management, I wasn't allowed. And I remember Venessa encouraging me that day to write my responses to your comments, Mary, on my PMF. As I told her, one day, I would respond. Today is that day.

And while I'm thinking about it, let me ask this question of you, Mary - did you ever do anything about the situation that occurred in Murray County, at the Animal Control Shelter - the situation I was called down to the Atlanta office to discuss the over 52 violations this county funded shelter had racked up in just 17 months?

You remember the meeting, the one where Venessa reprimanded Ray Deluca, telling him that "Murray County should have been handled long before Lisa Martin was ever hired". The meeting where Ray denied my contacting him that day to let him know about what the Director (Gary Cowart) of Murray County Animal Shelter stated to me during one of my inspections – the part where he was, pretty much, bragging to me how he allowed two pit bull puppies to fight, until blood was shed and laughing as he told me that he 'wanted to let 'em get one in' before he had to put them down.

So IF any action was taken, and I sincerely hope that one of your licensees admitting that he committed a felony inside of a county funded shelter was enough, in itself, for you to take action, then answer me this, Mary – why is it when I contacted Murray County Animal Shelter in January of this year, 2008, and asked who their director was, I was told "Gary Cowart".

My proposal to you, Mary Greene, is that if your department is going to continue to allow these kinds of people to hold Department of Agriculture licenses, at least have the decency to remove the word "protection" from your department's official title.

Let's revisit a few previous cases involving Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensees. Note: These are the few that I have found, so far – I'm still researching.

Larry Wendt

Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection license holder of Wendt's Pets, an Augusta, Ga Petland mall licensee. Wendt, according to reports, was the person responsible for instructing his employees not to feed, or medicate, a sick Chihuahua puppy, saying "It's going to die anyways". One of the store employees apparently decided to put the puppy inside of a plastic bag, and slammed it, repeatedly, against a concrete wall, in order to kill it.

What was the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division's response? To immediately begin to "negotiate" with the license holder, instead of allowing criminal charges to be pursued, so that Wendt could retain his license to continue 'business as usual'.

1) **March 4, 2004 Pet store workers are charged**

By Jeremy Craig | Staff Writer

An investigation into mistreatment of animals at an Augusta Mall pet store has resulted in citations against several of the store's employees, officials said Thursday. Randy Teasley, the director of Augusta Animal Services, said his department has issued citations for misdemeanor charges of cruelty to animals against three employees of the former **Petland** store.

Mr. Teasley refused to disclose the names of the individuals cited. Names of people charged with a crime are public records under Georgia's Open Records Act. He said that he did not want to jeopardize the investigation, and that he was told by a clerk at Richmond County Magistrate Court, whom he didn't name, that it was against the law for him to release the names. Magistrate Court Judge William D. Jennings III said citations filed with the court are a matter of public record. "What he (Mr. Teasley) does with paperwork in his own department is up to him or not," he said.

The charges are a result of an investigation launched after a former employee reported animal abuse to the Richmond County Sheriff's Office on Feb. 28. Sarah Milroy reported that a store manager had taken some of the animals to a veterinarian but had not been giving them the prescribed medications.

She also told police that **an employee put a dog suffering from seizures in a plastic bag and beat the animal against concrete until the dog died**, a police report states. It is not known whether the three workers charged are still employed at the store.

Ms. Milroy's report started a process that now has the former Petland shop under investigation by the Georgia Department of Agriculture and resulted in its loss of franchise affiliation.

2) **March 8, 2004 Owner tries to get deal**

By Greg Rickabaugh and Walter C. Jones | Staff Writers

The owner of an Augusta pet store where animals were allegedly abused is seeking a deal with the state Department of Agriculture over his dealer license and possible fines. The owner, Larry Wendt, began negotiations Monday when he arrived for a scheduled public hearing. By striking an agreement on the department's administrative punishment, he would avoid giving sworn testimony that could be used in a criminal case pending in Richmond County Magistrate Court. Magistrate court officials released the

names of those charged with animal cruelty Monday. They include Mr. Wendt and two employees, Dawn L. Irons and Donna Leigh Stover. A March 25 court date is set.

A former employee of the Augusta Mall store accused Mr. Wendt's manager of withholding medication from animals and of killing a sick dog by putting it in a plastic bag and beating it against concrete.

