

## Adam Roach

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**From:** Mark Benjamin <MBenjamin@riag.ri.gov>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 30, 2020 7:42 AM  
**To:** 'Earl Newman'  
**Subject:** RE: Gellman Warrant

Thanks Earl. I will review it and give you a call later today.

**From:** Earl Newman <enewman@rispca.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 28, 2020 2:57 PM  
**To:** Mark Benjamin <MBenjamin@riag.ri.gov>  
**Subject:** Gellman Warrant

[External email: Use caution with links and attachments]

Mark,

Attached is the search warrant that we discussed. Any advice would be greatly appreciated.

V/r,  
Earl



Earl K. Newman III  
Special Agent, RISPCA  
Humane Law Enforcement  
P: 401.438.8150  
F: 401.438.8154  
186 Amara Street  
Riverside, RI 02915  
[www.rispca.com](http://www.rispca.com)

## Adam Roach

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**From:** Earl Newman <enewman@rispca.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, February 10, 2020 9:22 AM  
**To:** Mark Benjamin  
**Subject:** Gellman  
**Attachments:** Search Warrant - Gellman.doc; Witness Statement - Lessa.doc; Witness Statement - [REDACTED] Witness Statement - [REDACTED]; Ciancarelli Statement.pdf

[External email: Use caution with links and attachments]

Mark,

Attached is the revised search warrant for Gellman and relative statements. Please let me know your thoughts.

Earl



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Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals  
186 Amaral Street  
Riverside, RI 02915

**WITNESS STATEMENT**

Name: Peter Ciancarelli

Date of Birth: [REDACTED]/78

Address: [REDACTED] Medfield, MA 02052

Phone #: 774-[REDACTED]

Home:

Today's Date: 07/03/19

Time: 1430

Place: RISPCA

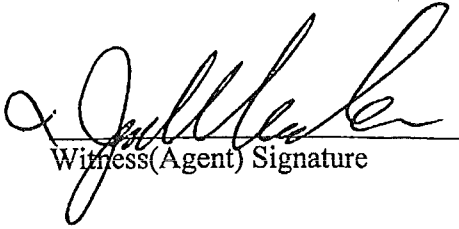
I formerly worked for a company called Solid K9 Dog Training, located in Providence, RI. The company is owned by a Jeff Gellman, who is the head dog trainer. I worked for Solid K9 for approximately 4 years between 2015-2019.

During the time I worked there, I witnessed, first-hand, a number of acts of animal cruelty committed by Jeff Gellman. I witnessed such things as Jeff kicking dogs in the chest extremely hard to the point where they would yelp in pain. On a number of occasions, I witnessed Jeff holding dogs completely off the ground by their collars, to the point where they almost lost consciousness. While he would hang the dogs, he would also utilize an electronic shock collar turned up on the highest level and continually shock the dogs. Jeff would use rolled up towels to strike dogs on their head as a form of punishment. He would also use dressage whips to strike the dogs during training.

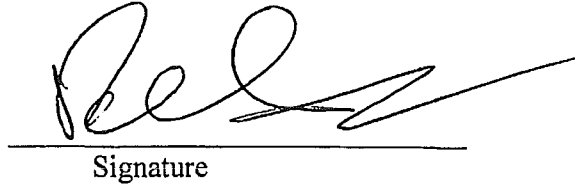
In addition to the cruel treatment I witnessed, the living conditions were often unsanitary. They kennels were not cleaned frequently enough, and the water bowls were also unsanitary. Some of them would also be confined in crates that were not big enough for them to stand up in or even turn around.

PK

I finally left Solid K9 because I was not comfortable with Jeff's training methods,  
and I could no longer be part of it.



Witness(Agent) Signature



Signature

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Signature of Parent of Legal Guardian( If under 18)



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Law Enforcement Division  
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Riverside, RI 02915

## WITNESS STATEMENT

Name: Erika Lessa

Date of Birth: [REDACTED] 1970

Address: [REDACTED]

Phone: 401-2 [REDACTED]

Today's Date: 2/3/2020

Time: 2:30 p.m.

Place:

**I, voluntarily without threats or promises, make the following statement to members of the RISPCA:**

I viewed a video posted by Jeff Gellman of Solid K9 Training in Providence, RI. In the video, Gellman can be seen walking up from behind an unsuspecting dog seated next to his owner and hitting the dog on the head with a rolled up white towel. He didn't just hit the dog, he wound up and put his weight behind it.

There are facts - scientifically proven facts - about dogs, the way they learn, their purpose, capacity for emotion, and their dependence on humans for survival. Attacking dogs as a response to any of their behaviors - be it aggression, barking, hiding, guarding - is the equivalent of beating a child for an emotional struggle.

There is research that has been done for decades on the overall impact of using brutality, dominance, force, and fear in training animals. It results in the animal developing more intense reactions to the original situation and/or creates new maladaptive behaviors to function as escape from the training scenario itself. Because they have been punished for warning you about their distress, a dog will either escalate to a new more dangerous behavior or, due to the ease at which fear generalizes, begin to exhibit other behaviors that you may not connect to the training.

The IACP, an organization the premises the use of choke, prong, shock collars, and other punitive methods, has dismissed this trainer from their professional organization. Here is their statement:

"First: midway through this year, a video was put out on social media in regard to an IACP member's (Gellman) behavior towards dogs. The Board conducted a review of that complaint, as well as other videos available online. Upon review, the Board did find that this member ... was in violation of the Code of Conduct and he was removed from membership in accordance with our Bylaws."



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They did not remove him for using punishment. Their Code of Conduct allows for that. They removed him because his conduct exceeded their tolerance. It was not that he used these methods but how he used them.

This mishandling of dogs, a species designed and bred for domestication meaning they are dependent on us for their very survival, is unconscionable. Trust the science when I relay the universal fact that if a dog is behaving in a way that threatens their relationship with people or other dogs, something is very wrong. That something should not be made worse by accelerating their fear and behavioral instability. It should be taken seriously and handled with the compassion, empathy, and protection required by the social contract we have entered into.

This qualifies as cruelty for the following reason: Mr. Gellman has openly admitted to using aversive and confrontational training methods all while intentionally instructing owners to ignore scientifically documented signs of the physiological and emotional distress. The long term effects of that stress is damaging to the dog physically, counterproductive to the training itself, and decimates the human-dog bond. He is doing this with full awareness.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness (Agent) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent of Legal Guardian



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