



NATIONAL LINK COALITION

Working together to stop violence against people and animals

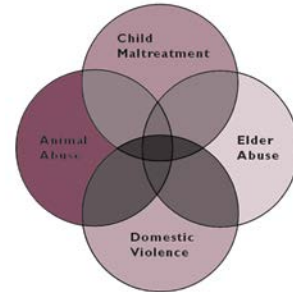
The LINK-Letter Vol. 6, No. 3 March 2013

A monthly report of news about the connections between animal abuse, cruelty and neglect and other forms of violence



www.nationallinkcoalition.org

[Phil Arkow](#), Editor



Special Report: Funding Opportunities for Link Programs

Grant Funds Available for Domestic Violence Animal Care Programs

Domestic violence programs seeking funding for animal sheltering programs may be able to qualify for grant funds available from the [Mary Kay Foundation](#).



Each October, the foundation commemorates

Domestic Violence Awareness Month by awarding grants to at least one domestic violence shelter in every state. In 2012, the foundation awarded \$20,000 grants to more than 150 women's shelters for a total of \$3,000,000. Applicants must be 501c3 organizations that operate immediate overnight housing/emergency shelters for survivors of domestic violence. Funds may be used only for operating expenses and staff travel. The deadline for applying is April 30.

Meanwhile, the American Kennel Club's Humane Fund is inviting applications for grants from women's shelters that permit pets on the premises. The Fund's Women's Shelter grants are available for essential operational support related to the housing of pets, or for capital improvements specifically for the housing and maintenance of pets. To be eligible, organizations must provide temporary or permanent housing for survivors of domestic abuse and their pets or provide temporary or permanent housing for pets of domestic violence survivors and have a formal, established working relationship with at least one nonprofit domestic violence shelter. Grants of up to \$1,000 are offered to 501c3 organizations. Application deadlines are May 15, August 15, November 15, and February 15. [Click here to see the application form](#).



Six Women's Shelters Receive \$10,000 in Grants for Pet Housing

RedRover, a national nonprofit organization based in Sacramento, Calif., distributed a total of \$10,000 in [Domestic Violence Safe Housing Grants](#) to six women's shelters in 2012 to enable these organizations to provide housing for the animal companions of domestic violence survivors. (See *LINK-Letter* April 2012.)

Grants were awarded to:

- Alle-Kiski Area Hope Center, Tarentum, Penna.
- Blue Water Safe Horizons, Port Huron, Mich.
- Colorado River Regional Crisis Center, Parker, Ariz.
- Metropolitan Center for Women and Children, Jefferson, La.
- Safe Harbor of Northeast Kentucky, Ashland, Ky.
- Shelter House, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.



“We frequently have women call or come to us for shelter who are reluctant or refuse to leave unless they can take their pets with them. Pets are an important part of their support systems and families; they just need an appropriate place at our shelter,” said Deniese Perez, executive director of the Parker, Ariz. crisis center.



RedRover program manager Esperanza Zúñiga noted they are partnering with [Sheltering Animals and Families Together \(SAF-T\)](#) with a goal of having at least one pet-friendly domestic violence shelter in every state. Currently, 20 states lack SAF-T pet housing and shelter executives in the following states are encouraged to apply for grant funds: AR, CT, DE, HI, IL, IN, IA, ME, MD, MA, MS, NE, NH, ND, OK, RI, TN, VT, WV and WI.

Esperanza Zúñiga

RedRover also offers Safe Escape grants of up to \$500 for temporary pet boarding and veterinary care for individuals fleeing domestic violence situations. Zúñiga reports a 126% increase in applications for these grants in 2012. “This definitely tells us that there is a need out there. We’re getting a really thankful response from the shelters. In many cases these grants saved lives, and the stories we are hearing offer powerful testimony to the need for these programs,” she said.

One such testimonial came from a Safe Escape recipient named Julia: “I was able to stay safe while being sure my dog was cared for which gave me the courage to testify against the man stalking me and he is now on electronic monitoring and being forced to get mental health treatment,” she wrote. “Without your grant I would not have been able to stay in the shelter during that time and may have been killed by this man. I can't thank you enough for all of your help. When I am recovered financially I plan to donate to your cause so you can help others like myself.”



