



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

The LinkLetter

March 2011

A monthly report of news about the connections between animal abuse and other forms of violence from the National Link Coalition -- www.nationallinkcoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Editor

When animal abuse can be detected early, it not only saves innocent pets from senseless abuse or death, but also alerts authorities to criminal or abusive behavior, leads to help for children who are developing a pattern of violence, and saves society and the justice system the heavy costs involved in dealing with serious violence offenders.

Update: Animal Rescue and Relief Efforts in Japan



[Keiko Yamazaki](#), our Link contact in Japan, reports that the Japan Veterinary Medical Association, Japan Animal Welfare Society, Japan SPCA, and Japan Pet Care Association are coordinating efforts to assist the animals affected by the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident. While search and rescue remains the top priority, the large numbers of people needing housing in emergency shelters predicts a significant impact on the animals that are part of these families. An account (#2814596) has been established at Mizuho Bank, Roppongi Branch #053, in the name of Japan Animal Welfare Society to accept overseas donations: an online contribution mechanism has not yet been established.

Meanwhile, [Humane Society of the U.S. and Humane Society International](#) have deployed disaster relief staff to Japan and are working with Japanese veterinary and animal welfare partners to identify needs and how to best provide emergency support. [American Humane Association](#) is monitoring the situation and has established a fund. The [World Society for the Protection of Animals \(WSPA\)](#) is sending a Disaster Assessment and Response Team to Japan following days of monitoring the situation from overseas.



Link to the Link's LinkedIn Link!



The National Link Coalition has established a LinkedIn social network site. Join us and connect with your colleagues. Just control-click on the LinkedIn logo and it will take you to the site.

Domestic Violence Safety Plans

Several local domestic violence agencies have asked the National Link Coalition for copies of safety plans that include protection for pets needing to escape from abusive situations. We've compiled a small collection of these on our website. Just visit our [Resources](#) section at nationallinkcoalition.org and you'll find some excellent samples that you can use and not have to "reinvent the wheel."

News from Link Coalitions

Boston, MA

Boston's Link Up Education Network, incorporated in 2003, has changed its name to [Safe People Safe Pets](#). The 501(c)(3) coalition of human and animal services professionals is working to reduce the risk of animal cruelty and human violence through advocacy, awareness, and safety programs. Activities include providing foster care for pets in families fleeing violent situations, educational workshops that provide insight on abuse, and support of policy and legislation that prevents violence to both people and animals. [Carol Yelverton](#) is the new Executive Director.

To assess the potential demand for these services, the Network had surveyed domestic violence service providers. 88% said that pet abuse or the threat of pet abuse is related to the victim's ability/willingness to leave a violent relationship. And 96% stated that they thought more victims would leave if there were safe, viable alternatives for their pets. If a program existed, 100% of the service providers stated they would refer clients to such a program.

Safe People Safe Pets is currently seeking volunteer office assistants, pet transporters, volunteer coordinators, and educators.

Washington, DC

The nation's capital is attempting to organize a Link Coalition. An inaugural meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 23. For details contact [Blair Warner](#) or call 818-261-1579.

Invitation to Join APA's Link Interest Group

The American Psychological Association's [Section on Animal-Human Interaction: Research & Practice](#) has established three Interest Groups addressing the [Human-Animal Bond](#), [Animal-Assisted Interventions](#), and [Animals and Interpersonal Violence](#).

The Animals & Interpersonal Violence Interest Group will focus on research, practice, programs, and policies providing scholarly leadership. Because animals and interpersonal violence intersects with women's issues, child and family welfare, violence prevention, law enforcement, and training for mental health professionals, there will be joint projects with other APA groups.

Co-chairs Frank R. Ascione and Sarah DeGue note that the group will provide a forum for discussion, collaboration, and progress towards an end to violence against humans and animals. Contact [Ascione](#) for details on how to join and participate in the listserv.

Animal Cruelty Resources Offered

The ASPCA has published an [extensive series of resources](#) for prosecutors, veterinarians and forensics professionals working with animal cruelty cases. The collection includes sample forms, articles, background on animal fighting, and free online courses.

The Link in the Legislatures

In **TEXAS**, **S.B. 279** would allow the court to prohibit the removal of a pet or assistance animal from a person named in a protection order; or from harming, threatening or interfering with the care, custody or control of an animal possessed by a person or family member protected by a court order. The bill, similar to ones introduced in 2009 and 2010, went to a Criminal Justice Committee hearing on March 8.

