

**From:** Aaron [REDACTED]

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Cc:** Aaron . <smileydazed@hotmail.com>

**Subject:** Bucceri Hearing Letter

**Date:** Tue, Jul 21, 2015 11:20 am

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I, Aaron Owens from the State of Washington, am writing to share my puppy purchasing experience with Chris "Buck" Buccerri beginning in August 2014. My communication with Buck began shortly after I lost my dog to cancer in early August 2014. I was quite emotional when conversing with Buck via email and phone as I was in search of the breed that best fit my lifestyle. I chose to purchase a German shorthair pointer (GSP) puppy as I'm a long distance trail runner. He shared that he had also recently lost a dog to old age and believed that he "had the dog for me". This was my first ever experience with a purebred breeder. I chose Buck because he gave a good sales pitch and I had already planned a trip home to visit my family on the east coast which was within driving distance of his "kennel". At the time, GSP puppies were not available for purchase near my home. Therefore, I made the trip to Michigan.

Upon my arrival, Buck was more than happy to spend as much time as I needed talking to him about his pups as I was someone new to the breed. He spoke highly of all of his dogs as if they were all bred to be show dogs which is how he advertised his pups online. After much research, I know this is far from the truth. The ads posted online including photos are proof that his product was not what he stated it was. A black coat is considered a AKC disqualification. A spotted nose is not desired with a flesh colored nose considered a disqualification. I also later questioned if his dogs were cross bred with wirehair pointers due to the coarseness of their coat. I now own a GSP that has a silky coat which is quite different from the dogs that I touched. Therefore, the claim that his dogs are "show quality" is false.

The unsanitary conditions were also quite concerning. Again as someone new to the purebred world, I was unfamiliar with the standards of care for dogs. When reading ads, I questioned why breeders boasted about having cement floors for their kennels. I now know that the wire floored kennels, like Buck's, are detrimental to the dogs paws/pads. The wire floor also allows feces to fall to the ground without having to clean the kennel. I was rather taken aback by the large piles of feces found under each of the elevated kennels behind Buck's home. The puppy kennels were also quite unsanitary as the pups were walking in their own feces resulting in it being smeared on their bodies. GSPs are bred to be hunting dogs that require a lot of daily exercise. Buck's dogs were kenneled as mating couples, one male and one female per kennel, with Buck reporting having a total of 25 dogs. As a GSP owner, it is difficult to find the time to adequately exercise a single GSP let alone 25 dogs. Therefore, I question the welfare of the dogs kept in small kennels without room to roam.

Buck also advertised within his ads online that the puppies' tails are cropped and dew claws removed. The litter that I was considering purchasing a puppy from was 6 weeks old at the time of my visit with the tail and dew claws intact. Buck told me that he would crop the tail and remove the dew claws immediately so that the puppy would be ready for me when available for purchase at 8 weeks of age. Again, new to the purebred world, I was unaware of the appropriate procedure for cropping tails and removing dew claws. After speaking with my hometown vet and doing much research, tails should be cropped within the first 5 days of life. Per the American Veterinary Medicine Association (AVMA), docking tails after 5 days of life can cause acute pain and should be done so by a licensed veterinarian. Per my discussion with my vet, Buck was practicing veterinary medicine without a license when cropping the tails of the puppies at 6 weeks of age as anesthesia

should have been used to sedate the dogs for the procedure. At that age, cropping is considered an amputation of the tail. Due to my concern for the welfare of the dogs, I later contacted ASPCA which shared that Michigan does not have a law prohibiting tail docking but does have an animal protection law that does prohibit knowingly mutilating, maiming or disfiguring an animal (750.50b) which could apply to Buck's tail docking practices. I'm not aware of Buck's procedure for removing dew claws but I'm fearful that it is just as gruesome as his tail docking practice.

