

Stouffville dog trainer finds emaciated labs in Markham

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You can call it the wild dog chase of Cornell.

Linda Mutch was to spend a stress-free day with her daughter in Markham last week, however, plans took a dramatic turn when the Stouffville dog trainer spotted three labrador retrievers – white, yellow and chocolate – running uncontrollably on Ninth Line.

"They were extremely emaciated, with open sores all over their bodies," Ms Mutch said. "They were in pretty bad condition."

With the help of neighbourhood people and a Bell technician in the area, Ms Mutch said they managed to gather the dogs and waited on Settlement Park Avenue for the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) to show up Wednesday.

The dogs were all male and not neutered, she said.

The white and chocolate labs are about three to five years old and the yellow one about eight to 10 years old.

"The older dog was in the worst condition. His ears were all chewed up," she said.

NEIGHBOURS PITCH IN

Cornell resident Heidi Spiar was one of the people on scene who helped Ms Mutch with the dogs. A dog owner herself, Ms Spiar said she had never seen the labs in the neighbourhood before.

It was about 2 p.m. on Wednesday when she saw the dogs "bolting" out of Cornell.

"They were really out of control. Everybody

jumped to help, it was an amazing effort," Ms Spiar said.

"These dogs were not well. They had bad infections. They were thin for big dogs — you can see their bones. It was odd for the neighbourhood."

Ms Spiar said another woman brought food and water out for the dogs and housed them down while they waited for OSPCA.

OSPCA ORDERS ALREADY ISSUED

"They were starving, they charged at the food," she said, adding the dogs were sweet and not bullies.

"It was difficult to see that, but it was refreshing to see people come together to keep the community safe, including dogs," Ms Spiar said. "It was horrific, but it reinforced why we moved into Cornell."

Alison Cross is the spokesperson for the OSPCA. She said she's not able to disclose details of the incident due to its ongoing investigation.

Ms Cross said the OSPCA received calls of concern about the dogs and issued orders to the owner to properly care for them about an hour before the chase. The OSPCA took possession of the dogs for a short while, but the animals have since returned home.

"We receive animal cruelty complaints every single day, so this is not uncommon," Ms Cross said. "No charges have been laid in this case. They are complying with the orders at this point in time."

If you have concerns about animal cruelty, call the OSPCA at 1-888-668-7722.

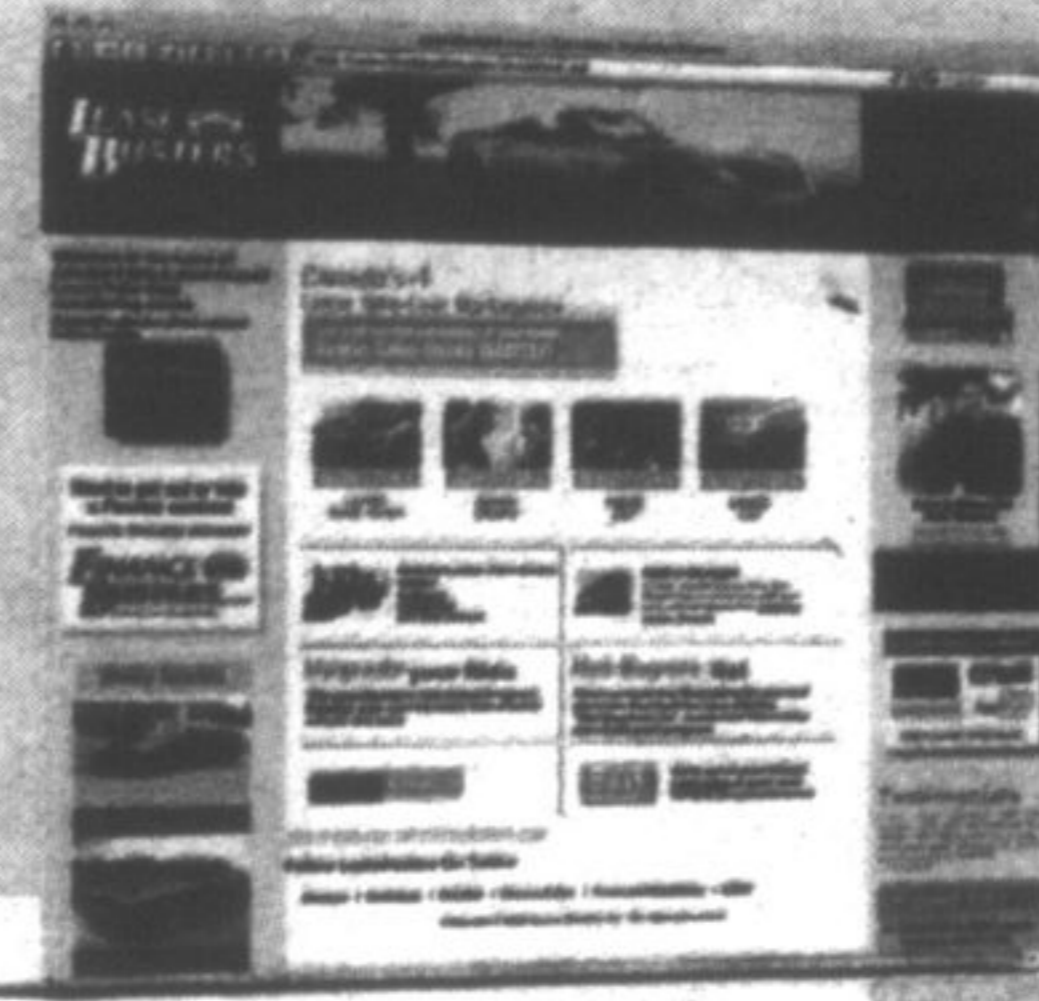
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