

# **WHEN VULTURES RULE**

**GREED, CORRUPTION, AND KICKBACKS IN MAINE'S  
ANIMAL AGENTS AND COURT SYSTEM**

# **DISCLAIMER**

For legal purposes, I am required to say that the information contained in this account is *ALLEGED* to be true and accurate to the best of my belief and knowledge. It is for a court of law to determine guilt or innocence of people and to determine the veracity of information given herein.

The Writer: Carol Murphy

## PROLOGUE

My name is Carol. I am 61 years old. In Maine, I have been subjected to discrimination, had my animals seized by greedy, corrupt animal agents, heard those agents and their friends perjure themselves in court, watched the judge in the case REFUSE to allow information into evidence that proved perjury and collusion of State witnesses, seen the District Attorney knowingly allow State witnesses to perjure themselves, and much more. I am not the only owner who has experienced these things. Let me tell you just part of what my investigation has uncovered.

My investigation into seven “animal cruelty” cases revealed that while it is the number of animals and their value that triggers seizures by dirty agents, perceived vulnerability of the owners is the key. The agents swoop down like vultures on carrion when they find an owner they believe cannot fight their false charges. The real payoff for the people involved is the money made after they show the animals on television and beg the public to give money for the care of supposedly half starved, dehydrated animals. More money flows in when agents give false information about the condition of seized animals to newspaper reporters and again, the articles beg the public to give. In my case, I saw a picture of my female pot-bellied pig, Astrid, in the newspaper with a veterinarian from Pine Tree Veterinary Hospital in Augusta, Maine bending over Astrid (Pine Tree Veterinary Hospital is paid by the State). The caption said the animals were half dead and here is this pig that is PREGNANT! Among other things, it mentioned a dog with untreated conjunctivitis. First, the pig could only be pregnant by Immaculate Conception since the males I owned had all been neutered. Astrid was simply FAT. Second, the dog has genetic dry eye and was treating with the leading veterinary ophthalmologist in Massachusetts since the day I bought her. This is a lifelong problem that requires constant care, and the dog’s ophthalmologist also works with doctors at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, MA. He’s that good. It was Norma Worley, head of the Augusta animal agents, who gave the false information to the newspaper reporter; and there was the Pine Tree Veterinarian in the photograph backing up the lies. The newspaper printed a retraction.

In some of the cases I checked (including my own), the animals seized had already been examined by licensed Maine veterinarians who found owners’ animals to be healthy, clean and the owners’ houses clean. Despite veterinarians’ assurances of health, owners were invariably found guilty of animal abuse, and the animals were kept by the State. I now have first-hand knowledge of how dirty agents, dirty judges, and dirty District Attorneys as well as others involved with these people are consistently able to win these cases. I want you, the public, to know what is going on too. Perhaps with this knowledge, you will be able to protect yourselves and your animals from these “vultures” when they kick in your doors as they kicked in mine.

Since the vast majority of the animals taken from the seven owners were healthy, WHERE DID THE MANY THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS DONATED BY THE PUBLIC FOR THE ANIMALS' EMERGENCY CARE GO? I asked for an investigation as did other citizens. To my knowledge no investigation is being conducted except for one that was aborted (see later information). In some cases, I was actually told that no investigation would be done (Robert Spear of the Department of Agriculture - - the department that employs the animal agents in question) and by the Attorney General, Congressmen and Congresswomen who said: "It's not my job".

A common factor in the cases I investigated was that the owners were threatened by animal agents (Official Oppression and Theft by Extortion – See Maine Law). The threat was that if the owner did not immediately sign over the animals to the agents, the agents would bump the charges against the owner from civil to criminal. In my case it was Wayne Atwood, dog officer, who threatened me. Read further on for the real reason my case became criminal. In the majority of cases, the owners were also told that their licenses (livestock, veterinarian, kennel etc.) would NEVER be returned to them if they did not roll over and sign their animals over to the State. That meant refusal got the owners not only criminal charges, but also that without their licenses, the owners had no businesses, and without their businesses, they had no income to support themselves and their families. So, the ultimate meaning of the threat to NEVER give back the licenses was no money for food and shelter to keep the owner and his family alive. Unless the law is very different in Maine, forcing someone to sign over animals under a threat of complete and utter ruin makes the signed document invalid.

