

movers & makers

ANIMAL HEALTH

Buyer beware

When looking into purchasing a pet, it's important to know now to recognize a puppy mill

Dr. Jennifer MacLean

Animal Talk



In the excitement of getting a new puppy, something important can get overlooked.

What condition are the puppy's parents living in?

Most people would never intentionally purchase a dog from a puppy mill, but recognizing one is often not easy. Puppy mills and backyard breeding operations flourish due to minimal breeding regulations and consumer demand for puppies at the lowest price.

What is a puppy mill? Irresponsible breeders aim to make the most money with the least investment. Mothers (the dam) are commonly bred on every heat, fed only enough to ensure they can reproduce and often suffer from painful medical conditions. They may be isolated and confined in filthy



A female dog is tethered in a barn stall in P.E.I. She has no room to move or exercise and she is malnourished. Her crouched body posture is one of fear and isolation. A myriad of problems is associated with animals living in these substandard conditions, including poor disease control and social isolation. **P.E.I. HUMANE SOCIETY/PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN**

uncomfortable conditions, with only minimal human interaction. When they give birth, they are fed a little more to ensure they can nurse their pups for eight weeks, then their pups are taken away and they live in isolation until they are bred, pregnant and nursing again.

A female dog can reproduce for over 10 years in these deplorable conditions.

How to avoid an irresponsible breeder or puppy mill? Don't buy your pup on Kijiji or buy/sell sites. Bad breeders use "brokers" who take pictures of puppies and advertise them on such sites. This is happening on P.E.I.



A beagle from a similar situation is shown after receiving care and finding a loving home. **P.E.I. HUMANE SOCIETY/PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN**

Happy endings



Simon, a five-month-old kitten, was adopted in June. Bethany says, "Simon is very active but so adorable and loving at the same time — he is the favourite part of my day! He's my best friend. I'm so happy I can give him a happy life."

BETHANY MACKINNON/PHOTO SPECIAL TO THE GUARDIAN

Do not pick up a puppy in a parking lot. If you go to a breeder's home, be wary if the mother is unavailable (e.g., "gone for grooming"). Also, be wary if the parents are timid or fearful. This may be a sign that they have limited human contact. Breeding operations may advertise multiple litters, which may be brought to a warm, clean space for viewing. However, there may be buildings on the property with multiple breeding dogs suffering.

Price is not an indicator. Irresponsible breeders spend little money on the parents yet still attempt to sell pups at the highest price.

How to identify a responsible breeder? A good breeder will be happy for you to meet the pups' mother (and father, if possible) and for you to see the living conditions of the puppies with their dam. The parents should be healthy, approachable dogs that live in a clean comfortable area, with lots of human attention and socialization. There

AT A GLANCE

- Do your research: Start with <https://www.ckc.ca/en/Choosing-a-Dog/Finding-a-Reputable-Breeder>
- Adopt: Humane societies in the Maritimes or reputable rescue groups may have the pup you are looking for.
- If you have concerns about puppies or breeding dogs, report your concerns to Animal Protection (P.E.I. Humane Society).

should be regular veterinary health checks and proof of veterinary screening for genetic diseases. The mother should have breaks between litters — she deserves the chance to be a normal pet.

A good breeder will ask about your family and home to make sure the puppy is going to a good home. The pups may be

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PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

SELF-HELP groups

The following list of self-help groups is from Individual and Family Support, a program of the Canadian Mental Health Association, P.E.I. division. Listing a group does not necessarily signify endorsement of that group by the CMHA. Check with the specific group regarding weather or holiday cancellations. Contact CMHA Individual and Family Support, 902-628-1648 or toll free at 1-800-682-1648, or find a complete listing of groups at www.pei.cmha.com/find-help/self-help-groups/.

For information

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
24-hour meeting information is at 902-892-2103.

AA 24-hour meeting information for Kings County is at 902-962-2305 or 1-866-961-2660.

Al Anon meeting information is at 902-892-9974 or www.al-anon-maritimes.ca.