Cara Brook, assistant prosecuting attorney in St. Joseph County, Ind., is assigned responsibility for prosecuting animal cruelty cases in the South Bend area. She presented a program on the challenges of animal cruelty prosecutions during an all-day public forum on The Link at the 129th Annual Meeting of the Indiana Veterinary Medical Association. She told the audience that photographs of the crime scene and of the victims are critical to tell the story to the prosecutor and to the jury.

“Cruelty Has a Face” in Southern California

The San Bernardino County, Calif., District Attorney’s Office has taken an unusual and effective step to promoting the links between animal abuse and other crimes by publishing a “Cruelty Has a Face” campaign on its [website](#). The page features blurred photographs of some eight animal cruelty offenders listing their additional convictions for other offenses including fighting, domestic violence, firearms, theft, DUI, robbery, drugs, vehicle theft, parole violations, and possession of an explosive device. “Animal abuse is often the first sign of other family and community violence,” reads each picture, with information on how to report suspected animal abuse. The D.A.’s Office has an extensive Animal Cruelty Task Force that conducts Link programs with numerous agencies in the region. A graphic [video](#) depicting how cockfighting is a “crime against the entire community” and adversely impacts children is also online.



Link Legislative News

Link Research Underpins Alabama Cross-Reporting Measure

Citing “reputable studies in the fields of psychology, sociology and criminology [that] have consistently demonstrated that violent offenders often have childhood or adolescent histories involving serious, intentional acts of animal cruelty,” and FBI and other studies documenting the predictive and indicative nature of animal abuse and its link to human violence, House Bill 51 was introduced into the Alabama State Legislature on January 25. The bill, sponsored by Rep. Jack Williams, would require a wide range of human and veterinary health professionals, teachers, law enforcement officials, social workers, mental health professionals and others to report suspected animal cruelty or torture. If the report is made in good faith, the reporter would be provided with immunity from civil and criminal liability. Failure to make such a report would be punishable by a fine.

The bill also dictates that law enforcement agencies receiving such reports that have reasonable cause to believe that cruelty or torture has occurred “shall process the case in the same manner as any other criminal investigation.”

HB 51 has been referred to the House Agriculture & Forestry Committee.

Animal Abuse = Acts of Domestic Violence

Senate Bill 473, currently in the New Mexico Senate Judiciary Committee, would add that state to the seven others that have enacted laws in which acts of animal abuse or neglect designed to intimidate, coerce or control an intimate partner meet the statutory definitions of domestic violence or stalking. Arizona, Colorado, Indiana, Maine, Nebraska, Nevada and Tennessee already have these provisions. Colorado additionally regards such animal abuse as an act of elder abuse. To see the statutory references to these provisions, please [see the new document](#) on the National Link Coalition’s website.

Will Connecticut Animals Have CASA-type Advocates?

Child victims of abuse, neglect and other domestic disturbances have long been entitled to [court-appointed special advocates \(CASA\)](#) to represent their interests in court proceedings. Legislative initiatives recently introduced would extend this concept to animals that have not traditionally had legal representation.



The Connecticut General Assembly is considering HB 5677 and HB 6310, introduced by Rep. Diana S. Urban and eight co-sponsors. The bills, which were referred to the Joint Committee on the Judiciary, would permit the appointment of an animal advocate – a veterinarian from the State Department of Agriculture – in family relations matters, civil cases, and criminal proceedings including cruelty cases, which involve the care, custody and well-being of animals.

The Link in the Legislatures

Reporting and cross-reporting:



New York AB 3766 would require any person charged with enforcing cruelty to animals laws to report suspected child abuse or maltreatment, and any person mandated to report child abuse or maltreatment to file a report of suspected animal abuse or maltreatment. The bill is in the Social Services Committee.



New York AB 3283 would require any employee of a veterinary hospital or clinic, boarding kennel, shelter or rescue center, or facility that provides services for animals to report an animal's injury, illness, or condition to the police if animal cruelty or abuse is suspected. Employees who reasonably and in good faith file such reports would be immune from civil or criminal liability. The bill is in the Agriculture Committee.