Discrimination against owners was the norm in the cases I checked. Owners of large numbers of animals were selected for vulnerability and because it plays well with the public to be told that owning a lot of animals is a bad thing. If that were true, there would be no horse farms, cow farms, chicken farms, pig farms, etc. There is nothing wrong with owning many animals as long as you take proper care of them and provide them with veterinary care. In a couple of cases, there were NO CHARGES against the owners, yet the State took their animals.

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Let me depart for a few paragraphs here to fill you in on a few things. The Animal Possession Hearing conducted in my case was held in Lewiston, Maine on 19 March 2004 which was one day over the limit the State has for conducting such a hearing. It is supposed to be done within 10 days. The judge at that hearing was Judge Cote. The District Attorney was Robinson.

In 2005, in Superior Court, Judge Jabar presided over the criminal charges of animal abuse. The District Attorney was Robinson.

The two women, Mary Baumgarten and Melanie Nadeau, who brought the original complaint were friends with each other. Both run puppy mills. Nadeau is on the Department of Agriculture's "Maine Animal Welfare Council". The Department of Agriculture also employs Norma Worley and her animal agents. Both Baumgarten and Nadeau had histories of animal abuse and more but both women were given my animals

in exchange for false testimony against me. This comes directly from Mary Baumgarten. You can judge for yourselves whether this was more than a conflict of interests after you read this account.

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There was testimony in my Animal Possession Hearing by one of the two women who acted as “shills” for Worley which sums up the discrimination in my case succinctly. Melanie Nadeau said: “Well you have no money”. Again in the criminal case, Nadeau’s friend, District Attorney Robinson, tried very hard to show I had no money. Unfortunately for them, their shills were very much mistaken about my finances. Also, since the only things in my life important to me were my animals, I intend to expose the corruption and discrimination within the Department of Agriculture’s Animal Humane Group and follow that corruption wherever it leads, which at this point appears to be into the judges’ chambers, the District Attorney’s office, the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife and Governor Baldacci’s office. The agents, headed by Norma Worley, discriminated against me because Baumgarten told them I was without money to fight them. They took my animals illegally by: breaking and entering into my house without warrant on numerous occasions; falsifying conditions in my home and photographing those staged conditions to show animal cruelty; filing false charges against me with the court; stealing cages and other property from inside my house; killing my baby horse and hacking off his head and neck for a rabies check while leaving a dead skunk they said they suspected of rabies just 20 inches from the barn door (they claimed they could not locate the skunk’s body on their second time at my farm, but their own photographs and those I took a month later show the dead skunk never got up and moved); perjury under oath in a criminal case; collusion; obstruction of justice; gaining financial benefit from the seizure of animals and the seizure of private property plus more.

As an aside, animal agents actually took photographs and presented them at my trial showing my upstairs storage room and bedroom. The storage room is piled with boxes, bags of clothing, etc. The bedroom had a corner where I was sorting clothing into piles. Did I miss the secession of Maine from the United States of America leaving Maine people without rights? Why would any U.S. citizen be forced to explain in a superior court that they were sorting items to get ready to move, or that they had talked with three real estate agencies about putting their house on the market to sell, or that because the owner needed to stay in Maine and fight the dirty agents, the house was taken off the market and the move was planned for after the exposure of the corruption in Maine? Must Maine citizens keep Worley and her animal agents on speed dial so the agents can drive out to approve the type of box or bag acceptable to them for storage of personal property, and where and how those items can be stored? At the moment, the answer is a resounding, “YES!”