The Agriculture Department can revoke the dealer license, impose fines of \$1,000 per violation or place restrictions on the business. *Mr. Wendt's attorney is negotiating with the staff of the state Law Department, which represents the Agriculture Department.* Any resulting order would be signed by Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin. Mr. Wendt applied for his license as a franchise of Petland Inc., a national chain based in Ohio. Petland withdrew its franchise last week after the allegations became public. That move puts Mr. Wendt's dealer license in jeopardy.

EMPLOYEES CHARGED Three employees were charged Wednesday with misdemeanor animal cruelty. Larry Harland Wendt, 59, the owner/president of Wendt's Pets, is accused of failing to provide proper care to a Chihuahua in his custody.

Dawn L. Irons, 22, is accused of causing the unjustified death, suffering or physical pain to a Chihuahua puppy housed at the former Petland store.

Donna Leigh Stover, 43, is accused of ordering employees to withhold food and water from a Chihuahua in her care. Reach Greg Rickabaugh or Walter C. Jones at (706) 724-0851.

3) **March 12, 2004 Agency sets fines on mall's pet store**

By Jeremy Craig | Staff Writer Georgia Agriculture Commissioner Tommy Irvin announced fines Friday against the owner of an Augusta Mall pet store under local and state investigation for animal cruelty. Mr. Irvin said Larry Wendt, the owner and operator of Wendt's Pets Inc. - formerly Petland - will have to pay a \$5,000 penalty on charges involving possible animal cruelty at the store, a news release states. [For the continuation of this article, see <http://chronicle.augusta.com> archives]

4) **March 30, 2004 Owner of pet store surrenders license** By Jeremy Craig | Staff Writer The owner of a pet store at the center of an animal cruelty investigation by local and state authorities has surrendered his state license, officials said Tuesday. According to the Georgia Department of Agriculture, Larry Wendt, the owner of the former Petland in the Augusta Mall, *voluntarily surrendered his state license* to sell pets. [For the continuation of this article, see <http://chronicle.augusta.com> archives.] **Pet-Abuse.Com Case**

Evelyn Nelson

Evelyn Nelson, of Sandies' Pets, in Toccoa, Ga., - **Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection License Number P-1380** - In November 2003, inspectors who were acting on a tip found more than 100 dogs and puppies in cramped filthy cages inside and outside of Nelson's home as well as bags of garbage piled in every room. Some of the dogs

found in wire cages behind her house were dead. Other dead dogs were found in the woods on her property. An Oconee County judge found Nelson guilty of animal cruelty and sentenced her to 30 days in jail.

Nelson yesterday voluntarily released ownership of the animals in a **deal** with Oconee County authorities. In exchange, Nelson is charged with three counts of ill treatment of animals—one count for each group: dogs, cats, and birds, that were taken from her home. **Had she not accepted the deal, Nelson would have been charged with more than 200 counts of mistreating animals.**

*Here in Toccoa, there are no plans to close Nelson's pet store, according to City Mayor Ken Davis. Last week, the City inspected the store and found it to be relatively clean and Nelson's paperwork in order. Davis says until formal charges are filed against Nelson, they will allow her to remain open, a move that has outraged many local citizens who say her store should be closed and her business license revoked. **WNEG News Article***

In 2007, Toccoa authorities shut down her pet store for the filthy conditions they found. The Department of Agriculture claims they were 'already on their way due to the complaints'. "We came in and the odor was horrendous," Toccoa Marshal Ken Cox said. "There were a number of animals in the back, dogs and birds. The bird room was covered in litter. It was just filthy." Nelson was allowed to re-open her store. Around this same time, Westminster, S.C. authorities raided her residence, and again, found conditions of filth and numerous neglected animals. She was arrested, charged with animal cruelty, and **convicted, again.**

Tommy Irvin was asked why her Georgia license had not been revoked upon her S.C. conviction. He said that Nelson hadn't violated any Georgia laws

No word on the future of Sandies' Pets, now that storeowner Evelyn Nelson is behind bars in South Carolina for ill treatment of animals. Nelson was sentenced Thursday to 30 days in the Oconee County Detention Center and must pay over \$5,000 in fines and vet bills on charges she abused and neglected 210 dogs, cats, and birds at her Westminster, SC home.