Because the housing of the dogs and tail docking practice was unsettling, I contacted the Genesee County animal control office, Clayton Township Police, ASPCA, NAVHDA and AKC. Unfortunately, I do not have the date of my original phone call to the animal control office and/or the township police but it would have been within 24-72 hours from my visit to Buck's home on 8/20/14. I was told that an investigation would be started and I would be contacted with the results. After not receiving a phone call, I later contacted the township police on 9/9/14 to request follow-up on the report I submitted. A male officer said, "The place was spotless, cleanest I've ever seen. I don't know what you're talking about. We've been there three times for complaints by buyers and never find anything." I then contacted the animal control office the following day (9/10/14) to request their report out of concern based on my disagreement with the police report. I spoke with a female that stated, "Breeders are known to dock tails after the recommended time period. Submitting a complaint would not be worth your time." I was also told that they had no record of a request to visit the home and that an investigation would not be pursued despite my concerns. I then called the Clayton township police and spoke with Stacy Lopez on 9/10/14 and was told that the police did confirm that the tails had recently been docked but no concerns were present, police report was sent to animal control and no further investigation would be conducted.

Due to my interactions with the police and animal control, I took matters into my own hands to look further into Buck's breeding history. From what I learned, Buck is fraudulent and has been for quite some time. Within Buck's ads he encourages buyers to register the dogs with NAVHDA. What's interesting is that Buck himself or his litters that were for purchase at the time were not registered. He also claimed that he bred "hall of fame dogs" which is also an untrue statement. Per the NAVHDA breeder report given to me by NAVHDA, Buck's "Full Body Patched" (Jenny, mother of puppies born on 6/12/14) was not a champion as stated because she had been rated as a prize 2 with a prize 1 needed to be considered a champion. Buck's false claim that "Harrison's Blue Jessie" is the number one all time GSP in the history of NSTRA was verified by contacting NSTRA directly. There were no listings for the dogs Buck claimed to be champions. Another claim for "best of all time" was verified to be false when contacting NAVHDA regarding "Shepherd's Independence" which only had a single prize 1 in 1997 with a prize 2 and 3 prior to this. The litter by "Jenny" and "Michael Jordan" that was available for purchase at the time of my visit had not been registered with the AKC as advertised. This was verified by contacting an AKC Customer Service Representative directly.

The next difficulty I had with Buck was getting the \$900 dollars I paid for a puppy that I didn't purchase. Prior to my arrival, Buck required a \$100 deposit via paypal which I paid on 8/6/14. When researching purchasing puppies online, this appeared to be a legitimate practice. Upon my arrival in Flint, I had to withdraw an additional \$800 from an ATM, which I have the receipts for, to pay for the remainder of the dog including the \$50 travel crate that was going to be purchased to fly the puppy back to Washington State. After deciding to not purchase a puppy from Buck due to the obvious reasons above, he promptly told me that the money was gone and that it would take several weeks

to return it. He also stated that the \$100 deposit had increased to \$200 due to the dog's age. He considered it a "restocking fee". I was told the sale was final but a contract was never signed nor does it mention all sales are final in his ads. I then began receiving text messages from Buck asking why the police were sent to his house and questioned why I didn't want one of his dogs. I responded with I needed additional time to mourn the loss of my dog before purchasing a new dog to replace her which was true because I couldn't replace her with one of Buck's dogs knowing his breeding practices. After multiple attempts to obtain my money, Buck submitted payment via paypal on 11/2/14. Due to the paypal fees, I was refunded \$649.70 of the \$900 originally given to Buck.

In conclusion, my experience with Buck was an unpleasant one as a buyer but my concern lies in the treatment of the many dogs and puppies in the years to come if Buck is allowed to continue his current breeding practices. Multiple complaints were submitted by buyers prior to my interaction with Buck. Therefore, I do not expect to be the last breeder that he tries to fool.

Thank you for your time and consideration of denying Chris "Buck" Bucceri's request for a special use permit allowing training, selling and kenneling of dogs.

Sincerely,

Aaron Owens