The agents’ shills help locate appropriately vulnerable owners, then Worley’s agents descend with their minions. If there is not enough evidence to convict an owner, the agents break into the owner’s house and set up conditions showing abuse and photograph their handiwork as fact. Then they present that doctored evidence in court as proof of cruelty. This is not a new trick. One police officer told me that there were many cases where the officers went into a home with a bag of garbage, dumped it over the floor and

took photographs to show the person's home was filthy. (Look this up, it is a matter of public record, because the officers were caught at it.) Remember, in my case a licensed Maine veterinarian was in my house just three days prior to the warrant seizure of my animals. He testified that the cages were clean, the animals had food, filled 16 oz. bottles of water and the house was clean. A woman and her husband had also visited just one day prior to seizure. So how did photographs of dirty, small cages appear in court when my animals all had huge, clean cages?

Mary Baumgarten swore under oath that she broke into my house twice. She never mentioned the German Shepherd sized cage she stole on one of these breaking and entering forays. She told me privately that she was inside my house at least four times. Why? Plus, in my case, they brought fantasy charges, and then, as a group, swore in court and in writing that the concocted charges were true.

Keep in mind that this cannot work without having dirty agents to bring false charges (in my case Wayne Atwood); having shills (in my case Baumgarten and Nadeau and their friends) willing to bring false claims of animal abuse in return for kickbacks (in my case the kickbacks were receipt of any of my \$56,000 worth of animals they wanted); a dirty District Attorney to prosecute false evidence in court and knowingly introduce perjured testimony; and dirty judges (in my case Cote, the judge who gave my animals to women with a history of animal abuse, no income, etc.), and most likely the judge running the criminal trial (in my case Jabar who suppressed key evidence of perjury and collusion, false charges filed with the court against me and more), plus the minions willing to perjure themselves under oath because they know they have the judge's protection from prosecution for perjury even if the defense attorney can prove they are lying.

There is absolutely no reason for any of these people to carry out such a concerted effort unless there is a hefty payback and free animals is not enough. Again, where is all the money going that is donated by the public for sick animals that do not exist? And, how is it that higher ups overseeing these people refuse to investigate what is going on; or are they part of it?

I contacted the Maine Attorney General; Robert Spear (Department of Agriculture that oversees Worley); Governor Baldacci (his brother, a lawyer, was involved in one of these cases and refused to fight for his client because he told his client: "My brother is the Governor, so although you have a case against the State, I won't help you in any way". Lawyer Baldacci also allowed the court to REFUSE to allow Kennedy to have a jury trial. How is this possible in the United States of America where we are told that every citizen has the right to a trial by his peers? The court told Kennedy that he had to have a psychological examination. My degree is in Psychology. You can get any test result you want with psychological tests depending on the person giving them and the tests given. This lawyer told Kennedy that the court mandated psychological evaluation to show whether Kennedy was a chronic animal abuser (how absurd is this?) would show:

“anything the agents wanted it to show” so the lawyer recommended that Kennedy have the evaluation done by someone Kennedy chose which meant Kennedy would have to pay for that evaluation; the Regional Department of Agriculture; the Federal Department of Agriculture; a State Representative; Congressmen and Congresswomen. To my knowledge, only the State Representative conducted an investigation. What he found caused him to immediately quash that investigation. He vowed to introduce legislation to keep other owners from having what happened to me happen to them. So far he has done nothing. The dishonest agents and their followers remain out of control and above the law, because it is the law at every level that is protecting them.

Soooo, at this point, I thought it prudent to bring at least part of the information I have to the attention of all of you, the public who were shamelessly fleeced of money you were told would be used to help sick animals - - sick animals that in the vast majority of cases, did not exist.

I, however, DO need your help! Please write and call officials and DEMAND an in-depth investigation into the activities of Norma Worley and her agents. Or, better, go outside of Maine corruption and ask the FBI Investigative Unit in Boston, MA to conduct an independent investigation. (See last page for the FBI address.)

As Martin Niemoeller (Christian opponent of the Nazis) observed:

***“First they came for the communists, and I did not speak out - - because I was not a communist;***

***Then they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out - - because I was not a socialist;***

***Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out - - because I was not a trade unionist;***

***Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out - - because I was not a Jew;***

***Then they came for me - - and there was no one left to speak out for me.”***

I am speaking out on behalf of my own animals and those belonging to the other owners falsely accused by these “vultures”. Please know that tomorrow our story could be yours, and this account could be about getting help for you.