On February 11th, an inspector with the State Department of Agriculture visited her Toccoa store on Collins Road. In his report, Ray Deluca said his department would not get involved in the South Carolina charges unless Nelson was charged. Nelson was charged February 17th with three counts of ill treatment of animals. Nelson is thought to have been breeding dogs at her home and selling the puppies at the store. However, **Department of Agriculture spokeswoman Jackie Sosby says they don't know where Nelson got her animals.**

Over the years, Department of Agriculture records show that Nelson was repeatedly cited for lack of proper record keeping. When asked to see her records during a routine inspection in November, 2004, Nelson told them she had accidentally thrown her books in the trash. In the February 11th report, inspector Deluca gave Nelson until the 15th of February to submit copies of her intake and outgoing records to the department or face a hearing. **When asked by WNEG News yesterday whether they had received those records, Sosby says she didn't know if Nelson had ever submitted any records.**

WNEG News has obtained copies of a handful of outgoing records from Sandies Pets dating from December 4th, 2005 to February 5th, 2005. **None of those records show where the animals Nelson sold came from and none of the forms have all the**

information as to who purchased the animals. Since February 17th, WNEG has repeatedly requested an interview with Commissioner Tommy Irvin to get an answer to these questions, but so far, the Commissioner has not returned our phone calls. WNEG March 2005 Pet-Abuse.Com Case

Being a former Animal Protection Inspector for the Ga. Dept of Agriculture Animal Protection Division, I can attest that ALL licensees are “**required**” to maintain, and present upon request, all incoming, and outgoing, records. These records are required to show all animals coming into the licensed establishment i.e. live births, adoptions, strays, etc. These records are also required to show ALL animals that have left the licensed establishment i.e. adoptions, sales, giving away, deaths, etc. Records are also required to contain the names and addresses of all parties involved in the transfer, be it incoming or outgoing.

Donna Pegg / Donna’s Precious Pups

Donna Pegg, Summerville, Ga., Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection License Number **P02-0209** - was found, by Chattooga County Animal Control, to be housing approximately four dozen dogs in “deplorable” conditions at her Chattooga County residence in January of 2007. “The dogs were standing in water and feces, the shelters were deplorable against the wind and rain,” explained Joe Johnson with animal control. “I got the 13 puppies in there with their momma’s, they were in her house, her house was despicable with feces all in it, a stench through it,” said Johnson. That was his description of Donna Pegg's home after they removed fifty five dogs.

But today, the story seemed much less severe. When News Channel 9 spoke with him this morning, he said, "The conditions were not favorable to the animals, the shelters weren't like they should have been, at that time there was no food and water and too many animals per cage. The animals were healthy as far as looking at them." That's what Pegg thought on Friday and didn't understand why these dachshunds, boxers, and chihuahuas were taken from her in the first place.

News Channel 9 didn't understand either, since most of the dogs were handed back over to Pegg today. Johnson says Pegg made the necessary improvements to the house. He said, "**It's a judgement call between myself and the department of agriculture, that the people that really want to go in and straighten up, we let them do that.**"

Johnson says Aanimal Control and the Georgia Department of Agriculture inspected the house this morning and it looked immaculate. I know this lady, she loves animals and she will do good from now on. It's bad, but it will be better from now on with her." Johnson says he is not pressing any charges, just putting Pegg on probation. He says he'll check her house and animals unannounced every so often.

Pet-Abuse.Com Case

Brenda Jackson



WsbTv News Article

Brenda Jackson of Sugar Valley Boarding Kennel in Cartersville, Ga - Ga. Animal Protection **License Number K270** – charged in 2006 with animal cruelty after local authorities discovered 59 dogs 6 cats and 2 birds, with most of the animals diseased and infested with fleas, being housed in unsanitary conditions.

Dr. Spenser Talley spent the day examining animals one by one -- dogs and cats that were confiscated from the Sugar Valley Boarding Kelley in Cartersville. Investigators say the animals were kept in filthy conditions.

“After the neighbors complained about the stench, we found the dogs in cages that were full of feces for who knows how many days,” said Bartow animal shelter director Debbie Elrod. She said one of the dogs was dead. “The rest were severely matted, had dental problems, ear infections and were infested with ticks,” Elrod said.

Talley said one of the dogs had neurological problems, another suffered from seizures and another had more than 150 ticks covering its body. Owner Brenda Jackson was arrested and charged with 62 counts of animal cruelty. “According to her, she had cleaned up the facility at 7 p.m. the night before. She says she loves them and takes good care of them,” said Elrod. Animal control officials say there are mostly pomeranians, poodles and schnauzers but several other breeds as well.

Some of the dogs had out-of-state tags. Authorities say they believe Jackson was both breeding and boarding dogs at the kennel and they're trying to find out how many rescued dogs didn't belong to her. “She indicated she was keeping them for people and wanted to know how they could get them back. They were instructed to come here with proof of ownership and veterinary records,” said Elrod. Elrod says the sickest dogs will be euthanized and they hope anyone who was boarding an animal at the kennel will contact the Bartow county animal shelter. She says eventually, when they've recovered some of these animals will go up for adoption. Anyone interested in adopting one of the dogs or making a donation should contact the Etowah Valley Humane Society, which handles adoptions for Bartow County. bartowhumane.org.