Washington HB 1186 and **SB 5102** would grant immunity from civil and criminal liability for veterinarians who report suspected animal cruelty in good faith. **SB 5204** and **HB 1202** would create new categories of failing to provide care and of leaving an animal unattended in a motor vehicle, both civil infractions that do not meet statutory requirements for cruelty, and would permit law enforcement officers, fire personnel, and animal control officers to intervene. It would also amend state cruelty and animal fighting language.



Alabama HB 51 would require a wide range of human and veterinary health professionals, teachers, law enforcement officials, social workers, mental health professionals and others to report suspected animal cruelty or torture. Good-faith reporters would have immunity from civil and criminal liability. Failure to report would be punishable by a fine. Law enforcement agencies receiving such reports “shall process the case in the same manner as any other criminal investigation.” The bill is in the House Agriculture & Forestry Committee.

Abuse Registries:



Washington HB 1786 would direct the attorney general to maintain a publicly available registry of persons convicted of animal abuse. The bill is in the House Judiciary Committee.

Pet Protection Orders



Kentucky HB 195 would allow a court to direct the care, custody or control of pets in domestic violence protection-from-abuse orders. It is in the House Judiciary Committee.



New Mexico SB 473 would allow a court to grant possession and control of any animal and order any party to stay away from the animal during a protection-from-abuse order.

Other



Connecticut HB 5677 and **HB 6310** would appoint a veterinarian from the State Department of Agriculture to act as an animal advocate in family relations matters, civil cases, and criminal proceedings (including cruelty cases) that involve the care, custody and well-being of animals.



New York AB 706 would include animal cruelty in the presence of a child as an element in endangering the welfare of a child, and within the definition of a neglected or maltreated child.



New Mexico SB 459 would appropriate \$50,000 to provide training for social workers and law enforcement personnel regarding animal cruelty laws and the social and legal consequences of animal cruelty.



New Mexico SB 83 and **HB 224** would strengthen anti-cruelty laws and allow psychological counseling for cruelty offenders; such counseling would be mandated for offenders convicted of the new crime of “extreme” animal cruelty, and for children convicted of animal cruelty.

Dogfighting and The Link

While much Link research and programming has focused on the intersections of animal abuse with other forms of family violence, a significant aspect of Link work addresses the impact of animal abuse on community violence. Pet-abuse.com has compiled a map of arrests made between 2000 – 2011 for dogfighting; the red pins depict cases which also involved crimes against people. Police officials in many cities link the epidemic of urban dogfighting to guns, gangs and drugs. George Bengal, director of law enforcement for the Pennsylvania SPCA and a 20-year veteran of the Philadelphia Police Department, says, “Usually with animal fighting we get guns and drugs and everything. I believe there’s more money in dogfighting than there is in drugs.”



News from Local Link Coalitions

Kansas City



Kim Fletcher

[Kim Fletcher](#) is now heading the Kansas City Caring for All Network (KC-CAN). A veteran in the domestic violence field, Kim recently left the [Rose Brooks Center](#) which now has [SAF-T](#) pet care facilities. Kim is a marriage and family therapist with children and families working through trauma issues. KC-CAN was initiated by the [Animals & Society Institute](#) through a grant from the Shumaker Family Foundation. Kim succeeds Heddie Leger, who helped establish KC-CAN as a stronger foundation for addressing animal abuse and other family violence issues in the region.

Swedish Link Coalition Moving Ahead

[Carin Holmberg](#) reports that Se Sambandet (“*Look for the Connection*”) has been registered as a charitable organization and has produced several booklets based on National Link Coalition materials. A 40-page booklet advises professionals how to see The Link in their work. Another summarizes The Link from a multi-disciplinary perspective and provides links and phone numbers for further information. A website is in the works. Training programs involving a forensic veterinarian and a police officer are being offered throughout Sweden. The group hopes to survey veterinarians to measure the incidence of abused animals and battered women they encounter in their practices.