***“All it takes for evil to flourish is that good men do nothing.”***

Walter McKee, a partner of Lipman, Katz, and McKee in Augusta told Judge Jabar in court (prior to picking a jury) that the defense McKee planned to present in my case would take 3 to 5 days (see the court record). Unknown to me, McKee did not plan to call any of the witnesses I told him were vital to my case, and he did not subpoena any of

the documents I told him to obtain. After eight months on the case and having been paid \$5,000 to present the defense I paid for, three days before my trial McKee informed me for the first time that he would NOT call any witnesses and had NOT gotten any documents (other than my past veterinary bills most of which I supplied to him). When I insisted that my witnesses be called, McKee went to Jabar without me. Jabar and McKee decided that the criminal trial would go forward, “whether or not I was present in the courtroom”. McKee left me a voice mail message saying exactly that on the day before my trial was to start. McKee failed to do anything he was contracted to do.

On the first day of my case, I brought it to Jabar’s attention that I expected my witnesses to be called. Jabar gave McKee two additional weeks to subpoena records and witnesses necessary for my case. I told Jabar that I had no problem keeping McKee on the case so long as my witnesses were called. McKee jumped up from his seat. He shouted that he WOULD NOT call any witnesses and that he wanted to sign off as my lawyer. And that is exactly what he did leaving me sitting in court with absolutely no representation and with his law firm still holding my \$5,000. This is in the court record.

Jabar gave me only two weeks to locate a new lawyer, have that lawyer get all the witnesses, subpoena all the documents, familiarize himself with the case, and be back in court to try the case. That is impossible. It took days on the telephone just to find a lawyer who would try to fit my case into his busy schedule. By the time I met with the new lawyer, and he managed to acquaint himself with the information in my case, there were only a few days to subpoena information and witnesses. We, therefore, were forced to go to court for a criminal trial without even having the transcripts from the Animal Possession Hearing – important to have because of the perjury by the State’s witnesses.

When my trial started, I learned that Jabar was allowing only **TWO** days for a case that according to McKee required 3 to 5 days if NO witnesses were called. I wanted to call at least 19 witnesses but there was no time in the court’s schedule to allow that to happen. In addition, Jabar EXCLUDED the one Maine State document Campbell was able to get on short notice that proved perjury and collusion between Melanie Nadeau and Dr. Patterson of Clearwater Veterinary Hospital. (Patterson allowed Nadeau to operate on a client’s animals and settled the lawsuit when Nadeau killed them. Nadeau is not a veterinarian and did not work for Patterson at the time.) Jabar had the document in his hand that proved perjury and collusion in a criminal case taking place under his direction in the Farmington Superior Court, yet he refused to allow my lawyer to introduce it to the jury or to even ask questions based upon its contents. Jabar also refused to allow Campbell to ask any questions regarding the original false civil charges brought against me by Wayne Atwood, nor would he allow any questions of Atwood regarding the second illegal seizure Atwood made of eight of my animals.

The second seizure was never mentioned by Atwood or District Attorney Robinson at the Animal Possession Hearing held in 2004. I told the judge at the Animal Possession Hearing, Judge Cote, about that illegal seizure not knowing at that time that Cote was dirty and that the agents were dishonest. Had I not come forward about it, Atwood never would have done so because the coveted champion-bred Komondor was in that seized

group, and that dog had already been promised to Nadeau. At the Animal Possession Hearing (which took place three days after the illegal seizure) when confronted with my information, Atwood who has been a dog officer for over 15 years said: "I didn't know that I needed court paperwork". Does anyone really buy that?

The jury in Jabar's courtroom was not privy to any of this vital information because Jabar blocked it. Atwood's testimony at the Animal Possession Hearing showed clearly that Mary Baumgarten has just perjured herself in Jabar's courtroom in a criminal trial, but Jabar shielded her. The jury had no idea that all of the people testifying against me were friends, co-workers, and accomplices who were promised my animals as kickbacks for their services. My attorney, Campbell, was not even allowed to ask Atwood about his threat to change the civil charges to criminal charges if I refused to sign over my animals. And, of course, the court records show that the civil charges WERE changed to criminal charges. I knew that the charges were changed, not because I refused to sign over my animals but because if I was taken into court under false civil charges, my lawyer would question Atwood about the basis for filing those charges. Since Atwood had no basis, he would have been found guilty of falsifying charges against me. By dropping the civil charges and muddying up the waters with their own dirty peoples' testimony, criminal charges were safer for them to bring.

