

Since writing to you in our last newsletter, information and action surrounding puppy mills has developed. First, the Critter Auction scheduled to take place at M&M Ranch on November 10 in Sparta was unsuccessful. We had several volunteers and staff who volunteered to attend, not only being a presence, but to also learn about what takes place. Upon arriving, they learned that there was little to no interest and that the auction would not take place. However, there were two cats brought to the auction and their owners agreed to surrender them to us. Both cats have been neutered, vaccinated, and de-wormed while with us and one recently was adopted. Mischief, the other cat, very nice and easy going, is still looking for a new home as I write to you.

There has not been any dog Auctions in Thorp, WI since last September. Over 100 humane advocates, including representatives from Humane Societies and rescue groups as well as citizens who want to see the conditions of these animals change, staged a peaceful protest at the September event. We have heard that Horst Stables plans another dog auction for March 12, 2008. We will do our best to keep you informed about this auction as well as future auctions.

There have been developments within the Wisconsin Legislature regarding puppy mills. Most recently, there was a joint Assembly - Senate public hearing on the "Dog Purchaser Protection Act" SB 308 and AB 567 (AKA the "Plale - Lothian" and "Puppy Mill" Bills) in Madison on January 10, 2008. This bill is an attempt to bring regulation to the puppy mill industry, but it falls grossly short in many areas and would create more problems if enacted (at the end of this, there is a link that will allow you to read more about this bill). Several individuals, animal welfare groups, and other groups concerned with the "Dog Purchaser Protection Act" were in attendance to voice their opposition to this. The following groups do oppose the bill:

- **Wisconsin Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)**
- **The Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association**
- **Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies**
- **Alliance of Wisconsin Animal Rehoming Efforts (AWARE)**
- **The Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project**
- **Alliance for Animals**
- **Animal Law Associates of Wisconsin**

We were saddened to learn that ASPCA issued their support of the "Dog Purchaser Protection Act." It appears that the ASPCA did not seek out those involved with humane animal welfare work within our State nor any State agency or key law enforcement that would be responsible for enforcing this before issuing their statement of support. It is clear that they are not supporting the majority of the humane animal welfare advocates within the State of WI. I speak on behalf of many professionals in this work when I say I am disappointed that a powerful national organization like ASPCA's would ignore our thoughts and position on this critical issue. I encourage them to reconsider their actions and involvement in Wisconsin legislation.

There are other legislators who are working on a bill that is expected to address licensure, regulation, and inspection of breeding facilities in Wisconsin. If this is drafted, it is expected to address the increasing number of puppy mills in Wisconsin, specifically the abuse, the neglect and the cruelty that animals endure in puppy mills. Please remember we recognize that there are responsible breeders who care for their animals as if they were their very own; it is not this group

that needs regulation. However, there are far too many groups that are not responsible, that do not care about the animal, but rather the almighty dollar the animal can bring them and how many that animal can produce to increase those dollars. This is the group that needs to be regulated.

What can you do?

1. Go to www.nowisconsinpuppymills.org to learn about what a puppy mill is and the work that is being done on behalf of the animals that suffer at such facilities.
2. Please read about the “Dog Purchaser Protection Act” by going to this link on the Wisconsin Puppy Mill Project’s website, <http://www.nowisconsinpuppymills.org/public-hearing-details.html#action> and click on the AB 567 and SB 308 links along with their amendments. Please write or call the committee chairs of this bill to let them know your opposition to this (it does not have to be lengthy) as your voice makes a difference:

Senate Committee on Small Business, etc
Senator Robert Wirsch (Chair)
Sen.wirsch@legis.wisconsin.gov
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882
Phone: (608) 267-8979
FAX: (608) 267-0984

Assembly Committee on
Consumer Protection and Personal Privacy
Representative Tom Lothian (Chair)
Rep.lothian@legis.wisconsin.gov
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708
Phone: (608) 266-1190
Fax: (608) 282-3632

3. It is also important to let your representatives know that you are opposed to AB 567 and SB 308 and that you encourage them to work with Rep. Wiekert on drafting legislation that truly addresses the neglect, abuse and lack of regulation that currently exists in the State of Wisconsin. Their information is as follows:

La Crosse County
(Michael Huebsch, Dan Kapanke,
Jennifer Shilling)

Michael Huebsch
Room 211 West
State Capitol
PO Box 8952

Monroe County
(Terry Musser, Dale Schultz,
Sheryl Albers, Lee Nerison)

Terry Musser
Room 11 West
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Madison, WI 53708
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Trempealeau County
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Dale Schultz
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Sen.Schultz@legis.wisconsin.gov

Sheryl Albers
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Vernon County
(Dan Kapanke, Lee Nerison)

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Sen.Kapanke@legis.wisconsin.gov

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I appreciate your help in being the difference for those who have no voice, who depend on us to take care of them. I continue to reference Margaret Mead, whose words are so incredibly powerful and true, when she said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Please be a part of the group that will be the change for the animals in puppy mills. Please.

Heather