

Online Classified Leads to the Dog Pound

On November 1, 2010 Evanston Game Warden Brian Baker received an anonymous phone call stating that Donna Lewis of Evanston, WY was illegally advertising wolf hybrid puppies for sale on KSL.com, a website for online classifieds, much like the well-known Craigslist. Baker accessed the website and found the wolf hybrid puppy ad immediately. Lewis had the hybrid puppies listed for sale at \$300 each.

Baker located the Lewis residence and observed several dogs that appeared to resemble wolves in the yard. Wildlife Investigator Jim Gregory contacted Mrs. Lewis by phone and was told that there were still two female puppies and one male puppy left. Lewis told Gregory she owned both of the parents, and that the female was 75-80% "timber wolf," and the male was 50% "timber wolf," making the puppies about 63% wolf.

Warden Baker obtained a search warrant based on probable cause obtained from the KSL.com ad, observation of wolf-like canines at the Lewis residence, and W.I. Gregory's phone conversation with Lewis. On November 15, 2010 Warden Baker served the search warrant with assistance from W.I. Gregory and Game Wardens Dustin Kirsch and Kyle Lash. Wardens seized an adult female wolf hybrid, an adult male wolf hybrid, and three wolf hybrid puppies during the execution of the search warrant. In addition evidence related to the breeding and sale of wolf hybrid puppies was collected, including emails, receipts and photos. When interviewed, Lewis admitted she had already sold seven puppies from the litter.

Lewis was charged with one count of possession of a wolf hybrid and one count of attempting to sell wolf hybrid puppies. She pled guilty and was ordered to pay a total of \$1,000 in court costs and restitution. Unfortunately, this illegal possession led to the euthanization of these wolf hybrids.