The judge in the Animal Possession Hearing, Cote, gave my animals to the two women who brought the complaint against me and to their friends. I was told by an agent not involved in this fiasco that there was a list of people asking for specific animals of mine BEFORE any charges were brought against me by the State.

One of the women, Mary Baumgarten, has no job other than as a part-time hooker at Clark's Livestock Auction in Skowhegan and the selling of a few sick animals at Clark's Auction. At the time, she told me that she gets her food from a food pantry in Anson; has no money for veterinarians for her animals; can't get the local veterinarians to take her animals because she owes all of them money; has no running water in her house; no toilet; and takes her baths in the dirty duck pond with the duck pooh. She has charges for theft against her in Wisconsin where she hails from; stole \$80,000 from her ex-husband; has a lean on her house for just under \$4,000 by a WI credit union; had the Milwaukee Poodle Rescue take 12 puppies from her WI farm where she fed her 29 dogs on scraps because she had no money. When she left Wisconsin, the rescue that took in her farm animals found them malnourished and in need of veterinary care; she was on the "Do Not Treat" list at the local WI veterinary hospital; she was cited and paid a fine for "Dog at Large" charges after one of her 29 dogs killed neighbors' animals. In Maine she continued this trend. When her Great Pyrenees was allowed to run and was hit by a car, she had to drive from Anson to Winthrop to find a veterinarian she did not owe money to in order to get the surgery for the dog done. She was able to get half the money through friends and through selling sick goats at auction, but still owed the veterinarian the other half. When I saw the Great Pyrenees several weeks later, the area around the metal rod sticking out of the back leg was exuding a heavy pussy discharge. I told Baumgarten the leg was infected, and she needed to get the dog back to the veterinarian. She told me she

had no money to do that. Perhaps she's not much of a lay so the Johns aren't willing to pay much money for her services.

After the Animal Possession Hearing, I received a telephone call from Baumgarten. She told me that she was promised any of my animals she wanted if she brought false charges against me. "And I've got them," she said. In the background, I heard Burble Finn, the little lamb I was bottle feeding, and one of my dogs.

Baumgarten is currently targeting another owner for Norma Worley's Storm Troopers. I'll give you the name of these people so that if Worley tries to bring false charges against them, you will all know what is going on. They are Theresa and Drew Gay of Patten, Maine; owners of the Champion bred Komondor illegally taken by Atwood and given to Melanie Nadeau by Judge Cote. Nadeau wanted to show and breed the dog which is illegal according to the American Kennel Club rules. Atwood knew the dog did not belong to me because I told him, but it had already been promised to Nadeau for her part in helping agents get my animals. (Please see further on about the police and threat of shooting regarding this dog.) Baumgarten tried to buy the dog from me months before not knowing I didn't own him. She offered \$200 for a \$2,500 dog who will bring in at least \$350,000 over the course of his lifetime; more when the Gays get him his championship – which they or I planned to do the year he was taken.

No honest judge would have given my animals to Baumgarten or Nadeau given their backgrounds. In the 18 month period that I lived in Maine, my veterinary bills were over \$10,000, and my animals got the finest food I could buy for them. Cote placed them into a home with no income, no clean water, no veterinary care - - nothing, and Nadeau has an animal extortion/animal killing background (see paragraphs below). Since Baumgarten bragged she was promised any of my animals she wanted, and as she pointed out she got them, who HAD to be in league with the dirty animal agents in order for that promise to come to fruition? The person who actually made good on that promise was Judge Cote. What did **HE** get? It had to be more than a good lay.