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) 24-hour meeting information is at 1-800-205-8402 or carna.ca.

Monday, Jan. 13

Caring for the Caregiver meets at the Hope Centre Clubhouse 419 Main St., Alberton (Dufferin Street entrance), 7 p.m. Call 902-806-0286.

SMART Recovery meets at Notre Dame Place, 67 Duke St., Summerside, 7 p.m. Contact smart-recoveryqueenspei@gmail.com or 902-330-4357.

Still Here, a group for anyone with a mental illness, meets at the Canadian Mental Health Association, 101 Longworth Ave., Charlottetown, 1-3 p.m. Call Ashley, 902-628-3666, or email a.belanger-birt@cmha.pe.ca.

Winds of Change (Adult Children of Alcoholics) meets at St. Pius X church (side door), 106 St. Peters Rd., Charlottetown, 6:30 p.m. Call Wade, 902-292-5905, or Gary, 902-388-1284, or email acoapei@gmail.com

Wings of Change peer group for first responders, military members, corrections personnel, health-care workers and more meets to discuss operational trauma at 6 p.m. at the Canadian Mental Health Association, 178 Fitzroy St. For information, contact meghanl.a.colvin@gmail.com, Facebook page Wings of Change - PEI or visit wingsofchange.wixsite.ca/wingsofchange.

Tuesday, Jan. 14

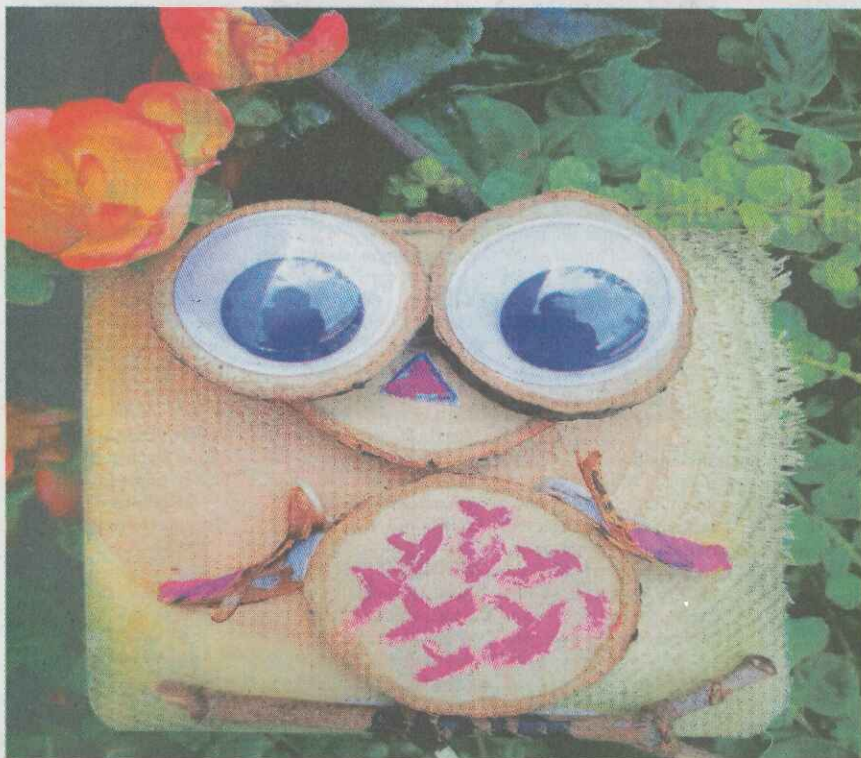
Brain injury group open to anyone with a brain injury meets at the Jack Blanchard Hall, 7 Pond St., Charlottetown, 2 p.m. Call 902-314-4228 or email simonmick@gmail.com.

CMHA family group meets at the Canadian Mental Health Association, 178 Fitzroy St., 7-9 p.m. Call 902-628-1648.