WXIA Atlanta News Article

Pet-Abuse.Com Case

My question is, did Brenda Jackson end up actually being charged with animal cruelty And was Brenda Jackson also previously charged, and possibly not convicted, in another cruelty case in Cobb County?

And why is Brenda Jackson still listed on a November 2007 Animal Protection Establishment list, obtained by the Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division management, as a current licensee?

Marie Hughes

Marie Hughes of L&D Farm & Kennel, Nicholson, Ga., Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection **license P1597** charged in February 2008 with animal cruelty.

Things seemed to be going as they should, until the Jackson County authorities received the 'infamous' phone call on the Monday following the raid – asking them to hold off on filing charges against the licensee.

What has followed, best we know, is that some sort of “gag order” agreement was made involving the rescue groups that agreed to house the dogs, while incurring the dog's medical and food expenses.

Why would an “agreement” to keep quiet need to be made to the rescue orgs that were willing to take these 300+ dogs and house them until this case can work its way through the criminal justice system. It was said to me that during one public meeting regarding the situation, that one of the Dept of Ag reps in attendance told people in the meeting that if they contacted Peta, it would hinder “their” case.

If this allegation is true, and I have no reason to doubt, but plenty of reasons to believe, why is the Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division attempting to keep all information so contained in this case? This case is said to be the largest puppy mill raid in Georgia history. So um, why are people being told to keep their mouths shut? Contacting Peta isn't going to hinder this, or any other, case. Sounds to me like, if this was said during that meeting, that someone is working awfully hard to keep things quiet.

And although, right now, I can't prove who made that infamous Monday phone call asking the Jackson County authorities to hold off on filing criminal charges, I will say that IF it was someone with the Department of Agriculture, then that person's name, and department, needs to be made known to the public, and authorities. In my opinion, that is a blatant attempt to obstruct law enforcement from enforcing the laws they are required to enforce in the state of Georgia.

And my biggest question – did local authorities, in these other cases, receive a similar phone call following the discovery, and arrests of the licensees?

If a person is arrested for animal cruelty, it should **NOT** make any difference, in the criminal procedure, if that person also happens to be a Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensee. Just because a person holds an Animal Protection license does not, and should not, mean that that person is exempt from the animal cruelty laws in this state.

Below are photos I found at Best Friends' website of two of the dogs seized from Marie Hughes' property. Is the neglect depicted in these photos what people are being told to keep quiet about? And if so, why? These photos need to be displayed for all Georgia citizens to view. Why is everyone trying to hide this evident case of neglect and cruelty?



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Pictured above, *Liberty*, found living in a cage with a dead dog. This dog should have not been allowed to get in this condition. And ESPECIALLY not at the hands of a Georgia Licensed Pet Dealer.



***Liberty*, after much needed medical Care.**



Photo above, *Justice*, found living on the L&D Kennel property in

Nicholson, Ga. The Ga. Dept of Ag Rules/Regs, as well as the Georgia Animal Protection Act, are supposedly in place to prohibit this kind of neglect.

The L&D Kennels case timeline posted on Best Friends' Network website

And what about these current licensees, listed on the November 2007 Dept of Agriculture Animal Protection Division establishment list, that have been previously convicted of animal cruelty in Georgia, and other states - why are they being able to be licensed with the Ga. Department of Agriculture as Animal Protection licensees? ' Here are a few Ga. Animal Protection licensees that I have discovered:

Christopher Coroneos of Reptile Connection – Ga. Animal Protection License Number P02-0023 located in Maryland – **convicted** of animal cruelty in Maryland after authorities discovered over 1,500 animals including 2 King Cobras, an alligator, 26 Gaboon Vipers, 100 Emperor Scorpions, 2 Death Stalker Scorpions, boa constrictors, King and Corn snakes. There were between 500 and 1,000 baby Ball Pythons. Of the over 1,500 animals, 199 were found dead. After the inspection, the animals were assessed to be at risk, the warehouse conditions were deemed unsafe, and all the animals were removed from the facility and placed in the care of area zoos and local herpetologists and veterinarians.

The Cold Blooded News article

R.V. Martin – Ga. Animal Protection License Number P354 located in Toccoa, Ga, arrested in December 2005, and eventually **convicted**, of animal cruelty, is still listed as holding a current Animal Protection license by the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division.

