

## Schull, Shyanne

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**From:** Mariah Worcester <vegangoddessmariah@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 25, 2020 3:42 PM  
**To:** duerrn@reno.gov; Schull, Shyanne; jill@spcanevada.org  
**Subject:** Ban Puppy Stores

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of Washoe County -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open **attachments** unless you are sure the content is safe.]

To whom it concerns,

I am unable to attend the upcoming meeting but I would like to voice my support of the ban of retail sales of cats, dogs, rabbits, and ferrets. While we have thousands of animals currently sitting in shelters and rescues around Washoe county there is absolutely no reason to be breeding more into existence solely for greed and profits. Let's set the standard for quality and care when it comes to our companion animals. Please pass the ban on the retail sales of these animals.

Thank you,  
Mariah Worcester  
Reno NV resident

As the General Manager of Ironwood Event Center I would like to express my concern regarding this permit. I do not feel that it is relevant to our business. *Legally*, horses are considered *Livestock* by the state of Nevada, which I pay livestock tax on. This ordinance is written to directly address "companion animals", which according to the laws of the state, horses are not. If and when they are considered companion animals then they are no longer considered livestock and I should then no longer be required to pay the livestock tax. Correct? In addition to this, the parameters, as outlined in the paperwork are nonsensical when speaking of horses. "Ambient temperature", "humidity" and "ventilation" parameters make no sense at all. And it is certainly NOT advisable to keep horses on concrete floors, much less "measuring the size of the horse to determine the size of the stall" likewise makes little sense. As far as a plan of veterinary care as outlined, there are no laws requiring horse owners to vaccinate, worm or otherwise perform veterinary care on their animals. It is also not illegal to vaccinate your own horses. It seems to me someone was recently arrested for "practicing veterinary medicine" because they vaccinated their own dogs?? While I can write a plan of care for the horses owned by the ranch, I cannot dictate to the owners of the horses boarded at the facility what plan of veterinary care they follow on an ongoing basis. Thus, if I am required to write a plan of care for the ranch owned horses, then would it not be logical for *all* horse owners to be required to do the same? Also, if you come out to Palomino Valley I will assure you, while not "commercial" businesses, there are multiple small ranches that board horses "for remuneration". How do you expect to enforce this law on all of them? If they are not required to have this permit, why should our facility be targeted? The ordinance specifically says "boards for remuneration" which would include anyone who boards any number of horses for a fee. Therefore, it would be discriminatory to just enforce it on those who are visible. When reading through the way the ordinance is written, at **no time** does it make **any reference** to horses or any parameters which would make sense for horses. If horses are to be included, then the ordinance would need to be rewritten to specifically address horse parameters, but first they would have to be reclassified as "companion animals" not livestock. I cannot sign off on something agreeing to follow parameters that are specifically written for "dogs and cats" and make no sense and would not even be safe for the "livestock" in my care.

It is my opinion that to try to extend this to horse boarding is unreasonable and irrelevant, and the ability to adequately enforce it without targeting a few while the majority go unchecked is unfair. If this is going to be the case, then anyone who boards even 1 horse for money should be subject to this as well, which seems to me would be a rather improbable task and would put an unnecessary and unreasonable load on the division of animal control to try to enforce.

If you have any questions regarding my concerns I will be happy to discuss them.

Overall this entire ordinance feels to me as an unreasonable expectation for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sue Davis

General manager

Ironwood Event Center

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sue Davis", written vertically on the page.

Notes for wcras 2 27 2020

Why are we having a " emergency meeting" over this old Chestnut..Why are we running up expenses for Billy Howard, and having a " special meeting" What is the " emergency" and what is the impact of this " emergency" that calls a special session, wasting time and resources ?

Since 2014, the City of Reno and the County of Washoe have known that a pet store ban is unconstitutional, as well as, preempted by NRS and the federal government. In the face of " certain knowledge " presented by the ADA directly to Ms. Schull, and, in addition to material available online at the State of Nevada website; Ms.Schull continues to bring this forward after being informed in writing by her County attorney that it is a violation of the Federal AWA, and infringes on several Constitutional clauses.