Emotions Anonymous meets at the Access P.E.I. Building through the side door entrance, 48 Mill Rd., Wellington, 8 p.m. Call Angela, 902-854-2974.

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Picture of the day



SUBMITTED BY JENNY WANG 6 YEARS OLD

To submit artwork, email newsroom@theguardian.pe.ca, mail The Guardian, P.O. Box 760, Charlottetown, P.E.I., C1A 4R7 or drop it off in person to The Guardian, 165 Prince St. in Charlottetown.

HEALTH FROM C1

BUYER BEWARE

more expensive. Good breeders spend money on the parents and puppies and give them a wonderful quality of life.

Finally, do not "save" a puppy. People often purchase puppies from bad breeders and puppy mills to get the puppy out of that situation. However, not supporting these places is the best way to shut them down,

ensure that you obtain a healthy, well-socialized puppy, and avoid contributing to a breeding dog enduring a lifetime of suffering.

Dr. Jennifer MacLean is a veterinarian at the Atlantic Veterinary College and a member of the PEIVMA. Animal Talk is produced in The Guardian by the

Companion Animal Welfare Initiative (CAWI), the goal of which is to improve the welfare of owned and unowned companion animals on P.E.I. CAWI consists of the P.E.I. Humane Society, SpayAid P.E.I., Cat Action Team, the P.E.I. Veterinary Medical Association, the P.E.I. Department of Agriculture and Land and Sir James Dunn Animal Welfare Centre at AVC. For more information, see gov.pe.ca/agriculture/CAWI.

EWOR

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

SELF-HELP

RELATIONSHIPS

Try a fresh start for 2020

Dear Readers - Early 2020 can kick-start renewed determination to aim for your own personal best. This positive energy can be applied to relationships with family, friends and to your own self-image. So, I'm encouraging us all to bring a fresh start to whatever matters most to you.

Ellie Teshler



Readers commentary regarding "great expectations" during the holiday season (Dec. 17):

Reader #1: Years ago, my then-boyfriend teased me about a surprise and I honestly thought it was an engagement ring.

My parents also thought so. On Christmas Day, there was a ring box, containing 10 loose, tiny diamonds.

It wasn't a proposal. Turned out, he had made a bet with a colleague that he could buy diamonds for less than \$20.

Unsurprisingly, I was devastated, and I broke up with him soon after.

Luckily, he came to realize how hurtful that surprise was, and he proposed six months later with a proper ring, even though he wasn't sure of my response.

We've been happily married for 12 years, have two kids and that incident is long forgotten.

The advice you gave was very good, and I hope the writer took it and didn't get her hopes up.

At the same time, she should make her future expectations of the relationship clear to her boyfriend.

Sometimes, we're all a little clueless, and may need help to realize what others are wanting and feeling.

Ellie: Let's hope that the woman who wrote that Dec. 17 letter about her hopes/expectations for an engagement ring and proposal, writes again to inform us all what happened.

Reader #2: Why do women

men who play head-games.

Fortunately, growing older comes with maturity and wisdom.

Should I discontinue looking and let the universe take over? Lonely and Frustrated!!!

A - Read my 2020 boost of encouragement above. Yes, you do have wisdom and maturity and you don't suffer fools.

So, don't let the dating-site scammers get you down.

Get out to places where seniors go because of their interests - concerts, library talks, a film club, a walking group, try meetup.com (many interest options).

Invite friends over for coffee, or brunch (keep it simple and affordable) and include someone new each time. Hopefully, you'll be invited back and your social world will grow. See below:

Reader's commentary: I was separated from my first wife of 20 years, during my early-40s.

When I was 55, I met my now-spouse and we have been together for 12-plus years.

Though I was alone for a number of years, it didn't bother me. When I started to become lonely, I entered the dating market.

Q - I was in a bakery-restaurant when a dishevelled, confused-looking man pushed past the line-up and said, "coffee". The waitress said, "Not now."

He left and returned minutes later, again said "coffee". A second waitress said, "Later".

A woman in line said aloud, "I'll buy him coffee and lunch." I