



Giving The Gift Of Love

(NAPS)—Most people would agree, the best gift during the holidays—and all year round—is the gift of love. For thousands of families, that means welcoming a puppy into their home. For those considering getting a new best friend for themselves or someone else, remember that choosing a puppy is a big decision. It's also one you should think about carefully—for both your sake and the dog's.

Consumer groups report receiving nearly 10,000 complaints about puppy/dog businesses in just the last three years, with 60 percent of consumers indicating they never got the pets they purchased, received pets that had health or genetic problems, or got no documentation for their pet. Just as concerning, most people don't know how to make sure they are getting their pet from a reputable breeder and not an inhumane and substandard puppy mill. While everyone is encouraged to look to their local shelters and rescues, roughly a quarter of new pet parents obtain their puppies from breeders, whether because of allergies, size or temperament, or just because they have their hearts set on a particular breed of dog.

Whatever your motivation, you should make sure you know that the organization you use to find your new best friend is legitimate and will secure you a happy, healthy and responsibly bred pet.

To help you avoid scams and find properly raised puppies, here are some



You can enjoy the love of a good dog for years to come, if you're careful to avoid scammers when you get your puppy.

important tips from the experts at American Humane—the country's first national humane organization and the largest certifier of animal welfare in the world—and PuppySpot, a placement service committed to helping responsible breeders place healthy, happy puppies with caring individuals and families:

- **INTEGRITY:** Find a source you can trust.
- **SUSPICIOUS PHOTOS:** Don't be swayed by a fancy website or puppy photos that look like stock photos that are perfectly posed, don't look real, or are found on multiple websites.
- **PRICING:** If the price looks too good to be true, it generally is. People should avoid buying from a company that says it will transport a dog by air if the full

purchase price seems to be less than or similar to the price of a flight.

- **WIRING MONEY:** Never wire money to anyone you have met only online and avoid major money wiring companies and mobile payment service apps.
- **BAD GRAMMAR OR MISSPELLINGS:** Be sensitive to strange language choices in puppy listings or communications. The vast majority of scammers are from foreign countries.
- **BOGUS STORIES/EXCUSES:** Scammers often come up with complicated reasons they need immediate wire transfers or can't deliver the puppy to you based on current events. Be on alert for bogus stories or excuses for why more money is requested after initial payment.
- **REFUSAL TO SUPPLY DOCUMENTATION:** A responsible breeder, shelter or rescue organization will provide registration, vaccination and veterinary health records on request. Refusal to supply medical records or pedigree documentation is a red flag.

Bringing a new best friend into your home should be a positive and joyous experience. By following these guidelines and using diligence and common sense, you and your family may avoid unnecessary heartache and find the healthy, happy puppy of your dreams.

Learn More

For further information, please visit www.AmericanHumane.org and www.PuppySpot.com.