The Commercial Animal Welfare permit was designed, and written with ONE purpose, to segue into closing a pet store. It shut down several other business , one to the detriment of several thousand citizens, and impacting dozens more businesses.

This waste of resources,does not have a public mandate, in fact, it is detrimental to public interests. Countless hours of government staff time, and hundreds of hours at the impacted businesses. Both the City of Reno and Washoe County have been irresponsible in the use of staffing, and material resources to take a wrecking ball to ONE family. Driven by a personal agenda, funded by the taxpayer , Mr. Howard and Ms Schull continue to harass several businesses, in spite of legal opinions by their legal counsel available online.

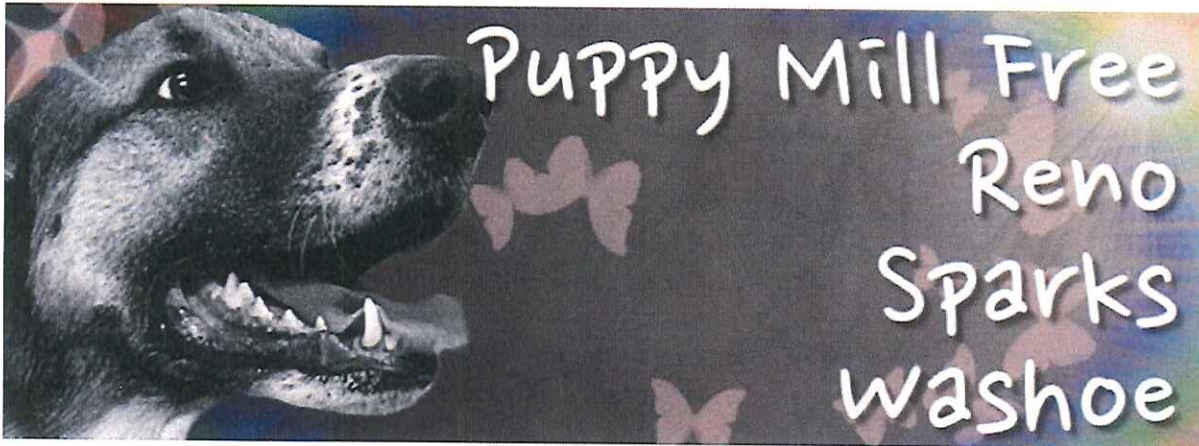
. It is time for WCRAS to get back to the business of Animal Control, and if Ms. Schull cannot do that, then it is time to remove her, or pull Sparks from the interlocal.

Six years, that is SIX years that business owners all over Washoe County have been harassed, and pulled away from their shops to run down to the County to defend their right to earn a living. Animal Control officers are interfering with employees and disrupting the livelihood of animal related businesses. During the 7 public hearings over 4 years a group of concerned business owners objected to the CAW, we were ignored and there is no business impact statement as required by NRS.