Pet-Abuse.Com Case

John and Humes Livingston – Ga. Animal Protection License Number P863 of Aiken, S.C. charged, and **convicted**, in Aiken, S.C. of animal cruelty after authorities discovered 180 dogs in squalid conditions that led to euthanization for 47 of the animals.

Animal control officials said that they spent more than \$52,000 for food, veterinary care and euthanization of the dogs. The sentences handed down were Sentence: Humes--5 yrs prison + 5 yrs probation for animal cruelty and \$4,800 in restitution; 7 yrs for unlawful conduct toward a child.

Livingston--2 yrs prison for animal cruelty charges and an identical fine; he faces 5 years probation.

A Legacy of Suffering

Note: These licensees, listed above, are just the few that I have found upon first reviewing the November 2007 establishment list. However, I **do intend on researching every single listed licensee to see what other information can be found regarding animal neglect or cruelty charges.**

And one more important point to ponder -

Why has the Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Division handed Animal Protection licenses to over 250 out of state “businesses” with licensee names including Steve Kruse of Iowa, PBT in Neosho, Mo., The Hunte Corp...... these corporations are well known for being massive commercial puppy millers. Is the Ga. Department of Agriculture now trying to “negotiate” with these licensees to bring their commercial puppy mills to Georgia?

And how does the Georgia Department of Agriculture justify licensing over 250 out of state businesses when their own Rules and Regulations state that in order for a person to be licensed with them, a pre-license inspection MUST be conducted at the location where the animals are housed prior to being licensed.

Below is an excerpt copied/pasted directly from the Georgia Animal Protection website:

I need a license for a new establishment. What are the steps necessary to obtain a license?

To obtain a license from the Animal Protection Section, **you must first have a pre-license inspection performed at the location**, this includes mobile facilities, you will be doing business. Please call the Animal Protection office (800-282-5852 ex 4914) to request a pre-license inspection. We will need your address, directions to the place where you plan to do business and a telephone number where you can be reached between 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM. You should review and become familiar with the Animal Protection Act, Bird Dealers Licensing Act, Bird Dealers Licensing Rules, and Animal Protection Rules BEFORE your inspection.

Even in the below statement, from the Ga. Animal Protection Division’s Rules and Regulations, it doesn’t justify their licensing previously convicted licensees:

(9) Any person who is not a resident of this state but who engages in this state in any activities for which a licensee is required by this chapter or Chapter 40-13-12 pertaining to bird dealer licensing **shall be subject to this chapter for such activities.** As a condition of licensure, each non-resident must execute a consent to the jurisdiction of the courts of this state for any action filed under this chapter; and service of process in any such action shall be by certified mail by the Commissioner.

How much longer do the animals of Georgia have to be forced to endure neglect and cruelty at the hands of these Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection Licensees?

It seems that ways have been found, thus far, to keep things quiet about what really goes on in the background of these cruelty cases, and with everything in me, I will not let that happen, again – not this time, not in this current case involving yet another Animal Protection licensee that has been allowed to go for years racking up violation after violation. There is over 300 animals that have suffered at the hands of Marie Hughes, a long time Georgia Department of Agriculture Animal Protection licensee.

All of these rescue groups have bent over backwards to help these animals, and by helping them, it’s certainly helped out the Dept of Ag and Jackson Co authorities – these groups are spending **THEIR** hard earned money on much needed veterinary care, food and housing. All of the things that Marie Hughes chose not to provide them, and things that the Dept of Agriculture didn’t require her to. Best Friends Network, a rescue group located in Utah, for crying out loud, has even come forward to volunteer. If this case isn’t prosecuted to the fullest, guess what? There is a

chance Hughes will get those animals back, and all of these rescue groups can kiss any monetary reimbursement goodbye. And most important, those animals will be placed directly back into the hands of the ones responsible for their current conditions.

To force these groups to remain quiet?? For what? So that this case can end up like Larry Wendt, Brenda Jackson, Evelyn Nelson, and other licensees – so that Hughes can retain her Animal Protection license? I'm not under any gag order, and I will speak up for those that have been told they can't. Whoever is forcing these rescue groups to remain quiet about things needs to be brought out into the public light. **Enough is enough.**

And Mary, [here is my response](#), after four years, to your comments on my PMF.

As I have always said, and will continue to say.....

IF YOU AREN'T OUTRAGED, THEN YOU'RE NOT PAYING ATTENTION.