Carin Holmberg

Spanish Link Coalition Continues National and Global Outreach



Spanish police officials announce the new unit

GEVHA – Grupo para el Estudio de la Violencia hacia Humanos y Animales – continues its groundbreaking work in Europe and Latin America. Nuria Querol i Vinas will speak to international criminology conferences this year in France, Italy and Spain. Link awareness inspired the police department in Castelló, Spain to [create a special unit](#) for environmental and animal crimes, La Unidad de Protección Medioambiental y Bienestar (UPROMA). Officers Pedro Moratalla, David Carrasco and Sònia Pujol are pioneers in family violence and animal abuse interventions and are establishing Link protocols.

Central Virginia Link Coalition to Meet

The [Central Virginia Link Coalition](#) will hold an information session, free and open to the public, on Saturday, Mar. 23, from 9:30 am – 12:30 pm at the Charlottesville-Albemarle SPCA. For details call Dr. Julie Palais at 703-609-2939 or Dr. Don Henry at 540-337-8886.

The Link in the Literature

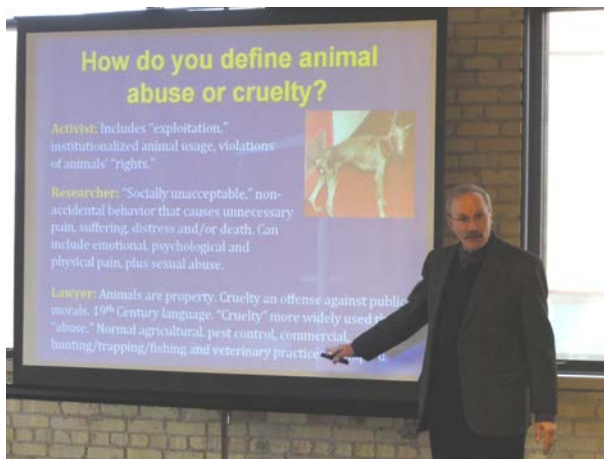
New Scholarly Publication Announced

The American Psychological Association’s section on Human-Animal Interactions has announced a new scholarly publication. The *Human-Animal Interaction Bulletin* will be an open access, online, peer-reviewed feature devoted to the dissemination of research in the field of human-animal interactions. Research regarding the Link between humans and other animals may be considered. Details regarding submitting articles for publication are at the [Bulletin website](#).

Domestic Violence/Animal Abuse Links Spotlighted by Animal Legal Defense Fund



The Animal Legal Defense Fund has added its weight to the growing interest in Link programming by dedicating [a page on its website](#) to the connections between animal cruelty and domestic violence. ALDF, a national network of thousands of attorneys and over 100,000 members, describes how acts of animal abuse are often within the cycles of violence that mark abusive intimate partner relationships and how these incidents scar not only the animals and partners but the children as well. The page provides valuable resource information on including pets in protection-from-abuse orders; including intimidating acts of animal cruelty within state definitions of domestic violence; increasing penalties for cruelty committed in the presence of a child; cross-reporting strategies; and what advocates can do for battered women and their pets.



National Link Coalition Coordinator Phil Arkow brought Link training to the Animal Law Society at the Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Grand Rapids, Mich. Law students, attorneys, former prosecutors, and animal welfare advocates attended the four-hour workshop to learn about the links between animal abuse and other crimes, and how to integrate this knowledge into criminal prosecutions and public policy.

The Link in the News

Sex Offender Indicted for Dog Torture

A grand jury in Princeton, N. J. has [handed up an indictment](#) against Michael G. Rosenberg, 31, a registered sex offender, for allegedly whipping and killing a German shepherd named Shyanne. Authorities said the alleged torture occurred last August and that Rosenberg reportedly passed himself off as a certified dog trainer. An animal control officer cited him for cruelty for injuries resulting in four broken ribs, puncturing one of Shyanne's ribs, and hyperthermia. Last month a second dog owner **Michael Rosenberg** filed similar charges against Rosenberg, who has also been charged with beating his own dogs over a period of several months. Rosenberg was convicted in 2011 on child endangerment charges and is on a Megan's Law list for having sex with a teenage girl.