*Audene Perry  
please insert into record*

Hi my name is Hanna Ratliff, I worked at puppies plus for over a year. The amount of animal cruelty I witnessed while working there was emotionally and physically heart breaking. These puppies that were being sold were treated like products instead of a living being. The puppies came in from puppy mills, they were sick, abused, and neglected. Some puppies would come in extremely sick and would die over the night. While working there, I witnessed illegal medications given. I witnessed the failure from the owners to get the puppies the proper veterinarian care they deserved. The puppies were kept in small cages, some cages had more than 3 puppies in them. The puppies drank out of a small rabbit water dispenser. The cages had torn up tissue paper, and they would eat the paper and they would lay in their own fecal matter. The puppies would also eat their own feces causing long term affects. In October of 2018, I rescued one of the puppies from this horrid place. He is a cocker spaniel/cavalier King Charles mix. He was there for 5 months, in that tiny cage. I paid a lot of money to rescue him. He contracted Giardia (Giardia is a parasite you can contact from dirty water, or eating feces, it can be passed from dogs to humans by letting the dog lick your face) because the other employees never wanted to clean out the cages. I also contracted Giardia from working there I was in the Emergency room for 6 hours and the owners did not pay for my medical expenses. Also, while working there, I was given a yellow Labrador retriever for free. She had a stage 3 heart murmur, the owners Michael and Leilani Schneider did not want to pay for her medical expenses. I took the yellow lab home and fostered her for a couple days and gave her to a family friend who payed for all her veterinarian care. The vet told us that will she only live to be 3 years old because of her condition. When the puppies would arrive they would smell like they were marinating in their own urine and feces they were dirty and hungry, some barely able to stand up. While working at puppies plus, I went through a traumatic experience, over 15 puppies died while I was working there. Most of these puppies would die in my arms because Michael and Leilani Schneider failed to come get the puppies and take them to the vet. They would wait days to come look at the puppies, and they would tell us "I think they are okay, just give them sugar water and they will be fine." After the puppies would die she would instruct us to wrap the puppy in a trash bag and leave the puppy in the back until they would come pick them up. Also if a puppy was sick we were told not to call any type of vet or take the puppies to the vet clinic. In the back of the store there are cages where they would keep sick puppies, so the public wouldn't seem them. The puppies would sit in the cages until they got better, or they would die slowly because the owners refused to take them to the vet. Moving forward, puppy stores should not continue to exist and puppies plus and puppy love should be shut down so no more innocent puppies suffer from the cruelty and torture these owners are causing. We also need to protect people from consumer fraud. How many more puppies have to lose their lives before we make a difference so please help make this ban on puppy stores go into full affect so we can save the lives of puppies everywhere.

Thank you.



## Washoe Regional Animal Services Board

Billy Howard, Founding Organizer  
Puppy Mill Free Reno Sparks Washoe Carson Douglas  
<https://www.pupymillfreereno.com>

<https://www.pupymillfree.us>

Dear Animal Services Advisory Board,

I am **Billy Howard**, graduate of the Reno Citizens Institute, Former Chair, Reno Neighborhood Advisory Board Ward 2 South, Graduate, Washoe County Engaged Leadership Academy. Have lived in Reno for 15 years and am sole family caregiver of my soon to be 100 year old WW2 Army Nurse who was wounded on the USS Comfort when it was struck by a kamikaze leaving the battle of Okinawa. Doris Howard was the Grand Marshall of the Reno Veterans Day Parade and has been introduced on the floor of the Nevada State Assembly.

First of all, let me speak for many in the community wishing to express our gratitude for the time you give up from your lives to make decisions for the voiceless animals in our area. Good things are happening and we hope to support the issues Director Schull is addressing in the next legislative session.

We are hear today to ask this august body to send a message to the cities of Reno and Sparks and the County Commission in favor of ending the sales of dogs and cats in retail stores in their respective jurisdictions.

As you are aware, Washoe County holds all animal code for the area under the 2006 Inter-Local agreement and this board's actions rebound throughout the region.

### History

We have been working on this issue since we formed in 2013, having amassed 20,000 signatures from canvassing at many local events to which we were invited over the years including all

events by the local SPCA, Nevada Humane Society and many other rescue and adoption fairs. Even the Earth Day organizers offered us a free booth as they were keen on having an ordinance passed to protect the mill-bred animals and consumers. The signatures are on the record in the City of Reno and Washoe County and are here for you to see today.

To date, 379 cities, counties, states and even 1 countrywide ban, in England—effective in a few short weeks, with Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland also developing bans—have enacted an end to the sale of at least dogs and cats in retail stores as they are all sourced from the reprehensible puppy mill breeder and distribution industry.

Bans in 28 jurisdictions have been enacted just since the Schneider's indictment was handed down, 2 with stores in them have been passed since the new year, Naperville, IL, and Olympia Washington, which only had a store for a few short weeks before a veterinarian council member put a stop to it.

### Bad Business

PMFR brokered the agreement that lead to the closing of the Meadowood Mall puppy mill store, Pets R Us, in 2015 after public outcry against the practices of the store including consumer fraud. To this day the remaining store in Reno has a score of "F" from the BBB. That's not based on Facebook-style likes, that's the BBB's business relationship with the owners of the store. That rating has been "F" since we started tracking it in 2013.