Melanie Nadeau, committed felony extortion involving a purebred dog she refused to return to the owner unless the owner paid her \$11,000. She also killed three Arabian horses belonging to the owner. She tried to defraud the Tennessee Welfare system and was only one step ahead of a warrant for her arrest when she left that state. She stole my female pig, Peanut, after I refused to sell it to her; drugged my horse; took money from me to stay with my horse and help Dr. Cooper, but never actually called Dr. Cooper. Instead of fulfilling her duty as my agent for Thunder, my baby draft horse, and helping him (she is a veterinarian technician), she took photographs of Thunder lying suffering and helpless inside the barn. Aside from the fact that I had paid her for her knowledge as a veterinarian technician and to act as my agent with Dr. Cooper, what kind of person would allow an animal to suffer from 8 a.m. until her friends arrived at 4:00 p.m. and do nothing to help him? She sent the digital photographs to her friend, the State veterinarian Dr. Fraser. Nadeau kept Thunder down with drugs the entire day so that by the time Fraser got to the farm in late afternoon, he was in terrible condition. As previously mentioned, Nadeau is on the Department of Agriculture's "Maine Animal Welfare

Council". The Department of Agriculture is the same department that employs Worley and her animal agents. Robert Stern is the head of that department who refused to investigate my concerns of corruption and kickbacks. Nadeau has falsified papers on rescue dogs so she could breed them, and with Worley's blessing and that of Judge Cote, has had possession of the Gay's Komondor for over a year. Though the Gays contacted District Attorney Robinson and Judge Cote, they have still not gotten their dog back. In fact, Cote didn't even bother to respond to them.

The Gays first heard about the illegal seizure of their Komondor when Nadeau tracked them down. She told the Gays that she had already called the AKC and demanded a copy of the dog's papers. The AKC told her they would not provide them as that is illegal (a fact Nadeau already knew because she has shown dogs under the AKC rules in the past). Mrs. Gay told Nadeau that it was illegal for her to show a rescue dog. Nadeau said she would go to some other Komondor breeder and get papers (false papers) for the dog or she would go to her **FRIEND**, District Attorney Robinson, and he'd force Carol to give Nadeau the dog's papers.

The Gays took their ownership papers and a copy of the contract with me and drove to the Nadeau's residence. They told Nadeau that they were there to get their dog. Melanie Nadeau threatened to shoot them with a shotgun and Nadeau's husband tried to start a physical fight with Mr. Gay. The police were called and six to eight cruisers were there in a matter of minutes. The police did nothing. The Gays left without their dog.

The Gays contacted Nadeau's friend, District Attorney Robinson who also did nothing and Judge Cote who never even acknowledged their request for the return of their dog. The Gays have contacted another court official about their dog, but it looks as though they will be forced to sue for the value of the dog over his lifetime plus damages, a lawsuit in the neighborhood of \$800,000.

Norma Worley is originally from California. She was charged with discrimination in Ventura County, California while the head of the animal agents (see California CIV201590). She was fired from that job and bumped up to a computer job as a result of the lawsuit. Worley had worked for Ventura County since 1975. Her discrimination cost Ventura County ONE MILLION DOLLARS to settle that lawsuit. Yet, six months after being put on the computer job, she quit her job, moved to Maine and volunteered at the Bangor shelter. A short time later, Maine (Governor Baldacci personally is the scuttlebutt) hired her for the same job she did in Ventura County knowing full well about the million dollar discrimination lawsuit because that's how I found out about it. Perhaps he believed he would take his chances that Maine animal owners would be too poor or vulnerable to sue Worley and the State for discrimination, stealing private property and more (see Dr. Hahnel, my case, Kennedy, and Merle's Kennel in Chapter Three).

Given Worley's background, I was not surprised to see that Worley submitted false information to the court regarding conditions inside my house on 22 March 2004 when they entered my house supposedly for the first time. The State's own photographs belie that fact and show clearly that they were inside my house several times without benefit of

a search warrant. Also, she had no problem telling the court in a signed, written statement that she was in charge of agents at my house. She allowed them to steal my big animal cages, water bottles, nesting boxes, etc. Their corrupt network has to be extensive in order for a State Legislator to back off his investigation and for them admit to theft, commit perjury, etc., and not even bother to cover their tracks. Again, why was no investigation ever done? Other people have also sent letters to Governor Baldacci requesting something be done, yet Baldacci has chosen to do nothing. At a guess, I'm thinking the dirty agents are bringing in too much money for Baldacci to stop their illegal activities or perhaps Baldacci is more personally involved.