MASSACHUSETTS Sen. Katherine M. Clark, with 41 co-sponsors, introduced **S.B. 682**, which would allow judges issuing protection orders to include animals owned by either party or minor children in the household. If judges believe an imminent threat of bodily injury to a human being or domesticated animal exists, they shall notify law enforcement agencies accordingly to execute such orders as soon as is practicable. The bill has been referred to the Joint Commission on the Judiciary.

Humane groups in **NEW MEXICO** are using awareness of The Link as support for **H.B. 319**, which would increase penalties for animal cruelty crimes. The bill would make aggravated cruelty, where an owner's negligence leads to great bodily harm or death, a felony instead of a misdemeanor. It would also make bestiality a crime in New Mexico, which currently lacks such a statute. Legislators "need to understand how much we need this law to improve the lives of animals and again the people that are the victims of domestic violence," said Animal Humane Executive Director Peggy Weigle, noting that her agency sees 24 to 36 cases of horrific animal cruelty each year.

MARYLAND's H.B. 407 would authorize a District Court Commissioner, in an interim protective order, or a judge, in a temporary or final protective order, to order a respondent to remain away from a pet or service animal, to refrain from cruelty or aggravated cruelty toward it, or to give it to a specified person. The bill also specifies penalties for failure to comply.

H.B. 3238 in **OREGON** would increase animal cruelty from a Class A misdemeanor to a Class C felony if the perpetrator has two prior convictions for a number of crimes including domestic violence and child abuse, or commits the animal abuse in the presence of a minor child.

Unfortunately, **MISSISSIPPI** still does not have a felony provision for animal cruelty. **S.B. 2127**, which would have created a felony crime of aggravated animal cruelty, died in committee on March 1.

OHIO's H.B. 25 would amend the state cruelty code to include provisions for psychological assessment and counseling for animal abusers, and would also include animals in domestic violence protection orders. The bill has passed out of the Criminal Justice Committee.

CONNECTICUT's H.B. 6226 would mandate animal control officers' cruelty investigations to be forwarded to the Commissioner of Children and Families for inclusion in investigations at that address. DCF employees would be mandated to report suspected animal cruelty or neglect to the Commissioner of Agriculture. The two commissioners would develop and implement cross-training procedures.

The Link in the News

LOWELL, MA – Miguel Andino, 34, previously accused of beating a woman until her nose and wrist were broken, was indicted on new charges alleging he also choked two dogs until their eyes bled, and kicked and punched them until they could no longer move. Prosecutors said Andino moved into the victim's home after having been kicked out of another woman's home where for two years he had been verbally, physically and emotionally abusive, including beating and strangling three dogs and putting the smallest of them in a dresser for 10 hours at a time. Andino is said to have shoved that victim into a wall, and threatened to "put her in a box," get a gun and kill her and her family. When she kicked him out and obtained a restraining order, prosecutors said Andino then went to the second victim's home, where on the day after Christmas he allegedly beat her viciously in front of her four children, leaving her with multiple fractures. Three children locked themselves in a bedroom while the fourth ran for help, according to the *Lowell Sun* newspaper.



CHESTER, WV – Jeffrey Nally, Jr., 19, was charged with kidnapping, domestic battery and 29 counts of animal cruelty for allegedly holding his former girlfriend hostage for a month while he tortured and mutilated 29 dogs and then made her clean up the mess.

The woman told police she moved in with him in December. In the past month he had become more physically and sexually abusive, not allowing her to go anywhere alone, not even to the bathroom or in the shower. Nally monitored her phone calls and restricted food, sometimes not allowing her to eat for two or three days at a time, she said.

She told police Nally began torturing and killing the dogs -- most of them puppies -- and took pleasure in her terror as he made her watch him kill them, experimenting with different tools. "Some were decapitated, some skinned. He used different tools on each dog -- a crossbow, hammers, saws, drills -- he did all this in the house. He made her watch, then forced her to clean up the mess," said Chief Deputy Todd Murray.

Nally reportedly had been previously convicted of a felony and was under house arrest. He was allegedly in possession of several weapons, in violation of his house arrest restrictions, which he used to threaten the woman.

“The violence was escalating, and in my opinion it's good this ended when it did, because I believe he eventually would have killed her,” Sheriff Mike White said.

PHILADELPHIA, PA -- John W. Fleet III was sentenced to two to seven years in prison for setting his puppy on fire in front of his children. Fleet said that at the time of the incident his marriage had broken up, he was fighting for custody of his two children, and he was drinking too much. When the five-month-old pit bull mix bit his son, “I took it out on the dog,” Fleet told the court. Fleet pleaded no-contest to animal cruelty, child endangerment and corrupting a minor. He also lost the right to see his children during his prison term and for seven years’ probation afterwards.

