**Getting a Stonepine Puppy: The Process**

*By Nannette Newbury, Stonepine Australian Shepherds*

In order to move forward with your purchase there are several steps.

1. Contact me via email (stonepine@hughes.net). You can also reach me via the “Contact Form” provided on the homepage of the website ([www.stonepine.net](http://www.stonepine.net))
2. In the email tell me about yourself; your previous experience with Aussies (if any); why you want an Aussie; your experience training previous dogs; your family situation; do you own or rent your home, what dogs you have owned and what dogs you have now, etc.
3. Visit my website and click on the “Owner Education” tab. There are a variety of handouts there that are designed to prepare your for your new puppy. It will be helpful if you read these handouts prior to our telephone interview.
4. I will respond to your email with my telephone contact information. You can schedule a call with me. Plan on spending a good amount of time with me discussing the breed (pros AND cons). Reputable breeders will ask you many questions, some might appear invasive. They are not. Our goal is to ensure that you AND a new Aussie puppy are going to be a permanent, perfect fit. Remember WE are the advocates for these planned puppies. You may also feel free to ask me questions as well.
5. If we agree that you are a great fit for a Stonepine puppy, I will add you to the Puppy List. At this time, you can indicate a preference as to color and sex you would like. Please note that having a both a color and a sex preference might limit you getting a puppy in any given litter. We never know what combination of colors and sex we will have in any one litter. If you are flexible on color and/or sex it is much easier to get you your perfect puppy! You can also change your mind as to sex and color after the litter is born if your specific color and/or sex are not available.
6. Remember: I am breeding this litter for myself and for the breed improvement as my primary objectives. My extra puppies, after I have made my selection(s), are only sold to homes as pets.
7. All litters are pre-planned and bred purposefully. If you are on the list, I send out email notification when the dam (female) is bred and indicate the sire, if I have not already done so. I can give you a tentative time frame on when the litter might be born. Breeding is no indication that any live births will occur, however.
8. I will notify you when the litter is born. I will include a photo and a description of the sex and colors that were produced.
9. I provide Weekly Updates thereafter. The updates include photos, information on puppy development, articles about the breed, health, nutrition, products, sample contract, etc.
10. Closer to Week 5 I can schedule puppy visits. These visits are weather dependent as it is best to play with the pups on my lawn/patio area.
11. Puppy Visit Etiquette: Schedule your visit and try to arrive on time, not earlier, please. Give advance notice if you must cancel, reschedule or if you are running late. Dress with clean clothes and shoes that fully cover your feet (no sandals). Do not bring other dogs with you or be around other dogs in the clothing and shoes you will wear to my place. The spread of disease is a very real concern at this age. When you arrive, you will be asked to wash your hands and to disinfect the bottoms of your shoes. Be prepared to be crawled on and slimed by a group of very exuberant puppies…you will get dirty!
12. You may visit as often as you wish with prescheduled appointments. As you can imagine as the puppies get older, my chores, based on their needs, grows exponentially. It takes a great deal of time to prep for your puppy visit. It is customary to spend about one hour during a typical puppy visit
13. Puppy Visits Facts: Whatever puppy crawled in your lap on your first visit will likely ignore you the next visit. They change daily even by the hour it seems. Their minds and skill sets are developing rapidly. Please do not get attached to one puppy or another. Remember, I will make my pick first. I generally do not know what puppy(s) I will keep until closer to weeks 8, 9 or even 10.
14. Puppy Pick-up Day: We will schedule a day and time for you to pick up your new puppy. During this visit there is paperwork to go over, registration papers and contracts to be signed and payment finalized. Plan on spending about one hour to complete the process.
15. After you go home: Please keep in touch with updates on the puppy transition. If you have any questions, I am available to you.

WHAT IS NOT ACCEPTABLE

1. Being on more than one breeder’s list for a puppy. Breeders have spent time in planning where their puppies go. If you have reserved a puppy on multiple lists, other breeders who saved a puppy for you and your family are going to be left with a puppy. Breeders turned away other suitable homes for that puppy based on your commitment. Behave responsibly.
2. The community of responsible and reputable breeder of Australian Shepherds is relatively small on a worldwide basis. We know each other. And we communicate with each other. If you act inappropriately with one breeder, it is likely that your behavior will be shared with other breeders.
3. If you change your mind about getting a Stonepine puppy this is perfectly okay and understandable…life happens. What is not acceptable is to delay telling me about your decision. Again, potential homes were turned away to hold your spot. Let me know immediately if you wish to be removed from the list.
4. Please do not assume that this “breeder” is a business. It is a very expensive hobby and a life-long dedication to this breed that I love. I have a business that does NOT involve breeding dogs. I am willing to spend as much time as you need to assist you making a decision that is appropriate for your, the puppy, and your family. And even after you take your puppy home, for the life of the dog. I may not however immediately return your telephone call. I will not spend hours responding to hundreds of questions via email. Pick up the telephone and talk to me.