Criminal Offender Faces Life Sentence for Bestiality

A Cedar Springs, Mich. man with a criminal history is facing a possible life sentence after being charged with his fourth felony offense – allegedly having sex with a dog. Charles Ralph Horton, 57, who allegedly had sexual contact with a lab/shepherd mix at various locations over a four-month period in 2012, was previously convicted in 1991 of criminal sexual conduct, and in the 1980s for burglary and breaking and entering. Court records described the crime as “abominable and detestable” and Horton as “a person whose sexual behavior was characterized by repeated acts which indicate a disregard for the consequences or recognized rights of others.”

Court Hearing Scheduled in Alleged Domestic Violence/Animal Cruelty Case

An [arraignment hearing](#) is scheduled for March 19 in Waterbury, Conn. Superior Court for Andrew Bekech, 35, of Southbury, [charged with animal cruelty](#), violation of a protective order, disorderly conduct, assault, and other charges. Bekech is accused of mutilating “Little Man,” the cat of his former girlfriend who told animal control investigators that he had abused and possibly poisoned her cats in a domestic dispute. Other cats reportedly suffered fractured ribs, paralysis of legs, and apparent chemical burns. “Little Man” is reportedly recovering at an undisclosed location after losing a portion of his tongue and tail.

Link Cited in Cruelty Conviction



Melanie Jasina

Kent County, Mich. Circuit Court Judge Paul Sullivan cited a connection between violence against animals and violence against people when [sentencing](#) a Grand Rapids woman for snapping the necks of three kittens during a domestic argument. Melanie Sabrina-Robert Jasina, whose lengthy criminal background includes firearms and bad-check violations, was sentenced to 150 days in jail and two years’ probation. Sullivan told her, “People who do this to animals, even wild animals, are often considered to be at risk for violent activities against people. I don’t know what caused you to do this, but I hope whatever your issues are, you get those under control.”

Link Training Opportunities

Coming Soon to a City or Computer Near You...

March 13 – (online): Diane Balkin will lead a webinar on veterinary forensics for the [Veterinary Information Network](#).

March 14 – (online): Amanda Fitch, veterinary forensic analyst at the University of Florida, will present a free webinar on “Unique Aspects of Processing Animal Crime Scenes” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

March 17 – Austin, Texas: Phil Arkow will discuss how focusing on The Link can shift the paradigm in animal care and control agencies to improve their service delivery, funding and respect in the community at the 5th [Texas Unites for Animals](#) conference.

March 20-21 – Huntsville, Ala.: Allie Phillips will present on The Link at the National Children’s Advocacy Center’s 29th [National Symposium on Child Abuse](#).

March 21 – Portland, Ore.: Diane Balkin will present on animal cruelty prosecution issues at the [Victim to Verdict](#) conference of the Oregon Humane Society.

March 22 – Tuskegee Institute, Ala.: [Lila Miller](#) will present on the role of the veterinarian in handling animal cruelty at the Tuskegee University College of Veterinary Medicine Annual Symposium.

March 23 – Charlottesville, VA: The Central Virginia Link Coalition will have an informational meeting for the public. For details contact [Julie Palais](#).

March 29 – Fort Collins, Colo.: [Diane Balkin](#) will present on legal considerations in equine cruelty investigations for the Colorado Department of Agriculture Equine Neglect Short Course Level 1.

April 1-30 – various locations: April is [Child Abuse Prevention Month](#), proclaimed in 1983 and coordinated nationally by the U.S. Children’s Bureau’s Office of Child Abuse and Neglect.

Apr. 4-5 – Kansas City, Mo.: Phil Arkow will present a program on The Link, and Maya Gupta and Nancy Bell will train on AniCare and AniCare Child, for the [KC-CAN Link Coalition](#)’s meeting on “Protecting People – Protecting Pets – Protecting Society.”

April 9 (online): [Allie Phillips](#) will conduct a free webinar on animal abuse and child maltreatment for the National Children’s Alliance.

April 9-10 – Knoxville, Tenn.: Elizabeth Strand and Nancy Bell will [train](#) on the AniCare Approach of assessment and treatment of animal cruelty offenders to interrupt the cycle of animal abuse and violence towards humans.