The children told a school counselor that their father became enraged when the dog nipped at them, and had made them hold the dog while he rubbed it with alcohol and set it on fire. They said he later offered them money to keep quiet about what had happened. Assistant DA Erin O’Brien said the children were most concerned that he be kept away from them. “They’re petrified of him,” O’Brien said.

The Link Comes to Wales



While Link conferences have been offered in various parts of the British Isles, activity in Wales has been absent until now. The Animal Welfare Network for Wales will hold its first conference on The Link on April 12 in Cardiff Bay. The conference will give Welsh participants their first opportunity to discuss the research and provision of services across both human and animal sectors. Speakers include Dr. Chris Laurence, Dogs Trust; Edwina

Davidson, RSPCA; Paula Hardy, Welsh Women’s Aid; and Dr. Jennifer Maher, University of Glamorgan. To register contact [Tina Reece](#) at the RSPCA.

Trainings: Coming Soon to a Venue Near You...

Hillsboro, OR – March 23: Scott Heiser of the Animal Legal Defense Fund will conduct a training on Investigation and Prosecution Issues in Animal Hoarding and Puppy Mill Cases. To register contact [Whitney Zeigler](#) or call 503-846-3437.

Albuquerque, NM – April 1-3: A three-day workshop on AniCare, AniCare Child and AniCare Training for Trainers. Through a grant from the NM Department of Public Safety, these workshops are free to psychologists, therapists, and social workers. For details visit [NM AniCare](#).

San Diego, CA – April 6: Allie Phillips will present on the Link at the National District Attorneys’ Association’s [Equal Justice for Children conference](#)

Sarasota, FL – April 11: [Allie Phillips](#) will present on the Link and how therapy animals can help child victims at the Child Protection Center.

Sarasota, FL – April 12: [Allie Phillips](#) will give the keynote on the Link at the Sarasota Junior League Child Advocacy Luncheon.

East Windsor, NJ – April 12: Phil Arkow will conduct a training on the implications of The Link for New Jersey Family Practice court officials at the annual [domestic violence training conference](#).

Seattle, WA - April 17. The [Seattle-King County VMA](#) will sponsor a workshop on "Animal Cruelty: What it looks like, how to document it and whom to call... A seminar for veterinary professionals", featuring Randall Lockwood and Bonnie Yoffe-Sharp.

New York, NY - April 21. The New York City Bar Animal Law Committee will host a panel discussion on the pros and cons of animal cruelty databases and offender registries, featuring Randall Lockwood. Details will be posted at www.abcny.org/nycbar

Denver, CO - April 27-28. The University of Denver Institute for Human-Animal Connection and the Colorado Alliance for Cruelty Prevention will host an Advanced Animal Abuse Forensic Evaluators Workshop. Speakers include Randall Lockwood, Frank Ascione, Philip Tedeschi and Diane Balkin. For information contact [Philip Tedeschi](#).

Santa Fe, NM – April 29 – May 1: A three-day workshop on AniCare, AniCare Child and AniCare Training for Trainers. Through a grant from the NM Department of Public Safety, these workshops are free to psychologists, therapists, and social workers. For details visit [NM AniCare](#).

Orlando, FL - May 1-3. [The International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#) will host its 4th annual conference. Topics will include discussion of ritualistic abuse by Randall Lockwood and Dave Hunt.

Orlando, FL - May 3-7. [HSUS Animal Care Expo](#) will include a session on recognizing and responding to "rescue hoarders" presented by Randall Lockwood and Tim Rickey.

Virginia Beach, VA – June 2: [Allie Phillips](#) will present on the Link at the Virginia Coalition for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

Vandalia, IL - June 7. Randall Lockwood will conduct a workshop on animal cruelty and family violence for the [Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council](#).

Shelbyville, IL - June 8. Randall Lockwood will conduct a workshop on animal cruelty and family violence for the [Illinois Family Violence Coordinating Council](#).

Saskatoon, SK, Canada – Sept. 23: Phil Arkow will conduct a training on The Link for the Saskatchewan SPCA's annual Animal Welfare Conference. For details contact [Sandra Anderson](#) .

About the National Link Coalition

The [National Link Coalition](#) is an informal network of individuals and organizations working cooperatively on the intersections between animal abuse and other forms of violence and to address these concerns through research, legislation, program implementation, and public awareness. Organized in 2008 at a historic summit in Portland, ME, the National Link Coalition's vision is:

The Link between violence against humans and violence against animals is widely known and understood. We believe that through the recognition and integration of this understanding into policies and practices nationwide, humans and animals will be measurably safer.

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