The screenshot shows the BBB profile for Puppies Plus, Inc., a pet shop. The header includes the BBB logo and navigation links for 'Join/Apply', 'Business Login', 'Español', and 'Vc Highlands, NV, USA'. The search bar contains 'Find' and 'Near Vc Highlands, NV, USA'. The profile details include the address '6405 S Virginia St STE 1, Reno, NV 89511-1192', the website 'http://www.puppiesreno.com', and the phone number '(775) 852-7600'. The accreditation status is 'THIS BUSINESS IS NOT BBB ACCREDITED'. The BBB Rating is 'F', with a note that 'Customer Reviews are not used in the calculation of BBB Rating'. The Customer Reviews section shows 'Average of 3 Customer Reviews' with a star rating of 1.5 out of 5. The Customer Complaints section shows '7 complaints closed in last 3 years' and '3 complaints closed in last 12 months', with a link to 'View Complaints Summary'.

<https://www.bbb.org/us/nv/reno/profile/pet-shop/puppies-plus-inc-1166-90021785/overview-of-bbb-ratings>

### Consumer Protection

Our issue is ending animal cruelty in the mills, in the distribution system and in the puppy mill stores themselves, but is also a consumer protection issue due to the amount of sickness in the dogs that have traveled often across country in small, cramped and stuffy vans, leading many animals to arrive sick to the store, as you will hear from a former employee today; the usurious and illegal pet leasing financing offered in the store and so-called warranties of dogs that suit lemon laws for lamps, curtains and cars, not living beings, which allows an animal to be exchange for a new one as long as the first is surrendered. Obviously, humans are bonded with their new canine before they even leave the store, of course they aren't going to exchange their new found family member for "a better one," which leaves the store off the hook for the sick dogs they so often sell as you will hear.



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## **AKC Fraud**

Puppy mill stores operate out of a similar business model across the country. They depend on fallacious licensing by the AKC which most people believe would ensure a puppy was bred from a reputable breeder. NBC's TODAY show proved this was not true, that the piece of paper one gets with a puppy mill store purchase is a sham. The puppy mill breeder goes online, pays a fee and a license is printed.

<https://www.pupymillfreereno.com/puppy-mill-stores.htm#videos>

Today Show is Video #1

## **Felons Can Sell Stores**

But this is the issue we are most concerned about: a number of elected officials, including in the County and in Sparks, believe that if Michael and Leilani Schneider are found guilty, the stores will close.

We do not believe this to be the case and the precedent was set right here in Reno, Nevada.

## **South Lake Tahoe 2009**

Some of you may recall that Mike Franks owned the puppy store in South Lake Tahoe, Broc's Pups, when the first activist ban in the country against a puppy mill store was passed by Dawn Armstrong of the local Humane Society in 2009. Coincidentally, as the ban was being passed, Mr. Franks was lead out of his store in handcuffs for drug trafficking to minors. Two other employees, including his grandson, were arrested for parole violations.

Mr. Franks owned two more stores, Lil' Pups in Carson City and Puppy World in Meadowood Mall. Mr. Franks was convicted and while in prison sold his Reno store in the mall, which Mr. Schneider was hired to manage until he broke away with his own store 6 months later, the now disgraced Puppies Plus and the newer Puppy Love in Sparks.

## **Carson City Ban**

By the way, Mayor Crowell of Carson City left me a message yesterday that he is ready to have Carson City move forward on a ban to prevent a store like Lil Pups returning when the Reno ban is enforced.

## **Trial Trials**

There is no telling how the trial will pan out. The two lawyers hired are experts at technicalities. Rick Cornell, representing Leilani, got Darren Mack a retrial based on a technicality that his original lawyers didn't give him proper instructions when he was arrested for stabbing his wife to death in the garage while their little girl was in the home and then drove downtown and attempted to assassinate the judge in their divorce proceedings from a downtown high-rise parking lot. That lawyer who allegedly didn't give Mack enough information is now Judge Freeman who is presiding in the case against the Schneiders.



Technicalities include asking for a new venue, which could be argued the Schneiders can't get a fair trial due to the many disparaging stories in the print and television media, the constant protests and many social media and websites denouncing them.

