

WE ARE AT WAR!!!

And we are losing it!!!! By Jim Hughes

WHY? Divide and conquer. That is a strategy that has been used to win battles in war, boardrooms, government, and homes. And you can bet it is now being used on us. The Animal Rights People have now honed this talent into perfection. The show fancy dog breeders hate the commercial large scale breeders and the pet shops do not buy from “puppy mills”. The breeders would rather not be licensed. The internet sellers of puppies will not sell to brokers. The retailers try to pass up the large brokers and breeders whenever they can. Save a little money, they think. But to keep volume up they are forced to rely on commercially produced puppies. But every last one of them will swear he does not buy from a “puppy mill”. We need to put “rescue” in the proper camp. They want to rescue our saleable dogs so they can finance their own endeavors. Very few of them can be considered a friend to our industry. Last year The Kennel Spotlight ran an article entitled “Just what is a puppy mill”. The conclusion drawn by the author was that it all depends upon which window you are looking through. Over the last 30 years, the Humaniacs have driven the term, “puppy mill” into the brains of the general public, and then cemented it there by making it so commonly used that newscasters and politicians have no qualms about defining ‘anybody that raises dogs, no matter how small or large,’ by this term. It is our job now to change this label, either making it acceptable, or making it politically incorrect and therefore unacceptable. We must use and adhere to the terms licensed, responsible, professional kennels. Those that do not live up to these descriptive adjectives must be labeled “substandard kennels”. We must then condemn these substandard kennels and work just as hard as the other side to put them out of business. This tiny percentage of poor breeders supplies 99 percent of the ammunition used by the Animal Rights people to shoot us down. This industry goes from large farms to backyards; from 20 million dollar facilities to a 2 dollar tether; from highly skilled, well educated, professional business men and women to a back yard dog house where mom wants to show junior the “miracle of life”. However each of these operations is called “puppy mill” and the public has come to accept this terminology. We have never been hit as hard in the 48 years that I have been in this business as we have been in 2007. Hundreds of kennels have been raided and their dogs confiscated [STOLEN]. Kennel sizes range from 20 or 30 dogs up to 1080. Attacks through the media are now taking place on some of the nations top retail pet stores. Breed bans are springing up all over the country. Spay and neuter laws are being enacted in cities, counties, and states everywhere. Some proposed license fees for intact females are prohibitive. When is all this going to stop? NEVER!! HSUS and PETA and many other so called humane organizations have come to realize that this is a great tool to raise dollars for their inflated salaries and their bulging treasuries. Then there are the bleeding hearts who have been brainwashed into believing the hogwash that these national organizations pour on all of us. Many of these people sincerely believe that they are helping the helpless. They are volunteering their time and money for their cause. They just do not see dirt as we do. They are city people and they are not used to cleaning up after 100 dairy cows or hosing down a feeder pig floor after you have removed 200 pigs to go to market. They all have 1 or 2 dogs that sleep with them at night and they think that you should take your 100 to 300 dogs into your bed also. O.K., enough crying about the problem. What’s the answer? Every breeder becomes licensed, either by federal or state or both. We must demand that our state legislators enact laws that we as breeders can live with. We can only get these laws if we help write them. We cannot help write them if we continue to fight them. These laws must be stringent enough to put the substandard kennel out of business if he will not upgrade his facility and his standard of care.

1. The retail pet shop operator must stand up for his breeders. When he is accused of buying his puppies from puppy mills, he must be able to say that he buys ONLY from licensed breeders, and he must be able to have the confidence that if the breeder is licensed, he is responsible. He is doing the job to his utmost abilities. The retailer must insist that all his puppies come from these licensed kennels. He must refuse to house any puppies that are not licensed.
2. The USDA must quit saying that they do not have the money to enforce the Animal Welfare Act equally, across the board. Every person that sells a dog should be licensed and inspected. All intermediaries should be made to meet the same criteria, be it a rescue, pet shop, animal shelter, show fancy, etc. etc.
3. The industry must be ready to support the individual that has been singled out to be crucified. A network of lawyers sympathetic to our cause must be recruited and encouraged to study the laws that pertain to our business. When a slanderous report is filed by a news network or a humane

organization, they better be able to prove all charges based upon the laws on the books and not just by their opinions. We must be ready at all times to file a major lawsuit for slander and/or trespassing.

4. All breeders need to belong to one of the state breeder organizations. This is imperative. Those that have been raided and lost their dogs have not been licensed nor do they belong to a state organization. They do not have the slightest idea what is happening to them. As a breeder or as a person, you have house insurance, car insurance, health, life, business, liability, in fact you are afraid to leave yourself exposed to any hazard without insurance. Consider your membership dues an insurance premium.
5. These state leaders must learn to work together. We need governmental lobbyists to look after our interest. We need university grants to several veterinary schools to study and report the incidence of parvo from the professional kennel and compare these results to similar studies made on the dogs coming from humane shelters or hobby breeders, or dogs running at large. We need comparisons made and publicized between the healths of our dog population compared to our human population. We need health studies done on our farm animals to see if we should boycott the carcasses of our food animals for some health reason.
6. We need a professional Public Relations firm to publicize these results to the general public. We also need to be able to tell our everyday stories about the care and love we bestow upon our animals. We need the public to realize that we are a decent, hard working, god fearing, community of breeders and not the drooling, bloodthirsty, vicious monsters that the AR's have painted us to be.

Will this cost a lot of money? You can bet on it. Do you want to continue to be able to raise and sell dogs profitably? Then plan on spending the money. This industry, the pet industry as a whole, grosses 41 billion dollars annually. Should the dog collar manufacturing people be asked to contribute to the welfare of the breeder community? Should the parakeet mill be concerned about the puppy business? Are we willing to go to bat for another segment of the pet industry as a whole? PEOPLE, most of you feel you are too busy to stop, think and act on these issues, AND there is no reason to ask other segments of our industry for help until we are willing to help ourselves. We need charismatic people with vision to lead our state and national groups. We need committed men and women to stand with these leaders, shoulders to shoulder, and say to the world, "we have nothing to be ashamed of; we are legal, professional, licensed, business people working hard and making an honest and respectable living".

Your future is in your own hands. The days of "LET GEORGE DO IT" are over. George died of overwork and old age.

JOIN YOUR STATE ORGANIZATIONS, JOIN NAPO, JOIN, join, join, etc ---