

WHO LOST?

By Jim Hughes

We did not get quite enough votes for our side. No matter how you look at it, a loss is a loss. Proposition B was predicted to lose by an 8 to 2 margin, then later that was revised to a 7 to 3. We all recognized that the wording of the name of the bill would bring about defeat. We really needed to win our attack on the **name** of the bill. Be sure to remember that Robin Carnahan contributed as much to the passage of this bill as any single person in the state. But let's look at some of the positive items of this total miscarriage of justice.

Tens of millions of people across the United States now see the H\$U\$ in an entirely different light. They have shown the nation the dark side of animal activism. The other entities of animal agriculture now see the threat of H\$U\$ to their livelihood.

Because of the Florida hog industry, the California poultry industry, the New Jersey duck and goose industry, the attacks on circus and rodeo shows, the never ending attacks on the medical research labs, the threat to the hunting and fishing industry, the fur and fashion industry, the closing of the horse slaughter plants (*which has brought horrendous suffering to horses that should have been euthanized and ruined the breeding farms of all forms of horses*), the animal agriculture industry was starting to become alarmed. But it took Proposition B to finally reveal how the H\$U\$ planned to turn this nation into an animal free nation. This action has brought all the entities together. There is a saying, "the enemy of my enemy is my friend". We have found many new friends.

I have lamented many times in this magazine that our leaders are non-existent. I have worried constantly that our fighters have grown too old to fight. And then along comes General Karen Strange, leader of Mo-Fed and coordinator of our war efforts! She and her very able lieutenants, Cathy Griesbauer and Barb York and way too many warriors to name here, were instrumental in almost tying that vote at 50-50. **Karen, you are my hero!** I am so proud of all of our fighters. The Humaniacs will think twice before they try to come to Missouri again.

The rest of the country has now become alarmed. They are looking for ways to band together to head off these actions in their states. Pennsylvania, Colorado, Texas, Iowa, Minnesota, Arkansas, Kansas, and especially Oklahoma are under attack now, as we speak. But we are coming together.

If I may jog your memory, we had a national breeder organization named APPDI. We headed off many things that were designed to kill the puppy industry. We killed a few efforts and watered down most other efforts to the point that the dog industry prospered. But the APPDI succumbed to internal fighting and outside jealousies from other entities within the pet industry. After several years in limbo with no national voice, I became alarmed to signs of strength within the humane organizations. Their jealousies at each other and their refusal to band together kept them weak and fragmented, and their attacks on the pet industry could easily be turned aside. When they finally realized this fact, their coordinated efforts brought about Proposition B. You have witnessed the results.

At this time, I called for another national organization. At one time, it seemed as though I was the only one concerned, but when we finally met together at the Oklahoma seminar, there was a lot of interest and support for this idea. A name was selected for this organization we chose to call NAPO. A resolution was voted on to proceed and NAPO came into existence. We counted on the state breeders clubs to help finance this group, but money was slow coming in. Each state chapter wanted to wait and see if the other chapters would kick in. Due to lack of funds, we could not get any programs into operation that we felt were needed. Our board of directors got to infighting as each had a program in mind and no money to implement the ideas. After one year, NAPO starved to death.

Again, I say to you, it is a foolish folly for this industry to try to exist without some sort of national agenda. Some cooperation must exist between the states. MPBA is the largest organization and also has the richest treasure chest in the country. But they sat on that money until it was too late. They need to give Barb York a free hand to access the money the day it is needed. If money was available to fight the petition signatures before they were presented to Robin Carnahan, possibly this proposition would never have made it to the ballot. If MPBA wants to become our national voice, I say "get ur done".

I think a lot of breeders in other states have seen the devastation that can befall them if they keep their heads buried in the sand. They want and need direction. They want and need help. They possibly could use some seed money to get an organization started. We need a national group to help these people before Prop B hits them also.

At this time, Mo-Fed is the logical choice to be this national group and Karen Strange is the logical choice to be its first president. All of the state chapter presidents should get together and call upon Karen to lead this fight nationally. She has already taken her Mo-Fed agenda all over the United States and everyone needs to budget money to pay for this effort. I would also encourage you to individually send Mo-Fed a contribution in appreciation for the tremendous effort they made on our behalf. I am sure their treasury has been depleted.

Meanwhile, what do we do now? Proposition B does not take effect until November, 2011. Possibly, we can get it repealed. Contact your state legislator and ask him to seek a way to repeal this onerous act. Do not give your dogs away. Do not leave the business if you truly love what you are doing. Accept the fact that you are going to have to put on a better face. You must encourage your neighbors who do not do as good a job as you to either "shape up or ship out". If you are ashamed of your operation, clean it up. If you are ashamed of your neighbor's operation, turn him in. It is not called tattling anymore, it is called 'self preservation'. Even if Proposition B were to get repealed, it will not be business as usual. Make your pens bigger. Quit crowding your dogs. Groom them. Cull them. I don't care if three legged Sally can have pups or not, think of your image. Be proud of what you do. You run a puppy farm. The beagle from "Peanuts" comic strip came from a puppy farm. He goes back occasionally to see his relatives and he is proud of where he came from. You are one of a very few animal industry professionals who does not have to kill his produce to gain an income. Be proud of that! You sell love, and love is what makes the world go round. Be proud of that! You provide a product that generates an income for 24 related industry workers, from pet store employees to feed manufactures to airline pilots. Be proud of that! If you want an increase in your income, you produce another litter of puppies; not another baby to add to the aid to dependant children rolls of our welfare departments. You are a tax paying, responsible, knowledgeable professional business person. Be proud of that!

Wait and see what happens. A year from now things could look a lot different. But do not set back and wait for somebody else to fight your battles for you. Become a Mo-Fed member. Join your state breeder organizations. Donate some time and money to the fight. Hang in there, people, hang in there.