That is to say, though scheduled in 75 days, anything can happen and the trial may go on for some time. There may be a national precedent set in this trial as the judge's response to the writ mentions that definitions of human murder are being applied to the death of the dog in question. That could be a first in trial history and could drag the trial on.

But even if the Schneiders are found guilty, it doesn't mean the stores will be taken away from them. The judge could sentence them to own the stores, but not be involved in the management. Or, as we saw with Mr. Franks, they might be convicted but still be able to sell the store. And we believe there are at least 2 people who might be waiting in the wings for just such an opportunity.

### **Bans are the Answer**

The only thing that will prevent the bad press that continues to plague Reno with hundreds of articles and exposes on the radio and tv (as you can see on our News Coverage page), of what goes on in the backrooms of the stores and the continuing consumer fraud issues are jurisdiction-wide bans, such as the one Reno is poised to pass likely unanimously.

I spoke with Reno staff member Angela Fuss recently who felt the ban could be presented to the council for a vote as early as the end of March. The language has been written and is being shopped around City Hall.

But how much good is a ban in one city when the city next door continues the practice? The Schneiders, or anyone else, could market to Reno residents and have them pick up their dogs in the Sparks. Or open a store in Incline Village to be closer to the California market. Then Reno's ban becomes mute. This is why the Reno City Council will send a message to Sparks to consider passing a similar ban. Even now we see many California state licenses at the Reno store during our weekend protests as puppy mill stores have been outlawed in California since 1/1/2019.

### **Lawsuits**

By our count, 14 out of 14 lawsuits against jurisdictions that have passed bans, including the State of Maryland, signed by a Republican Governor, have failed including appeals. Being sued is clearly no longer an issue of concern.

### **Judge Upholds Maryland Ban on Pet Stores' Sale of Cats, Dogs**

February 2020

*A federal judge has thrown out a lawsuit that challenged Maryland's newly enacted ban on the sale of dogs and cats by retail pet stores.*

*U.S. District Judge Ellen Hollander, who also denied the plaintiffs' request for a preliminary injunction blocking the law's enforcement, [ban became effective 1.1.2020] said she found ample evidence that state lawmakers had a "rational basis" for enacting the statute.*

*"Protecting consumers, reducing financial support for mill breeders, and encouraging pet adoption are indisputably legitimate state interests," she wrote in her 79-page decision.*

*Hollander said the plaintiffs essentially argued that lawmakers improperly tried to harm pet stores by siding with animal-rights groups.*

*"This argument is without merit. Siding with one group does not necessarily signify hostility towards another," the judge wrote.*

<https://www.usnews.com/news/us/articles/2020-02-07/judge-upholds-maryland-ban-on-pet-stores-sale-of-cats-dogs>

Of the many unpleasant routines at the store, we have heard from a number of sources no veterinarian in Nevada will work with the Schneiders and they, therefore, have to pay for a vet, Dr. Cruz, to come to the store once a week, every Wednesday, from the Los Angeles area.

### **Indictment Practices Will Continue**

So our question remains: If Puppy A becomes sick on Wednesday (the store receives its trailer of puppies from the midwest distributor every Tuesday), he will get treated by the Vet the next day. But if Puppy B becomes sick on Thursday, the puppy will not receive licensed veterinary care until the following Wednesday. Or so seemed to be the situation as late as last mid-September. How then is it be feasible that the Schneiders and their employees would not be practicing veterinary medicine without a license when puppies become sick?

You will hear corroboration of this from Hanna Ratliff, a year-long employee who finally had to quit in despair just before the Schneider's indictment.

### **Conclusion**

We are asking you today to send a message to the three jurisdictions of your support for an end to the sale of dogs and cats in retail stores to put an end to the the bad publicity that comes up time and time again when they were all over the local and national press in 2014, 2016 and 2019. The business model is not going to go away. This is how all puppy mill stores operate as you can see by watching the videos on our site of investigation-after-investigation in cities across the country that all find the same thing: the things that have been going on in Reno.

We beg you to end the animal suffering and the scandalous consumer protection issues like 379 other jurisdictions have, once-and-for-all.

Thank you so much for your attention in this pressing, region-wide matter.