Another interesting aspect of my case is that two of the criminal permit charges brought against me are false. No permits are ever issued for hedgehogs or for Quaker Parrots yet I was found guilty on both counts for *possessing animals that require a permit in Maine*. How can I be found guilty of not getting required permits when there are no permits for those animals? Discrimination in my case as perpetrated by the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife is outrageous.

I moved to Maine just eighteen months before the seizures took place. The "permit" animals are animals you routinely buy in a pet shop in Massachusetts. I've owned three of those animals for 5 to 12 years depending on which one you are talking about. The fourth I bought about a month prior to seizure at Clark's Livestock Auction in Skowhegan. No one mentioned needing a permit to own a peacock in Maine when the peacock was sold to me.

I was given no time to request permits for any of the animals once I was told that permits were needed. The animals were seized and criminal permit charges were filed immediately against me. Phillip Ducas, Wildlife Investigator told me that he was being forced to issue criminal charges against me by "higher ups". If these "higher ups" actually exist, one would think that they would know that there are NO permits issued for two of the animals I owned. At the least, one would think that Ducas as a long time wildlife investigator would know the law, and I am very sure that he does. So why discriminate against me?

I put in for permits for all four animals the first week in May 2004 after learning that I needed permits. I hand carried the application form to the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife along with a money order for the required fee of \$28. I never heard back from them. I was more than a little busy with lawyers and evidence and court and investigations, and never checked back until recently. I was told there is no record of my letter to the Major (now a Colonial) requesting permit forms. Yes, the forms were sent to me after he got my letter. I was told there is no record of my permit application or money order.

I resubmitted the form and this time gave them a check for the \$28. I also insisted the woman at the counter give me a copy showing her signature and the date I dropped off the permit request. The Colonial sent me a letter telling me there are no permits ever given for two of the animals. He also returned my application and check telling me to

resubmit the request for the other two animals if I still wanted permits. I think not. It is clear that they are playing games. I don't find discrimination funny, especially when false criminal charges are the result of that discrimination.

Because they “**LOST**” my original permit application plus the letter I sent to the then Major, it caused me to investigate the usual procedure followed when someone moves to Maine and does not know that a permit is required for some of their animals. I learned that everything from Cougars to Bears have been brought into Maine **WITHOUT** permits and kept for years, yet these owners were issued permits “*after the fact*”. Their animals were not seized. The owners were not served with criminal permit charges and hauled into Superior Court. The owners were simply given time to apply for the needed permits. Also, it seems that people **HAVE** been issued permits for animals that permits are **NEVER** given for in Maine. So, why not for my animals?

Keep in mind that the animals I owned were two, small, Russian Tortoises; one Quaker Parrot; two Pygmy Hedgehogs, and one Peacock. These animals do not threaten the public safety, not even if they were able to get out of their cages which are *inside the house*. Pygmy hedgehogs fit in the palm of your hand and were kept in a four foot cage. The Quaker Parrot (also known as a Quaker Parakeet) is the size of a large cockatiel and had a large cage. The tortoises fit in your hand and were kept in a four foot long, glass aquarium tank. The peacock was of normal size and was temporarily in an indoor cage until spring. Had they gotten to a door, none of them could have reached the knob even if they had the ability to turn it - - which clearly they did not. On the other hand, the animals brought into Maine and given “*after the fact*” permits were Cougars, Bears, etc. - - a clear danger to the public safety if they escaped from their outdoor enclosures should those enclosures not meet State requirements.

Another interesting point is that on the Permit Form the Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Department sends out, it asks “do you currently possess the animal you are submitting the permit for or are you planning to get it in future”. That shows the usual procedure of simply asking an owner to get a permit once they are told that a permit is needed in Maine is the usual, routine procedure. So why not for my animals?