

November 22, 2010

Effort targets animal euthanasia

A pair of bills to make animal euthanasia more humane could be put down in Lansing, unless **Joe Sowerby** can help them regain traction soon in the Senate.

Sowerby, partner at Mt. Clemens commercial real estate firm **Anton, Zorn & Sowerby Inc.** and founder-president of Chesterfield Township nonprofit **Hayes and Friends Inc.**, is working with local officials to have Senate Majority Leader **Mike Bishop** seek a vote before the legislative session ends in early December.

Hayes and Friends is the nonprofit organization that raises funds for Pet-A-Palooza, the annual pet adoption event held at the Palace of Auburn Hills.

A pair of bills sponsored by state Rep. **Fred Miller, D-Mt. Clemens**, calls for all animal euthanasia statewide to occur solely by injection of sodium pentobarbital rather than by poison gas. They cleared the House by a 91-14 vote in September, but have stalled in the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Bioeconomy and there are no plans to take them up.

"More than 90 percent of communities use euthanasia by injection, and the communities that don't use it aren't large communities," Sowerby said. "And there's grant money available to help those places transition over, so there's no reason to cry poor or claim hardship."

About 118,000 cats and dogs are euthanized statewide each year.