



EVERY DOG HAS ITS DAY: Trixie and Robin, two of the puppies rescued from an alleged puppy mill, are up for adoption on Aug. 1.

Photo by Steve Solomonson

Long paw of the law

Alleged puppy abuser busted

BY ERIC FAYNBERG

Call it puppy payback.

Police arrested the man who allegedly abused and sold sick puppies while running an illegal puppy mill out of his Gravesend home, nearly a month after local animal rights activists rescued nine dogs from him.

The man was arrested on July 20 at his Avenue X residence on 10 counts of torturing, injuring and not feeding animals, said police. Cops also charged the man with eight counts of selling and exposing diseased animals.

He was given a desk appearance ticket, and will be asked to appear in criminal court for arraignment, police said. The American Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals said it provided veterinary forensic support to the cops, but would not comment further.

The man allegedly transported at least 20 sick puppies from Florida to New York, failing to provide veterinary care, authorities said, and at least three of the ill pups perished from malnutrition and the canine virus Parvo. He also sold the sick dogs, without a license, to unsuspecting customers, according to a police report.

The animal cruelty investigation began in June, when internet postings about the

sale and abuse of sick puppies captured the attention of local animal-rights activists. Animal rescue group Rescue City paid the man nearly \$2,000 to take nine of the puppies out of the home, but he still had at least one other puppy in the home.

One of the puppy protectors said she's pleased that the authorities finally took action, even if it wasn't as soon as she would like.

"Persistence prevails," said Rescue City co-founder Stella Plit. "We keep bringing attention to people like this because it's about stopping animal abuse and animal cruelty."

Rescue City, along with the Oceanside Animal Clinic on Kings Highway, helped nurse the nine pooches out of peril. Four of the dogs have been adopted, while five are still in foster care awaiting permanent homes.

Rescue City is hosting an adoption event on August 1 at a Gerritsen Beach pet shop to find permanent homes for the five lucky dogs.

Rescue City Adoption Event at Bargain Bow Wow [2754 Gerritsen Ave. between Florence and Everett avenues in Gerritsen Beach, (718) 332-6192, www.rescuecity.nyc]. Aug. 1, 11 am-3 pm.

Printing jobs in S'Park

After layoffs, MakerBot opens new factory, begins hiring

BY MAX JAEGER

The Brooklyn tech darling that laid off 100 people in April has just opened its new factory in Sunset Park — and now the company is hiring.

MakerBot, a 3D printer manufacturer, unveiled a new factory in the waterfront industrial complex Industry City on July 22 that's twice the size of its former space and could accommodate double the number of factory workers it has now.

The company, a leader in making 3D printers a household commodity, is looking to bring on about 40 new people just three months after it axed about 100 jobs — reportedly one-fifth of its workforce — citing a reorganization. But factory jobs weren't really on the chopping block in the springtime cull — on the contrary, MakerBot sought to trim ancillary positions in order to beef up its factory line and quality control, according to the company's new chief executive officer.

"There were certain areas that we had to reconsider ... retail stores being a great example of that," said Jonathan Jaglom. "Some of [the new hiring] is back-filling, some of it is new positions, some of it is expansion in certain areas."

Many of the new jobs are on the factory floor and require little formal education or training, the manufactory's manager said.

"We typically require a high-school diploma and we like to see a couple of years work experience," said Diana Pincus. "Ideally, we get people with light assembly skills."

Fewer than 19 percent of residents living in the area around the factory have a four-year college degree or more, census data shows.

The company's relatively low barrier to entry and good advancement prospects are a boon for locals, according to a local workforce-development group.



BOOT IT UP: (Above) MakerBot chief executive officer Jonathan Jaglom, at center, cuts the ribbon on the 3D-printer company's new Sunset Park factory alongside Borough President Adams. (Right) The company makes machines that can craft just about anything, but the devices are still assembled by hand on a traditional factory line.

Photos by Jason Speakman



"MakerBot gives an opportunity for folks to get in the door at an entry level and rise within the company, and achieve some economic mobility," said Justin Collins of the Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation. "They tend to pay better wages and are more likely to have more benefits than comparable retail positions."

The corporation is helping a few dozen low-skill workers apply for jobs at MakerBot, he said.

"We're going to be referring a good number of people there starting this coming week — mainly for assembly positions," Collins said.

MakerBot employs about 140 people on its production line, but the new factory has room to employ twice that, Pincus said.

The company began in Gowanus in 2009 and moved offices Downtown in 2013. A year later, it relocated its Boreum Hill factory and Downtown office to Industry City.

Staff handed out 3D-printed screw-and-nut sets last Wednesday to give announcement attendees a tangible takeaway from the event, but Borough President Adams said the doohickies also symbolized potential job creation in a neighborhood that was hit hard by a decline in Brooklyn manufacturing.

"For many years, our folks in this community — instead of making screws — they felt like they were being screwed," Adams said. "And now we have an opportunity to ensure that they be part of this great revolution that's happening here."

BIGGER, BETTER, BOTTER: Older MakerBot models on display at the new factory show the company's do-it-yourself roots. Originally sold as kits that customers had to assemble themselves, the first models assembled at the original factory took longer for workers to build because they required more screws and some soldering.

Photo by Jason Speakman

