Recently the FHANA Board of Directors voted to hold a referendum in early 2011 to help decide this issue. The issue, describing it as briefly as possible, is: Will FHANA recognize the offspring when breeding purebred Friesian mares to purebred Friesian stallions that have not officially been approved for breeding by the KFPS? Presently the KFPS, our parent organization in the Netherlands, does recognize such offspring, whereas FHANA does not. If a foal is born in North America as a result of such a mating, even by accident, FHANA will not register the foal. FHANA will, however, offer advice to the owner as to how to go about registering the foal into the B Book II registry, but the owner must correspond directly with the KFPS in the Netherlands. In addition, the FHANA Board of Directors decided in 2009 that B Book II-registered Friesians would not be welcome at North American inspections. Since then, some FHANA members have expressed concern regarding FHANA's present position on this contentious issue. Hence, the Board made the decision to let all members weigh-in by way of referendum in early 2011.

I believe the natural tendency of a FHANA member is to take the position that we need to protect and promote legitimate Friesian matings to approved Friesian stallions. I firmly agree with that position. Nevertheless, I have come to the conclusion that our present position regarding B Book II matings is wrong. By recognizing B Book II matings, I do not believe we will undermine the vast majority of breedings, which are those that occur to approved stallions. In the Netherlands, the recognition of B Book II offspring has not had a negative impact on breedings to approved stallions, and I do not believe that would become the case in North America either.

I have volunteered to give the reasons why I believe FHANA should recognize these matings. I do believe that "to recognize" is not the same as "to promote".

A membership referendum vote in favor of FHANA recognizing B Book II foals would mean that:

1. Our FHANA office would facilitate registering B Book II foals (blue papers).

2. B Book II Friesians would be welcome at all FHANA inspections.

My reasons for supporting this position are:

1. The policy would reflect KFPS policy and be in agreement with FHANA bylaws that state that our policies conform to the policies of our mother organization.

2. Accidental breedings do happen. This would allow our members an avenue to best salvage an unplanned mating.

3. KFPS policy allows the third generation offspring (great-grandchild) of a B Book II mare to enter the Main Studbook again, provided the 1st, 2nd and 3rd generation offspring are all sired by

approved stallions. Taking that fact into consideration, why would we ostracize these offspring so significantly, as the present FHANA policy does?

4. Let's be clear: Purebred Friesian mares are being bred by unapproved, purebred Friesian stallions. Our present policy drives these practices underground. Let's recognize them officially and FHANA will be better informed about this aspect of Friesian ownership.

5. Our membership has the potential to grow (we are presently shrinking) as owners of B Book II Friesians will be allowed to feel at home within the FHANA family.

6. FHANA will collect more fees from registrations and inspections.

7. B Book II-papered Friesians will always be inferior to Main Studbook Friesians, hence approved stallion matings will not be jeopardized.

8. B Book II Friesians will command lower values, effectively discouraging breeders from this practice.

9. Lower-valued Friesians have the potential of widening the Friesian family circle, as these horses are within the reach of a lower economic group of horse owners. It is my firm belief that a B Book II owner will always aspire to become a Main Studbook Friesian owner.

10. Lastly, I would argue that we should respect the individual Friesian breeder and their right to decide which stallion to breed to their mare. I believe FHANA does not need to act as "big brother" in these circumstances.