April 11 – Fort Collins, Colo.: [Lila Miller](#) will present on the role of the veterinarian in handling animal cruelty at Colorado State University College of Veterinary Medicine.

April 11-13 – Knoxville, Tenn.: A Link track at the 3rd [Veterinary Social Work Summit](#) will include: Phil Arkow on how social workers can use The Link to build empathy and social capital; Maya Gupta on ethical dilemmas and evaluations in domestic violence Safe Haven programs; and Mary Lou Randour and Nancy Blaney on what mental and health professionals should know about animal abuse.

April 14 – New York, N.Y.: Phil Arkow will discuss The Link to the [L.O.V.E. Task Force](#) of the Church of the Holy Trinity.

April 16 – (online): Judge Maria Felix and Deputy County Attorney Kendrick Wilson, of Pima County, Ariz., will present a free webinar on “Animal Welfare Court: The Development of a Specialty Court Focused on Animal Abuse Cases,” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

April 16 – Port of Spain, Trinidad: [Lila Miller](#) will present on the role of the veterinarian in handling animal cruelty at the [Caribbean Animal Welfare Conference](#).

April 22 – Baltimore, Md.: Allie Phillips, Michelle Welch and Caroline A. Griffin will present on “Dealing with Media, Public Pressure, and Scrutiny in Animal Cruelty Cases” at the Maryland Bar Association’s [4th Annual Animal Law Symposium](#).

April 25 – Madison, Wis.: [Lila Miller](#) will present on the role of the veterinarian in handling animal cruelty at the University of Wisconsin College of Veterinary Medicine.

May 10-12 – Milan, Italy: Nuria Querol y Vinas will present on The Link in a workshop on “Innovative Perspectives to Study Domestic Violence Dynamics” at the 2nd [International Congress of Criminological Sciences](#), “Criminal Behaviors: Impacts, Tools and Social Networks.”

May 13-15 – Orlando, Fla: The [International Veterinary Forensic Sciences Association](#)’s 6th annual conference features numerous speakers addressing Link issues.

May 14 – Seattle, Wash.: Allie Phillips will present on “Caught in the Cross Fire: When the Abuse of Animals Co-Occurs with Family Violence” at the Washington State [Children’s Justice Conference](#).

May 15 – Kitchener, Ont., Canada: Phil Arkow will present Link trainings on behalf of the [Human-Animal Violence Link Coalition](#).

May 23 – (online): Rachel Touroo, DVM, director of veterinary forensics for the ASPCA, will present a free webinar on “The Role of the Forensic Veterinarian in Animal Abuse Cases,” in a [webinar series](#) presented by the National District Attorneys Association’s National Center for Prosecution of Animal Abuse, in partnership with the ASPCA and the Animal Legal Defense Fund.

July 26-27 – Bento Gonçalves, Brazil: Phil Arkow will train on implications of The Link for veterinarians, and practical guidance to respond to suspected abuse, at the [Medvep](#) 2nd Congress of Veterinary Specialties.

July 30-31 – São Paulo, Brazil: Phil Arkow will present [eight Link workshops](#) for ABMVL (Brazilian Legal Veterinary Medicine Association) and ITEC (Education, Conservation and Animal Welfare Institute).

Nov. 7-8 – Almoradi, Alicante, Spain: Nuria Querol y Vinas will discuss preventing future aggression by looking at the early indicators of family violence at the II [International Congress on Juvenile Violence and Juvenile Offenders](#).

ABOUT THE NATIONAL LINK COALITION



The National Link Coalition is an informal, multi-disciplinary collaborative network of individuals and organizations in human services and animal welfare who address the intersections between animal abuse, domestic violence, child maltreatment and elder abuse through research, public policy, programming and community awareness. We believe that human and animal well-being are inextricably intertwined and that the prevention of family and community violence can best be achieved through partnerships representing multi-species perspectives.

OUR VISION: 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.

To subscribe to The Link-Letter (free!) – Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow (arkowpets@snip.net) and tell us what organization(s) you're with and where you're located.

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